

Table 2: Summary of Key Issues and Opportunities by Facility Type

COMMUNITY FACILITY	KEY ISSUES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES/FUTURE DIRECTION
Community Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited functionality and multi-purpose use.</li> <li>Ageing facilities.</li> <li>Many halls are not suited to needs and expectations of the community.</li> <li>Vary in condition and most require more regular maintenance and upgrades.</li> <li>Condition and age -unappealing to potential users.</li> <li>Vary in level of utilisation.</li> <li>Average utilisation for community halls is 68 hours per month (17 hours per week) representing approximately 20% of available hours.</li> <li>11 halls are utilised for less than 15 hours per week.</li> <li>Some halls are well utilised. For example, Mannering Park Community Hall, Tuggerah Community Hall and Halekulani Hall.</li> <li>Potential oversupply in some areas, notably Southern Lakes Social Planning District.</li> <li>Lack of equipment.</li> <li>Lack of car parking and/or external lighting.</li> <li>Issues with vandalism and graffiti.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of the Review of Assets (RAP) Assessment Tool to assist Council in its decision making to determine the appropriateness of each facility by asset and use.</li> <li>Consideration of the geographic isolation of some communities, for example in the Northern Lakes and Rural West districts and the lack of higher order services and facilities available to the community in these areas.</li> <li>Embellishments to existing halls, where this is a feasible and practical option to increase the functionality and future utilisation.</li> <li>There is a need to address maintenance and other micro issues impacting on the usage and attractiveness of each facility.</li> <li>Promote and develop community halls as a focal point for the local community via improved marketing, signage, community information noticeboards and clearer booking procedures.</li> </ul>
Community Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need a strategic approach to marketing and programming.</li> <li>Under utilisation of some centres eg. The Berkeley Centre, Watanobbi Community Centre, Woodbury Park Community Centre, Cynthia Street Community Centre, youth space at Blue Haven Community Centre.</li> <li>For some centres, the current model of 355 Committee management may not be the most suitable to achieve social outcomes by funded services.</li> <li>Limited funding available from State and Federal government for the expansion or establishment of new services and programmes, particularly in the growing areas of the Shire.</li> <li>Recent changes in State and Federal government funding has meant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All centres are multi-purpose and have the capacity to undertake programs and activities for all age groups and backgrounds within the community.</li> <li>Opportunities exist to improve utilisation at a number of centres via marketing and promotion.</li> <li>There is a need to implement a consistent and transparent process for accommodating services within a facility through an expression of interest process and performance based reviews/reporting to ensure services, programs and activities are achieving desired social outcomes as identified in key Council plans and policies.</li> <li>Explore/review management models and increased staffing</li> </ul>

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	<p>that some services and programs have either changed focus or no longer exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some dissatisfaction with the level of building maintenance, cleanliness, lack of external lighting, vandalism and graffiti at some centres.</li> </ul>	<p>for direct management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore social/creative enterprise models for management and activation of community centres.</li> <li>Opportunities exist to incorporate commercial components into current and future centres.</li> <li>There is a need to adapt to changing community needs and expectations over time, shifts in government policy/funding programs and new models of provision.</li> <li>Development of community hub models to support co-location and integrated approach to service delivery and programming eg. The Entrance Community Centre.</li> </ul>
Youth Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in State government service specifications have impacted on services operating from Gravity and The Cottage eg. drop-in to activities to structured case management model. The future of these sites solely as youth centres may need to be reviewed.</li> <li>The role, function and future of the leased facilities require review.</li> <li>Purpose built youth space at Blue Haven Community Centre has never been maximised to its potential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broaden the use of Gravity Youth Centre to provide for a range of activities for all age groups as well as providing space for young people. eg. with a music studio, art studio/workshop and dark room there is potential to enhance cultural use and link the facility to the network of cultural facilities.</li> <li>Youth space is to be incorporated as part of the Community Hub planned for the new Warnervale Town Centre.</li> <li>Oasis Youth Centre currently operates out of a building at Wyong which has been identified as an iconic development site, its future use will need to be considered in line with potential development of the site.</li> </ul>
Senior Citizens Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most senior citizens centres offer activities that are used by the 70+ population. There is a need to rebrand these facilities and offer a broader range/new activities and programs to attract 50+ and 60+ population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The larger centres at Toukley and Long Jetty are well utilised with over 1000 members. The functionality and capacity of these centres to cater for large groups may lend these facilities to broader community use.</li> <li>There is a need to examine the role and function of senior citizens centres as part of the Positive Ageing Strategy in consultation with residents aged 50+.</li> <li>Link to WSC draft Learning Communities Strategy action plan for lifelong learning opportunities.</li> </ul>

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Arts and Cultural Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council and independent studies have identified a shortfall in cultural facilities in Wyong Shire.</li> <li>The provision of specific purpose built cultural/arts centres has been difficult to achieve to date due to lack of funding and resources.</li> <li>To develop existing and new arts facilities into an effective coordinated network, Council would be required to have Business Plans for each facility and a broader spectrum of hire, leasing and programming models on hand and an agreed understanding of the cultural development role (services) of each facility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toukley Senior Citizens Centre as been identified as an iconic development site, its future use will need to be considered in line potential development of the site.</li> <li>The development of license/lease allowing single cultural organisations exclusive use and/or management responsibilities of a community facility need to be based on the achievement of cultural development goals to justify such arrangements.</li> <li>Newer models for use of Council facilities for arts activities include creative enterprise, residency programs, commercial hire and longer term leases based on MOUs.</li> <li>Continued planning and provision of appropriate cultural infrastructure and programs will be required to respond to community needs and to develop a vibrant cultural life.</li> <li>Complete design documentation of The Art House and seek funding to meet capital costs with the Project Working Party.</li> <li>Arts and Cultural space should be considered as part of the Community Hub in new Warnervale Town Centre.</li> <li>Stakeholder engagement to inform development of existing facilities as a network by developing Business Plans for all four existing cultural facilities.</li> </ul>
Community Cottages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cottages are highly demanded because of proximity to town centre. However, most are small, not built specifically for the service provided, offer poor functionality and require maintenance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further review required.</li> <li>Explore options to enhance integrated service delivery and sharing of resources.</li> </ul>
Heritage Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire damage to Alison Homestead from fire in 2011 destroyed main building and many artefacts.</li> <li>Meeting the cost of repair, maintenance, programming and promotion of heritage buildings.</li> <li>Need for greater community engagement, involvement in and support for Wyong heritage buildings.</li> <li>Need for alignment and working relationship between WSC and heritage groups to achieve agreed outcomes consistent with WSC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan to address the rebuild and heritage significance of Alison Homestead.</li> <li>Implement heritage stakeholder engagement strategy to establish agreed goals, models of operating and means of utilising extensive community knowledge to develop and manage heritage buildings to best standard.</li> <li>Staged development of a Heritage Strategy through consultation with stakeholders.</li> </ul>

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	<p>Strategic Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of a Wyong Heritage Strategy for Aboriginal, European and migrant heritage that informs plans of management to ensure the sustainable long term management and care of heritage buildings and sites to achieve desired goals of tourism, investment and meaningful community identity and pride.</li> </ul>	
Scout and Guide Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of some of these facilities is not known.</li> <li>Most require maintenance and upgrades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review formal documentation.</li> <li>Potential to increase use of these facilities by other groups.</li> </ul>
Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current provision of library floor space and the size of the library collection is below State Library of New South Wales benchmarks for library facility provision.</li> <li>Existing branches require refurbishment and/or expansion as use is limited by layout and floor space constraints, lack of appropriate multi-purpose space, meetings rooms for activities, programs, displays and events, study space and technology areas.</li> <li>The Entrance and Bateau Bay branch libraries have a lack of suitable furniture and fittings and are not conducive to passive use.</li> <li>Increasing community pressure for public libraries in NSW to revitalise or expand facilities, collections, electronic infrastructure and programs if they are to keep up with increased demand, modern technology and national benchmarks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are well placed to support agendas in areas such as lifelong learning, literacy, community strengthening and community capacity building.</li> <li>Can form a key part of a community hub or learning precinct.</li> <li>Can provide key space for connectivity in the community, helping to overcome digital access barriers. Enhanced connectivity as part of NBN rollout will enable library services to provide access to e-content more effectively.</li> <li>Key distribution point for information about government services and programs and tourist and community information.</li> <li>A new library and council services centre is proposed to be incorporated as part of a Community Hub in the new Warnervale Town Centre.</li> <li>A new library at The Entrance is being considered as part of a redevelopment opportunity via a voluntary partnership agreement.</li> <li>As part of the iconic sites development project there may be opportunities to link the Toukley Library into redevelopment of this area to provide greater access and enhanced usage and to better service the community or in the short term activate the existing community precinct.</li> <li>Improved branding and signage.</li> </ul>

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Child Care Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities are structurally sound however internally some centres are of poor design and have floor space constraints. Externally, most centres have an aged exterior.</li> <li>Most existing centres require refurbishment, redesign and/or expansion to optimise space and modernise the aesthetic appeal.</li> <li>Some centres are located in locations with a high presence of local competitors.</li> <li>Ongoing changes to legislation with the introduction of the National Quality Framework. This encompasses changes to National Law and Regulation, National Quality Standards and National Curriculum (Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place). This could have implications for the size and layout, compliance with maintenance and equipment statements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent programs across all Care &amp; Education services.</li> <li>Link between childcare and economic development via actions from the WSC draft Learning Communities Strategy.</li> </ul>
Recreation Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both EDSACC Bateau Bay and Lake Haven Recreation Centre have maintenance issues due to the nature of their design and lack of proper preventative maintenance since their construction.</li> <li>EDSACC Bateau Bay has dated equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with YMCA and PCYC to increase participation in sporting and recreation activities and to consider other opportunities for the community to use this space for activities beyond sports.</li> <li>Investigate options to improve and upgrade EDSACC fitness room and gym area to cater for increased community demands as well as expanding programs to increase participation across a number of sports both within the facility and surrounding area.</li> <li>Lease/licence - ensure maintenance obligations and social outcomes for sport and recreation development are being met.</li> <li>EDSACC - develop Business Plan for upgrade as recreation/community hub.</li> </ul>
Recreation Clubhouses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation levels are not known.</li> <li>There are a number of clubhouses that have been constructed solely with the funds of the lessee or occupant, and are located on Council owned land.</li> <li>Most clubhouses have no formalised tenure arrangements in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalise tenure arrangements linked to sports development benefits for the community.</li> </ul>

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Surf Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance is not always compliant and often with undertaken with no reference to Council.</li> <li>• Surf Clubs have a dual role. They operate for an important community benefit hence, Council interest in supporting their ventures. However, most clubs operate as a commercial enterprise.</li> <li>• Limited community access unless room is hired from club.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop standard Operating Agreements.</li> </ul>

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### Vision

The vision for community facilities is to:

Provide a network of sustainable community facilities across Wyong Shire that are accessible, safe, well maintained and responsive to community needs.

### Guiding Principles

The vision is supported by a number of guiding (or aspirational) principles:

#### Community/Social Benefit

Community facilities will be provided to benefit the community and contribute to residents' quality of life and wellbeing. Council often assumes a facilitator role in creating partnerships with government and non-government agencies and community organisations to:

- Target local needs: Facilities will address the social needs and interests of the surrounding community and desired social outcomes by offering a range of relevant programs, services and activities.
- Build community cohesion: Programs, activities and events will be designed to encourage social interaction between and involvement of different people and groups in the community to generate social capital.
- Multi-purpose and shared use: The design of facilities will be flexible and adaptable to meet changing community needs and expectations, and where possible, will be multi-purpose to accommodate diverse groups, maximise activity, shared use and utilisation and to provide an integrated and/or partnership approach to the delivery of services.
- Creation of community hubs: Where synergies exist, facilities will be co-located to provide a focal point for community and economic activities and integration with other uses and services such as schools, shopping centres, recreation and sporting facilities. This will enhance accessibility and connectivity of uses and provide a destination and one-stop-shop approach for users.
- Local and district facilities: Facilities will be well located throughout the Shire, as part of a network. Facilities will be provided within key centres and/or high social need areas with localised provision in communities that are geographically isolated and/or have limited access to public transport.
- Community identity: Facilities will be actively promoted and marketed to the surrounding community and have a strong local profile and identity through appropriate design, branding and signage. The community will have a high awareness of the facility, the services, programs and activities offered and value facilities as a key community resource.
- Engage the community: Active involvement of the community will be encouraged in planning, design, operation and management of facilities.

## Access and Equity

Community facilities will have equitable access to all user groups by being accessible and safe.

- **Accessibility:** Facilities will be welcoming and accessible to all people within the community including people of differing ages, abilities, income levels, cultural backgrounds and interests.
- **Fees and charges:** Fees and charges for the use of facilities will be based on balancing the social objectives of community facilities with attaining a fair and equitable contribution towards maintenance and upgrade requirements and the long term financial management of facilities.
- **Physical connectivity:** Facilities will be located in close proximity to public transport, bicycle and shared pathways or other places in the public domain that are considered to be key focal points.
- **Community safety:** Facility location and design of internal and external spaces will meet best practice requirements for public safety as per Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines, and occupational health and safety requirements.
- **Fair and open processes:** Allocation of space within a facility will be based on a transparent and collaborative decision making process aligned with social outcomes identified in key Council plans and policies.
- **Flexibility:** Flexible options will be considered in the way we manage facilities provided it meets the key social objectives of the Community Strategic Plan and achieve mutual benefit for both parties.
- **Consistent and equitable practices:** Operational policies and procedures are standardised and will promote fair and equitable community access.

## Well Maintained

Community facilities will be well maintained and rated highly by the community.

- **Sustainability:** Sustainable funding, maintenance and management arrangements are required to ensure that facilities are financially viable and responsive to community needs. Funding sources for maintenance, lifecycle and management costs will need to be identified during the planning and investigation stage of any new community facility project. Income from fees and charges will be reinvested to contribute to maintenance.
- **Building condition:** Facilities will be regularly maintained to a standard level, and will have good internal and external appearance. This will maximise access and increase utilisation.



## Guidelines for Planning

Planning and design guidelines for provision of new facilities include:

- Identification of social needs and desired outcomes.
- Consideration of the hierarchy of facility provision.
- Economic, social and environmental sustainability of facilities.
- Exploration of funding options for capital, operation and maintenance costs.
- Flexible and multi-purpose design to meet changing needs and expectations and enable shared used.
- Co-location of facilities to create focal point for community activities and opportunities for integrated service delivery.
- Location and siting with complementary land uses and linkages to public transport and bicycle and shared pathways.
- Functional, practical and flexible design to optimise utilisation, promote accessibility and safety for users.
- Community engagement to encourage participation and ensure facilities meet community needs.
- Public art and place making to create a sense of identity and enhance indoor and outdoor spaces.

## Recommended Program for Provision and Upgrade

The following program for the provision and upgrade of facilities is recommended to meet identified community needs (subject to funding and partnerships):

- The Art House, Performing Arts and Conference Centre in Wyong Town Centre.
- A district level community facility in Warnervale Town Centre providing a hub of activities including multi-purpose space and a modern library.
- A new library facility in The Entrance Social Planning District linked to a redevelopment opportunity.
- Children's and Family Centre Stage 3 of The Entrance Community Centre hub.
- A new library and multi-purpose community centre in Toukley Town Centre linked to an iconic development site.
- A new multi-purpose community centre in the northern part of the Shire to cater for a range of programs and services, linked to population growth in the medium to long term.
- A new Indoor Recreation Centre in the northern part of the Shire.

- A community hub partnership project as part of Westfield Tuggerah redevelopment.
- Embellishment of existing facilities.

To achieve this program Council will need to explore a range of funding options including Section 94, Council revenue, special rate levies, State and Federal government funding, public private partnerships, voluntary planning agreements, sale/disposal of assets, commercial opportunities, corporate sponsorship and public trusts.

Any proposals for the provision of new facilities or upgrading/embellishment of existing facilities will be assessed, evaluated and ranked using a standard Project Evaluation Tool as part of Council's Project Management System.

To assist Council in its decision making process a Review of Asset Portfolio (RAP) Assessment Tool has been developed and adopted by Council in February 2012. This tool seeks to provide an objective and transparent means of determining whether an asset provides an appropriate investment, both economically and in service delivery. The tool is to be applied to all assets within the community facilities portfolio which will then guide future decision making on all community buildings.

Some of these future decisions may include or consider:

- Joint ventures/partnerships with private enterprise to enhance or redevelop existing or new sites.
- Reducing the number of buildings.
- Investigation into alternative service delivery models.
- Accepting lower levels of service.

## OPERATIONAL REVIEW

Currently there is no clear management framework, systems or processes in place for community facilities. This has resulted in inequitable and inconsistent operational practices.

Standardised policies and procedures for the sustainable operation, management and maintenance of community facilities are required to ensure Council's practices are consistent, equitable and based on clear social outcome criteria and to improve levels of service and benefits to the community.

There are a number of day to day processes associated with managing the operations of community facilities. The operational review covered the following key elements:

- Management/Governance.
- Bookings and hire.
- Fees and charges.
- Marketing and promotion.
- Asset management.
- Asset maintenance.
- Cleaning.
- Security.
- Emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Unit roles and responsibilities.
- Finance.

For each of these elements the current process has been documented and issues and opportunities have been identified to streamline processes and improve efficiencies for both the community and Council. Table 3 provides a summary of key operational issues and opportunities, many of which are being implemented as part of current and future operational business within identified Units of Council as the majority relate to day to day operations.

Table 3: Summary of Key Operational Issues and Opportunities

OPERATIONAL ELEMENT	KEY ISSUES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES/FUTURE DIRECTION
Management/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and governance models are not clear and in some instances non-existent. Current models of management are inequitable.</li> <li>• 355 Committee Code of Practice is often not adhered to often leaving Council vulnerable in its obligations in particular risk and insurance management.</li> <li>• Most 355 Committees have a lack of documentation in terms of bookings, hire forms, insurance, key registers, usage and asset registers.</li> <li>• There is no clear and transparent process for the allocation of space.</li> <li>• There are no standard templates across the portfolio for operation issues such as tenancy agreements, asset registers, risk management, and fees and charges.</li> <li>• Leases are not reviewed or developed to ensure social benefit or maintenance obligations are achieved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to develop a clear framework to guide the governance of community facilities consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Leases for Commercial Properties – managed by Property Unit.</li> <li>◦ Licence -2x2 year agreement for exclusive use spaces.</li> <li>◦ Licence to define agreed service and maintenance level and annual reporting on social objectives.</li> <li>◦ Occupancy agreement for annual, short term or casual use.</li> <li>◦ 355 Committee to use standard occupancy agreement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is a need to develop consistent guidelines, policies, procedures and standard templates for managing facilities ensuring social benefit, equity, consistent fees and charges against asset classes.</li> <li>• Review and update 355 Committee Code of Practice, resourcing and monitoring compliance.</li> <li>• The model of 355 Management Committee has been demonstrated as a viable option for some facilities. This management model should continue for facilities where they are functioning.</li> <li>• Where 355 Committees are deemed as non compliant a viability review or action plan should be developed on a case by case scenario.</li> <li>• As a priority formalise tenure agreement where there is no agreement currently in place.</li> <li>• Ensure all parties are provided with appropriate resources and documentation to manage facilities, for example, annual maintenance schedule, standard templates, and agreed fees</li> </ul>

OPERATIONAL ELEMENT	KEY ISSUES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES/FUTURE DIRECTION
Bookings and hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No data exists for utilisation for the majority of the portfolio.</li> <li>Most 355 management halls do not have a formal booking system in place and there is no consistency in the collection of hire forms, usage agreements and insurance obligations although sample templates are provided in the 355 Code of Practice.</li> <li>Council's Pathways Booking System is still in its infancy and has a number of limitations.</li> <li>Provision and allocation of space for some groups has been based on historic agreements with no formal documentation. This has created an expectation of guaranteed tenure and booking.</li> </ul>	<p>and charges schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend functionality and application of Pathways Booking System to cover all facility bookings.</li> <li>Review process for regular hirers for the allocation of time and space. This needs to be transparent and equitable based on criteria linked to social outcomes.</li> <li>Investigate swipe card system to enhance access in isolated locations.</li> </ul>
Fees and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community buildings are provided as part of Council's community service obligation and are provided with a high level of subsidy for user groups. There is a need to balance cost recovery for maintenance and operational costs with Council's community service obligation.</li> <li>Some 355 Committees due to their low fees and charges are not realising potential income opportunities.</li> <li>Fees and charges comparison with neighbouring councils has rated Wyong at one third of the costs for not for profit groups.</li> <li>Investment by Council by subsidy and reduced fees and charges is not captured to enable annual reporting of the true cost benefit provided to the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of fees and charges.</li> <li>Implement generic model of fees and charges across the portfolio regardless of the management model.</li> <li>Publicise Council's significant contribution to the community (from subsidised fees and charges) in its Annual Report.</li> </ul>
Marketing and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited to no marketing or promotion of community facilities.</li> <li>Information on Council's website is outdated.</li> <li>Lack of marketing and promotion is reflective of low level of utilisation.</li> <li>The main form of marketing by 355 Committees is by word of mouth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a marketing and promotion program for all community facilities including branding, signage and the internet.</li> <li>Provide details of all facilities (including link to 355 managed facilities) on Council's website.</li> <li>Provision of updated equipment and resources at key facilities to increase utilisation.</li> </ul>

OPERATIONAL ELEMENT	KEY ISSUES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES/FUTURE DIRECTION
Asset management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asset management is information dependent and therefore, information hungry. Limited staff resources have limited the rate of progress of improving asset management practices.</li> <li>Prior to this Strategy there was no centralised or detailed database of community buildings within Council to inform asset management. Information has been kept in a number of informal systems.</li> <li>Lack of documentation of corporate knowledge resulted in major systems, processes and information being lost.</li> <li>The model of asset planner/asset supplier is still in its infancy and may need some refinement and review.</li> <li>Some of the asset management systems only reflect structural condition from an asset supplier perspective and are often silent in regards to functionality and useability from an asset planner perspective.</li> <li>There is not a future financial plan in place for asset management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An integrated community buildings database has now been created linking corporate, financial and asset management systems and detailed information on each asset is stored in a corporate system on the WSC Intranet.</li> <li>Ensure a long term financial and maintenance plan for each asset class.</li> <li>Improve integration of Council's systems and processes (NAMS, SAM, Matman, Fixed Assets, Powerbudget).</li> </ul>
Asset maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual maintenance inspections whilst conducted each year reflect a backlog of defects from several years.</li> <li>A large proportion of Building Services time is reacting to requests as they are reported. Often this impacts on the team's ability to undertake regular or preventative maintenance or new works.</li> <li>No quality control to ensure that maintenance work is undertaken by a qualified professional for non Council managed facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus of defect rectification over the next 3 years.</li> <li>In 2012/13 more funds have been provided to get on top of defects and compliance issues for our community buildings. Once this is undertaken more time can be spent on proactive maintenance.</li> <li>IT hardware to deliver a field solution to improve inspection processes and associated maintenance reporting.</li> <li>Annual inspection report to be provided to 355 Committee and then agreement as to maintenance schedule and responsibilities.</li> <li>Develop Maintenance Manual for 355 Committees to ensure co-ordination and clarify roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul>

OPERATIONAL ELEMENT	KEY ISSUES	KEY OPPORTUNITIES/FUTURE DIRECTION
Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No standard/minimum level of service for cleaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review cleaning contract to maximise benefit and standardise level of service.</li> </ul>
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graffiti and vandalism are a major issue for community buildings.</li> <li>As security systems are updated and upgraded, especially high tech equipment such as latest CCTV systems, policies are required for operation, monitoring and compliance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to assist in reduction of graffiti and vandalism.</li> <li>Develop CCTV monitoring policy.</li> </ul>
Emergency and evacuation procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency and evacuation procedures need to be reviewed across each facility as some are outdated.</li> <li>There is no documented process, understanding or allocated resources to implement or activate community facilities as emergency evacuation centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update emergency and evacuation plans to ensure compliance.</li> <li>Understand the role, function and resources required for facilities to be activated as emergency evacuation centres.</li> </ul>
Unit roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are many parts of Council involved in community facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To streamline the process and ensure it is effective for the organisation and user groups there is a need to clarify roles and responsibilities and implement Service Level Agreements where required.</li> </ul>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The process for managing the finances associated with community facilities remains complicated due to varied management models, poor historical data and lack of systems.</li> <li>Historically financial data has been captured at a responsibility centre level (reflects a high level total sum for the whole portfolio rather than individual asset).</li> <li>There is no ability to identify the true value of subsidies provided.</li> <li>Facilities managed by 355 Committees have the ability to retain surplus funds which should be used for future maintenance. This proviso does not extend to the rest of the portfolio with surpluses being absorbed as Council revenue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction across all asset management systems of a unique identifier number for each asset will enable asset data to be tracked at a project and individual level.</li> <li>A basic annual budget including operation and maintenance should be established by Council for all facilities managed by Council or a 355 Committee.</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

Community facilities play a significant role in contributing to the social well being of our Shire. They provide focal points for community activities and for the delivery of services and programs to meet the needs of the community. In many cases these are provided in partnership with the community either to deliver services and programs or to participate in the management of our facilities.

The costs to deliver and maintain community facilities are significant and it is important that Council reviews the use and operation of its community facilities to ensure that they are effective in meeting community needs and are being managed sustainably. The Community Facility Strategy provides a comprehensive strategic and operational review of Council owned facilities in the Shire. It has highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for improvements in the way Council provides and manages its community facilities in order to better meet the needs and expectations of the community.

The key findings of the Community Facilities Strategy are:

- Most facilities are underutilised. The condition, aesthetics and age of facilities, lack of awareness by the community and limited multi-use capacity impacts on utilisation.
- There is no ability to capture utilisation rates for any facilities apart from those directly booked through Council.
- There is a lack of marketing, promotion, branding and signage across all facilities.
- Facilities require more regular maintenance and upkeep and there is no long term asset management strategy.
- Historically community facilities have been a lower priority and there is a funding gap in asset management.
- There is no clear management framework, systems or processes resulting in inequitable and inconsistent management practices.
- The 355 Management model, in some instances, is leaving Council vulnerable and needs to be reviewed to ensure compliance and governance requirements are being met.
- There is a lack of documentation and formal agreements for usage of facilities and a need to address social outcomes and maintenance obligations.
- Fees and charges are relatively low in comparison to neighbouring Councils.
- No centralised or detailed data base of community building assets to inform decision making.



Future priority areas for Council are:

- Opportunities to increase utilisation through information, marketing, promotion, branding, the provision of appropriate furniture and equipment, business plans and rationalisation.
- Provide/redesign facilities to enable multi-purpose function and co-locate within key centres to create a community hub and facilitate integrated service delivery.
- Enhance partnerships with the private and public sector to deliver services and facilities.
- Investigate opportunities for incorporating commercial components into existing and future facilities.
- Opportunity to recognise Council's significant contribution to the community through subsidies and support.
- Ensure a long term financial and maintenance plan for each asset class.
- Develop consistent guidelines, policies, procedures and standard templates for managing facilities ensuring social benefit, equity, consistent fees and charges against asset classes.
- Address non compliant 355 Management Committees and update 355 Code of Practice, resourcing and monitoring compliance.
- Improve integration of corporate systems and processes.
- Use of Review of Asset Portfolio (RAP) Assessment Tool to assist Council in its review of all community facilities.



WYONG SHIRE  
LEARNING COMMUNITY  
**STRATEGY**  
2012-2015





Wyong Shire Council

LEARNING COMMUNITY STRATEGY  
2012-2015

Community & Cultural Development Unit

© Wyong Shire Council  
Wyong Shire Council  
2 Hely Street Wyong  
PO Box 20 Wyong NSW 2259  
**P** 02 4350 5555 **F** 02 4351 2098  
**E** [wsc@wyong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wsc@wyong.nsw.gov.au)  
**W** [www.wyong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wyong.nsw.gov.au)

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## FOREWORD

The *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* represents a major commitment by Council in engaging and working with our community to better understand the key opportunities and challenges of learning in Wyong Shire.

Wyong Shire Council is proud to inspire and motivate the community to embrace learning in all forms across our lifetime and focus on developing Wyong Shire as a 'Learning Community'.

In a Shire characterised by low school retention rates, low participation rates in higher education and high unemployment, the development of a Learning Community Strategy for the Shire has been seen as a priority.

I encourage all Wyong Shire residents to embrace and pursue the many learning opportunities available in the Shire. If we work together as a community to improve learning outcomes we will 'Learn to Know,' 'Learn to Do', 'Learn to Live Together' and 'Learn to Be' and start the journey to create Wyong Shire as a successful Learning Community.

Mayor  
Cl Bob Graham

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Learning Community Strategy has been co-ordinated and developed by Council's Community and Cultural Development Unit. The development of the Strategy has been overseen by a Project Control Group (PCG) which has included representation from the Community and Cultural Development and Lifelong Learning Units, and sponsored by the Director, Community and Recreation Services.

Council would like to thank those residents and stakeholders who participated in the community engagement processes and shared their stories and experiences of learning in Wyong Shire - the time invested has been integral to the Strategy's development.

Thankyou.....

ABC Lake Munmorah  
 ABC Woongarah  
 Aboriginal Employment Co-ordinator DEEWR  
 Aboriginal Employment Network  
 ALESCO Learning Centre Berkeley Vale  
 Australian Red Cross  
 Bendigo Bank  
 Berkeley Vale Preschool  
 BreakThru People Solutions  
 Budgewoi/ Halekulani Preschool Kindergarten Inc  
 Burnside  
 Catherine's Montessori Early Learning Centre  
 Central Coast Business College  
 Central Coast Business Enterprise Centre (CCBEC)  
 Central Coast Campus Friends Inc  
 Central Coast Chinese Association  
 Central Coast Community College  
 Central Coast Council of P&C's  
 Central Coast Group Training  
 Central Coast Health

Central Coast Men's Shed Cluster  
 Central Coast Youth Connections (CCYC)  
 Central Coast Youth Interagency  
 Child and Family Health Central Coast  
 Child and Family Health – Family Care Cottage  
 Communities For Children Project 2261  
 Compass Housing Services  
 Cynthia St Neighbourhood Centre  
 Department of Education and Communities (DEC)  
 Department of Education (Wyong Public School)  
 Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)  
 Department of Family and Community Services  
 Department of Human Services  
 Department of Human Services (Centrelink)  
 ET Australia  
 Family and Community Services  
 Irene Wilson Speech Pathologist  
 Men's Shed Cluster  
 Multicultural Development Northern Settlement Services  
 NSW Business Chamber  
 NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet  
 NSW State Training Services (STS)  
 NSW Trade & Investment  
 NuCoal Resources  
 PALS Group  
 Plan-it-Youth  
 Regional Development Australia Central Coast (RDACC)  
 Regional Youth Support Services Inc  
 Residential Park Homeowners Association (Northlakes)  
 Samaritans Foundation  
 San Remo Neighbourhood Centre  
 Schools as Community Centres  
 TAFE Hunter/ Central Coast / Wyong  
 The Benevolent Society  
 The Entrance Surf Life Saving Club  
 The Smith Family  
 Toukley and District Senior Citizens Club Inc  
 Toukley Preschool-Kindergarten  
 Toukley, Noraville, Canton Beach Community Precinct Committee  
 Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College



- Tuggerah Lakes USA
- Uniting Care Mental Health
- Uniting Care Ageing, Hunter Central Coast New England
- Uniting Care Burnside Central Coast
- University of Newcastle
- University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age
- Volunteering Central Coast
- WSC Care and Education
- WSC Library and Council Services Centre Lake Haven
- WSC Seniors Council
- WSC Speech Pathologist
- Wyong Community Bendigo Bank
- Wyong Grove Public School
- Wyong Shire Council Speech Pathologist
- Wyong Shire Older Women's Network
- Youth Connections

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* is a Shire-wide Strategy that reflects the importance of learning and commits Wyong Shire Council and key partners to drive and implement the learning goals, objectives, strategies and action plans. It is a whole of community approach in addressing the learning challenges and issues faced by residents of Wyong Shire.

Wyong Shire is characterised by a combination of many complex environmental, social, economic, education and employment issues such as low school retention rates low educational attainment, high unemployment and low wages; and poor attitudes to learning. These issues are closely linked and have a significant impact on the current and future quality of life of our residents. The Learning Community Strategy is the Shire-wide framework for partnership and collaboration in widening learning opportunities and achieving improved learning outcomes for residents.

Learning occurs in different forms and places across the Shire. Learning is both formal (for example through schools, TAFE, University and workplaces) and informal (for example through reading and playing with children, cooking classes, sharing stories, mentoring). It happens at different times and places. It is flexible, diverse and dynamic.

A community that aspires to be a learning community recognises the value of learning, and its influence on improving the social, economic and cultural life of the community. A learning community prioritises and focuses on learning to improve quality of life for all its residents.

The Learning Strategy has been developed in the context of Federal and State Government policies and frameworks, the Wyong Shire Community Strategic Plan 2030, the Central Coast Regional Economic Development and

Employment Strategy (REDES), and the Keep Australia Working Regional Employment Plan. There is potential for the actions and outcomes of the strategy to be influenced by a number of important local initiatives such as: Building Australia's Future Workforce and the Better Futures Local Solutions Measures.

As part of the development of the Strategy a comprehensive research, mapping and profiling exercise was undertaken. The research phase highlighted the frameworks, models and approaches used in establishing learning communities nationally and internationally. The research adopted that underpins the Wyong Learning Community Strategy is the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Four Pillars of Learning model: Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together and Learning to Be (Faure Report, 1972; Delors Report, 1996).

Community engagement has been the most significant component in the development of the Strategy. Over 400 people were directly involved through the various range of engagement methods undertaken.

The overarching key issues that emerged from the community engagement phase were:

- A universal focus on the importance of learning in the early years;
- Learning basic foundation skills e.g. numeracy and literacy, social and communication skills;
- Providing opportunities for the community to enhance their education, knowledge and skills base leading to better employment prospects;
- Identifying and linking future employment opportunities with areas of skills shortages;
- Taking advantage of emerging IT developments and trends;
- Improving co-ordination and communication, partnerships and linkages within the education, training and employment sectors;



- The challenge of inspiring and motivating the community to embrace learning; and
  - Residents feeling disconnected, undervalued and isolated in their community.
- These key issues above form the basis for the development of the five learning goals of this Strategy which are:
- Learning Goal 1: 'The Building Blocks of Learning' – Every person has a strong foundation in learning and can continue to learn over their lifetime.
- Learning Goal 2: 'Working, Earning and Learning' – Improving learning, training and employment outcomes for the Wyong Shire Community.
- Learning Goal 3: 'Moving to the Future' – Influencing future development and innovation in the Shire.
- Learning Goal 4: 'Working Better Together' – Working together to achieve a shared vision for Wyong Shire as a Learning Community.
- Learning Goal 5: 'Inspiring and Valuing Learning in Wyong Shire' – Encouraging a culture of learning.

Each of the five Learning Goals corresponds with a pillar of learning. The Strategy document shows an action plan for each of the five learning goals.

The Learning Community Strategy is presented in five Chapters:

- Chapter 1: Introduction – provides background information on Learning Communities and outlines the scope and approach undertaken to prepare the Strategy.
- Chapter 2: Learning to Know – provides a definition and outlines the Learning Goal, Objectives, Strategies, Population measures and Action Plan.

- Chapter 3: Learning to Do – provides a definition and outlines the Learning Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Population measures and Action Plan.
- Chapter 4: Learning to Live Together – provides a definition and outlines the Learning Goal, Objectives, Strategies, Population measures and Action Plan.
- Chapter 5: Learning to Be – provides a definition and outlines the Learning Goal, Objectives, Strategies, Population measures and Action Plan.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### WHAT IS A LEARNING COMMUNITY?

Investment in learning by individuals, families and communities brings a range of wider benefits including stronger and healthier communities, informed and engaged citizens, economic prosperity, social cohesion and understanding between and across cultures.

Learning can occur through formal education and training as well as through everyday learning. Everyday learning includes life experiences, on the job learning, establishing networks, building relationships and working through daily challenges, throughout people's lives as they interact as part of the community.

A Learning Community mobilises all types of learning to drive the social, economic and cultural life of the community through a shared vision and partnership approach.

Lifelong learning is a cradle to grave process involving all types of learning, well beyond formal education. It is flexible, diverse and available at different times and places. Lifelong Learning opportunities are seen as embracing all forms of learning as the basis of economic development, building the capacity and personal wellbeing of individuals and the community.

The *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* has been developed as a framework for partnership and collaboration in widening and achieving learning opportunities for the residents of Wyong Shire. Harnessing the total learning resources of the Wyong Shire community in a strategic and coordinated way will bring a range of social, economic and personal benefits and will build the capacity of the community. Learning is a key factor in the

sustainable social and economic development of Wyong Shire for the future. (Definition of 'Learning Communities' adapted from Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2010 – 2013).

This will result in significant implications for the area's learning and education levels, unemployment level, income levels and resultant quality of life. Significant intervention in this area is needed to close the gap.

### WHY A LEARNING COMMUNITY STRATEGY?

Learning communities use learning as a way of achieving improved social cohesion, cultural understanding, economic regeneration and development which involves all parts of the community to provide local solutions to local challenges. A culture of learning provides opportunities for communities to develop economic resilience, social cohesion, cultural understanding and active citizenship.

Traditionally a holiday and retirement area, Wyong Shire has experienced rapid population growth over the last 30 years and is now established as a popular coastal urban fringe area with a population of 152,758 people (ABS ERP). The Shire's population is projected to grow to around 200,000 by 2031. A combination of complex factors has contributed to a range of social and economic issues within the Shire. These are linked although their cause/effect relationships are not always clear. Economic issues (including high unemployment, low wage levels and a high proportion of persons employed in part-time jobs) underlie many of the Shire's social challenges. Employment issues in turn (at least in part) are linked to educational issues (low school retention rates, low participation rates in higher education etc).

To summarise, Wyong Shire is characterised by (2006 Census):

- An ageing population - There is a clear ageing trend translating to a decline in the available labour force over the longer term. 23.3% of the

- population are aged 60 years and over, compared with 18.6% respectively for NSW.
- Out-migration in the 25-34 age group - This out-migration is likely to have significant impacts upon many of the labour supply indicators and also impacts upon the levels of innovation present in the labour force, especially when those who are leaving are those with higher education levels. (HVRF, 2006).
  - High numbers of families with children - A high proportion of families with young children together with comparatively high levels of early childhood developmental vulnerability in Wyong Shire on one or more domain/s of the Australian Early Development Index compared to NSW.
  - A Diverse population - A higher and growing proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (2.8%) compared to NSW. These residents tend to experience a combination of lower educational attainment and disengagement from education and the workforce.
  - A relatively small proportion of population 4.3% (5,800 persons) from a non-English speaking background, compared with 16.8% respectively for NSW, however this groups has diverse education, training and employment needs.
  - Lower incomes - A significantly lower income profile than NSW, with a median weekly household income of \$770 in comparison to \$1,036 for NSW.
  - A ranking of 68 out of the 152 LGAs in NSW in terms of the index of relative disadvantage and a ranking of 17 out of 152 in terms of education and occupation.
  - Low retention and educational attainment - Low school retention rates for completing years 7 to 12. 53.12% compared to 69.74% for NSW (DEC 2010).  
Comparatively low levels of educational attainment and formal qualifications needed to obtain and sustain employment, with 51.5% of the population having no post-school qualifications compared with 45.6% for NSW. A lower proportion of the population has a bachelor or higher degree, 6.6% compared to 16.4% for NSW.
  - Lower labour force participation - Lower labour force participation rates and a higher ratio of part-time to full-time employment 34.1%, which could disguise significant levels of underemployment. The 2007 Quality of Life Survey found that 32.5% of the region's residents who worked part-time would like to work more hours.
  - A large proportion of the workforce (56.4%) employed as tradespersons, labourers and related workers, clerical and sales workers.
  - Unemployment rates that have historically been 2-3% above State and National unemployment rates. For the December quarter 2011, the Shire had an unemployment rate of 7.95% compared with 5.2% for NSW and 5.1% for Australia (DEEWR).
  - Historically higher youth unemployment rates for 15 - 24 year olds. 15.3% compared to State (11.5%) and national rates (10.3%) (ABS April 2009).
  - An increase in young people aged 12 to 24 years, in particular the 18 to 24 year age group, who experience a disproportionately higher level of unemployment and underemployment.
  - Limited IT connectivity within the Shire - Low home internet connectivity with 41% of households not connected to the internet compared with 33.7% for NSW.
  - Lack of local job opportunities - 32.7% of employed residents (15,261 people) commute out of the Region for work with the majority travelling two hours each way to Sydney (2006 Census).
- Given the above factors, the development of a Learning Community Strategy for the Shire was seen as critical. If the issue of education and learning across our community is not a priority focus of government and the community, the existing trends in the Shire will continue. This will result in significant

implications for the area's learning and education levels, unemployment level, income levels and resultant quality of life. Significant intervention in this area is needed to close the gap.

Wyong Shire Council believes that environmental, economic, social and cultural development issues are closely linked, and that partnerships are fundamental to the support and development of strategies, resources, and programs for learning. Building Wyong Shire as a Learning Community will require many forms of partnership with considerable local leadership, investment and time given to building and strengthening relationships.

With the development of the Learning Community Strategy, Council and the community have a mechanism to lead, join and inspire collaborative action towards improving the environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes of the Shire. It is through the development of robust partnerships and ongoing stakeholder commitment that the strategy will be successfully implemented and outcomes achieved.

## COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ESTABLISHING WYONG SHIRE AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY

Although Council undertakes a broad range of learning activities across its many portfolio areas, the direct provision of learning and education is not its core business. Council, however, has an important role in promoting a culture of learning, advocating for investment in learning and education, facilitating learning opportunities, establishing and further developing partnerships, and providing places and spaces within the Shire to enable and support learning.

Inspiring and valuing Learning

Inspiring and motivating people to embrace learning is as much about building people's confidence as finding people's currency and what they value – to recognise and articulate that every resident has skills, knowledge and talents is critical in achieving Wyong Shire as a learning community. Council is in a good position to enhance, encourage and promote a culture of learning through: establishing and co-ordinating the Wyong Shire Learning Network, promotion of Wyong Shire as a Learning Community, and establishing and further developing partnerships and collaborations to achieve great learning outcomes for the Wyong Shire community.

Advocating for the Learning Needs of the Community and Region

Advocacy is an important role that Council undertakes to address challenges and take advantage of learning opportunities. Council advocates on behalf of communities to influence decision-making in other levels of government and in the wider community in order to enhance learning opportunities for all residents.

Facilitating Learning Opportunities through Partnerships

Building Wyong Shire as a Learning Community will require many forms of partnership with considerable local leadership, investment and time given to building and strengthening relationships. With the development of this Learning Community Strategy, Council and the community have a mechanism to lead, join and inspire collaborative action towards improving the social, cultural and economic outcomes of the Shire.

Enabling Places and Spaces to support Learning

Wyong Shire Council currently provides a network of community facilities throughout the Shire for the benefit of the Community. Through its community centres, libraries, youth centres, senior citizens centres, arts and

cultural facilities, parks, playgrounds, sports fields and through the provision of events, programs and activities.

## HOW IS THE STRATEGY ALIGNED?

The Learning Community Strategy aligns with the Australian Government and State and Territory governments' recognition of the importance of and focus on the early years of life to ensure the wellbeing of children throughout their lives and to increase the productivity of Australians.

In July 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed Australia's first ever overarching national strategy for early childhood development. 'Investing in the Early Years: A National Early Childhood Development Strategy' provides a blueprint for the future. It outlines a shared vision for the development of young children in Australia that by 2020 all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation.

Focusing on all aspects of children's development from before birth to age eight, the strategy aims to guide governments and encourage greater engagement between governments, with the non-government sector, and with families around the needs of young children.

The importance of learning, education and employment has been identified in the following Central Coast specific strategic documents:

### Wyong Shire Community Strategic Plan 2030

Education, learning and employment emerged as a key issue during the development of the plan and education has become one of eight key priority objectives for the Shire:

*'The community will be well educated, innovative and creative. People will attain full knowledge potential at all stages of life'. Strategy 4.2: Create programs that encourage lifelong learning for everyone.*

The Learning Community Strategy contains key actions designed to achieve the goals and aspirations of Council's Community Strategic Plan 2030, and extend the reach of learning in Wyong Shire. The *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* contains practical steps to address learning challenges and opportunities facing the community.

### Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy (REDES)

The Central Coast Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy (REDES) is the long-term plan designed to shape future economic development and employment growth for the Central Coast Region. The development of REDES was led by Regional Development Australia Central Coast in partnership with Department of Industry and Investment, Premier's Department, Wyong and Gosford Councils.

The aim of REDES is to lay the foundations for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to sustainable economic development and job generation in the region. The REDES has prioritised learning as a focus area by allocating a strategy specifically as follows: 'Designating the Central Coast as a Learning Region'.

*Source: Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy (REDES) 2009*

### Keep Australia Working – Regional Employment Plan

Keep Australia Working is part of the Australian Government's response to the global recession. As part of Keep Australia Working, the Central Coast – Hunter region was identified as one of 20 priority employment areas across the country. This is one of the areas identified as being most vulnerable to unemployment during times of economic downturn.

The Regional Employment Plan works with and builds on the REDES. The plan focuses on specific employment-related objectives. The plan identifies challenges and opportunities for the area in employment, job creation and regional capacity.

Source: *Keep Australia Working – Regional Employment Plan 2010*

In the short term the following initiatives may have the potential to influence the actions and outcomes of the Learning Community Strategy:

#### Building Australia's Future Workforce

The Building Australia's Future Workforce package provides a \$3.02 billion investment over six years for a new approach to deliver the skilled workers the economy needs and ensure more Australians have the opportunity to share in the nation's prosperity. This is on top of new funding of more than \$2 billion over the next four years for Australia's university sector.

The package has four components:

- Putting industry at the heart of the training system.
- Skills to support increased participation.
- Modernising apprenticeships.
- Reforming the national training system.

Improving education and skill levels across the labour market is a key focus to ensure Australians are equipped with the skills required to thrive in an innovative and sustainable economy.

The Government has also identified ten Local Government Areas where additional assistance will be offered to boost participation and reduce disadvantage. Wyong Shire is identified as one of these ten Local Government Areas.

#### Better Futures Local Solutions Measures

The 'Better Futures, Local Solutions' measures will allow government to work in partnership with community organisations in an effort to increase employment, education and skills in Wyong Shire. Better Futures, Local Solutions provides extra support and services to further empower communities in identifying service gaps and creating local solutions to social and economic barriers to employment.

Better Futures, Local Solutions is made up of a number of measures that will provide services and programs to help young parents, jobless families and the very long term unemployed improve their chances of gaining paid work and provide a better future for themselves and their families.

To help communities address local service gaps, a \$25 million Local Solutions Fund will be made available to community groups over four years. This will assist them to develop and establish innovative and creative approaches to addressing barriers to employment and social inclusion.

The program will also extend the pilot Communities for Children (C4C) program in postcode 2261 to cover Wyong Shire. The success of this pilot program provides a framework for the rollout of early intervention partnerships and projects across the Shire.

#### Establishment of a Central Coast Learning Board

The Central Coast Learning Board has long been a goal of various education sectors across the region, and has been included as an item within the RDACC Central Coast 2011-12 Regional Plan.

One of the goals identified in REDES is:

## OUR APPROACH

*'Improving the training and skills development opportunities' and 'Building skill levels of the community through a stronger learning culture, which recognises the value of education and training and contributes to increased employment'.*

One of the specific actions of REDES in this area is:

*'Establish a Central Coast Learning Region Network with the charter to promote and increase training and education participation in the region.'*

Based on successful models in Victoria such as Hume, Melton and Brimbank it is envisaged that the intention of the Learning Board is to:

- Provide strategic thinking, leadership and advice to the Central Coast Region on learning challenges and opportunities;
- Take action to address learning challenges, promote learning opportunities and improve learning outcome for the Central Coast;
- Build strong foundations for learning by enabling learning opportunities for all;
- Inspire and facilitate participation of all Central Coast residents in learning;
- Promote a learning culture, create community awareness and increase in the take-up of education and training opportunities;
- Support Councils in the establishment of the Central Coast as a learning region; and
- Encourage and support partnerships and linkages within the education, training and employment sectors.

The establishment of the 'Learning Board' should ensure a co-ordinated approach to learning on the Central Coast, engaging key partners to provide strategic direction and actions to address learning and employment challenges and opportunities for the region.

The development of the Learning Community Strategy has been informed and influenced by:

- What we have already learned from our community through the development of key Strategies and Plans (e.g. Wyong Shire Community Strategic Plan, Youth Engagement Strategy, Community Plan and Cultural Plan).
- Experience gained from working with the Wyong Shire Community.
- Understanding of National and State policy directions.
- International and national best practice in developing 'Learning Communities'.
- Input from the local community.

The *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* aims to provide a framework for exciting and innovative partnerships, and to inspire, extend and enrich holistic learning in all forms across the Shire. It is the strategic framework for how stakeholders and the community will maximise their potential and meet the current challenges, improve learning opportunities, increase the value for learning in our community and increase the social, cultural and economic prosperity of Wyong Shire.

This strategy reflects the vast range of experiences and knowledge of learning in Wyong Shire. It reflects the aspirations of the Wyong Shire community in the future, that is, to be a place where everyone is able to improve their quality of life, through learning.

Achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy and building a culture of learning in Wyong Shire will take time. The *2012 – 2015 Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* is the first step in a long term process to facilitate improved learning outcomes for Wyong Shire residents. Similar learning

strategies such as Brimbank and Hume City Councils are now in their second and third generation action plans which have evolved significantly from their original strategies.

#### Research, Profiling and Mapping

The development of the Learning Community Strategy has involved significant research, profiling and mapping components. Details of the various components are included in the supporting document.

The research component was undertaken to obtain information and knowledge regarding best practice Lifelong Learning models nationally and internationally, liaise with best practice learning communities in Australia (including a site visit to Hume and Melton Local Government Areas in Victoria) define lifelong learning and learning communities, and identify social and economic indicators to measure the impact of the Strategy over time.

A learning profile of the Wyong Shire community has been developed using 2006 Census data. This profile will be updated when the 2011 Census Data becomes available in mid – late 2012 and will be incorporated to inform future actions of this strategy.

A mapping exercise was also undertaken to map the current learning and education service system in Wyong Shire.

#### Community Engagement

The Learning Community Strategy key goals, objectives and actions were developed following extensive community engagement. Over 400 people were directly involved the use of various types of community engagement methods. These included:

*Individual Conversations* - Conversations were held with over 50 key stakeholders covering a range of learning areas - vocational education and training, school education, tertiary education, registered training organisations, mentoring programs, volunteering services, local businesses, alternative education providers, community education providers and community members.

*World Café Forums* - Council's Community and Cultural Development Unit hosted four World Café Forums to enable further input into the development of the Learning Community Strategy. Over 220 people attended the Forums, representing local services, organisations, businesses, community groups and residents.

A World Café is a community engagement tool used to gather further opinion, generate new ideas and test existing ideas about the challenges and opportunities of learning in Wyong Shire. The World Café format allows participants to choose the themed discussions they wish to participate in, contribute their own thoughts, knowledge and experience, and build on discussions already provided by others. Participants at the Forums were asked to consider the information gained from key stakeholders and residents; add value, knowledge, and experience to this information; and suggest practical ways and ideas for moving forward.

Questionnaires with Childcare Centres and Council Libraries - Surveys were conducted with 10 (one from each social planning district) independent childcare centres, Council's Care and Education Centres and Council Libraries.

Community Surveys - Further community engagement was undertaken at Kids Day Out on November 6 2011. Over 50 residents completed a questionnaire about the importance of learning. The information gathered was utilised in the writing of the strategy.

Development of the draft action plan – Approximately 50 key external and internal stakeholders were identified to provide input and comment on the



draft action plan. This included the identification of their projects, resources and potential partnerships.

Councillor Briefings/ Updates - Councillor briefings and Councillor Updates were undertaken at key stages of the Learning Community Strategy process to keep the Councillors informed of the project.

#### The Four Pillars of Learning Model

The strategy is underpinned by the Four Pillars of Learning Model: Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together and Learning to Be (Faure Report, 1972; Delors Report, 1996). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) model describes lifelong learning under the four pillars as follows:

1. Learning to Know – involves the development of knowledge and skills that are needed to function in the world. Examples of these skills include literacy, numeracy and critical thinking.
2. Learning to Do – involves the acquisition of skills that are often linked to occupational success, such as computer training, managerial training and apprenticeships.
3. Learning to Live Together – ‘Learning to Live Together’ involves people working better together. This includes through the establishment of partnerships and collaborative projects and also through people living, connecting and interacting together in the community - developing values, respect and concern for others.
4. Learning to Be – involves activities that foster personal development (body, mind and spirit) and contribute to creativity, personal discovery and an appreciation of the inherent value provided by these pursuits.

#### Key Issues that emerged from the Community Engagement Phase

Information gained from the community engagement phase was documented and analysed for common themes. Analysis was qualitative using the technique called ‘grounded theory’. In grounded theory technique, themes are coded, grouped and sifted, with common themes emerging from the analysis until a set of overarching themes are established (Grounded Theory Institute 2008).

The key issues that have emerged as a high priority during the community engagement phase are as follows:

- The challenge of inspiring and motivating the community to embrace learning;
- Limited appreciation by the community for the value and benefits of learning;
- Lack of a whole of community approach to learning;
- Residents feeling disconnected, undervalued and isolated in their community;
- Lack of accessible opportunities for people to come together to learn and develop new skills;
- Prioritising the importance of learning basic foundation skills e.g. numeracy and literacy to enable a good transition to school;
- Increasing participation levels in preschool learning experiences;
- Supporting families in learning;
- Improving the participation and retention rates of students to year 12 (or equivalent) and into tertiary education;
- Providing clear pathways to employment for the community;
- Identifying and aligning training courses with current and future employment opportunities and encouraging the community to develop the skills required to fill these opportunities;

Learning Goal 4: 'Working Better Together' – Working together to achieve a shared vision for Wyong Shire as a Learning Community.

Learning Pillar: Learning to Be

Learning Goal 5: 'Inspiring and valuing learning in Wyong Shire' – Encouraging a culture of learning.

- Providing more local jobs;
- Taking advantage of IT developments and trends;
- Improving access to learning, education and training opportunities (both formal and informal) within 'local' communities or by available public transport;
- Improving access to learning programs that develop social skills such as communication, problem solving;
- Improving co-ordination and communication, within the education, training and employment sectors;
- Fostering healthier partnerships and linkages between key stakeholders;
- Duplication of services, programs and activities; and
- Chaotic and adhoc networking practices.

#### The Strategy Document

The overarching themes that emerged through the community engagement phase form the basis for the development of the five learning goals of this Strategy. Each learning goal corresponds with a pillar of learning as follows:

Learning Pillar: Learning to Know

Learning Goal 1: 'The Building Blocks of Learning' – Every person has a strong foundation in learning and can continue to learn over their lifetime.

Learning Pillar: Learning to Do

Learning Goal 2: 'Working, Earning and Learning' – Improving learning, training and employment outcomes for the Wyong Shire Community'.

Learning Pillar: Learning to Live Together

Learning Goal 3: 'Moving to the Future' – Influencing future development and innovation in the Shire.

## MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

Measuring progress and evaluating performance is important. Our research highlighted that measuring the impact of learning is currently varied from simple statistical data to more complex community indexes. Internationally communities are starting to achieve whole of population measures to determine their community learning index. In Victoria a similar approach has commenced through the Department of Local Government. At this stage NSW are in the concept stages for developing such a tool. Therefore for the purposes of measuring the impact and progress of the *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy*, we have adopted the 'Results Based Accountability' framework a model commonly used through State and Federal Government Departments.

Results Based Accountability has two components: population accountability and performance accountability. Population accountability is about outcomes for the wider population. Performance accountability is about outputs (this is what we measure our activity/ program/ strategy effectiveness against).

Population accountability reflects a whole of community approach in working towards a shared outcome. It is important to understand that Council is merely one partner in achieving/ influencing any outcome.

The Learning Community Strategy will measure its effectiveness against performance measures (outputs), not directly against population measures (outcomes). However, a partnership approach through the implementation of the strategy will contribute to influencing the broader population measures. It is anticipated that the Learning Board will play a key role in establishing broader population measures.

It is intended that the *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* will be a web-based document. Council will provide avenues via a web-based reporting tool to capture Shire performance outputs and will provide its wellbeing index, determined by the Central Coast Quality of Life survey, as a baseline.

These measures will evolve and be monitored over time as further work is undertaken by the Division of Local Government to develop a community indicators framework for NSW (similar to Community Indicators Victoria) and by both Wyong and Gosford Councils on the Central Coast Quality of Life survey.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the *Wyong Shire Learning Community Strategy* will require a partnership approach which brings together the local community, government, non government services and agencies, and the private sector.

The goal is to build on the existing strengths and opportunities in the community and address learning challenges facing the community by working in partnership with key stakeholders to improve people's quality of life.

Council's Lifelong Learning Unit will be responsible for co-ordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Strategy.

## CHAPTER 2: LEARNING TO KNOW

'Learning to Know' involves the development of knowledge and skills that are needed to function in the world. These skills include literacy, numeracy and critical thinking.

### WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

Learning to know is about the building blocks of learning – the basic foundation skills in learning that children need to develop in life to become happy, healthy, productive adults. These adults will then continue to learn, grow, expand their knowledge and skills, think critically and contribute positively to their community.

*"There should be a strong focus on quality early childhood learning. If quality is good then it has increased positive impacts on disadvantage – that is important in this community."*

A positive start in life helps children develop to their fullest. Quality early learning is integrally linked to increased abilities at primary and secondary school, in higher education and to being productive, contributing members of society. The benefits of a positive start to life spread to the whole community, through enhanced human capital (the skills and qualifications held by individuals that support economic activity), community capacity, increased productivity and greater social inclusion. It also results in reduced expenditure on health, welfare and crime related to disadvantage and poor quality of life. Overwhelming national and international evidence supports the view that investment in early learning can provide crucial support to parents and communities, helping to ensure that children succeed in life. Investment in the early years of life delivers strong long-term benefits for children themselves and for the wider community.

*"Focus on kids – start early – early intervention is key."*

A child's early years lay the foundation for all that is to come in the future. In recent years, researchers have learned that the human brain is at its most receptive to learning between birth and three years of age (Shonkoff, J.P., and Phillips, D.A. (Eds). (2000). From Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science OF Early Childhood Development. National Academies Press).

Our research and the community engagement phase for the development of this document highlighted the need for understanding of the importance of learning in the early years – that learning begins at birth, not at age 5 when a child starts school. Parents, carers and families in Wyong Shire, as the first teachers of our children need to partner and join the journey in building strong foundations in learning for our community.

*"Families need to be aware that learning starts before birth, at home. People shouldn't be waiting until kids get to school to start reading to them – it's too late then."*

"Preparing parents for parenthood – it's not just about breastfeeding – it's also about the importance of reading to your children, doing activities with them that relate to their stage of development, and providing informal play opportunities that enable social and skill development."

Healthy and happy children are more likely to become healthy and resilient adults who have more capacity, opportunity and resources to contribute to a connected, innovative and prosperous society. On the other hand, children who have a poor start in life are more likely to develop learning, behavioural or emotional problems. These problems can spread through to the whole community in the form of increased social inequality, poor attitudes to education and employment, reduced productivity and high costs associated with entrenched disadvantage.

developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains compared to 10.3% for NSW. (Source: AEDI Community Profile Wyong NSW May 2010).

Literacy and numeracy has also been identified as an important issue for the adult population. Responses from the engagement phase highlighted the following issues for adults: low literacy and numeracy skills, hesitancy to be involved in their children's learning (therefore creating a cyclic generational effect), lack of social and communication skills (leading to low educational and employment achievements) and a lack of 'stepping stone' activities to get adults involved in learning.

*"So many parents have had negative experiences at school which then influences their future involvement in learning activities and ultimately their child's learning experiences."*

With an ageing population, it is important to provide a variety of lifelong learning opportunities to ensure better health and social outcomes for older residents. As Baby Boomers and Generation X move into the later stages of life, significant changes will impact on all aspects of their social and economic life including where and how they are living, what they are doing, how they will continue to learn over their life span, how healthy they are and what services they are accessing. It is important to keep the brain active and intellectually stimulated as this has been demonstrated to offset the onset of dementia.

*"Keeping the brain active as we age is so important, especially with the increasing levels of dementia in the community."*

One of the most critical themes emerging from the community engagement phase was the need to improve literacy, numeracy, language and communication skills, to enable better and brighter futures for our children and our community. In Wyong Shire, there are a significant number of children who are not improving or progressing their skills in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and communicating with others to make sense of the world.

*"Literacy and numeracy issues have life long consequences - these issues need to be addressed at a very young age."*

Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen to language in a way that allows people to communicate with each other and to make sense of the world. Numeracy helps us use mathematics effectively to meet the general demands of day-to-day life at home, at work and in society generally. In today's rapidly changing world, the definition of being literate and numerate changes every day. For example, learning and educating the community about new technologies such as computers, ipads, mobile phones and e-books need to be embraced to enable the Shire to progress.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is a measure of how young children are developing in different communities. The AEDI is a population measure of children's development as they enter school. The AEDI measures five areas of early childhood development: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills (school based); and communications skills and general knowledge.

In 2009, the AEDI was completed in Wyong Shire for 1,953 children in their first year of full-time school. The results show that overall there are 22.9% of children in Wyong Shire developmentally vulnerable on one or more domain/s of the AEDI compared to 21.3% for NSW. Over 11.2% of children are

**GOAL 1:** 'The Building Blocks of Learning - Every person has a strong foundation in learning and has opportunities to continue to learn over their lifetime'.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 1.1 Engage, educate and encourage the community to experience learning in a positive way and to embrace their role as a learner and a teacher.
- 1.2 Expand and further develop opportunities for the community to enhance literacy, numeracy, social, language and communication skills.
- 1.3 Provide a range of quality early childhood services to support the learning and development of children and support working and learning families.

**STRATEGIES:**

- Educate parents, carers and the wider community about the importance of early childhood development.
- Support and expand parenting and support programs, which equip parents with the knowledge and skills to inspire, motivate and support their children's learning in their role as their child's first teacher.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities for older residents to stimulate the brain and be actively involved in community life.
- Provide and expand programs targeted at improving the literacy and numeracy skills of the community.
- Support and further develop stimulating play-based learning experiences for children, parents and carers to enhance social, language and communications skills.

- Ensure the timely assessment, referral and early intervention for children and families and with identified learning and developmental needs.
- Provide quality flexible childcare options to support working and studying parents.
- Increase the participation of children (specifically targeting ATSI children) in quality early childhood services and programs at least one year prior to the commencement of school in line with COAG targets.
- Provide transition to school programs for children to ensure school readiness.

**KEY PROJECTS:**

- Conduct targeted workshops for the community based on AEDI results. Targeted suburb based outcomes and strategies – roll out to families.
- Expand Communities for Children project to wider Wyong Shire beyond the 2261 postcode.
- Free language, literacy and numeracy training for job seekers (additional places allocated for Wyong)
- Develop and implement the 'Born to Read' program.
- 'Its cool to go to school the year before big school' - PR Campaign focussing on Central Coast parents

**POPULATION MEASURES:**

- % of children developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains in the AEDI.
- Key ages and stages child health visits at age 3.5 (NSW HEALTH)
- % increase in children attending Pre School in the year prior to school (DEC)
- % increase in the number of children and ATSI children enrolled in child care.



- % of children who reach development targets (NSW HEALTH)
- NAPLAN results (DEC)
- My school results (DEC)
- Best Start Program Results (DEC)
- Child literacy and numeracy rates (DEC)
- Adult literacy and numeracy rates (ACE, ALLS, Life Skills Survey ABS)

Action Plan  
GOAL 1: 'The Building Blocks of Learning – Every person has a strong foundation in learning and has opportunities to continue to learn over their lifetime'

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
1.1 Engage, educate and encourage the community to experience learning in a positive way and to embrace their role as a learner and a teacher.	Educate parents, carers and the wider community about the importance of early childhood development.	Ongoing: Brighter futures program.	UnitingCare Burnside/Community Services Brighter Futures funding. The Benevolent Society	Ongoing	Increased Awareness of the importance of Early Childhood Development.  Number of programs for parents and carers.
		Communities for children (C4C) program 2261	The Benevolent Society, Department of Human Services, Better Futures, Local Solutions Funding.	Ongoing	Number of parents and carers attending programs.
		Mothers group education - program for new mothers. Play Café The Entrance.	NSCCAHS	Ongoing	Increased involvement of parents and carers in programs.
		Schools as Community Centres - Blue Haven, Northlakes and Wyong Babes with Babes program.	Benevolent Society NSCCAHS Wyong Shire Council DEC	Ongoing	Positive community stories documented.
		D.A.L.E (Dynamic Alternative Learning Environment) College - Wadalba.	Central Coast Family Support Services DEC, Youth Connections, St Phillips Christian College, C4C.	Ongoing	
		Children's programs at libraries Supported playgroups	WSC UnitingCare Burnside, SaCCs, Child and Family Services, TAFE, NSW Playgroup Association	Ongoing Ongoing	
		New: Expand the Baby and parenting Expo.	CCNWHC \$'s required	Year 2	



WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		Develop and implement the 'Born to Read' program through Wyong Shire Council libraries.	WSC	Year 1	
		Conduct targeted workshops for the community based on AEDI results. Targeted suburb based outcomes and strategies – roll out to families.	Local SACC centres, local educators, community centres, Wyong Shire Council Learning Partnerships Officer, DEC AEDI. \$'s required	Year 1	
		Develop and implement a module in ante natal classes and mother's group sessions around child development stages.	NSCCAHs/ TAFE and other training organisations.	Year 2	
		Expand the play café concept across the Shire including specific target groups e.g. grandparents who are parenting	The Benevolent Society NSCCAHs Wyong Shire Council CCWVHC Northern Settlement Services UnitingCare Burnside	Year 2	
		Develop and install signs in local parks about gross motor skills for different ages	WSC \$'s required	Year 1	
		Develop child development recipe cards 'Recipe for a Healthy Happy-Baby, 1 year old, 2 year old....5 year old' with developmental stages, how parents can help through play and diet. Laminated cards with fridge magnet.	WSC, Coles, Uncle Pete's Toys. \$'s required	Year 2	
		Distribute child development information at Immunisation Clinics and Storytime sessions at libraries	NSCCAHs WSC	Year 1	
	Support and expand	Ongoing:			Expansion of programs.

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
	positive parenting and support programs, which equip parents with the knowledge and skills to inspire, motivate and support their child's learning in their role as their child's first teacher.	<p>TAFE Early Literacy Project.</p> <p>Parent training in literacy and numeracy with children.</p> <p>Parenting programs e.g. Fussy eaters and understanding tantrums.</p> <p>CHAT and SANITY (under 19 years) young parent playgroup.</p> <p>Warnervale Family and Community Centre and Northern Lakes Family Centre programs e.g. Introduction to parenting skills, living with teens program, ideas for parents program, Early Family Options.</p> <p>Triple P positive parenting program.</p> <p>Making Educational Goals Sustainable (MEGS) Program.</p> <p>Homework help for parents (schools program).</p> <p>YourTutor program</p> <p>Just 4 Families</p> <p>New:</p> <p>Expand Communities for Children project to wider Wyong Shire beyond 2261 postcode.</p> <p>Develop a mentor and peer speakers program to break cycles and develop a positive approach to learning.</p> <p>Cultural awareness education (recognising different parenting practices).</p>	<p>TAFE, C4C</p> <p>TAFE</p> <p>CCWHS</p> <p>Central Coast Family Support Service</p> <p>The Benevolent Society</p> <p>UnitingCare Burnside</p> <p>NSCCAHs, Family Support Services, DEC (Behaviour team)</p> <p>University of Newcastle</p> <p>DEC</p> <p>Schools, TAFE,</p> <p>WSC</p> <p>Horizons Family Support</p> <p>The Benevolent Society.</p> <p>Department of Human Services Better Futures Local Solutions Funding</p> <p>Central Coast Learning Board \$'s required</p> <p>Northern Settlement Services \$'s required</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 2</p>	<p>Number of parents involved in programs.</p> <p>Parents with improved skills to support their child's learning.</p> <p>Positive community stories documented.</p>

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		<p>Homework help – parents provided with the training and skills to help their primary school aged children therefore increasing their own literacy and numeracy skills</p> <p>Provide foundation courses (such as cooking courses, basic budgeting, birthday party planning etc).</p> <p>Use Council Care and Education centres to deliver cooking and nutrition classes for parents families after hours or weekends using the expertise of existing employees (e.g. cooks)</p>	<p>DEC, Libraries, Youth Services, TAFE - Adult Basic Education. \$'s required.</p> <p>SaCCs, The Benevolent Society, UnitingCare Burnside, Family Support Services, Youth Services. \$'s required</p> <p>WSC, Central Coast Community College. \$'s required</p>	<p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 3</p> <p>Year 3</p>	
	Provide lifelong learning opportunities for older residents to stimulate the brain and be actively involved in community life.	<p>Ongoing:</p> <p>Wyong Shire Senior Citizens Centres.</p> <p>Men's Sheds.</p> <p>Knit Wits program</p> <p>Mentoring and Volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Adult educational activities for over 50's</p> <p>Seniors Broadband internet kiosk / computers.</p> <p>Dementia Care Programs</p> <p>Library programs for seniors</p> <p>Arts programs</p> <p>Family history courses and resources</p> <p>New:</p>	<p>Central Coast Shed Cluster Inc</p> <p>Wyong Shire Council</p> <p>Plan-it Youth, DEC/ SaCCs, Senior Citizens Centres, Volunteering Central Coast, Men's Sheds.</p> <p>University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age</p> <p>Senior Citizens Centres, Community Centres</p> <p>Community Care, Uniting Care Burnside, ADSSI, WSC</p> <p>WSC</p> <p>Toukley and District Arts Society</p> <p>Wyong Family History Group</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Number of programs provided.</p> <p>Positive community stories documented.</p>

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		Living Library Program	WSC	Year 3	
		Technology for seniors program.	Wyong Shire Council Libraries \$'s required	Year 3	
		Intergenerational and mentoring programs such as volunteering in schools program (Grand friends), Community Readers Program.	Plan-it Youth, DEC, Senior Citizens Centres, Volunteering Central Coast	Year 2	
		Parenting programs for grandparents who are full time or part time carers for children.	Family Support Services \$'s required	Year 2	
		'Have a go' days so people don't need to make a long term commitment.	Central Coast Wood turners, Lapidary Club, Arts and Crafts groups, Spinners and Weavers Guild, Tuggerah Lakes Potters Society	Year 1	
		Develop a wellbeing program similar to Brisbane City Council's 'Growing Older, Living Dangerously'.	WSC, Senior Citizens Centres \$'s required	Year 2	
		Colour Me Clever (mind mapping and brain gym), Social networking for older people.	WSC, TAFE Outreach \$'s required	Year 2	
		'Writing your life': Poetry and memory workshops, reminiscence programs.	WSC \$'s required	Year 2	
		Singing for the Brain	Alzheimer's Society	Year 3	
1.2 Expand and further develop opportunities for the community to enhance literacy,	Provide and expand programs targeted at improving the literacy and numeracy skills of the	Ongoing: MUSE teenage literacy and literature program.	Wyong Shire Council BreakThru Links to Learning Program	Ongoing	Number of literacy and numeracy programs implemented.

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
numeracy, social, language and communication skills.	community.	TAFE Early Literacy Project – Storytime.	TAFE/ CAC	Ongoing	Improved literacy and numeracy skills.
		Yarning Indigenous program.	The Benevolent Society	Ongoing	Positive community stories documented.
		Literacy Loop Blue Haven.	SaCCs Literacy Loop Partners	Ongoing	
		Learning together – Parents as experts.	DEC Transition to School Project	Ongoing	
		Conversations with Kids.	DEC Transition to School Project	Ongoing	
		Numeracy Now – a workshop for parents.	DEC Transition to School Project	Ongoing	
		Making cents – financial literacy for families.	DEC Transition to School Project	Ongoing	
		Parents as teachers – model (PAT).	DEC Transition to School Project	Ongoing	
		TAFE Literacy and numeracy volunteer course.	TAFE	Ongoing	
		Adult literacy programs.	TAFE, Community Education Providers, Central Coast Community College, VET providers.	Ongoing	
		Wyong Shire Council Library/ Care and Education partnership to promote literacy with young children – library membership, promoting borrowing, librarian visiting childcare centres etc.	WSC	Ongoing	
		Partnership with Hunter TAFE children's services to deliver language and literacy activities in vacation care (5-12year olds)	WSC, TAFE	Ongoing	
		New:			
		Free Language, Literacy and numeracy training for job seekers (additional places allocated for Wyong).	DEEWR Department of Human Services	Year 1	

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		Develop and implement the 'Born to Read' program. Promote work implemented via 'Tales from a Dilly Bag' in Wyong LGA schools. Big Book on Nutrition for preschools and kindergarten classes – children 3-6Years. Creative writing @ your library. National Year of Reading Events	Wyong Shire Council  DEC  DEC, NSCCAHS  WSC, Local writers, Fellowship of Australian writers, Youth Connections, DEC, TAFE, local business sponsorship.	Year 1  Year 1  Year 1  Year 1	
	Support and further develop stimulating play-based learning experiences for children, parents and carers to enhance social, language and communications skills.	Ongoing: 'You are what you make classes' – cooking, clay work, eco art, mural project. Yarran Mobile Toy Library.  Singing, percussion and dance sessions. Toddler Gym. Killarney Village Central Playtime, Hop and Move, Singing percussion and dance moves. Kidz Sport Program. PCYC Kids in Sport Supported playgroups	TLCC  Yarran CCCWHC/C4C CCCWHC/ C4C  The Benevolent Society C4C project. C4C  C4C PCYC Uniting Care Burnside, SaCCs, Children and Family Services, TAFE, NSW Playgroup Association NSW Playgroup Association Wyong Shire Council	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	Number of play-based learning programs/ activities developed.  Improved social, language and communication skills.  Positive community stories documented.
		Sing and Grow Provision of accessible Regional Playgrounds		Ongoing Ongoing	

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		Music classes for babies and preschoolers	Wiggle and Giggle Benevolent Society SaCCs	Ongoing	
		PALS – Playing and Learning Social Skills	UnitingCare Burnside	Ongoing	
		New: Develop child focussed art and cultural programs in communities with limited access to programs	Wyong Shire Council, Family support services, SaCCs, neighbourhood centres, community centres. \$'s required	Year 3	
		Establish a Wyong Shire mobile van for playgroups to deliver workshop/school ready and parent ready programs.	Wyong Shire Council/ Family Support Services \$'s required	Year 3	
		Interactive and creative activities within community centres and shopping centres.	Wyong Shire Council, DEC, SaCCs \$'s required	Year 2	
		Bi-lingual playgroups	Northern Settlement Services, C4C. WSC, Conservatorium of Music \$'s required	Year 2 Year 1	
		Program to deliver music to young children in care and education centres through libraries	WSC \$'s required	Year 3	
		Funded arts teacher to deliver programs to centres on art, clay, sculpture, etc with links and learning around types of art/history etc.	WSC \$'s required	Year 2	
		Expand programs/ partnerships with community artists to work together with children to create art projects for community locations	WSC \$'s required	Year 2	
	Ensure the timely assessment, referral and	Ongoing: Yarran 'Child Start' program 2261	Yarran, ADHC, SaCCs	Ongoing	Numbers of children with identified learning needs.

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
1.3 Provide a range of accessible, quality early childhood services and programs to support the learning and development of children and support working and learning families.	early intervention for children and families with identified learning and developmental needs.	Wyong Shire Council Speech pathology service including sign language for families, parents and staff.	Wyong Shire Council	Ongoing	Numbers of children with identified learning needs assessed and referred in a timely manner.
		Playgroup Plus	SaCC Wyong/ Blue Haven, ADHC	Ongoing	
		Making tracks program (ATSI and CALD).	Yarran		
		New:			
		Outreach program for families requiring assessment and therapy services.	SACCS, NSCCAHS \$'s required	Year 3	
		Train parents in speech therapy practices	SACCS, NSCCAHS, WSC \$'s required	Year 1	
		Ongoing			
		Little Coast Kids and Vacation Care	WSC	Ongoing	
		New:			
		Provide additional childcare places in Wyong Shire to ensure flexible delivery.	Department of Human Services, TAFE and educational institutions, Child and Family Services (JET crèche).	Year 1	
Increase the participation of children (particularly ATSI children) in quality early childhood services and programs at least 1 year prior to the commencement of school in line with COAG targets.	Increase the participation of children (particularly ATSI children) in quality early childhood services and programs at least 1 year prior to the commencement of school in line with COAG targets.	New:			Increased numbers of children participating.
		Lobby relevant agencies to ensure the adequate provision of childcare services.	DEEWR	Year 1	
		Create partnerships that empower Aboriginal families to engage with mainstream preschools.	DEEWR, DEC, Childcare Providers, Ngroo Education, Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council, Muru Bulbi, Wyong and Kuriwa AECGs	Year 1	
		Ongoing:			
Provide transition to school programs for children to ensure school readiness.	Provide transition to school programs for children to ensure school readiness.	TAFE Early Literacy Project Parent Training – resilience for transition to school	TAFE	Ongoing	Number of transition programs.
					Increased number of



WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE	HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE IT?	ONGOING AND NEW ACTIONS:	RESPONSIBILITY, KEY PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	TIME FRAME	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
		Ready, Set, Go Transition to School playgroups.	Horizons	Ongoing	children participating in transition to school programs.
		Wyong Shire Council Care and Education Centres Transition to school programs.	Wyong Shire Council	Ongoing	Positive community stories documented.
		Transition to School Programs for children and parents/carers (varying from 4 weeks to whole year)	DEC/SaCCs	Ongoing	
		Young Black and Ready For School NAIDOC week and health screening days.	The Benevolent Society, ACYFS, DEC	Ongoing	
		Families NSW Transition to school project.	DEC	Ongoing	
		Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Transition to school project.	DEC	Ongoing	
		New:			
		'It's Cool to Go To Preschool The Year Before Big School' - PR Campaign focusing on Central Coast Parents.	Families NSW, DEC Transition.	Year 1	
		Transition to school Workshop series for parents of children with disabilities.	NSW Playgroup association, Northlakes SaCC,, Yarran, Cerebral Palsy Alliance	Year 1	
		Distribute parent/ carer transition toolkit	Primary Schools, Families NSW, DEC Transition, Schools	Year 1	
		CDRom 'Big School Ready' for distribution	Families NSW, DEC Transition, Schools	Year 1	
		Distribution of Video 'It's OK to Say Goodbye'	Families NSW, DEC Transition, Schools	Year 1	
		Investigate opportunities for expansion of transition programs from age 3.	DEC	Year 2	

## CHAPTER 3: LEARNING TO DO

'Learning to Do' involves the acquisition of skills that are often linked to occupational success, such as computer training, managerial training and apprenticeships.

### WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

Education and learning should be seen as an investment in the economic, social and cultural sustainability of the region. The skills and knowledge of the community greatly contribute to both its social and economic strengths. A more highly educated community should create income generating opportunities for it, as well as generating employment opportunities from the range of businesses attracted by the skilled workforce to establish/relocate in the Shire. It will also have a positive impact on the Shire's social fabric via improvements in community connectedness, civic participation, wellbeing and quality of life.

The capacity of the community is enhanced whenever learning and education are valued, encouraged, actively acquired and ultimately achieved. A person's level of education can have an impact on their access to employment and the economic resources necessary to support a reasonable standard of living. Local employment and income generating opportunities are vital as they provide residents with the time and money necessary to actively participate in their community. Employment is an important part of life for a large proportion of the population. It is a source of income, often takes up a considerable amount of time, helps people define who they are and gives them the opportunity to enjoy other benefits (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008).

Important characteristics of the Central Coast regional economy include the provision of 86,000 local jobs (2006 Census) and a population projected to grow by a further 100,000 people by 2031, requiring more than 45,000 new local jobs. The economy supports a significant number of local businesses with 86% operating as sole traders.

(Source: *Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy December 2009*).

"There are a large number of small businesses here on the Central Coast. There should be better support for innovation shifts in small business - this needs to happen for businesses to be sustainable into the future."

Wyong Shire is centrally located between the City of Newcastle to the north, the Hunter Valley to the west, and Sydney to the south. With 32.7% (15,261) of employed residents having jobs outside of the Region, it is identified as having a significant skills and labour shortage. The Shire should embrace this strategic geographic positioning via partnerships and programs to enable residents to develop job based skills and knowledge, gain practical experience, find rewarding and skilled employment and bring economic benefits back into the community.

"We are in such a unique position here on the Coast - Sydney to the South, Newcastle to the North and the Hunter Valley to the West - it provides such a great opportunity for our residents to gain skills and experience and bring the dollars back to be spent on the Coast - we need to understand and embrace the benefits this brings."

"There needs to be mechanisms to better support commuters - it is not realistic to or achievable to have full opportunities for education and employment on the Central Coast - it is good that people leave to gain experience (both professional & life). People will still choose to live here because of the affordability and lifestyle of the area - this should be maintained as a point of difference."