

Community Development Charter

Our Community. Our Future.

Image: Carl Harris.



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MANSFIELD SHIRE

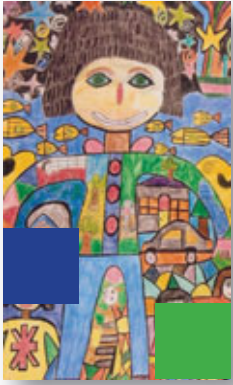


Image: Thomas Huber.

Our Principles

- **Inclusiveness & participation** – all people in the community having an equal opportunity to be involved.
- **Respect** – being respectful of different views, backgrounds and ideas.
- **Empowerment** – working to build communities with the voice, knowledge, skills and support to decide and do things for themselves.
- **Collective action** – working together to achieve our shared visions and goals.
- **Communication** – striving to communicate regularly, honestly and openly with one another
- **Sustainability** – finding ways to meet our communities' present needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.
- **Learning** – learning through doing, and sharing experiences to build knowledge into the future.

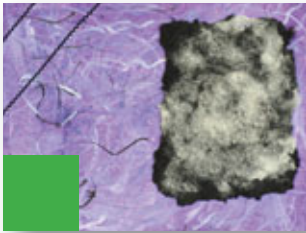


Image: Anne Marie Frické.

Our Goals

We want Mansfield Shire to be a place known for its:

- **Active & involved communities** – community members from all backgrounds and levels of ability are directly involved in decision-making for their future.
- **Capable communities** – communities have the skills and capacities to put their goals into action.
- **Effective two-way communication** – communities and Council openly listen, consult and engage with one another; and provide regular feedback to one another.
- **Shared vision** – there is a clear link between community goals and plans and Council's organisational objectives.
- **Teamwork** – cooperation and collective action between community groups and Council makes plans a reality.
- **Holistic planning** – communities' and Council's plans and projects support the long-term environmental, social and economic health of our communities.



Image: Emily Reynolds.

Our Responsibilities: Council

- **Create a vision and a plan** – Council will guide and support each of the Shire's townships in the creation of their own community plans.
- **Bringing the visions together** – Community plans will feed into annual budget considerations and legislative Council planning processes. Council will strive to achieve an integrated, 'whole-of-Council' approach to supporting community priorities.
- **Support community action** – Council will support communities in their efforts to make their plans a reality and will advocate on behalf of communities to external agencies and funding bodies.
- **Check where we're up to** – Council will guide and support communities in the process of annually reviewing community plans.
- **Communication and consultation** – Council will use a broad array of methods to communicate and consult with community. Council will provide regular feedback to communities and will hold one public meeting per year in each ward.
- **Grow skills** – Council will seek out and organise training opportunities to boost communities' skills and capacities.
- **Develop networks** – Council will aim to join the dots by connecting individuals and groups within the shire and also connect community groups with organisations and funding bodies outside the shire.
- **Community Grants** – Council will administer the annual Community Grants Schemes, which provide capital grants to local community groups.





Image: Carl Harris

Our Responsibilities: Community

- Create a vision and a plan – Community groups in each township will lead the creation of a community plan for their community.
- Make it a reality – Community groups will take the first steps and will lead efforts to make their plans a reality.
- Check where we're up to – Community groups will lead the process of annually reviewing community plans.
- Get involved and speak up – Community members will find out what's happening in their community, will get involved if they're interested, and will give their thoughts and time.
- Supply solutions – Identifying a problem is easy, finding a solution is harder – communities will canvas different opportunities to solve the issues affecting them.
- Bring a friend – Community members will encourage as many people as possible to get involved and will seek input from people with as many different backgrounds as possible.
- Be patient and don't give up – Often things take way too long, but the more you do, the less you wait on others. Take the lead wherever you can, understand that sometimes things will still take time and don't give up.

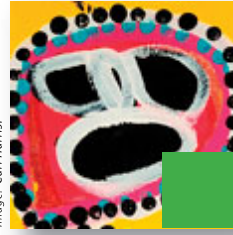


Image: Carl Harris

Our Responsibilities: All of us

- Get connected and be inclusive – Join forces with other groups and individuals. Stay in the loop, communicate with people beyond your immediate circle and share your thoughts and ideas.
- Reserve judgment – Be open to new ideas and different views. We all come from different backgrounds and we all have a right to voice our thoughts and opinions... And this can be the source of new and exciting ideas.
- Learn together – Share experiences and skills and embrace a learn-by-doing attitude. Spreading skills and stories will create a stronger, more capable community.
- Value what we've got – We live in a beautiful part of the world, full of talented and unique people... Only by recognising what we've already got, can we make use of it and build on it.
- Forgive and look to the future – Mistakes and misunderstandings in the past can become barriers in the present. Resolve past mistakes, acknowledge good intent behind any misunderstandings, forgive and move forward.
- Celebrate! – Take the time to celebrate successes – no matter how big or how small!





Image: Carl Harris.

What is the Community Development Charter?

The Community Development Charter is a set of principles, goals and responsibilities that outlines the way in which Council aims to work with communities in Mansfield Shire. The Charter will guide both Council's interaction with community; and communities' interaction with Council. It sets out a cooperative approach and acknowledges the shared roles and responsibilities of both Council and community.

With this Charter guiding our work, we will seek to improve our communication; plan together more effectively; ensure we have the skills in our communities to achieve outcomes; and develop a shared vision for the future of our Shire and the communities within it.



Image: Prudence Burgess.

Why have a Charter?

The Community Development Charter is based on important state, national and international

documents that note the rights of all individuals. These include: the Victorian Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities (2006), the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) and the Australian Government's Principles for Social Inclusion in Australia. Core principles in these documents include:

- freedom of expression;
- freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief;
- freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- the right to take part in public affairs and the government of your country;
- the right to participate in the cultural life of your community;
- equity;
- tolerance;
- sustainable development; and
- shared responsibility - citizens' duty to contribute to the public life of their community.

By adopting the Community Development Charter, Council is acknowledging its commitment to these rights and principles.

The Charter provides a framework that aims to increase the skills of community organisations, create more opportunities for community involvement in community planning and action; and boost community strength and connectedness within our shire. These goals are also identified in the State Government's Strengthening Community Organisations Action Plan (2008); and 'A Fairer Victoria Action Plan' (2009).



Image: Emily Reynolds.

How does the Community Development Charter link with other Council documents?

With the Community Development Charter as our guide, Council will support communities in their efforts to develop their own community plans, prioritise the actions within them; and form action groups to make them a reality.

The community plans and other communication processes established under the Charter will feed into regular Council planning processes – such as the Council Plan and Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan. This will improve opportunities for all community members to get directly involved in planning for our Shire's future.

Wherever possible, all community development activities will also acknowledge and incorporate the principles and goals outlined in other strategic documents such as the Mansfield Youth Charter.



This document is available in alternate formats on request from Mansfield Shire Council 5775 8555.