

Community engagement on the 2025-2029 Council Plan is now open - make your voice heard.

What should we prioritise over the next four years?

Every four years Northern Grampians Shire Council develops new Council and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, which determine the direction of work we undertake over the next four-year term. These plans are also supported by the 10-year Asset and Financial Plans to ensure we can effectively and efficiently deliver on our goals. The direction, focus and priority areas of these plans, including council's core services, are shaped by the needs and aspirations of the community.

Your feedback is key.

In addition to completing this survey, throughout the coming weeks there will be opportunities to attend in-person discussion forums or speak with a councillor at a pop-up talking post. More details regarding these opportunities are available on our website.

Survey responses are completely anonymous. Should you have any questions or concerns before you begin, please call us on (03) 5358 8700. We thank you for taking the time to participate and to make your voice count.

Section 1: About you

Council is dedicated to understanding our community and your needs and aspirations. To help ensure your voice is fairly represented, we would appreciate it if you could provide a few details about yourself in the following questions.

* 1. Please select your age group?

- 12 to 17 years
- 18 to 29 years
- 30 to 39 years
- 40 to 49 years
- 50 to 59 years
- 60 to 69 years
- 70 to 79 years
- Over 80 years
- Prefer not to say

* 2. Please select your gender:

- Male
- Self-describe
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Non-binary

If selecting self-describe, please specify.

* 3. Do you live with a disability, or care for someone with a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

* 4. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander
- Prefer not to say

* 5. What is your residential location?

- Stawell and surrounds
- St Arnaud and surrounds
- Halls Gap and surrounds
- Great Western and surrounds
- Navarre and surrounds
- Glenorchy and surrounds
- Stuart Mill and surrounds
- Marnoo and surrounds
- Other (please specify)

Section 2: Our community vision

In this section we aim to reaffirm our 20-year Community Vision that was developed in 2021 to ensure our community still believes it is relevant to our strategic direction.

* 6. Council's community vision is 'to love where you live'. This is a 10-year vision that was developed through community consultation in 2021 as part of the 2021-2025 Council Plan process.

Do you agree that this vision reflects your desired future for the shire?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you are not in support of this vision, what would your ideal vision for the future of Northern Grampians Shire look like?

Section 3: Understanding your priorities

In this section we endeavour to identify what community services are important to our residents and the areas where they feel further investment should be made and/or attention focused.

* 7. Council supports a diverse range of services designed to deliver outcomes associated with a vibrant and healthy community.

In choosing where to invest council resources, which of the following areas do you feel would have the greatest positive impact on our community's livability?

(Please select as many as appropriate)

- Arts, Culture and Heritage (celebrating the arts, cultural diversity and building social cohesion)
- Social, Community and Health Programs and venues (initiatives to build social connection, community resilience and health equity)
- Access and Inclusion (initiatives promoting inclusion of all members of community including those living with disability)
- Leisure, Recreation, Sports and Aquatics (providing facilities that offer a diverse range of leisure opportunities)
- Child and Family Services (delivering services to families with young children - childcare, immunisation, supported playgroups)
- Infrastructure Services (sealed/unsealed roads, footpaths, civil works, public lighting, drainage)
- Parks, Gardens and Reserves (managing and maintaining a diverse range of outdoor spaces and assets)
- Economic, Tourism and Business Support (supporting economic growth, local businesses and the tourism industry)
- Education and Learning (advocacy for enhanced education and learning opportunities within the community)
- Emergency Management (building community resilience, disaster preparation, and emergency management and response)
- Environmental Sustainability (Natural Resource Management)

- Recycling, Waste and Resource Recovery (managing our waste sustainably, recycling and reducing what we send to landfill)
- Community Care and Aged Services (providing a range of home care and healthy ageing services)
- Environment, Climate Actions and Natural Resources (supporting coordinated and collective action to mitigate the impact of climate change on our community)
- Local Laws (parking, domestic animal registration, school crossings, fire restriction enforcement, animal welfare services)
- Other (please specify)

Question continues on next side

* 8. What do you believe are the biggest challenges facing the community over the next four years?

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

- Ageing population
- Increasing social and economic disadvantage
- Vulnerability to natural disasters
- Climate impacts
- Renewable energy
- Housing (availability, affordability and homelessness)
- Access to public transport
- Waste and recycling
- The condition of council assets (roads, bridges, buildings, footpaths)
- Community health and wellbeing (including mental health)
- Access to health care
- Family violence
- Business sustainability and growth
- Workforce and skills shortages

9. What do you believe are the strongest opportunities to promote economic wellbeing and quality of life over the next four years?

* 10. How important are the following council services to the community?

	Highly unimportant	Unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Important	Highly important
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sporting facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early childhood education and care (daycare and kindergarten)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maternal and child health and supported playgroups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immunisation services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aged care (care at home)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy ageing programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth activities and engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation and active living programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. What new programs or services would you like to see introduced to better support community wellbeing?

* 12. Do any of the following barriers apply to you when accessing Northern Grampians Shire activities, programs or events?

(Please select all that apply)

- Lack of awareness
- Transportation issues
- Language or cultural barriers
- Lack of childcare
- Safety concerns
- Social stigma
- Technology barriers
- Financial constraints
- Geographic location
- Negative past experiences
- Other (please specify)

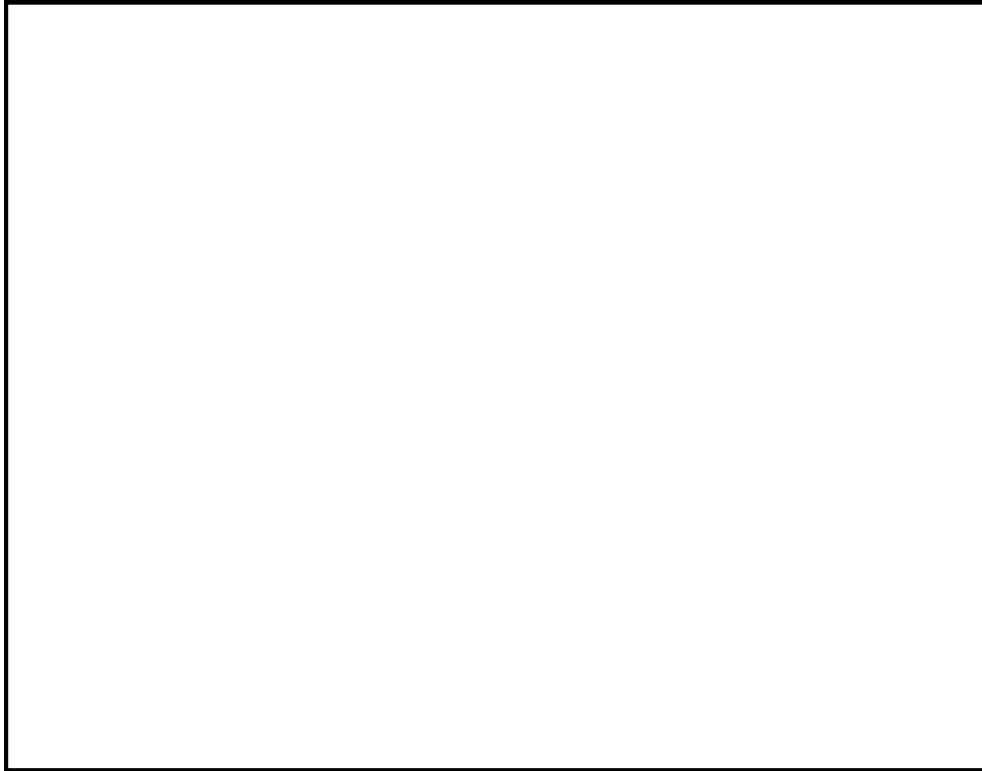
- None, they have been accessible and I've been able to attend.

Section 4: Housing

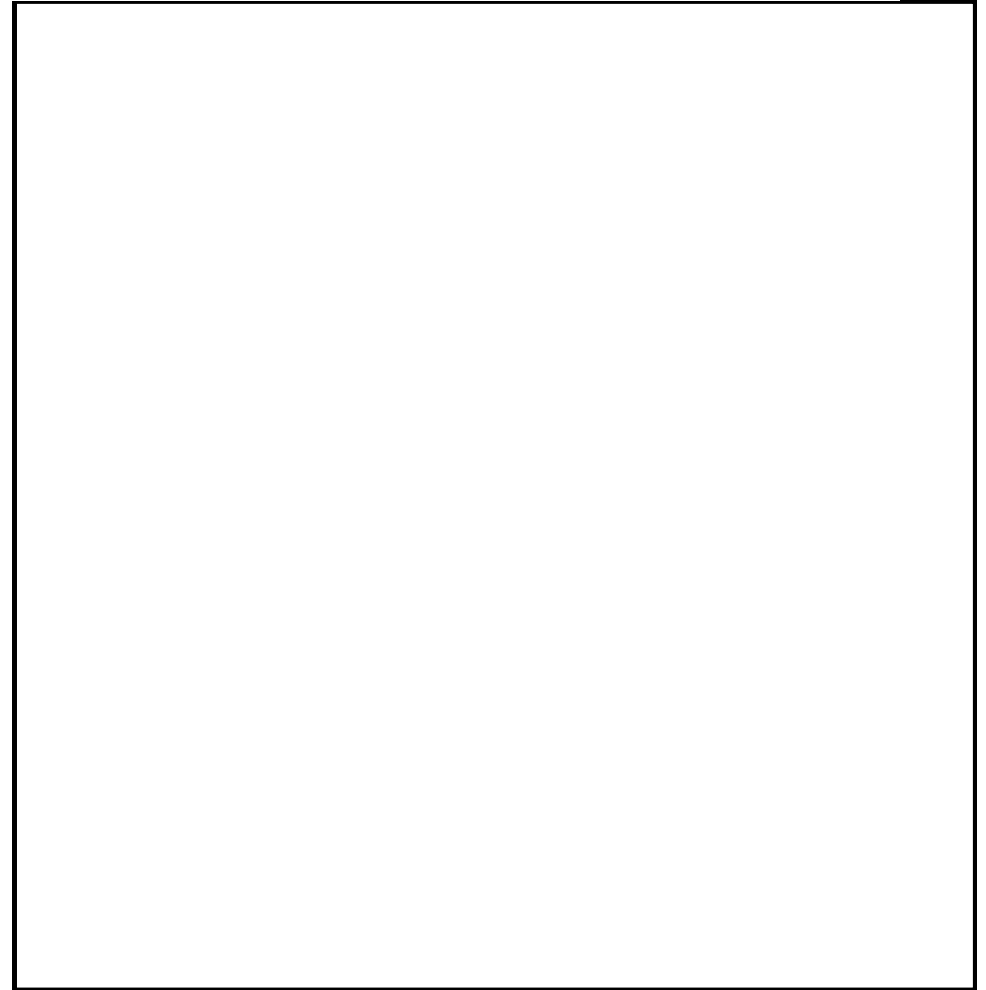
In this section we want to identify the how the community feels about current housing opportunities, or lack thereof, and how we could potentially resolve the provisioning issue.

* 13. There is strong demand for housing within the shire, particularly in the towns of Stawell and St Arnaud. Current supply does not match demand, with the provision of additional houses needed. There is also little diversity of housing product, with existing housing stock consisting predominately of 3-4 bedroom single dwellings.






What do you think are the main causes of housing issues across the shire?



* 14. What suggestions do you have for how council can help to address the housing issue?



* 15. According to Census data, 31 people identified as being homeless in Northern Grampians Shire in 2021. Please indicate your level of agreement as to whether council has a role to play in helping to address homelessness?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
				

16. Please share your ideas for how Council can help to address the issue of homelessness?

Section 5: Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 recognises the key role of councils in improving the health and wellbeing of people in their municipality. It also requires each council to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years.

The following list includes the overarching public health and wellbeing priorities identified in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 that councils must also consider.

* 17. Please indicate which of the following priorities you believe council should focus on over the next four years, by ranking them in order of importance.

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

- Reducing harm from tobacco and e-cigarette use
- Enhancing overall wellbeing (including mental health)
- Tackling climate change and its health impacts
- Promoting healthy eating (including improving dental health)
- Encouraging active living
- Reducing harm from alcohol and drug use
- Improving sexual and reproductive health
- Preventing all forms of violence
- Reducing injuries

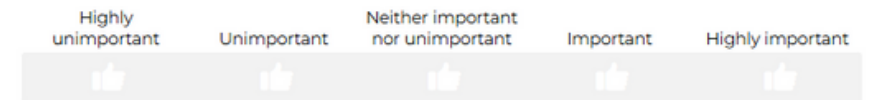
18. Please tell us your suggestions for how council can address the health and wellbeing priorities you selected above?

19. How can we make places (our environments) in the shire healthier?

Think about where you live, learn, work, study or play and consider built environments (sports centres, bicycle paths and community buildings), natural landscapes (parks and reserves), and the economic environment (such as jobs, investment and tourism).

* 20. Northern Grampians Shire has significantly worse oral (dental) health in children aged up to six years compared with the broader Victorian average.

How important is it to you that oral (dental) health is prioritised in our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan?



Section 6: Managing our assets

The Local Government Act requires council to develop a 10-year Asset Plan. Northern Grampians Shire Council manages about \$650-million worth of infrastructure including roads and bridges, buildings and open space, drainage, kerb and channel, and paths.

Council also manages 3,384 kilometres of roads. Of this, 838km are sealed, 2093km are gravel and 453km are dirt, dry-weather-only roads.

Council wishes to understand the community's views on these assets and the level of priority you believe certain assets should receive.

* 21. Please rank, in order of importance, the road types that you feel should be prioritised for sealing/gravelling.

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

<input type="checkbox"/> Roads to homes	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Roads to on-farm infrastructure such as sheds and stock yards	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Roads to places of business and commerce	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Roads to recreation areas such as lakes, state or national parks and sporting fields	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>

* 22. Please rank, in order of importance, the following road priorities:

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

<input type="checkbox"/> Gravel roads to every home out of town	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dirt tracks for each road which is used less than once per day	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sealed roads to every home in town	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Gravel roads to every block with on-farm infrastructure (sheds and stockyards)	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sealed roads to every home	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dirt tracks for each road used less than 2-10 times per day	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>

* 23. Dirt roads (dry weather use only) are cheaper to construct and maintain. Would you prefer more dirt tracks if it meant that:

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

<input type="checkbox"/> The savings were used to seal more gravel roads	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> The savings were used to widen the seal on existing sealed roads	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> The savings were used to grade gravel roads more frequently	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> I would pay more money (eg rates, special charges) if it meant there were less dirt roads	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't want more dirt roads	<input type="button" value="^"/> <input type="button" value="v"/>

* 24. Council is actively working on a program of improving our streets in urban areas (towns). This includes activities such as installation of kerbs and channels, new footpaths and planting of street trees.

Based on the current pace of the program, it would take between 60 and 70 years to complete all streets within urban areas. In order to speed up the process, please rank which areas you would support redirecting funding from.

Please write a number next to each option below to signify your order of importance.

<input type="checkbox"/> Road sealing works	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Road maintenance	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> New underground drains	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> New footpaths	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> I would pay more money (via rates or a special charge scheme) to accelerate the program	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't want the street upgrade program to accelerate	<input type="button" value="^"/>	<input type="button" value="v"/>

* 25. Do you agree with the following statement: "Every road that has at least one truck travelling on it per day, should be sealed"?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure, I require further information.

26. Please share any other thoughts or feedback regarding council's asset management approach for areas such as roads, buildings or parks.

Section 7: Financial management

In this section we aim to identify the community's sentiment with regards to council's current funding model and associated opportunities based on rate restrictions imposed by the Local Government Minister.

* 27. The percentage by which council can increase rates each year is set by the Local Government Minister. Any increase over this 'rate cap' requires the council to undertake a community engagement process to determine if the community is willing for rates to be raised above the cap.

Would you be prepared to accept a rate increase above the rate cap, to enable council to deliver greater levels of service or more construction projects?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure, I require further information.

28. If you answered yes to the above question, please indicate what services or construction projects (i.e. road developments, new community facilities or programs) you would like to see funded by a potential rate increase?

29. If you answered no to the above question, please indicate where you feel cuts could be made to community services, infrastructure or construction works.

* 30. Council currently has very low levels of acquired financial debt. Would you support further financial borrowing to fund additional services and/or construction works?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure, I require further information.

* 31. If you answered yes to the above question, please select from the following list, what services or construction projects you would like to see funded by the additional borrowing?

(Please select all that apply)

- Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre redevelopment
- Stadium upgrades
- New paths and trails
- Streetscape enhancements
- Road upgrades
- Drainage upgrades
- Improved community facilities (sporting or other community)
- Increasing housing opportunities
- Car-parking improvements
- New or increased services

Other (please specify)

32. If you answered no to the above question, please indicate where you feel cuts could be made to community services, infrastructure or construction works.

Community engagement on the 2025-2029 Council Plan is now open - make your voice heard.

Survey feedback

You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback and ensure your voice is heard.

In addition to the survey, there are also opportunities across the Shire over the coming weeks to attend in-person discussion forums or speak with a councillor at a pop-up talking post. More details are available on our website [here](#).

33. Do you have any final comments or suggestions you would like council to consider in developing the next iteration of the Council Plan or Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan?

