



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS STRATEGY

February 2017

SED





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1. Introduction

Events and Festivals have become an integral part of our community life. They add vibrancy, diversity and opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy what our communities and lifestyle have to offer.

The 2016 Events and Festivals Strategy aims to inform and guide how we as a community can continue to enjoy the benefits that events bring and to help ensure that our resources best meet the needs of events and assist them to be vibrant, safe and prosperous.

The Strategy provides a summary of the primary outcomes from discussions and surveys with event stakeholders and partners and presents a set of approaches and actions for Council and communities to work together on future opportunities.

The focus of the Strategy is our existing hallmark and headline community events. It informs how we support new events and provides guidance and direction that will be beneficial and informative for event managers and community groups who have interest in opportunities for the range of events and festivals we host.

Corangamite Shire recognises that events and festivals are major undertakings for the organisations and the individuals involved in their planning and delivery. The Shire also recognises that it has an important role in supporting and promoting events to help ensure they are successful and sustainable.

The aim is that together, we support and grow the cultural and music, food, sporting, community, fundraising and agricultural events that make up our festivals calendar.







1.1 Why have events?

Events and festivals deliver a number of community, economic and social benefits.

- ▶ They celebrate our unique community identity and provide opportunities for everyone to be participants in community life.
- ▶ Attendees come and spend in our shops, hotels, caravan parks and visit other attractions in the region.
- ▶ We showcase our history, culture, community way of life and our natural environment, buildings and assets.
- ▶ They foster partnerships between communities and business to support local projects, community groups and good causes.
- ▶ Events bring visitors to our region who can enjoy what we enjoy about living here.
- ▶ Our events provide opportunities for residents and visitors to see regional, national and international music, sport and performing artists.
- ▶ We can profile our community as a place to visit, live and work.



2. Events and festivals today

We are proud of the events and festivals that we have in our Shire many of which are run and managed by community groups, dedicated volunteers and committed individuals.

Our events celebrate our rural way of life, our history, our culture and our community values. We host events that attract visitors for music, sport, food and arts against a backdrop of history and heritage and some of the region's most unspoilt areas of natural beauty.

Our calendar of events include:

- ▶ Large events that attract many thousands of attendees and participants.
- ▶ Regional and local community events that support a range of groups and associations.
- ▶ Regular events that provide for active participation in community life.
- ▶ Our sporting calendar that hosts games, matches and fundraisers.

Our hallmark and regional events attract thousands of participants and visitors and make a direct and indirect social and economic contribution to our communities. The commitment of the volunteers and organisers provide us with confidence in the future of our events and their ongoing contribution to our way of life and our attraction as a place to visit. The following provides a summary of some of our hallmark and major community events.



CopRice Cobden Spring Festival

A fun family festival running for over 20 years to celebrate the spirit of this community. 1,000s of attendees enjoy the many activities for three days in mid-October.



Terang Country Music Festival

Hundreds of country music fans visit the town of Terang in March to enjoy two nights and two day days of music, food and catching up with friends.



Noorat Show

One of the largest one day shows in Victoria, the Noorat Show is a family, activity filled day in November that has been showcasing the farming, food and country life of our region since 1932.



Robert Burns Scottish Festival

A feast of Robert Burns and Scottish cultural activities, the Robert Burns Festival presents a diverse weekend program of music, dance, lectures and community activities for all ages in May.



Inner Varnika Festival

An independent, three-day music festival held just north of Camperdown over the Easter weekend. A cultural and music event for the free-spirited who want to experience something different.



Kennedy's Creek Music Festival

A boutique, grass-roots music festival located in the middle of the bush west of the Otways. Featuring emerging local and Australian artists, the event attracts hundreds of music lovers in October.



Camperdown Horse Trials Events

Presenting two primary horse trial events in April and December, the Trials are an elite level competition that has attracted Olympics winners and hopefuls. With over 300 competitors and horses, all are welcome to this free event.



Heytesbury Agricultural Show

Running for over 80 years, the Heytesbury Show is held on the weekend before the Labour Day long weekend. The show attracts over 2,000 visitors with a day of livestock competitions, craft shows and a program of family activities.



Simpson Rodeo

Raising funds for the Simpson community, the Rodeo is becoming a firm favourite for rodeo fans and people enjoying a fun country event. With over 2,500 attendees, the rodeo will be holding its third event in March 2017.



Camperdown P&A Society

The Camperdown P&A Society manage the Camperdown Show and host other events including the Camperdown Dog Show, Hill Climb and the Lady Manifold Games attracting locals and visitors to a showcase of country life and pursuits



Corangamite Foodies Feast

The fifth annual Foodies Feast was held in 2016, showcasing the quality local produce of the region. In addition to a sit down dinner the event has also run food and cooking workshops and attracts gourmet chefs for a delicious menu of activities.

Other events in the region include:

- ▶ Community Christmas celebrations;
- ▶ Australia Day celebration;
- ▶ Art exhibitions and music and cultural events;
- ▶ Fundraising and charity activities such as Relay for Life;
- ▶ Corangamite Fun Run series and individual fun run events;
- ▶ Horse Racing Carnivals;
- ▶ Community and Farmers Markets;
- ▶ Community events and celebrations;
- ▶ Sporting events and finals.





3. What people told us

With events and activities happening nearly every week and month, we know that there is a lot of work undertaken behind the scenes before we ever see anything on the ground.

To assist us with a better understanding of the events we have in the Shire, and their development opportunities and challenges, a program of interviews and consultation and a survey of event interested parties was completed. This provided valuable information that has helped to develop this strategy.

- ▶ We attract a range of visitors and participants from the local region, Victoria, interstate and even overseas.
- ▶ The role of volunteers in the planning, management and delivery of events is critical. As our population gets older we all need to ensure that we continue to support our volunteers and that we encourage more people to be part of the volunteer collective. This includes identifying ways for event managers to attract volunteers onto community committees and supporting groups as well as individuals who provide time and support to events.
- ▶ Events are an important part of our community life and provide direct and indirect economic benefits to our businesses and local groups. Identifying ways to increase and spread economic benefit will be important for continuing community support for events.
- ▶ Community fundraising for specific projects and local associations is a significant feature of many of our events and event organisers are continually looking at ways to help return further benefits into the future.
- ▶ We must ensure that new events are sustainable, manageable and have the capacity to become self-funding. In addition, they should provide economic and social benefits and deliver a quality event experience for attendees and partners.



- ▶ Whilst Council has a role in supporting events through funding programs, event planning and promotion, and Council services such as road closures, compliance, waste management and site preparation, our research shows that our events are generally self-reliant and rightly proud of their achievements. We want to ensure that we target support where it is most needed and where it will provide the greatest assistance.
- ▶ Harnessing sponsorship and funding are strategically important and together with robust financial management, are seen as opportunities to further strengthen the sustainability and growth of events.
- ▶ We host a number of high profile events that attract strong patronage numbers. Some events are reaching capacity in term of assets, people and resources, and the number of participants that can be catered for. We will need explore opportunities to assist events with addressing constraints and continue to advocate for funding in our key assets and the attraction of investment tourism and community infrastructure.
- ▶ Our natural environment, heritage buildings and a good location all contribute to what makes events attractive and bring people to visit. There are no doubt avenues for us to explore on how these competitive features can be utilised to support new events and attract visitors to stay longer in our region.
- ▶ Event planning, management, marketing and succession planning are seen as skills that we can further enhance as the market for events becomes more competitive, and we witness the rise in new marketing and promotion media.

The more our communities embrace the events, the more successful they will be. We want to support our event organisers with event planning, funding options and marketing, to continue to make their event attractive and sustainable.







4. Successful events

In partnership with event managers and residents, we want to help ensure that our events are successful and sustainable.

Our consultation has shown that there are common themes and approaches that make events successful.

We will use these success factors to plan how we support our existing events and how we decide which new events to support in the future.

Events that are authentic and align to our community values

Demonstrate professionalism and quality content, good management, robust financial management and budget control, strong marketing and successful delivery

Events that have a tangible (actual) community benefit

Key success factors

Provision of appropriate Council support including communication, marketing, funding advice and event services

Foster community support through building community returns and participation

Build strong links into networks – local and the event / theme industry

Have a defined purpose and aligns to our vision for events and economic and social opportunities





- ▶ *Events that are authentic and align to community values:*
 - ▶ Celebrate the unique features of our communities, towns and environment.
 - ▶ Have appropriate input from local communities and organisations.
 - ▶ Provide an authentic experience that deliver on participant expectations.
- ▶ *Quality content, good management, strong marketing and successful delivery:*
 - ▶ Adopt good management practices including planning, reporting and financial management.
 - ▶ Support the brand and marketing of the region as a place to live, visit and work.
 - ▶ Ensure that marketing fairly and accurately represents the event, its content and the community.
 - ▶ Recognises key event sponsors, funding partners, supporters and volunteers.
 - ▶ Adhere to all necessary compliance requirements and develops plans for safe event delivery and incident management
- ▶ *Appropriate Council support, funding advice and event services:*
 - ▶ Acknowledge and understand the level of support Council does and can provide to events through funding and sponsorship and identify ways that the event can become self-funding and sustainable.
 - ▶ Liaise with Council on the services the organisation provides and timing requirements including compliance, road closures, waste management, open space and gardens management, marketing, funding reporting and other Council support services.

- ▶ Provide and discuss with Council any issues arising or concerns in relation to the event and Council services so that an agreed and positive outcome can be achieved.

▶ *Defined purpose, align to our vision and opportunities:*

- ▶ Events that support our vision and have a clear community, social, economic and / or environmental purpose and outcome.
- ▶ Respect our natural environment and utilise our many assets as a showcase of our community.
- ▶ Minimise impacts on our natural environment, flora and fauna.

▶ *Build strong links and networks:*

- ▶ Develop partnerships with communities, agencies and networks within and outside our region.
- ▶ Utilise and foster the experience and knowledge of event partners and communities of interest.

▶ *Foster community support, build community participation and deliver tangible community benefits.*

- ▶ Identify avenues for providing opportunities for local communities to benefit from events. This can include volunteers, fundraising, business opportunities and promotion of our businesses and services.
- ▶ Enable opportunities for community groups to be active partners and acknowledge local support.
- ▶ Identify opportunities for local supply and support by our businesses, services and local community groups.
- ▶ Encourage businesses to support events and provide a positive and welcoming experience for attendees and participants.





5. Strategy and actions

5.1 Our vision

Corangamite will support, develop and foster events that contribute to our community values and provide economic and social benefits for our residents. Our events will celebrate and showcase our culture, heritage and unique natural environment.

5.2 Principles

Three core principles inform the strategy and actions, and the nature of support for sustainable growth and development of events and festivals in our Shire.

Support

Develop

Attract & Foster







5.3 Support

- ▶ We will continue to build partnerships with event stakeholders so that we can provide timely and helpful support and to plan for events that are delivered successfully and safely.
- ▶ Our oversight role will be to assist events with advice and guidance on event planning, compliance, management and promotion. Opportunities to build skills and capabilities in event managers and support groups will be progressed.
- ▶ Funding for events will look to how our investment supports the event, and at ways for events to transition to being financially self-sustaining.



Action	When	Lead	Partner
Facilitate an annual roundtable with event organisers (event managers group) to share ideas and opportunities and enhance engagement between event managers and Council.	2016-17	Council	Event managers. Community groups.
Develop a program of workshops (2-3 per year) specific to events managers in areas such as marketing, planning, grants and funding, succession planning, and volunteer management.	2016-17	Event managers group	Council
Provide a summary checklist of the services that Council can provide to event managers and other sources of help and information.	2016-17	Council	Event managers. Business and community.
Develop a register of buildings, venues and other assets that would inform and support event planning and delivery. Identify opportunities to include other organisations and asset holders.	2016-17	Council	Community groups. Event managers.
Develop a funding policy for events and review current funding structures to provide greater clarity and equity.	2017-18	Council	Event managers. Community groups
Provide a suite of useful event planning, management and evaluation templates to assist events managers. Make available online and through improved engagement activities.	2016-17	Council	Event managers
Undertake timely reviews of funding to events to ensure that support is provided where it is most needed and most beneficial.	Annual	Council	Event managers





5.4 Develop

- ▶ We will help the development of events through improved, collective promotion and better utilisation and functionality of our website and other online and social media.
- ▶ Events that require infrastructure or asset investment will be supported through funding application advice, support letters and / or agreed and targeted funding support where there is a level of co-contribution and a supporting finance plan and event budget.
- ▶ Our development activities will be informed through consultation with event managers, regional agencies and the wider community.



Action	When	Lead	Partner
Ensure the development of dedicated and motivational events promotion and information sections and an improved events calendar as part of Council's new website initiative.	2016-17	Council	Event managers
Include back-end database capability to support newsletters, calendar update reminders and other communication activities.	2016-17	Council	Event managers. Community groups.
Collectively improve events marketing and promotion including opportunities to promote the region as a place to live, visit and invest.	2017-18	Event managers group	Council and regional development agencies
Consider options for temporary and/or digital signage along road entry points in key towns to promote events and other community activities.	2017-18	Council	Event managers. Community groups
Identify critical infrastructure and assets directly associated with events that would benefit from investment to help events grow and prosper.	2017-19	Event managers	Council and Government agencies
Prioritise opportunities to attract investment in community and tourism assets and infrastructure that will support our events.	2017-18	Regional agencies	Council
Develop a volunteer attraction and support strategy for residents and for greater participation by community groups.	2017-18	Event managers group	Council
Consider the facilitation of a Shire Wide volunteer pool supported with training, mentoring and scheduling. Look at a broad range of skills such as marketing, event delivery, IT and visitor services.	2017-18	Community groups	





5.5 Attract and Foster

Council will work with primary groups and networks to identify opportunities to attract new events to our Shire. Our focus will be on events that:

- ▶ Add value to our existing events calendar and promote our region's natural assets, businesses, tourism destinations and communities;
- ▶ Have manageable impacts on our financial resources and people; and
- ▶ Can demonstrate longer-term sustainability and provide tangible benefits to our communities.



Action	When	Lead	Partner
Assess our resources, including options for seed / attraction funding, and capacity to attract and host professionally managed events.	2016-17	Council	Community groups and regional agencies
Develop an events attraction package that details our capabilities, assets and services to attract and support new event planning and delivery.	2017-18	Council	Community groups and regional agencies
Identify target opportunities / organisations to attract events to the region with consideration to resource capability and capacity.	2017-18	Council	Regional representatives and communities
Identify opportunities to partner with other local governments in the region on promoting and supporting events.	2017-18	Regional representatives	Regional agencies and Council
Improve connection and partnerships within networks in the events sector.	Ongoing	Event managers	Council and regional agencies
Ensure decision making on supporting new events address core measures of economic, social, environment benefit and financial and resource sustainability.	Ongoing	Event managers	Council





6. More information

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