



WHITEHORSE Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025



Council's partners

Thank you to the many partner agencies contributing to the Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025. See Appendix 5 for detailed list.

Notes

Data sources

Unless referenced otherwise, demographic information is sourced from the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing. Other information sources include the Victorian Population Health Survey, VicHealth Indicators Survey and the Australian Urban Observatory. A full reference list is provided.

Acronyms

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
EDVOS	Eastern Domestic Violence Service
EMR	Eastern Metropolitan Region
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning (An inclusive umbrella abbreviation to encompass a range of diverse sexualities, genders and sex characteristics.)
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MPHWP	Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
PVAW	Prevention of Violence against Women

Further information

Refer to Council's demographic fact sheets and interactive maps at <https://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/about-council/about-whitehorse>

Contact Community Engagement and Development Department at CDEnquiries@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

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Acknowledgement of country

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of the land. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Whitehorse Community Vision 2040

Whitehorse is a resilient community where everyone belongs.

We are active citizens who value our natural environment, history and diversity.

We embrace sustainability and innovation.

We are dynamic. We learn, grow and thrive.

Health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or disability. (World Health Organisation)



Welcome from Mayor



On behalf of Council, it is my pleasure to present the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025*.

As required under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* (Plan) describes the work Council will undertake in partnership with the community and with key State and local organisations over the next four years to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Whitehorse

The Plan directs this work across eleven domains over the next four years towards achieving the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040, where:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or disability. (World Health Organisation)

Our community, through the development of the Community Vision 2040, asks for health and wellbeing initiatives that are

shaped by the principles of social justice, inclusivity and sustainability. The Plan describes how Council and its partners will put these principles into practice.

The Plan has been developed with the assistance of the Whitehorse community through the “Shaping Whitehorse” community engagement process. Building upon the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040, Shaping Whitehorse sought input from the community to help inform Council’s *Financial Plan 2021–2031*, the *Council Plan 2021–2025*, the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* and the *Asset Plan 2022–2032* (which will be developed in 2022). This engagement with the local community was achieved through a survey, pop up events, focus group sessions, partnership workshops and a deliberative community panel, resulting in the identification of key priorities and strategies for our community’s health and wellbeing over the next four years. We thank all community members who have made the time to participate and share their views.

We also thank the many partner organisations Council works alongside to deliver on the Plan.

We look forward to working with you for a healthy and well municipality over the coming years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cr Andrew Munroe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Cr Andrew Munroe

**MAYOR
WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL**

For the year 2020 – 2021

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



One of the things the global COVID-19 pandemic has taught us is the importance of protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of the people in our community — ourselves, our families and neighbours, our work colleagues, the business owners and visitors to our municipality.

The Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025 outlines the health and wellbeing strategic objectives and priorities for action that:

- reflect the values and priorities of the people of Whitehorse
- account for their current and projected health and wellbeing challenges
- consider national, state and local policies and context
- align with the role and influence of local government
- most importantly, builds on the strengths of the municipality and its people.

These strengths, or foundations, are the existing infrastructure, systems, natural environment, organisations, programs,

services, social networks and people that make up the diverse and vibrant City of Whitehorse.

Much of the core work of Council helps to keep our community healthy and well, on an everyday basis. Public health food inspections and home care services are examples of this important work. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed new challenges to the health and wellbeing of us all.

Effective recovery from the impacts of the pandemic requires collaboration between individuals, communities, all levels of government, non government organisations and businesses. Council's strong partnerships between a wide range of local and regional agencies, organisations and individuals will continue to be vital in helping the Whitehorse community to recover over the years ahead.

The Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025 describes the strategic advocacy and initiatives in collaboration with our partners that we will undertake over the next four years, as well as the actions underway in the first year.

This overview provides a summary of the objectives across eleven domains towards which Council and partner agencies will work to achieve by 2025, as well as the five top priorities identified by our community for us to focus our efforts on.

Simon McMillan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon McMillan', written in a cursive style.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL**

Objectives

Healthy Start for Life

1. Over the period 2021-2025 more children and young people in Whitehorse will have the best possible start in life

Healthy Relationships

2. By 2025 we will see increased capacity of Council, its partners and the community to respond to and prevent bullying, elder abuse, child abuse and family violence

Healthy Behaviours

3. By 2025 people in Whitehorse will be enjoying more physical activity and a healthier diet

Health Protection

4. Over the period 2021 to 2025 we will see an upward trend in immunisation rates

Mental Health and Wellbeing

5. By 2025 people in Whitehorse will feel more resilient and re-connected to their community

Healthy Ageing

6. Over 2021-2025 we will see more people ageing well in Whitehorse

Access and Participation

7. By 2025 there will be fewer barriers for access to information, services and participation in the social and economic life of the municipality

Social Cohesion

8. By 2025 our community will be more inclusive of diversity

Safety

9. In 2025 the people of Whitehorse will report a greater sense of personal safety both at home and in the community

Neighbourhood Liveability

10. By 2025 our community will enjoy more liveable neighbourhoods

Climate Change Mitigation

11. By 2025 we will see more individuals, organisations and businesses taking action to mitigate and build resilience to the effects of Climate Change

Priorities



Mental wellbeing



Physical activity



Social and neighbourhood connection



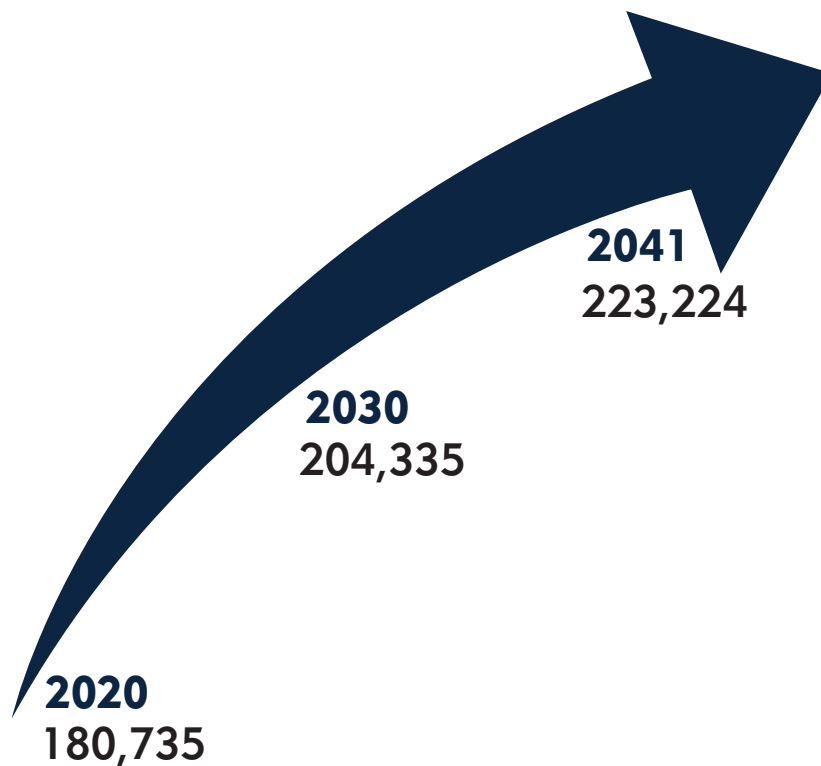
Social inclusion, including digital inclusion



Climate change mitigation

Community snapshot

Our changing population¹



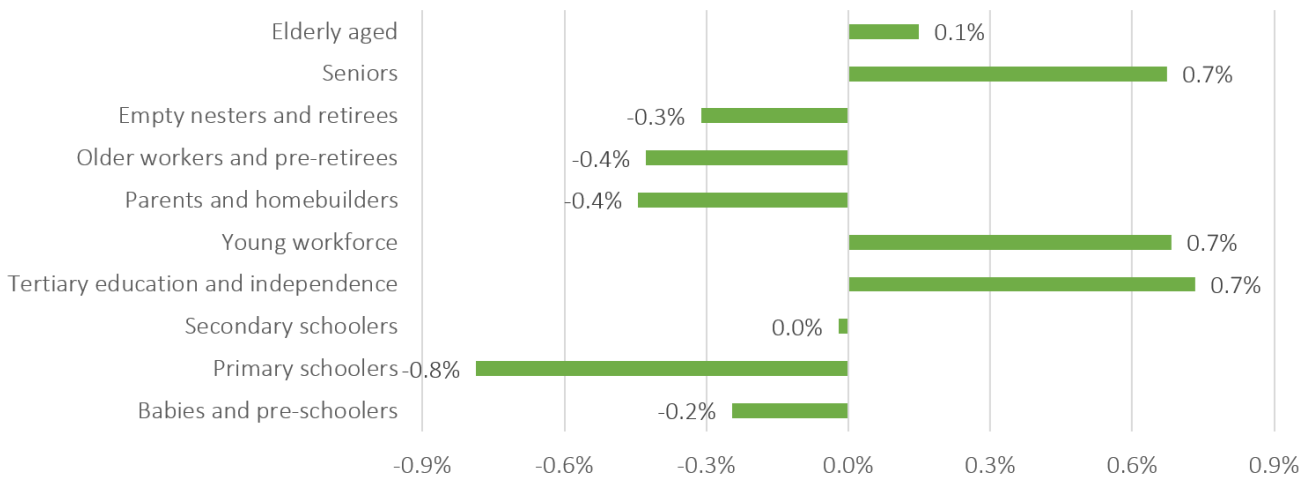
Between the last Census in 2016 and 2041, the population for the City of Whitehorse is forecast to increase by 53,583 persons (31.6% growth), at an average annual change of 1.1%.

Due to COVID-19 this forecast will be impacted by a number of factors including: closure of borders to overseas migration; greater levels of financial insecurity affecting birth rates and increasing the likelihood of people moving to affordable growth areas, regional centres and peri-urban areas².

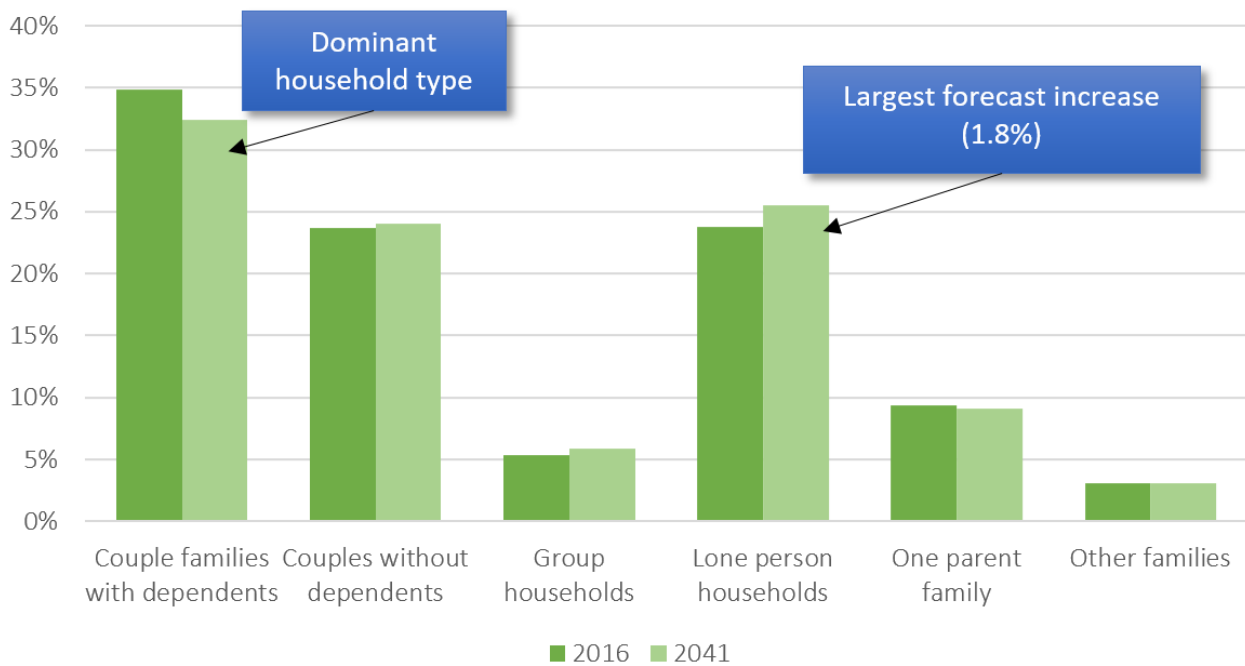
1 id Consulting (2021), based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) Census of Population and Housing

2 Peri-urban areas are those on the edge of the city and where there may be a mixture of productive agricultural land, bushland as well as living areas.

Age groups forecast percentage change, 2016 to 2041



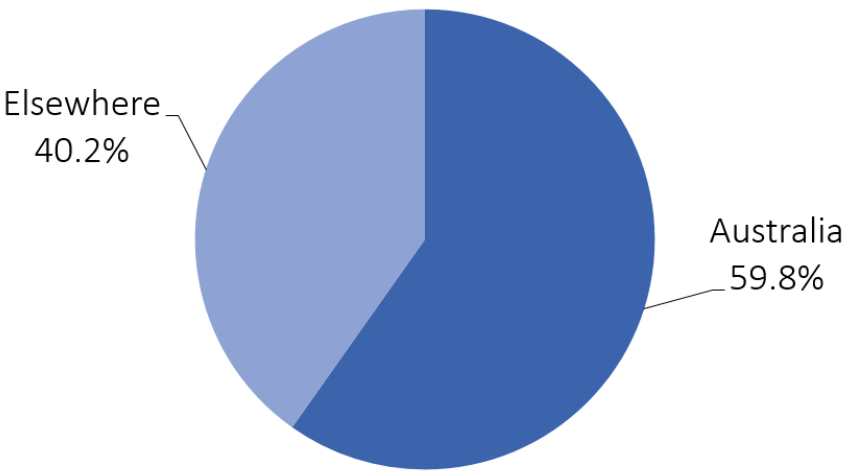
Household types forecast percentage change, 2016 to 2041








At the last Census

Males	78,051	48.2% < Melbourne
Females	84,032	51.8% > Melbourne
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	358	0.2% < Melbourne

Where people were born



Born in Australia	92,759	59.8 %	<Melbourne
 China	11.5%		
 India	3.0%		
 United Kingdom	3.0%		
 Malaysia	2.7%		
 Hong Kong	1.5%		

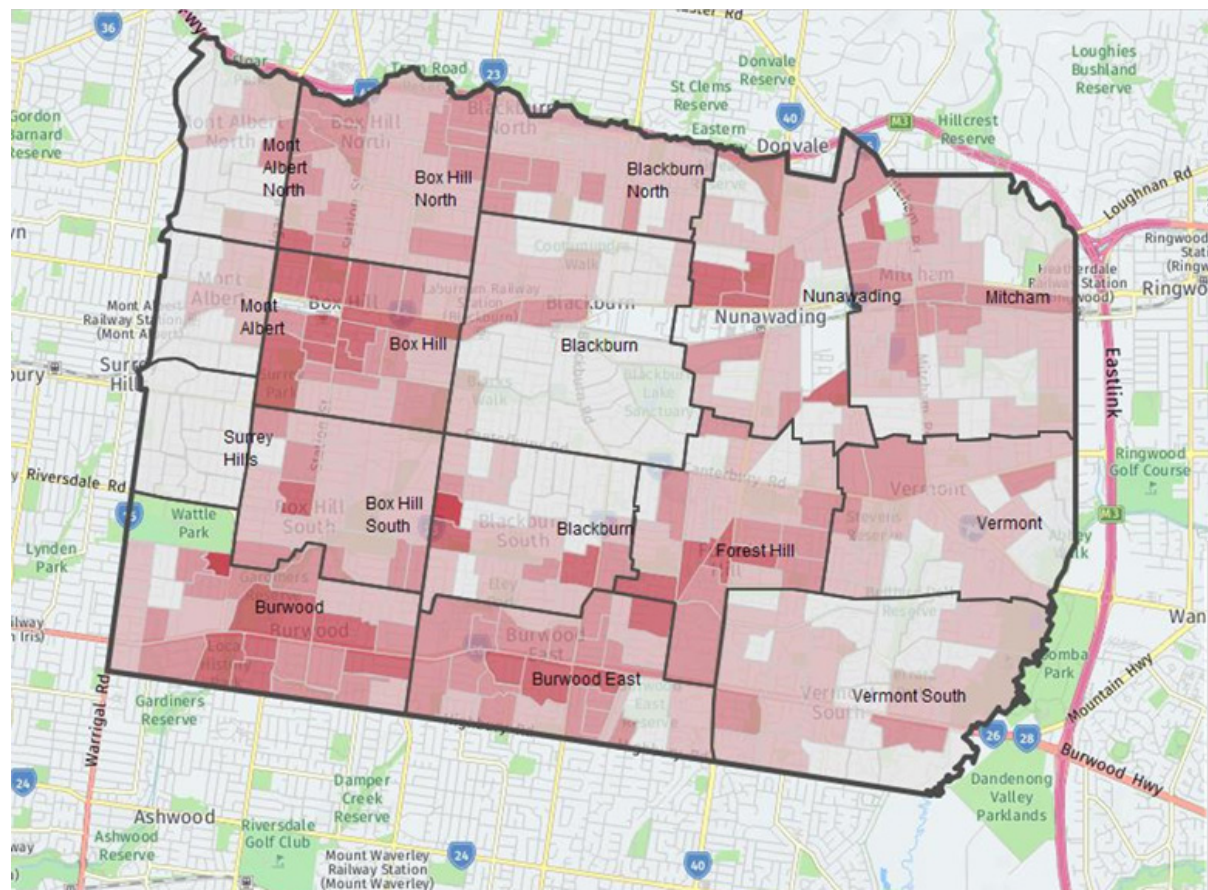
Language diversity

Speak language other than English at home	59,418	36.7%	>Melbourne
Mandarin	12.9%		
Cantonese	5.3%		
Greek	2.5%		
Italian	1.4%		
Vietnamese	1.3%		

People needing assistance³

Need for assistance with core activities 7,628	4.7%	<Melbourne
Caring for others	15,786 11.7%	>Melbourne

Areas of advantage and disadvantage⁴



Lighter red = more advantaged Darker red = more *dis*advantaged

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) Census of Population and Housing
4 id Consulting (2021), based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) Census of Population and Housing.

Ages and stages

The health and wellbeing needs in Whitehorse reflect the different ages and stages of its people as well as changes in the population over time⁽ⁱ⁾.

Early Years: people aged less than 12 years

Forecasts for 2026

0-4 years increase by 1,169

5-11 years increase by 680

- Nurturing family, educational and care settings important for development
- High levels of participation in Council's child health services
- Child abuse reports lower than Victoria

Young People: aged 12-24 years

Forecasts for 2026

12-17 years increase by 2,096

18-24 years increase by 4,674

- Learning relationship and work skills for adulthood
- Over 75% of mental health problems occur before the age of 25
- Education and employment disrupted by COVID-19

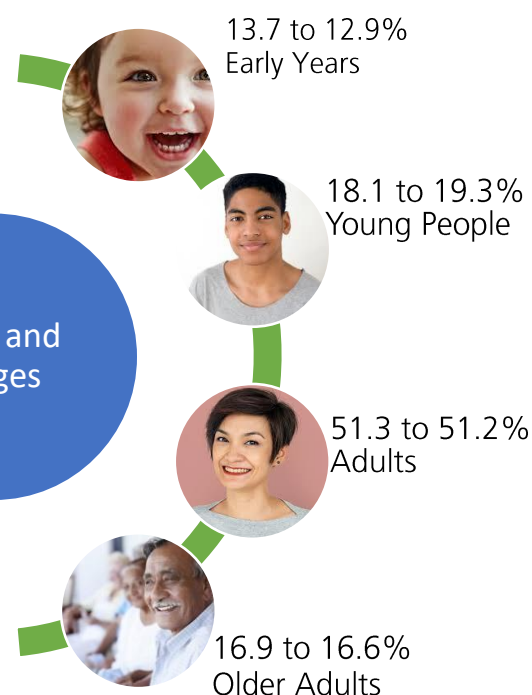
Adults: people aged 25-64 years

Forecasts for 2026

25-39 years increase by 7,251

40-64 years increase by 5,179

- Behaviours influence risk of developing chronic disease
- Nearly half don't do enough exercise and most don't eat enough vegetables
- 1 in 5 experience anxiety or depression



Older Adults: people aged over 65 years

Forecasts for 2026

65-79 years increase by 2,499

80 years and over increase by 1,139

- More than 30 % of people aged 65+ are born overseas
- Active working, learning, volunteering and grand-parenting
- Falls and likelihood of dementia increase with age
- Risk factors for elder abuse exacerbated by COVID-19

Introduction

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* describes the work Council will undertake in partnership with the community and with key State and local organisations over the next four years to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Whitehorse

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* (Plan) outlines the health and wellbeing objectives and priorities for action that:

- reflect the values and priorities of the people of Whitehorse
- account for their current and projected health and wellbeing challenges
- consider national, state and local policies and context
- align with the role and influence of local government
- most importantly, builds on the strengths of the municipality and its people.

These strengths, or foundations, are the existing infrastructure, systems, natural environment, organisations, programs, services, social networks and people that make up the diverse and vibrant City of Whitehorse.

The first sections of the Plan describe the approach that Council has taken in the Plan's development, how the community and partner organisations were involved in its development and the broad range of information sources used.

Then, the Plan details the most important areas for Council and its partners to focus on over the next four years to work towards implementing the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040. These were identified through a rigorous community engagement process that included a deliberative component, and of these, five top priorities emerged: mental wellbeing, physical activity, social and neighbourhood connection, social inclusion (including digital inclusion) and climate change mitigation. In the Plan the term people with a disability is used in its broadest sense and includes people with lived experience of mental illness.

The main body of the Plan features each of the eleven domains and the objectives which Council and partner agencies will work to achieve by 2025. Indicators against which we can measure change over the four years of the Plan are listed for each objective. Each domain features details of the strategic advocacy, collaborations and initiatives we will undertake over the next four years, as well as the actions that are allocated to the first year of the Plan.

Finally, the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation of the Plan is described.

Background

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* is Council's seventh Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP). It represents Council's long term commitment and endeavor to improve the health and wellbeing of the municipality in partnership with the community and with key State and local organisations.

In preparing a health and wellbeing plan every four years, the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires Council MPHWP's to:

- Be consistent with the corporate plan (Council Plan) of the Council and the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS).
- Specify measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims of family violence in the local community. (Section 26 (2)(ba))
- Have regard to climate change (Section 17 of the Climate Change Act)
- Consider the focus areas and priorities of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023.

Subsequent to the release of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023, a major worldwide public health event has had sudden and profound impacts on everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic is a unique emergency event unlike any we have experienced in the past.

Since being reported in January 2020, the Whitehorse community has experienced a low rate of infection. However, the impact of the control measures and fear of the virus itself have impacted our community.

Restrictions on human contact and movement as well as the wearing of personal protective equipment are public health controls that have not been implemented in our society before. The introduction of these restrictions is significantly impacting on the economy (constraints on people's ability to work and do business), education (students' ability to attend schools/tertiary institutes), health (constraints on access to health services, manifestations of psychological distress, mental health issues, decreased physical activity etc.) and social (impacts of people being isolated and more vulnerable). Health inequalities will increase as a result.

The MPHWP is informed by the most up to date evidence and information about the impacts of the pandemic and prioritises strategies for community recovery.

Planning framework

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* sits alongside the Council Plan in directing the efforts and resources of Council. The Plan aims to achieve four-year health and wellbeing objectives, ultimately working towards achieving the twenty-year Whitehorse Community Vision 2040.

The health and wellbeing objectives sit within eleven domains in the Plan, each of which reflect broad strategic areas in which Council has a direct role or a level of influence over, and in which there are opportunities for collaborations with partner agencies and the community.

Under each objective within the Plan we have listed the strategies to achieving that objective. In other words, we have listed what we plan to achieve (objective), what we will do to achieve that objective (strategies) and how we will measure our impacts (indicators).

When submitting a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan to the Secretary of the Department of Health, Council is also required to submit the first year's action plan. Actions we will take in 2021-2022 are described under each objective of the Plan.

Vision	The aspirations of the Whitehorse community for the year 2040.
Priorities	The top key health and wellbeing priority areas for Council and partners to focus on over the next four years.
Domains	The strategic areas of health and wellbeing in which Council and partner agencies have a role or influence.
Objectives	What we aim achieve over the next four years across the domains towards the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040.
Strategies	How Council and partners will work towards achieving the objectives over the four years of the Plan.
Actions	Actions to be undertaken in the first year of the Plan.
Indicators	The impacts we will measure in evaluating achievements of the Plan.

Community Vision 2040

People who participated in the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040 engagement process said they wanted a diverse community that is welcoming, *inclusive and caring, vibrant and connected with friendly people and family-oriented neighbourhoods. They want community activities and events that bring people together and people who are happy, healthy and well.*



The most frequently used words to best describe how the community want Whitehorse to be in the future are *safe, green, sustainable, friendly, inclusive, liveable and community.*

Our Community Vision 2040 asks for health and wellbeing initiatives that are shaped by the principles of social justice, inclusivity and sustainability:

- address the inequalities in health outcomes
- create affordable options to increase accessibility, platforms for advocacy and individualised support
- access to information on local services within neighbourhoods
- there is a place for everyone and their voices are heard
- facilitate social connection
- education opportunities for the community to maximise healthy lifestyles, encompassing mind, body and spirit.

“Would like our community to be safe and sustainable, a place where people feel they belong there”

(Our hopes for the future - From Community Vision Broad engagement findings. Female, 12-17 years)

The Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 20221-2025 aligns with all themes of the Community Vision 2040, but in particular:

Theme 1: Diverse and Inclusive Community

We will make decisions that encompass the rich cultural, linguistic, and diverse abilities of all people represented within the City of Whitehorse.

Theme 2: Movement and Public Spaces

Our community works best when its people can move freely and connect with each other in a healthy and safe environment.

Theme 5: Sustainable Climate and Environmental Care

We will grow and improve the unique biodiversity and landscape of Whitehorse.

Theme 7: Health and Wellbeing

Health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or disability (World Health Organisation).

"A place where everyone feels safe, respected and valued no matter what your age or income level"

*(Our hopes for the future —
From Community Vision Broad
engagement findings.
Female, 50-59 years,
Mitcham)*



Socio-ecological model of health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing mean different things to each of us. It may involve being able to go cycling or walking in our neighbourhood. Or it could be having supportive and nurturing relationships. When there are challenges in life, such as we've all experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, it could mean our own or collective resilience in the face of difficulties.

As there is no single way of telling whether we have achieved optimum "health and wellbeing" it helps to look at a broad range of factors that influence this. The diagram below shows how we can think of these influences which surround us in everyday life.



Source: Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2019–2023⁵

Our health and wellbeing is influenced by the interaction of our individual characteristics, lifestyle and the physical, social and economic environment in which we live⁽ⁱⁱ⁾. There are wider influences at play also: income, early childhood experiences, gender stereotypes, social norms and expectations, education, employment, social inclusion, housing and geography, living and working conditions, quality of air, soil and water, and health systems⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾.

According to the World Health Organisation^(iv) research shows that these influences can be more important than our health system or our individual lifestyle in determining our health outcomes.

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* recognises the contributions that Council and the community can make to influence these wider factors for the health and wellbeing of everyone in Whitehorse, while at the same time ensuring individuals have the opportunity to access healthy lifestyles of their choice.

5 Adapted from original model by Dahlgren G, Whitehead M (1991), Policies and strategies to promote social equity in health, Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm. Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/public-health-wellbeing-plan>

Council's role

The role of Council is to ensure the social, economic, environmental (including the built form) and cultural wellbeing of the Whitehorse community, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

This includes exercising, performing and discharging the powers, functions and duties of local government under this and other Acts in relation to the City of Whitehorse, by undertaking the role of:

Planner

Plan, encourage and develop initiatives and developments within the community for improving the quality of life now and into the future.

Provider

Provide services, programs and initiatives that benefit the community of Whitehorse (ratepayers, residents and visitors), including: general public services or facilities, health services, community services or facilities, cultural or recreational services or facilities.

Advocate

Advocate on behalf of the municipality and represent the interests of the local community.

Funder

Fund infrastructure for community use and development within the municipality, and support local organisations, clubs and groups to provide initiatives that benefit people in the community.

Legislation

This Plan takes into account Council's responsibilities under the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)*.

The *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)* (the Act) requires Councils to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) every four years following the Council election process. Under the requirements of the Act, the MPHWP must:

- Examine data and evidence on health and wellbeing
- Involve the local community in its development
- Identify strategies to achieve maximum health and wellbeing of the community
- Specify how Council will work in partnership with other agencies to accomplish the strategies; and
- Provide a consistent message to that in the Council Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.

An amendment to section 26 of the Act was introduced in 2017 requiring councils to report on the measures the Council proposes to take to reduce family violence and respond to the needs of victims.

The aim of the Act is to achieve the highest attainable standard of public health by reducing health inequalities, promoting environments in which people can be healthy, and the protection and prevention of disease, illness, injury, disability and death.

The Act recognises that local government is a major partner in efforts to protect public health and wellbeing. The Act states that in preparing their plans, Councils must have regard to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023.

In addition, the *Climate Change Act 2017* s.17 states that decision makers must have regard to climate change in the MPHWP.

Other legislation underpinning and influencing the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* is outlined in Appendix 1. The list is not exhaustive.

Related Policies, Strategies and Plans

National Health Priority Areas

The National Health Priority Areas details the diseases and conditions that Australian governments have chosen to focus their attention on, because they contribute significantly to the burden of illness and injury across the Australian community.

The Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing publishes information about these, including the associated indicators and risk factors with a focus on particular population groups of interest ^(v).

Chronic diseases such as cancer, coronary heart disease and diabetes are the leading cause of ill health and death in Australia. Two-thirds of the burden of disease is due to five disease groups: cancer, cardiovascular diseases, mental and substance use disorders, musculoskeletal conditions, and injuries.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

The *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019—2023* establishes priorities for action and identifies place-based approaches as a key platform for change, alongside healthy and sustainable environments and people-centred approaches.

The *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019—2023* provides continuity for the priorities of the previous State plan, while recognising antimicrobial resistance (the ability to effectively treat infections in our community).


The State-wide plan highlights four priority focus areas to encourage coordinated action where it is anticipated to make the greatest gains. These are highlighted in bold below:

- **Tackling climate change and its impact on health**
- **Increasing healthy eating**
- **Increasing active living**
- **Reducing tobacco-related harm**
- Reducing injury
- Preventing all forms of violence
- Decreasing the risk of drug resistant infections in the community
- Improving mental wellbeing
- Improving sexual and reproductive health
- Reducing harmful alcohol and drug use



The *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019—2023* recognises key links between actions taken in a number of these priority areas. For example, by promoting active transport (walking, cycling or the use of public transport) and by reducing the number of trips by car we in turn reduce emissions. A reduction in emissions and increasing active transport produces health co-benefits through improvements to air quality and increasing opportunities for physical activity.


The Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021 provides evidence in support of the inclusion of seven of the ten State priorities as being of higher priority for the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025*. (Table 1)


Table 1: Alignment of Victorian Health and Wellbeing priorities with local data

Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and local data	Evidence supports inclusion for Whitehorse
<p>Tackling climate change and its impact on health</p> <p>Climate change is likely to directly and indirectly amplify existing public health risks. Direct impacts include hypo- and hyperthermia, heat stress, injury, trauma and death. Indirect impacts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ communicable diseases spread from insects and animals to humans ▪ water and food-borne diseases and contaminants ▪ adverse effects on mental health including fear of the future ▪ exacerbation of existing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as a result of higher temperatures, poorer air quality and airborne pollen <p>Climate change is likely to be a factor in thunderstorm asthma events by increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations, temperatures affecting aeroallergen concentrations and extended pollen seasons.</p> <p>During the thunderstorm asthma event in 2016, across Melbourne there were 672% excess respiratory-related presentations to emergency departments, and 992% excess asthma-related admissions to hospital, especially individuals of Indian or Sri Lankan birth (10% vs 1%) and south-east Asian birth (8% vs 1%) compared with previous 3 years. Of all presentations to emergency departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The mean age was 32 years ▪ 56 per cent were male ▪ Only 28 per cent had current doctor-diagnosed asthma. <p>People of Asian or Indian background may be at higher risk of future thunderstorm asthma hospital admissions. In Whitehorse over 18% of the population were born in SE Asia or India. In Whitehorse 19.9% of the adult population have been diagnosed with asthma at some time in their life.</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.50</p>	

Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and local data	Evidence supports inclusion for Whitehorse
<p>Increasing healthy eating</p> <p>In Whitehorse in 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 52.6 per cent of people do not meet either the fruit or vegetable consumption guidelines ▪ Men are less likely to meet the dietary guidelines for healthy eating than women. ▪ 46.9 per cent of adults in Whitehorse were overweight or obese and, while this is lower than the Victorian average of 50.8 per cent, it is evident that a significantly large proportion of the population is faced with a higher risk for many chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.39</p>	
<p>Increasing active living</p> <p>In Whitehorse in 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 46.6 per cent of people in Whitehorse did not obtain sufficient exercise for good health, with 23.3 percent spending eight or more hours sitting on an average weekday. ▪ 46.9 per cent of adults in Whitehorse were overweight or obese and, while this is lower than the Victorian average of 50.8 per cent, it is evident that a significantly large proportion of the population is faced with a higher risk for many chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.39</p>	
<p>Reducing tobacco-related harm</p> <p>The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 found 6.2 per cent of people in Whitehorse identify as daily smokers. This is significantly lower than the Victorian average of 12.4 per cent.</p> <p>A person who smokes throughout their life is at heightened risk of potentially fatal diseases including various cancers, lung diseases, heart disease, stroke and circulatory problems.</p> <p>In Australia in 2019 the prevalence of 14-17-year-olds smoking daily is 1.9 per cent. This is a decline of almost 80 per cent over the past 20 years (in 2001 11.2% of adolescents smoked daily). Young people are initiating smoking and drinking alcohol at a later age.</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.49</p>	

Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and local data	Evidence supports inclusion for Whitehorse
<p>Reducing injury</p> <p>In Whitehorse the percentage of unintentional injuries caused by falls is the third highest in the state (45.9% compared to the Victorian average of 38.7%).</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.40</p>	
<p>Preventing all forms of violence</p> <p>The rate of <i>recorded</i> crimes against the person in Whitehorse in 2019–20 was 682.2 per 100,000 people compared to Victoria as a whole (1295.7/100,000).</p> <p>The rate of crimes against the person which were family <i>offences</i> in Whitehorse for 2019/2020 was 280.0 per 100,000 population which is an increase of 141 per cent since 2010/2011 (rate of 116.0).</p> <p>The City of Whitehorse has almost half the rate of recorded family violence incidents for Victoria. However, there were still 1,302 family violence incidents reported in 2019/2020; an average of 25 incidents every week. It is estimated that only 25 per cent of family violence incidents are reported to the police so the true annual number of family violence incidents in Whitehorse may be closer to greater than 5,200 per year, equating to 100 incidents per week.</p> <p>Rates of family violence incidents in Whitehorse in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the same time in 2019 increased by 25.2 per cent.</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.41</p>	
<p>Decreasing the risk of drug resistant infections</p> <p>Outside the influence of local government</p>	

Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and local data	Evidence supports inclusion for Whitehorse
<p>Improving mental wellbeing</p> <p>Anxiety and depression are the most frequent forms of mental illness in Australia. The proportion of adults in Victoria who were experiencing high or very high levels of psychological distress was 18.1 per cent in 2019. This proportion was significantly lower in men (15.6%) compared with women (21.0%). There was a significant increase in the proportion of men, women and people ever diagnosed with anxiety or depression during the period 2015–2019.</p> <p>In 2017 in Whitehorse, 20.6 per cent of people experienced anxiety or depression; 23.6 per cent were female and 17.2 per cent were male. Over 75 per cent of mental health problems occur before the age of 25.</p> <p>The number of hospital admissions in 2018, where it was determined that the injury or poisoning was purposely self-inflicted, per 1,000 persons in Whitehorse was 1.30 female and 0.86 male, compared to the Metropolitan East rates of 1.2 female and 0.6 male.</p> <p>People experiencing problem gambling are more likely to be diagnosed with depression (41.9 per cent) compared to moderate-risk gamblers (24.1 per cent). They are also twice as likely (39.5 per cent) as moderate-risk gamblers (20 per cent) to be diagnosed with anxiety disorders.</p>	
<p>Improving sexual and reproductive health</p> <p>In Whitehorse Sexually transmissible infections (STIs) reported in 2019 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 444 cases of chlamydia (223 male and 221 female) ▪ 12 cases of infectious syphilis ▪ 115 gonococcal infection cases ▪ 81 unspecified hepatitis B and 2 newly acquired cases ▪ 22 unspecified hepatitis C and no new cases <p>The rate of chlamydia notifications in Whitehorse per 100,000 population in 2019 was 261.0 compared to Victoria with 406.0.</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.49</p>	

Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities and local data	Evidence supports inclusion for Whitehorse
<p>Reducing harmful alcohol and drug use</p> <p>Whitehorse alcohol and pharmaceutical drug hospitalisation admission rates in 2017/2018 (62.0 and 22.8 per 100,000 people) are higher than Victoria's and are higher than those for the previous financial year.</p> <p>55.3 per cent of Whitehorse adults have an increased lifetime risk of alcohol-related harm, in comparison to Victoria at 59.5 per cent.</p> <p>Further reading: Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021, p.47</p>	

See Appendix 4 for full referencing.

Plan Melbourne

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is the high-level plan developed by the Victorian Government to guide growth and change for metropolitan Melbourne⁶. It guides planners, local councils, landowners, and developers to ensure Melbourne grows to be more sustainable, productive and liveable.

In recognition that detailed planning is required to manage growth across the city, six metropolitan Land Use Framework Plans (LUFs) are under development in 2021. The LUFs will better align state and local planning and inform the development of local planning strategies. The LUFs will also inform the review and update of local planning schemes to align with Plan Melbourne.

The Eastern Metro Land Use Framework Plan (LUF) has been developed by the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to guide the application of Plan Melbourne's nine guiding principles and 32 directions at a regional and local level. The Eastern Metro LUF identifies urban renewal and growth areas, flags future transport opportunities, prepares for community, health, education, recreation, sporting and cultural facilities, and continues work in protecting and identifying open space and greening initiatives.

The Eastern Metro LUF to be implemented from 2022 is a 30-year strategic vision which aims to:

- Shape population and industry growth
- Inform plans for services and infrastructure
- Guide public and private sector investments such as Suburban Rail Loop.

Find out more about Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 www.planmelbourne.vic.gov.au.

⁶ <https://www.planmelbourne.vic.gov.au/>

City of Whitehorse Strategies and Plans

Whitehorse City Council has numerous Strategic Plans in place which, together, represent the depth and breadth of Council's commitment and investment in the health and wellbeing of the people of Whitehorse. Among these are the detailed plans and policies which describe the actions Council will be taking across a number of social health priority areas to implement the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025:

- ▶ Community Participation and Volunteering Strategy
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Early Years Plan
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan
- ▶ Reconciliation Strategy
- ▶ Affordable Housing Policy
- ▶ Gambling Policy

The full list of City of Whitehorse strategies, plans and policies that play a role in protecting and enhancing health and wellbeing is provided in Appendix 2.



Partnerships

Whitehorse City Council has strong partnerships with many health and wellbeing community agencies, faith organisations, educational institutions, businesses and state and local government departments. These partner agencies, and numerous community groups and not-for-profit organisations, all work towards improving the health and wellbeing of the Whitehorse community.

Partnerships can be understood on a continuum from networking and coordination through to cooperation and collaboration, depending on many factors. Whitehorse City Council has established partnerships for health and wellbeing with:

- ▶ Box Hill Asian Business Group
- ▶ Department of Education and Training
- ▶ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- ▶ Department of Health
- ▶ Department of Justice and Community Safety
- ▶ Digital Connection in Whitehorse Group
- ▶ Eastern Access Community Health (support services for Council)
- ▶ Eastern Affordable Housing Network
- ▶ Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- ▶ Eastern Community Legal Centre
- ▶ Eastern Elder Abuse Network
- ▶ Eastern Health – Child Youth and Health Services
- ▶ Eastern Homelessness Network
- ▶ Eastern Housing Alliance
- ▶ Eastern Mental Health Service Coordination Alliance (EMHSCA)
- ▶ Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership
- ▶ Eastern Region Fire Management Planning Committee
- ▶ Eastern Region Group of Councils
- ▶ Eastern Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
- ▶ Eastern Sector Development Team (Ageing and services for older people)
- ▶ Eastern Transport Coalition
- ▶ Emergency Management Victoria
- ▶ EMR Action on Alcohol Flagship Group
- ▶ EMR Social Issues Council
- ▶ EMR Emergency Management Group
- ▶ EMR Local Government Healthy Ageing Group
- ▶ HealthAbility (formerly, Carrington Health)
- ▶ Inner East Community Health Catchment (Integrated Health Plan)
- ▶ Inner East Primary Health Partnership
- ▶ International Students Partnership Network
- ▶ Local Government Victoria
- ▶ Melbourne Water
- ▶ Municipal Association of Victoria
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- ▶ Q-East Alliance
- ▶ Regional Family Violence Partnership
- ▶ Together for Equality and Respect Partnership
- ▶ Victoria Police
- ▶ Whitehorse Business Group and Trader Groups
- ▶ Women's Health East
- ▶ Yarra Valley Water
- ▶ Youth Issues Network

Community engagement

The Plan has been developed with the assistance of the Whitehorse community through the “Shaping Whitehorse” community engagement process.

Building upon the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040, Shaping Whitehorse sought input from the community to help inform Council’s *Financial Plan 2021—2031*, the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021—2025* and the *Asset Plan 2022—2032* (which will be developed in 2022). This engagement with the local community was achieved through a survey, pop up events, focus group sessions, partnership workshops and a deliberative community panel, resulting in the identification of key priorities and strategies for our community’s health and wellbeing over the next four years.

“Developing programs that connect young people together (e.g., letter writing campaigns, game nights, clubs/interest groups).”

FReeZA Committee participant

October 2020

Cross-Council Project Working Group establishes health and wellbeing domains

March 2021

Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021 shared with community

Mar–Apr 2021

Broad community engagement: surveys, pop-ups, focus groups

Jun–Aug 2021

Community Deliberative Panel

July–Sept 2021

Councillors and Council officers shape and refine

Outcomes of community engagement are described in Appendix 3.



Core business for health and wellbeing

Much of Council's core business protects, promotes and enhances the health and wellbeing of the people of Whitehorse. This work is reflected in the *Council Plan 2021—2025*.



The focus of the Plan for 2021–2025

In many ways, Whitehorse is a healthy place to live - most people report their health as excellent, very good or good⁷ — but there is always room for improvement.

The most important areas for Council and partners to focus on over the next four years towards the Community Vision 2040 were identified through the bringing together of:

- the values and priorities expressed by the people of Whitehorse through the [Community Vision 2040](#), the recommendations arising from the Shaping Whitehorse community engagement and deliberative processes, and the Child and Young Person engagement program [Appendix 3]
- analysis of the current and projected health and wellbeing challenges for our population, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic [[Health and Wellbeing Profile 2021](#) and Appendix 4]
- the priorities of the Council Plan 2021-2025
- the priorities of our health and wellbeing partner organisations [Appendix 5]
- directions of national, state and local policies [see Related Policies, Strategies and Plans]
- the strengths of the municipality and its people. These strengths, or foundations, are the existing infrastructure, systems, natural environment, organisations, programs, services, social networks and people that make up the diverse and vibrant City of Whitehorse

Health and wellbeing objectives and strategies for the four years are defined across eleven domains which, together, reflect the breadth and depth of Council's role in protecting health and promoting wellbeing and active living. These domains are:

- ▶ Healthy Start for Life
- ▶ Healthy Relationships
- ▶ Healthy Behaviours
- ▶ Health Protection
- ▶ Mental Health and Wellbeing
- ▶ Healthy Ageing
- ▶ Access and Participation
- ▶ Social Cohesion
- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Neighbourhood Liveability
- ▶ Climate Change Mitigation

⁷ 80.5% of women and 78.5% of men. Victorian Agency for Health Information (2019), Victorian Population Health Survey 2017.

Across all of the domains, five broad health and wellbeing priorities emerged for the City of Whitehorse to focus on for the next four years: mental wellbeing, physical activity, social and neighbourhood connection, social inclusion (including digital inclusion) and climate change mitigation.



Mental wellbeing



Physical activity



Social and neighbourhood connection



Social inclusion, including digital inclusion



Climate change mitigation

The plan to improve health and wellbeing

The *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* recognises and builds on the strengths, or foundations, that make up the diverse and vibrant City of Whitehorse. These are the existing infrastructure, systems, natural environment, organisations, programs, services, social networks and people.

On the following pages are the Plan's health and wellbeing objectives across eleven domains accompanied by impact indicators that will help us measure progress towards achieving them. Strategies to achieve the objectives for the four years and what we will do in the first year of the Plan are all described.

Each domain includes an indicative list of the areas of Council and importantly (as the health and wellbeing of the community is a collaborative effort and not achieved by Council alone) the partner organisations that are involved in achieving the health and wellbeing objective.

Many of Council's strategies, plans and policies are aligned with and support the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025*. The full list is provided in Appendix 2, however the most significant ones are listed in the relevant domain.



Healthy Start for Life

Childhood and adolescence is a period of rapid cognitive, biological and social development and is the most critical in influencing a person's health and wellbeing throughout life.

Objective

Over the period 2021-2025 more children and young people in Whitehorse will have the best possible start in life

Four-year indicators

- Increase participation of children in maternal child health and early childhood services
- Children meet key childhood milestones (per the Early Years Plan)
- Improved agency response to family referrals (capability, capacity, functioning deficits)

Strategies to achieve the objective

Support children and families at key transitional points, i.e. post-natal, moving from home to early years' education, kindergarten to school, primary school to secondary school and secondary school to tertiary education or employment.

Engage young people in determining how best to support their social and emotional needs.

Tailor Council programs and services to meet the health, social and emotional needs expressed by young people in our community.

Support parenting of children and adolescents.

Promote community information and resources to assist new parents.

Advocate for improved agency response to family referrals and for supports for children with learning deficits.

Build partnerships, advocate for and support the growth of mental health services that are accessible in Whitehorse, in particular for children and young people aged 6-24 years.

Work with key government and agency groups to build upon and expand prevention and response strategies to reduce the incidence of family breakdown, family violence and child abuse in the community.

Provide opportunities for children and young people's creativity and social skills development.

Advocate for a coordinated service response to address the needs of vulnerable children, youth and families including resourcing of case management services.

Facilitate access to childhood dental services and healthy food options in Council's early years' service.

Promote childhood immunisation and facilitate access to child care.

What we will do in the first year

Develop the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan

Develop the Whitehorse Municipal Early Years Plan

Deliver children's community arts program and artist in schools program

Host the children's Friendship Group at Strathdon House and Orchard Precinct

Who is involved

- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Eastern Access Community Health (EACH)
- ▶ ParentZone
- ▶ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- ▶ Orange Door
- ▶ Eastern Mental Health Service Coordination Alliance (EMHSCA)

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan
- ▶ Municipal Early Years Plan
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy



Healthy Relationships

Healthy family, peer and intergenerational relationships provide the foundations for everyone to develop and grow and enjoy a full, healthy and rewarding life.

Objective

By 2025 we will see an increased capacity of Council, its partners and the community to respond to and prevent bullying, elder abuse, child abuse and family violence

Four-year impacts

- Increased awareness of the issue of family violence and elder abuse (including what constitutes family violence)
- Increased knowledge about the drivers of elder abuse, family violence and all forms of violence against women
- Increased knowledge of respectful relationships amongst adolescents
- Increased knowledge of organisational and individual responsibilities covered by MARAM Framework.
- Increased knowledge of how to respond to reports of elder abuse
- LGBTIQ+ people and people of CALD background have increased access to information about supports for FV and mental wellbeing.
- Increased collaboration between Council and community to promote gender equality and the prevention of family violence in the local area.
- Increased collaboration and coordination within Council to respond to and prevent family violence and elder abuse.

Strategies to achieve the objective

Implement the FV Prevention Action Plan 2021-2025 in collaboration with the community

Educate Council staff and the community about family violence and elder abuse and what to do in responding to a situation where abuse is happening.

Educate Council staff and the community about the impacts of family violence on women and men, boys and girls, gender diverse people and people with a disability.

Educate young people about how to have respectful relationships, how to recognise the signs and behaviours of unhealthy relationships and how to access support.

Support the education of young people about bullying and advocate for law enforcement/consequences.

Collaborate to support LGBTIQ+ community members, especially young people.

Provide opportunities for different generations of people to come together to share knowledge, skills and experiences.

Advocate for family violence and universal health services to ensure cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and families.

Inform a strategic sector response about the co-occurrence of harmful drug and alcohol use, mental illness and family violence presenting to Council MCH services by exploring partnerships and evidence through consultation and research.

Collaborate with the family violence sector to increase access for adults and children with a disability.

Promote themes around healthy and respectful relationships at all ages through arts, cultural, recreation, health and community programs.

Provide information and assistance to victims of family violence and elder abuse to help them get the support they want and need.

Promote and encourage the Whitehorse business community to create leadership and mentoring opportunities for women.

What we will do in the first year

Lead the Whitehorse Collaborative Action Network for Prevention of Violence Against Women (CAN4PVAW).

Partner in the EMR Together for Equality and Respect Strategy (TFER) and the Eastern Elder Abuse Network (EEAN).

Align the Whitehorse Family Violence Prevention Action Plan with Council's Gender Equality Action Plan.

Collaborate with members of the CAN4PVAW, TFER and EEAN to implement call to action campaigns, projects and events.

Produce an information pack (hard copy and online) for international students in Whitehorse that includes information about mental health supports and what Australian law says about informed consent.

Implement awareness raising campaigns that address prevention of family violence, violence against women and elder abuse.

Seek further opportunities to roll out gender equality initiatives in Sports Clubs and the broader community in Whitehorse.

Collaborate on a training program for the FV services sector covering the barriers facing people who live with a disability and ways to overcome these.

Increase networks and information sharing between Council departments, CAN4PVAW members and Chinese support services.

Deliver seminars for parents, carers and children/ adolescents covering respectful relationships, healthy masculinity, parenting and mental wellbeing.

Adapt Council's Women's Safety Cards for identified priority groups.

Determine and collect data for evaluation.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Whitehorse Home and Community Services
- ▶ Recreation and Leisure Services
- ▶ People and Culture
- ▶ EMR Together for Equality and Respect Partnership
- ▶ Whitehorse Collaborative Action Network for Prevention of Violence against Women (CAN4PVAW)
- ▶ Eastern Elder Abuse Network (EEAN)
- ▶ Eastern Health, Health Promotion
- ▶ EDVOS
- ▶ HealthAbility community health service
- ▶ Orange Door
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Municipal Early Years Plan
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan



Mental Health and Wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on community life have had a profound impact on people's mental wellbeing.

Objective

By 2025 people in Whitehorse will feel more resilient and re-connected to their community

Four-year impacts

- Improved community resilience measure
- Increased volunteering rates
- Improved Social Infrastructure Index
- Increased participation rates in Council's arts, cultural, recreation, environmental, health and leisure activities

Strategies to achieve the objective

Provide information, services and programs across Council to promote social connection and support people's mental wellbeing, including intergenerational activities.

Connect community members to social support, and health and wellbeing services and programs in their local area.

Recognise the needs of young people, international students and people most disadvantaged in the community as a result of the pandemic, in our approach.

Ensure tailored approaches to mental wellbeing for different ages and genders and for communities with specific needs.

Encourage more small-scale opportunities such as local Repair Cafés and neighbourhood collaborations.

Bring people together from across the municipality (people who live, work, study and recreate in Whitehorse) to reconnect with Council arts, cultural, recreation and leisure programs and services.

Make it easy to volunteer within Whitehorse.

Promote good news to counteract negative social narratives.

"A place free of harm, area to sit with yourself and take a moment to step away from what is worrying you."

FReeZA Committee participant

What we will do in the first year

Develop the Municipal Youth Plan and Early Years Plan.

Develop the Diversity Plan.

The needs of people with lived experience of mental illness inform the Disability Action Plan.

Diversify planned activities at the Nunawading Community Hub to include community engagement sessions, group exercise and wellness programs and social activities or events.

Implement a Creative Wellbeing Workshop Series at Box Hill Community Arts Centre.

Collaborate with neighbouring Councils in the Joint Health and Wellbeing online Series, which has a focus on mental wellbeing.

Engage the community in the development of Council's Volunteer and Community Participation Strategy.

Implement the Jobs for Victoria Project with Box Hill Institute to increase local employment opportunities.

Implement the Working for Victoria (State funded) program across Council.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Strategic Communications and Customer Service
- ▶ Youth Services
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ Community groups
- ▶ HealthAbility community health service
- ▶ Neighbourhood and Community Houses
- ▶ Neighbouring LGAs
- ▶ Tertiary institutions
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Community Participation and Volunteering Strategy
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan
- ▶ Reconciliation Strategy
- ▶ Recreation Strategy
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy
- ▶ Gambling Policy



Healthy Behaviours

Often referred to as lifestyle, these are the things we do every day which have a powerful influence on our physical health and mental wellbeing.

Objective

By 2025 people in Whitehorse will be enjoying more physical activity and a healthier diet

Four-year impacts

- Reduced rate of people who are sedentary or insufficiently physically active
- Increased rate of people who complied with fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines

Strategies to achieve the objective

Plan, develop and partner to create built environments and programs that enable the community to be active.

Ensure public spaces, recreation and play spaces are safe and are accessible to all.

Increase information and opportunities for the community to consume, cook, share and grow food.

Promote participation in structured and unstructured physical activity.

Encourage physical activity and social interactions in the community e.g. promote the benefits of owning and walking a dog, joining cycling clubs, park runs, walking groups etc.

What we will do in the first year

Engage and collaborate with the community on the use of Strathdon House and Orchard Precinct to deliver activities encouraging physical activity and consumption of vegetables.

Conduct community engagement, including pop up displays, at public open spaces.

Implement active transport programs encouraging people to cycle and walk in the municipality.

Collaborate with local sports clubs and other community groups to increase community participation.

Get the message out and incentivise people to re-engage with their memberships in recreation and leisure programs.

Investigate innovations for families to participate in gardening and growing food at the child care services in Council leisure facilities.

Implement the Easy Ride Route network to encourage more short trips by bicycle.

Plan and deliver walking and cycling improvements in Box Hill.

Educate individuals and families about healthy eating through provision of nutritious meals and sharing recipes by Whitehorse Early Learning Services and Home and Community Services.

Who is involved

- ▶ Engineering and Investment
- ▶ Leisure and Recreation Services
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ Community Safety
- ▶ Whitehorse Home and Community Services
- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ HealthAbility community health service
- ▶ Community groups
- ▶ Sports clubs
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Recreation Strategy
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Box Hill Integrated Transport Strategy
- ▶ Community Road Safety Strategy
- ▶ Cycling Strategy



Health Protection

Individuals and communities can take action to help protect themselves from diseases and other harms in the community.

Objectives

Over the period 2021 to 2025 we will see an upward trend in immunisation rates

Four-year Impacts

- Increased adult, child and adolescent immunisation rates
- Increased participation in immunisation program by people who experience access barriers
- Increased awareness of harms due to non-vaccination

Strategies to achieve the objective

Provide information and education on an annual basis to addresses vaccine hesitancy for identified groups and in ways that meet their access needs.

Collaborate with secondary education providers to reach adolescents with HPV and other vaccines.

Collaborate with community health services and reach out to people who face barriers in accessing immunisation and other health services, including vulnerable residents living in high risk accommodation.

What we will do in the first year

Develop tailored communications with groups who face access barriers to immunisation services (new migrants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, CALD communities and people living in precarious housing).

Participate in the second phase of the collaborative HRAR (High Risk Accommodation Response) project which provides vulnerable communities in high risk accommodation with COVID related education and access to testing and vaccines, provides winter packs and food to those who are struggling and also provides ongoing support and referrals to access health care needs.

Implement the local government adolescent vaccination project.

Who is involved

- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Strategic Communications and Customer Service
- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Access Health and Community,
- ▶ HealthAbility community health service
- ▶ Neighbouring LGAs
- ▶ TAFE
- ▶ Secondary schools
- ▶ Special development schools

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Municipal Early Years Plan
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan



Safety

Feelings or perceptions of safety affect how people move around and freely access all aspects of the municipality – transport, open spaces, activities, facilities and information.

Objective

In 2025 the people of Whitehorse report a greater sense of personal safety both at home and in the community

Four-year impacts

- Reduced number falls/injuries or footpath obstructions in the community reported to Council
- Improved community satisfaction survey
- Reduced requests for graffiti removals
- Increased awareness and understanding of online safety practices
- Improved perception of safety in the community
- Decrease in the number of properties with footpath obstructions, such as overhanging vegetation
- Increased number of local businesses achieving a 5-Star Rating and recognition for their food safety, infection control and hygiene practices

Strategies to achieve the objective

Assess and improve processes for informing Council and the maintenance of Council's footpaths and thoroughfares.

Ensure the Urban Realm and open spaces are conducive to the needs of the local community and businesses.

Partner with other organisations to promote online safety in the community.

Conduct regular risk-based reviews of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan and Sub-Plans and contribute to regional risk-based emergency management planning.

Inform the community about Council's Community Local Law Framework.

Educate the community about keeping footpaths free from obstructions.

Implement strategies to reduce discriminatory attitudes and behaviours (see also Social Cohesion section).

Collaborate with Victoria Police and other agencies to work towards the prevention of crime and to promote community safety.

Seek opportunities to implement smart lighting and CCTV to increase community safety.

Promote Council's 5-Star Food Safe Program to business and the 5-Star Rating to the community.

Develop and promote a new 5-Star Beauty Safe program to business and the 5-Star Rating to the community.

What we will do in the first year

Engage the community in the development of Council's Community Local Laws 2024-2034.

Proactively identify and address 300+ non-compliant properties where footpaths are obstructed.

Promote and activate public open space for business and community use.

Implement the Working for Victoria digital literacy project for older people which includes online safety practices.

Implement the Family Violence Prevention Action Plan.

Develop Council's Diversity Action Plan, Disability Action Plan and Healthy Ageing Plan.

Collaborate with Victoria Police to promote the Community Support Register.

Launch new branding and promote the 5-Star programs.

Implement a new assessment system for the new Beauty Safe program.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Safety
- ▶ Engineering and Investment
- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Victoria Police
- ▶ Emergency Response relief and recovery organisations

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Plan



Healthy Ageing

Being valued, respected and able to participate in community life is important to people of all ages.

Objective

Over 2021-2025 we will see more people ageing well in Whitehorse

Four-year impacts

- Improved type and frequency of imagery of older people and ageing
- Increased awareness of ageism
- Improved attitudes to older people and ageing
- Increased opportunities for participation by underrepresented groups of older people in Council programs and services and programs in the community
- Improved Community Satisfaction survey results with older people and services supporting older people

Strategies to achieve the objective

Celebrate the contribution of older people.

Support and promote intergenerational activities by Council and other agencies.

Implement the Intergenerational Grants program to enable connections between older people and other generations; encourage, facilitate the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience between generations; and tackle ageism towards older people.

Conduct promotional campaigns sharing positive images of people as they age and which proffer a different view to the stereotypes.

Educate the community about ageism.

Advocate for services and supports to help people to age well.

Design arts, cultural, heritage, leisure and recreation programs that are enjoyable for and meet the needs of the diverse population of older people in Whitehorse.

Support partners to provide opportunities for older people's participation.

What we will do in the first year

Develop the Whitehorse Healthy Ageing Plan.

Deliver the Whitehorse Seniors Festival.

Fund and deliver the intergenerational grants program.

Deliver the Midweek Matinee program.

Deliver the Aqualink Fab Living Program for members.

Collaborate in the Tackling Ageism Together campaign.

Conduct Life Stories Intergenerational and Early Childhood Centre Programs.

Employ Working for Victoria Intergenerational Partnerships and Digital Support Workers to support older people.

Conduct baseline review of images in Council publications.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Whitehorse Home and Community Services
- ▶ Strategic Communications and Customer Service
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ Leisure and Recreation Services
- ▶ Neighbourhood and Community Houses
- ▶ Whitehorse Manningham Libraries Corporation
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Community Participation and Volunteering Strategy
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Recreation Strategy
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy



Access and Participation

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing social disparities, such as the lack of access to digital information

Objective

By 2025 there will be fewer barriers for access to information, services and participation in the social and economic life of the municipality

Four-year impacts

- Increased use of translated materials and use of interpreters across Council
- Increased digital competence
- Increased access to devices and the internet
- Increased use of translations and Easy English in Council communications.
- Increased use of Council information, programs and services by recently arrived migrants, people new to Whitehorse, people with a disability and people from non-English speaking backgrounds

Strategies to achieve the objective

Collaborate to implement a digital inclusion project to reduce exclusion for older people and others lacking access to online information and services.

Assist the community to access education and supports in how to get online.

Adopt a best practice approach to the development and operation of the various volunteer programs across Council.

Promote access to community relief services regardless of gender, age or disability.

Undertake Gender Impact Assessments for policies, programs and services of Council that have significant impact on the community.

Implement effective, accessible communications to reach all segments of the Whitehorse population.

Promote the locations of accessible free secure internet access in the municipality.

Promote accessible communications for Council and other organisations.

What we will do in the first year

Develop Council's Participation and Volunteering Strategy.

Develop the Disability Action Plan, the Diversity Action Plan and the Healthy Ageing Plan.

Apply a gender lens to the review of the Emergency Management Plans.

Host a Digital Connection Group

Scope and design a digital inclusion project, including an accompanying community engagement strategy.

Deliver digital literacy support to senior groups in Whitehorse.

Deliver a digital support program to Mountain View Cottage clients.

Run accessible communications training for the community and Council.

Produce and distribute translated and Easy English versions of Welcome to Whitehorse.

Assist government agencies and local not-for-profit organisations to reach new migrants with information about their services.

Inform international students about Council and community life at Tertiary Orientation Week events.

Ensure access to Community Arts programs for people funded through the NDIS.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Whitehorse Home and Community Services
- ▶ Community Safety
- ▶ HealthAbility community health service
- ▶ Inner East Primary Care Partnership
- ▶ Neighbourhood and Community Houses
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Affordable Housing Policy
- ▶ Rates Hardship Assistance Policy
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Plan



Social Cohesion

Social cohesion means we all have a sense of belonging and feel connected to, and responsible for, our community.

Objective

By 2025 our community is more inclusive of diversity

Four-year impacts

- Increased awareness of discrimination
- Reduced discriminatory attitudes
- Increased participation in intergenerational programs

Strategies to achieve the objective

Promote, support, advocate for and facilitate an environment for social cohesion.

Support and promote intergenerational, intercultural and interfaith activities.

Partner in activities that raise awareness of discrimination related to gender, age, disability, faith and racial diversity.

Build the capacity across Council and the community to support and be responsive to people who are experiencing discrimination (people with a disability, people of non-English speaking backgrounds, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people who are LGBTIQ+, especially young people).

Embed the stories of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, new migrants, asylum seekers and international students within the narrative of Whitehorse.

Learn from local Aboriginal community members and continue to celebrate Aboriginal culture.

What we will do in the first year

Develop Council's Diversity Action Plan, Reconciliation Strategy, Healthy Ageing Plan and Disability Action Plan.

Develop the Municipal Youth Plan.

Implement the Family Violence Prevention Action Plan.

Deliver the Tackling Ageism Campaign.

Implement Disability Awareness Training for community and Council.

Collaborate to increase awareness in Council and the community of issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community, including the higher rates of mental health and suicidal ideation/ attempts in the Rainbow community, especially among young people.

Ensure a COVID-safe and inclusive cultural events program.

Promote Aboriginal history and affairs.

Highlight Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung history in our local community and through cultural events.

Develop the Welcome to Whitehorse resource and promote Council programs, events and festivals for new migrants and international students.

Support local not for profit organisations to host welcoming social activities for new migrants and international students.

Establish a social cohesion working group to assist Council plan and deliver projects and events.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Whitehorse Home and Community Services
- ▶ Strategic Marketing and Customer Services
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ Family Access Network
- ▶ Women's Health East
- ▶ Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- ▶ International Students Partnership
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Community Participation and Volunteering Strategy
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Action Plan
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan
- ▶ Reconciliation Strategy
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy
- ▶ Recreation Strategy



Neighbourhood Liveability

A liveable neighbourhood is one that is safe, accessible and attractive, and provides good connectivity

Objective

By 2025 our community will enjoy more liveable neighbourhoods

Four-year impacts

- Improved Liveability Index
- Improved Social Infrastructure Index
- Improved perceptions of safety in the community
- Increased access to public open space
- Reduced complaints regarding domestic animals

Strategies to achieve the objective

Look to implement 20-minute neighbourhoods when Victorian planning guidance is provided. In the meantime, continue to strengthen, advocate for and facilitate well-connected neighbourhoods that link with surrounding regions.

Facilitate opportunities for people to socialise/meet with others in their neighbourhood.

Use innovative ideas from the community for community infrastructure (e.g. pop up gardens, cafes with outdoor dining in carparks), ensuring need and easy access/navigation

Seek opportunities to open up and diversify use of Council spaces and facilities for multi-use, e.g. on-demand lighting, casual use sports infrastructure such as basketball/netball rings, oval walking tracks, picnic seats, community gardens; unlock athletics tracks, open toilet facilities.

Expand the in-ground parking sensor strategy to effectively manage timed parking restrictions across the municipality.

Implement supports for small local business to continue to attract and meet the needs of the community.

What we will do in the first year

Deliver on key objectives of the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Administer Round 3 Whitehorse Business Grants Program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implement the expanded in-ground sensor parking program.

Engage the community in neighbourhood place-making activities and events.

Implement outcomes of the on-demand lighting trial.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Safety
- ▶ City Planning and Development
- ▶ Engineering and Investment
- ▶ Leisure and Recreation Services
- ▶ Business groups
- ▶ Health Ability community health service
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Domestic Animal Management Plan
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Open Space Strategy
- ▶ Play Space Strategy
- ▶ Recreation Strategy



Climate Change Mitigation

Human health and wellbeing is dependent on a healthy planet

Objective

By 2025 we will see more individuals, organisations and businesses taking action to mitigate and build resilience to the effects of Climate Change

Four-year impacts

- Increased community skills and knowledge
- Increased community activity in collaboration, advocacy and partnerships related to climate change mitigation
- Increased active transport participation rates
- Increased consumption of vegetables
- Participation in the Food Organics and Garden Organics, recycling and composting programs (monitoring of volume collected)
- Increased number of trees planted
- Increased % of tree canopy cover

Strategies to achieve the objective

Improve Environmental Sustainable Design outcomes in the development of Council sites and through planning assessment process to achieve minimal impact on the environment both initially (in construction) and in the long term.

Encourage people to come together in taking action in their neighbourhoods to improve health and wellbeing and contribute to mitigating or adapting to climate change

Provide educational opportunities about actions that improve health and wellbeing and contribute to mitigating or adapting to climate change, e.g. tree planting, growing and eating more vegetables, developing bike riding skills.

Provide information about how to be more resilient to the impacts of climate change, in homes, workplaces and businesses.

Provide accessible information and programs for the community to reduce waste to landfill, including ways to compost organic waste.

Promote positive stories in the community such as sustainable business and manufacturing practices happening in Whitehorse.

Review the EMR Heatwave Plan.

Look to expand the scope of the Whitehorse 5-Star Food Safety Program to include availability of healthy food options.

Implement the Action Plan of the Urban Forest Strategy.

Investigate the development of a corporate recycling policy

Collaborate with other Councils and regional bodies on climate change action and advocacy.

What we will do in the first year

Commence development of the Sustainability Strategy 2030, including the Climate Response Plan, prioritising actions with both a community and corporate focus.

In partnership with the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, implement the Business Energy Saver program for local businesses, providing incentives for the adoption of energy efficiency measures.

In partnership with the Australian Energy Foundation provide an independent expert advice service for residents about solar panels installations and home energy efficiency practices.

Undertake the partnership project Healthy Me – Healthy Planet with WM Libraries Corp, Manningham Council and Deakin University.

Engage the community in planning and delivering health and wellbeing activities at the Strathdon Precinct.

Feature topics such as gardening, healthy eating, reducing waste and home composting in the 2022 Sustainable Living Week and Smarter Living programs.

Promote Council's new Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) service for the community to capture and recycle food waste.

Deliver Bike Skills program to increase confidence in bike riding.

Who is involved

- ▶ Community Engagement and Development
- ▶ City Services
- ▶ Health and Family Services
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Services
- ▶ WM Libraries
- ▶ Neighbouring Councils
- ▶ Deakin University
- ▶ Australian Energy Foundation
- ▶ Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- ▶ Not for Profit Organisations and Community Groups

Related Council strategies, plans and policies

- ▶ Sustainability Strategy
- ▶ Interim Climate Response Plan
- ▶ Urban Forest Strategy
- ▶ Urban Biodiversity Strategy
- ▶ Waste Management Strategy
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Plan



Monitoring and evaluation

Each Council department will monitor and report on progress for the *Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* as part of Council's quarterly and annual reporting cycles. The longer term four-year objectives/impacts will be thoroughly evaluated in 2025 and reported to Council.

Appendices



Appendix 1: Legislation

INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights

Australia is a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1978) and the International Covenant of Civic and Political Rights. Australia is committed to the protection and promotion of human rights for not only all Australians, but for all human kind.

Australia became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

The Racial Discrimination Act (1975)

The Racial Discrimination Act (1975) focuses on the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of a person's race, colour or national ethnic origin. Councils, as well as all members of the Australian community are obliged to eliminate discrimination under this Act.

Sex Discrimination Act (1984)

The Sex Discrimination Act (1984) makes it against the law to discriminate on the basis of sex, marital or relationship status, and pregnancy. It also protects against sexual harassment. The Act was amended in 2013 to make discrimination on the basis of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status against the law.

Disability Acts

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Victorian Disability Act 2006 provide the framework for addressing barriers experienced by people with disability through the development of Council's Disability Action Plan. This legislation states:

Disability Act 2006 – Section 38

The Victorian Disability Act 2006 requires all public bodies including local government to develop a Disability Action Plan which identified the following four key areas that must be addressed:

- a) Reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- b) Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- c) Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- d) Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability

Councils are required to report the outcomes of the Disability Action Plan in their Annual Report.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 – Section 61

This broad rights based legislation aims to eliminate as far as possible discrimination towards people with disability. The action plan must include provisions relating to:

- a) The devising of policies and programs to achieve the objects of this Act; and
- b) The communication of these policies and programs to persons within the action planner; and
- c) The review of practices within the action planner with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and
- d) The setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonably be determined against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of the Act may be assessed; and
- e) The means, other than those referred to in paragraph(d), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and
- a) The appointment of persons within the action planner to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) (inclusive).

VICTORIAN LEGISLATION

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)

Victoria's Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 describes the twenty fundamental rights contained in the legislation promote and protect the freedom, respect, equality and dignity of all people in Victoria. The Charter requires that all levels of government and other public bodies comply with these rights and consider the relevant human rights contained in the legislation when developing laws, policies and when making decisions.

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005: Child Safety Standards

To help ensure the safety of children Victoria introduced compulsory minimum standards (under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005) that apply to organisations providing services for children. These were implemented in Council services from January 2016.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management (MARAM) Framework

Established in law under Part 11 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 the MARAM Framework outlines and underpins the necessary policies, practice and procedural considerations required for Information Sharing Entities, including Councils, to align with to be compliant with the legislated requirements for information sharing about family violence and child safety: Part 5A of the Family Violence Protection Act (FVPA) 2008 and the Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2019 and 41ZA of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act.

Climate Change Act 2017

The Climate Change Act 2017 recognises that Victoria's climate is changing and requires certain decision-makers to have regard to climate change and to consider its potential impacts and contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. Local government is identified as a decision-maker that must consider climate change when preparing a municipal public health and wellbeing plan.

Gender Equality Act 2020

Under the Gender Equality Act 2020 Whitehorse City Council is a defined public entity. The Act requires defined public entities to promote gender equity in the workplace and when developing policies and programs and delivering services to the public.

Appendix 2: City of Whitehorse Strategies and Plans that play a role in protecting and enhancing health and wellbeing

- ▶ Affordable Housing Policy
- ▶ Arts and Cultural Strategy 2014-2022
- ▶ Box Hill Integrated Transport Strategy 2020
- ▶ Community Engagement Policy
- ▶ Community Local Law 2014
- ▶ Community Participation and Volunteering Strategy
- ▶ Community Road Safety Strategy 2013
- ▶ Cycling Strategy 2016
- ▶ Digital Strategy 2017-2020
- ▶ Disability Action Plan
- ▶ Diversity Action Plan
- ▶ Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Action Plan
- ▶ Gambling Policy
- ▶ Healthy Ageing Plan
- ▶ Integrated Transport Strategy 2011
- ▶ Integrated Water Management Strategy (under development)
- ▶ Interim Climate Response Plan 2020-2022
- ▶ Investment & Economic Development Extension Strategy 2020-2022
- ▶ Municipal Early Years Plan
- ▶ Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2020
- ▶ Municipal Youth Plan
- ▶ Open Space Strategy 2007
- ▶ Play Space Strategy (under review)
- ▶ Rates Hardship Assistance Policy
- ▶ Reconciliation Strategy
- ▶ Recreation Strategy 2015-2024
- ▶ Revenue & Rating Plan
- ▶ Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2014-2024
- ▶ Urban Forest Strategy 2018-2021
- ▶ Waste Management Strategy 2018-2028

Appendix 3: Outcomes of Community Engagement

SHAPING WHITEHORSE

The Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 was developed with the assistance of the Whitehorse community through the Shaping Whitehorse community engagement process, which included broad community engagement as well as a deliberative panel process. Building upon the Community Vision 2040, Shaping Whitehorse sought input from the community to help inform Council's Financial Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Asset Plan 2022-2032.

The community engagement process for Shaping Whitehorse responds to Council's obligation under the Local Government Act 2020 as well as Council's recently adopted Whitehorse Engagement Policy (2020). Councillors have played an essential role by, informing the parameters and objectives of the Shaping Whitehorse engagement and contributing significant input and feedback for each of these strategic plans.

Broad Shaping Whitehorse engagement was through a community survey, pop up events and focus groups with a total reach of 287 people. Face to face engagement was severely curtailed by the social restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus groups included discussions with young people, Chinese-background Australians, culturally diverse communities, women, men and parents with children.

The broad engagement findings of the Shaping Whitehorse engagement process as well as information about the Health and Wellbeing Profile of Whitehorse 2020 were presented to a dedicated, representative Shaping Whitehorse Deliberative Community Panel (Panel) in late June 2021. Panel members were recruited through a public expression of interest (EOI) process and were demographically representative of the municipality. The Panel commenced with 59 people and had 35 completing all discussions and deliberations about local priorities and the future of their community.

Recommendations of the Community Deliberative Panel

In addition to the priorities emerging from the broad engagement findings, information from the Health and Wellbeing Profile of Whitehorse 2020 and the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan priorities, in their deliberations Panel members added what they considered to be priorities based on their own experiences and from other people they know in Whitehorse). From this list, each Panel member then voted for their top five priorities. The full list is documented below, with the **priorities receiving the most votes highlighted in red text**.

Domain: Healthy Start for Life

- Effective parenting
- Participation in education
- Child abuse
- Social activities for children (social skills and interaction)
- Support and acknowledgement of role of extended family members in child raising
- Identifying delays in development of children under seven

Domain: Healthy Relationships

- Family violence; violence against women
- Elder abuse
- Respectful relationships for young people
- Dealing with gender discrimination

Domain: Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Mental wellbeing for all**
- **Tailored mental health approaches for different ages and genders and for communities with specific needs** (in particular young people, international students and people most disadvantaged in the community)
- **Social isolation and loneliness**

Domain: Fair and Equal Society

- **Digital inclusion** (with a focus on public housing tenants, socially isolated people and older people)
- **Equity of access to clubs, services, groups and programs**
- Equity of access to the built environment (universal access)

- Equity of access to information (with focus on people who are from CALD background)
- Youth employment
- Affordable housing
- Gender equality

Domain: Social Cohesion

- Racism
- Intergenerational connections
- **Volunteering and participation**
- **Welcoming new communities**
- Promoting human rights
- Social enterprises

Domain: Healthy Ageing

- Ageism
- Transport/ mobility

Domain: Healthy Behaviours

- **Physical activity**
- Healthy eating
- Alcohol harms
- Gambling related harms
- Smoking/ tobacco

Domain: Health Protection

- Tailored health literacy approaches
- Health service access
- Immunisation

Domain: Safety

- Falls in the home and community
- Online safety
- Community lighting
- Police presence
- Graffiti and cleanliness

Domain: Neighbourhood Liveability

- 20-minute neighbourhoods
- Connectivity
- Flexibility around neighbourhood activities
- Local shared spaces
- Safety in and around bushland areas

Domain: Climate Change Mitigation

- Sustainability literacy
- Tree canopy
- Greater adoption of green technology and resources
- Shared resources (e.g. community gardens, programs that fix or enable borrowing of tools)
- Underground electricity

Throughout their deliberations the Panel provided many ideas for actions that could be taken to address many of these priority areas. All of this information was considered in the shaping of the Plan's draft strategies.

Based on all this information Council Officers drafted the Plan's priorities, objectives and strategies which were then reviewed by the Panel for additional feedback in August 2021.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS: VICTORIAN HEALTH AND WELLBEING PRIORITIES

In an online community survey conducted in March and April 2021, ninety-four people shared which Victorian Health and Wellbeing Priorities they thought were priorities for Whitehorse. The most frequently selected priorities were:

- Increasing active living
- Preventing all forms of violence
- Improving mental wellbeing
- Tackling climate change and its impacts on health

CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON ENGAGEMENT

The Child and Young Person engagement program was conducted August – September 2021 to inform the MPHWP and the Early Years and Youth Plans. The engagement included an online survey and focus group conducted with the FReeZA committee⁸. Fifty-seven people completed the online survey and six members of the FReeZA committee participated in the focus group.

The engagement program provided an opportunity for participants to share multiple factors that help them to be happy and healthy. Participants also outlined several ideas for how they can be happier and healthier in the future. Participants provided several reasons why health and wellbeing are important as well as what children and young

⁸ The Whitehorse FReeZA Committee is a group of young volunteers aged 12-25 years who focus on event management in the areas of music, art and culture.

people in Whitehorse think is important regarding their health and wellbeing.

Children

At least 54 per cent (31) of the survey respondents were children (age zero to 11). Within this 54 per cent, 40 per cent (23) of the survey respondents were aged within the nine-to-11-year age group.

A total of 31 children (aged between zero to 11 years) completed the survey. Many of them shared playing such as video games, sport, on playgrounds and outside, in addition to eating healthy food, exercise and spending time with family and friends would make them happier and healthier.

When asked what makes them happy 12 (of the 15 total) children chose 'praying', eight (of the 12 total) chose religion, and seven (of the 11 total) chose the skate park. When asked what makes them healthy six (of the nine total) children chose home schooling.

Young people

Young people (12 to 25 years of age) who completed the survey or participated in the FReeZA Committee workshop, shared that spending quality time with family, friends, and other people who you love and who accept them, exercise, healthy food and looking after their mental health, would make them happier and healthier.

When asked what makes them happy, 14 (of the 15 total) young people chose farmers markets, two (of the two total) chose homework, eight (of the nine total) chose nightlife clubbing, and four (of the five total) chose working. When asked what makes them healthy, seven (of the nine total) young people chose hot drinks, five (of the seven total) chose indoor shopping, two (of the two total) chose take-away food, four (of the five total) chose live theatre, and two (of the two total) chose nightlife clubbing.

Appendix 4: Health and wellbeing priorities emerging from the data

In March 2021 Council released the Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Profile, with an update to data in July 2021. The profile brought together a broad range of demographic and health data as well as information from local sources about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. From this information the following were highlighted as ongoing and emerging priorities for the health and wellbeing of the people of Whitehorse.

- Chronic disease risk factors
- Mental wellbeing
- Family violence and child abuse
- Risks for elder abuse
- International student health
- Health disparity
- Digital exclusion
- Housing affordability
- COVID-19 impacts
- Climate change impacts

CHRONIC DISEASE RISK FACTORS

The full picture of how our risk factors for chronic disease and our mental health have been impacted by COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions is still being played out.

When we compare Whitehorse data from the 2017 Victorian Population Health Survey to other LGAs generally the news is good. The exception being time spent sitting on an average day which is higher than the State average and also the proportion of people not meeting the physical activity guidelines. However, no matter which way the data changes, all our preventable risk factors remain unacceptably high, as for all of Victoria.

In Whitehorse in 2017

- 52.6 per cent of people do not meet either the fruit or vegetable consumption guidelines
- Men are less likely to meet the dietary guidelines for healthy eating than women.
- 46.9 per cent of adults in Whitehorse were overweight or obese and, while this is lower than the Victorian average of 50.8 per cent, it is evident that a significantly large proportion of the population is faced with a higher risk for many chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.
- 46.6 per cent of people in Whitehorse did not obtain sufficient exercise for good health, with 23.3 percent spending eight or more hours sitting on an average weekday.

Source: Victorian Government (2019). Victorian Population Health Survey, 2017.

MENTAL WELLBEING

In Whitehorse, 20.6 per cent of people experience anxiety or depression; 23.6 per cent are female and 17.2 per cent are male.

Source: Victorian Government (2019). Victorian Population Health Survey, 2017.

GAMBLING

In 2019/20 the net expenditure (i.e. losses) on EGMs in the City of Whitehorse was \$37.5 million or \$261 per adult, despite gaming venues being closed for more than three months in the reporting period due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Source: Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation, 2021

ALCOHOL HARM

55.3 per cent of Whitehorse adults have an increased lifetime risk of alcohol-related harm, in comparison to Victoria at 59.5 per cent. Research in 2020, during the COVID-19 restrictions, on the delivery practices of the most popular online alcohol retailers in Australia found 69 per cent advertised a willingness to leave alcohol unattended at an address. With a shift to online alcohol markets, alcohol will be increasingly available to intoxicated persons and minors.

Sources:

Colbert S, Wilkinson C, Thornton L, & Richmond R (2020). COVID-19 and alcohol in Australia: Industry changes and public health impacts. *Drug and alcohol review*, 39(5), 435–440

Victorian Government (2019). Victorian Population Health Survey, 2017.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The VicHealth COVID-19 survey found that people experiencing the most significant health and wellbeing impacts of the second wave of COVID-19 compared to the Victorian population overall were young people aged 18–35 years, people on low incomes, people who were unemployed and people with a self-reported disability.

In December 2020, total employment fell by 1.5 per cent in Whitehorse, with the greatest decline in Retail Trade.

Source: Victorian Government (2020). REMPLAN Economy - Economy, Jobs and Business Insights City of Whitehorse, as at December 2020.

HEALTH DISPARITY

Although Whitehorse is overall a relatively affluent community enjoying good health, the municipality has greater social disparity with more high income earners and more low income earners than other local government areas. Between 2011 and 2016, in Whitehorse the number of households in the low income earner category increased by 10.9% compared to 2.6% in the highest income group.

Unemployment is highest among our young people aged 15 to 24 years at 16.4 per cent

DIGITAL EXCLUSION

The percentage of households with no internet connection in Whitehorse is 11.1 per cent. This is similar to the Melbourne metropolitan rate of 11.3 per cent. However some pockets of Whitehorse have a significantly lower rate, for example a Statistical Area in Burwood with 61.4 per cent of households in social housing has 33.3 per cent of households with no internet connection. Just over twenty per cent of households in this SA do not have a car.

Commonwealth Government's My Aged Care is available only via digital connection – and this is an observed barrier for older clients of Whitehorse Home and Community Services who may have low digital skills, be of non-English speaking background or have limited financial means for internet or digital device access.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

11.8 per cent of households in Whitehorse are in housing stress (rental or mortgage), compared to Victoria 11.4 per cent and Metropolitan Melbourne 11.7 per cent.

Rental housing stress is highest in Box Hill, accounting for 30.5 per cent of all renters. This is followed by Burwood, with 18.6 per cent of renters.

In Whitehorse, 32.7 per cent of households in the bottom 40 per cent of incomes spend more than 30 per cent on housing costs.

Source: Australian Urban Observatory (2018).

In December 2020, the percentage of available affordable lettings in Whitehorse is just 1.4 per cent; significantly lower than Victoria at 11.4 per cent and Metropolitan Melbourne at 7.4 per cent. In Whitehorse in 2019 only 2.1 per cent were affordable lettings. Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance estimates that there is a current shortfall of 2,350 social housing dwellings in Whitehorse.

Source: Victorian Government (2020). DHHS Rental Report, September Quarter.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

For international students the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified their challenges. Emerging and compounding risks for this vulnerable cohort include:

- Heightened risk of poor mental health
- Financial insecurity, loss of employment, limited support from families in home countries; growing personal indebtedness and vulnerability to financial scams
- Housing insecurity, risk of homelessness, overcrowding in shared housing
- Vulnerability to housing, employment and sexual exploitation
- Visa insecurity
- Isolation and loneliness, fracturing of relationships
- Difficulties accessing supports
- Developing online gaming addictions

Source: Jeffrey, K. (2020) Insights from Inner East Primary Care Partnership on International Student Wellbeing. IEPCP, Melbourne.

FAMILY VIOLENCE, CHILD ABUSE AND ELDER ABUSE

Increases across the board:

Indicator	Observation
Family violence incidents in Whitehorse reported 2019/20	Average of 25 incidents/week Increased severity, complexity and newly presenting cases
Between April-June 2020 in Victoria	Increased by around 6%
Young victim-survivors recorded	Increased by around 6%
Number of young people under FV protection order	
Rates of family violence incidents in Whitehorse in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the same time in 2019	Increased by 25.2%
DHHS Intensive Infant Risk Panel reports	Increased number at very high risk
Between April-June 2020 older people in Victoria under FV protection order	Increased by 10%

Department of Health and Human Service's Intensive Infant Risk Panel reported a large increase in the number of infants at very high risk, the level of family violence being reported as very high, with children present during the violence and in some cases also being held while it was happening.

Between April and the end of June 2020 the number of young victim-survivors recorded by Victoria Police has increased by around six per cent , and the number of unique young people protected by a family violence protection order has also increased by around six per cent.

Source: Victorian Government (2020). Crime Statistics Agency data portal

The City of Whitehorse has almost half the rate of recorded family violence incidents for Victoria. However, there were still 1,302 family violence incidents reported in 2019/2020; an average of 25 incidents every week. It is estimated that only 25 per cent of family violence incidents are reported to the police so the true annual number of family violence incidents in Whitehorse may be closer to greater than 5,200 per year, equating to 100 incidents per week.

Sources:

Victorian Government (2020). Crime Statistics Agency December 2020

Hutcheson, E. (2017). Family Violence in the Southern Metropolitan Region – a data analysis. Executive Summary. Southern Metropolitan Region Integrated Family Violence Executive Committee

Rates of family violence incidents in Whitehorse have been historically around half that of the State average, however in the second quarter of 2020 rates of family violence incidents in Whitehorse increased by 25.2 per cent compared to the same time in 2019. By contrast, the State average only increased by 12 per cent, indicating that in Whitehorse during the start of the pandemic family violence incidents were increasing at a rate of more than double that of the State.

Source: Victorian Government (2020). Crime Statistics Agency December 2020

Between April and the end of June 2020, the number of older people under protection/intervention orders increased by 10 per cent, compared to the same period in 2019.

Source: Victorian Government (2020). Crime Statistics Agency data portal.

Research by Respect Victoria (2020) found there to be a high degree of resilience by older people in the face of the threat of COVID-19 and the pandemic response. However, there is an apparent increase in ageism, which is a known contributor to elder abuse. Risk factors for elder abuse that have increased during the pandemic response include: social isolation, less access to health care and exercise, more reliance on the use of technology, financial stress and carer stress.

Source: Parkinson, D, O'Halloran, K & Dinning, J (2020). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic response on older people. Melbourne, Victoria: Respect Victoria.

A key driver of family violence is gender inequality:

- In Whitehorse we have a higher percentage of females with higher education and working as professionals than men, yet women are much less likely to be holding managerial positions.
- There are more women working part time and with lower weekly incomes than men
- And, like the rest of Melbourne, women do the bulk of unpaid domestic work, and are more likely to care for children and for others.

All of which impacts women's safety, independence, financial security and involvement in decision-making.

Source: ABS (2016) Census of Population and Housing

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

The impacts of climate change on human health are well documented and there is clear rationale to act.

Climate change is likely to be a factor in thunderstorm asthma events by increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations, temperatures affecting aeroallergen concentrations and extended pollen seasons.

During the thunderstorm asthma event in 2016, across Melbourne there were 672% excess respiratory-related presentations to emergency departments, and 992% excess asthma-related admissions to hospital, especially individuals of Indian or Sri Lankan birth (10% vs 1%) and south-east Asian birth (8% vs 1%) compared with previous 3 years. Of all presentations to emergency departments:

- The mean age was 32 years
- 56 per cent were male
- Only 28 per cent had current doctor-diagnosed asthma.

People of Asian or Indian background may be at higher risk of future thunderstorm asthma hospital admissions. In Whitehorse over 18% of the population were born in SE Asia or India. In Whitehorse, 19.9% of the adult population have been diagnosed with asthma at some time in their life.

Sources:

Thien F, Beggs P, Csutoros D et al. (2018). The Melbourne epidemic thunderstorm asthma event 2016: an investigation of environmental triggers, effect on health services, and patient risk factors. *Lancet Planet Health* 2018; www.thelancet.com/planetary-health Vol 2 June 2018 e255

Beggs PJ (2016). *Impacts of climate change on allergens and allergic diseases*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2016

Albertine JM, Manning WJ, DaCosta M, Stinson KA, Muilenberg ML, Rogers CA, (2014). Projected carbon dioxide to increase grass pollen and allergen exposure despite higher ozone levels. PLoS One. 2014; 9: e111712

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In the 2014 Melbourne heatwave there was a 24 per cent increase in mortality. Elderly people, those with existing health conditions and people using medications or abusing alcohol or drugs are at heightened risk.

Source: Victorian Government (2014). The Health Impacts of the January 2014 Heatwave in Victoria, Department of Health.

Appendix 5: Outcomes of Partner Workshops, Stakeholder Consultations and Desktop Review

In April and May 2021 Council held two online workshops for 25 internal and external Whitehorse health and wellbeing service providers and stakeholders. Council also conducted 22 one-on-one consultations with external stakeholders in March – August 2021 and a desktop review of organisations' strategic plans.

This engagement and review identified potential shared health and wellbeing priorities and strategic partnership opportunities to achieve health and wellbeing outcomes for Whitehorse.

KEY THEMES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Overall the key themes and opportunities that emerged from the partner engagement and review were:

- Co-benefits of addressing climate change at local level for health and wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing and resilience is affected across the board due to pandemic; but especially so for isolated older people, young people and those economically stressed
- Multiple benefits of intergenerational activities, including addressing ageism
- Opportunities and challenges of digital information and services; lack of access for older people and people on low incomes
- Need to reconnect people with local services, volunteering opportunities, programs and community groups; bring people together to broaden their social networks
- Volunteering promotion and adaptation
- Student employment and local opportunities
- Healthier and active living and reducing sedentary time
- Health literacy around preventable admissions to hospital: asthma and injury prevention
- Access to Family Violence services for adults and children with a disability and people of Chinese-background
- People living in shared accommodation having access services
- CALD grieving families and vaccine hesitancy
- Support of LGBTIQ+ community, older non-English speaking people on parent visas, international students and people seeking asylum
- People with a disability not able to access NDIS and professionals with suitable knowledge
- Respect and inclusion; challenge discrimination (racism, ageism and ableism) and promote healthier masculinity

- Complexity of family violence, child abuse and elder abuse due to pandemic
- Existing and ongoing partnerships we can build on for advocacy and prevention actions, e.g. prevention of violence against women, affordable housing, emissions reduction

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

Australian Iranian Society of Victoria
(Forest Hill)

Carrington Health/health Ability

Centre for Holistic Health

Chinese Community Social Services
Centre Inc. (Box Hill)

Chinese Nurses Association (Box Hill)

Deakin University, Health Promotion

Department of Families, Fairness and
Housing

Eastern Community Legal Centre

Eastern Health, Health Promotion

Eastern Volunteers (EV)

Family Access Network Services (FAN)

Inner East Primary Care Partnership

Migrant Information Centre (Box Hill)

Neighbourhood Houses

Regional Family Violence Partnership
(RFVP)

Sikh Gurdwara Blackburn (Sri Guru Nanak
Satsang Sabha)

The Hong Kong Club (Mitcham)

Victoria Police

Whitehorse Disability Advisory Group

Whitehorse Manningham Libraries
(WML)

Whitehorse Reconciliation Advisory
Group

DESKTOP REVIEW

Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA)

Eastern Metropolitan Primary Health Network

Integrated Health Promotion Plan: IEPCP, Access Health and Community, healthAbility,
Link Health and Community and Women's Health East

Our Community (Sector Impact Survey)

U3A Nunawading

Endnotes and references

- i. Shown here comparing 2016 population figures to forecasts for 2026. Based on .id Consulting Population Forecasts 2021
- ii. Buck D, Baylis A, Dougall D, Robertson R 2018, A vision for population health: Towards a healthier future, The King's Fund, London.
- iii. World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe 2014, Review of social determinants and the health divide in the WHO European Region: final report, Updated reprint 2014. World Health Organization, Geneva.
- iv. WHO 2021, Social determinants of health, https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1
- v. Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (2021) <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-conditions-disability-deaths>



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