

## **3.0 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED IN THE DISCUSSION PAPERS**

This section summarises the key issues and strategies of each of the 28 discussion papers so that service providers and other readers can have a quick reference to topics of interest. For more background and detail the discussion papers should be referred to. They can be accessed at all Newcastle branch libraries and at <http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/go/communityplan>. The discussion papers cover particular issues (pages 13-27), some planning districts (pages 29-34) and target groups (pages 35-44).

### **3.1 ISSUES**

The issues to be covered in the Community Plan were identified by the Social Plan Advisory Committee (see glossary) and the Community Quadruple Bottom Line Team (see glossary) in response to emerging community concerns about the need for improved service delivery and outcomes.

- ❖ Community Facilities (CF)
- ❖ Community Safety (CS)
- ❖ Complex Needs (CN)
- ❖ Cultural Issues (CI)
- ❖ Events (E)
- ❖ Funding (F)
- ❖ Housing (H)
- ❖ Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- ❖ Lifelong Learning (LL)
- ❖ Public Domain (PD)
- ❖ Public Transport (PT)
- ❖ Recreation (R)
- ❖ Social Capital (SC)
- ❖ Unemployment (U)

### 3.1.1 Community Facilities (CF)

Council provides a wide range of community facilities ranging from grandstands to public toilets to libraries. The discussion paper identifies a need to develop a management approach focused on services rather than things (assets). A review of how services can reflect current trends in demand within current resource constraints will help to determine which facilities should be retained, redeveloped or disposed of.

#### Key Issues

- Integrated service approach to Community Planning
- Responding to the challenges of the future
- Innovative partnerships
- S355 Committees sustainability
- Lack of affordable commercial space in the Inner City

#### Key Strategies

- Adopt an integrated service delivery model approach to managing facilities
- Develop criteria for determining service priorities for Council funding
- Support and complete a Recreation Plan to identify present and future recreational demands, and how they can be met.
- Commit to developing multi-purpose and adaptable community facilities
- Engage in partnerships which can maximise the delivery and use of existing and future assets
- Review the long term role in providing affordable childcare services
- Review the community management model for Council facilities given trend of decreasing volunteer participation
- Identify opportunities for developing/encouraging the provision of community service hubs
- Encourage the provision of community services and facilities in or near mainstreets and parks
- Encourage the Hunter Council to consider how future demand for cemeteries and crematoriums can be met
- Clarify the role of management committees leasing Council assets in line with the Asset Operator Model

### 3.1.2 Community Safety (CS)

“Community Safety” means community members feel free to use a broad range of services at a variety of times and venues. Community safety gives individuals the security necessary to actively participate and move around in their community. It also gives reassurance that should they require it, help will be forthcoming.

#### Key Issues

- Adequate resourcing of crime prevention services
- Public perceptions of crime
- Adequate support for crime prevention initiatives
- Inner City - 24 hour city vs residential amenity
- Crimes associated with drinking of alcohol
- Family violence
- Emergency services

#### Key Strategies

- Continue to incorporate safety by design principles in Council’s planning documents
- Continue to encourage the provision of housing diversity in Council’s planning documents
- Continue to provide support and resourcing for Nightlink and associated initiatives
- Continue to provide support for the PCYC Activity Van operating in the Newcastle area
- Continue to support the Liquor Accord
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to increase usage of its open space and community facilities
- Implement the Community Safety Policy and the Crime Prevention Plans
- Review the Inner City Crime Prevention Plan
- Develop a Public Toilet Strategy
- Encourage the provision of learning and mentoring programs, including those that support the needs of parents
- Support community-building programs that can be implemented across the LGA such as the Walking School Bus and the Street Parties Program

### **3.1.3 Complex Needs (CN)**

People with complex needs continue to be some of the most chronically disadvantaged people in Australia. Complex needs include issues in mental health, drugs and alcohol, and gambling. Often, mental and affective disorders are linked to problems with alcohol dependence or substance use. Mental health disorders can be both a cause and effect of homelessness. Deinstitutionalisation, without adequate community care, has resulted in new forms of institutionalisation – homelessness and imprisonment.

#### **Key Issues**

- Affordable accommodation
- Access to services
- Case coordination

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to encourage the provision of a case coordination approach
- Advocate for and support provision of equitable and adequate long term funding to meet the needs of people with complex needs, improved public transport to access health facilities, improved access to training for workers and access to respite care
- Encourage wider promotion and participation in the existing Newcastle Interagency by service providers to enable information exchange
- Encourage the implementation and review of existing protocols between agencies and service providers
- Monitor the impact of rising operational costs on service providers
- Monitor the impacts of the current General Practitioner shortages

### 3.1.4 Cultural Issues (CI)

Council recognises and acknowledges the fundamental role culture plays in defining dynamic, sustainable and healthy communities. Involvement in culture contributes enormously to personal wellbeing and vibrant communities. Cultural engagement and activity in any form, is how people make sense of their environment, articulate their aspirations and celebrate their uniqueness.

#### Key Issues

- Fostering community wellbeing
- Expanding participation in cultural activities
- Promoting cultural diversity and acceptance
- Celebrating identity locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Developing creative industries and linking business
- Creating vibrant public places and spaces
- Provision of infrastructure
- Generating cultural tourism

#### Key Strategies

- Explore the appropriateness of engaging an Aboriginal Cultural Officer
- In response to the increasing demands on communities for public liability, research the availability of affordable options for small groups to access public liability cover for one off events
- Collaborate with the Cultural and Recreational areas of Council to provide accessible information that will engage the community in a range of diverse activities
- Develop a range of interpretation strategies for public spaces in order to give Newcastle life, colour and movement for the benefit of the community and visitors
- Develop open spaces as lively community places that have landscaping, public art and cultural activities to encourage increased use and ownership of open spaces
- Facilitate programs that will reconnect neighbourhoods with the natural fabric of their local creeks, rivers and estuaries as a first step on the sustainability pathway to ensure positive shifts in community awareness, knowledge and behaviours

### **3.1.5 Events (E)**

An event can be civic, political, public or educational in nature. Well connected communities with strong networks are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher achievement and better economic growth. Community events and time-limited group activities can bring the community closer together by exploring connections and increasing the sense of belonging.

#### **Key Issues**

- Selection of venues
- Event evaluation
- Event insurance
- Professional approach

#### **Key Strategies**

- Facilitate the provision of training for event organisers
- Prepare a brokerage package for event organisers
- Provide a web hotline/discussion panel for event organisers
- Develop a venue selection process/criteria for events

### 3.1.6 Funding (F)

Newcastle City Council faces new pressures with increasing public expectations on Local Governments to fill some of the gaps caused by constrained resources. Changes to the population mix in Newcastle, which is particularly noticeable at present around the Inner City and inner suburbs, are also having an impact on the expectations of the nature and levels of services that Council should provide.

Increased emphasis on funding for specific client outcomes, less certainty about the continuation of funding and the combination of rising administrative costs have placed significant pressure on non-government organisations, particularly the smaller community groups.

#### Key Issues

- Changing expectations
- Limited resources
- Equity issues

#### Key Strategies

- Continue to support the “Council Community Fund”
- Encourage and support capacity building for Non-Government Organisations to deliver services and where appropriate to remain located in Newcastle
- Advocate for changes to State/Federal Government policies to provide better funding certainty for Newcastle services
- Develop an integrated “service-driven” approach to funding
  - Explore alternative service delivery models which improve service outcomes and are more cost effective
  - Better understand the real cost of delivering services and whether/how they could be self funding
  - Explore opportunities to diversify the revenue base for Newcastle City Council
  - Explore opportunities to reduce Council outlays
  - Bundle services to more effectively market services and obtain external funding

### **3.1.7 Housing (H)**

Adequate and secure housing is one of the basic necessities of life. Access to secure, appropriate housing is essential before people can feel empowered to become involved in their community and be able to contribute to their local economy. Demand for housing in the future is expected to exceed population growth.

#### **Key Issues**

- Neighbourhood character/liveability
- Residential diversity
- Access to accommodation
- Sustainability

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to encourage greater regional cooperation and coordination of housing strategies between Lower Hunter Local Government Areas
- Advocate for programs, policy and resources to meet local housing needs
- Advocate for an integrated accessible transport system with direct and feeder services to central hubs in the Lower Hunter
- Develop a housing framework identifying the role of Council in facilitating a range of housing outcomes
- Develop and encourage the development of pilot or demonstration projects to encourage innovation in design and diversity of housing choice
- Develop strategies to encourage more adaptable housing provisions in new buildings and to convert existing buildings where possible
- Monitor trends and factors influencing housing provision, and inform both the community and building industry
- Actively contribute to the Newcastle Hunter Homelessness Interagency Network

### **3.1.8 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

Internet infrastructure, particularly ADSL broadband, has improved significantly in Newcastle in recent years with the majority of the area now having access. Increased and improved use of communications infrastructure, and in particular the Internet, has been recognised both internationally and locally as vital for the efficient operation of society and as a catalyst for growth and development. However, there is growing concern over the existence of a 'digital divide' between those who have access to the Internet and broadband technology and those who do not.

#### **Key Issues**

- Tool to build communities
- Digital divide
- Increasing the range of ICT infrastructure
- Understanding ICT as public domain

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to develop and provide innovative ICT learning opportunities in Council's libraries
- Use Council's website as a means of community building as well as providing information about what it does
- Investigate the viability of establishing an information delivery hub
- Participate in the Reference Group which is implementing the Newcastle ICT Action Plan
- Explore options to increase access to ICT after hours in Council's libraries
- Communicate user infrastructure needs to relevant peak regional bodies

### **3.1.9 Lifelong Learning (LL)**

Lifelong learning is a process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills and values in a range of formal and informal settings, throughout life. It provides formal education, vocational training, and personal development. Lifelong learning enables informed citizens to make positive and rewarding contributions to sustain their environment, their community and the economy.

#### **Key Issues**

- Knowing where to go
- Learning opportunities for children and youth
- Computer literacy
- Vocational Education
- Informal learning
- Planning for future learning infrastructure
- Education for Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)

#### **Key Strategies**

- Advocate for and encourage the provision of affordable formal and informal learning opportunities, the development of Lifelong Learning Frameworks at both the State and Federal Government level, programs which enable children to be school ready and alternative education programs
- Further development of the One Stop Learning Shop Model
- Implement Council's ICT Strategy
- Support the building of closer working relationships between schools, vocational education providers, career advisors/counsellors and employers
- Encourage the facilitation of forums between people involved in providing learning opportunities
- Work with the Department of Education to understand the decreasing retention rates, planning for population growth and opportunities for sharing of facilities
- Implement the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) Framework to support the development of sustainable communities with particular focus on Berotarwood and Beresfield planning districts

### 3.1.10 Public Domain (PD)

Public domain is shared communal space that is open to everyone. Ongoing social and economic shifts have contributed to changing community expectations and perceptions about how the public domain is used. Different aged groups, socio-economic expectations and desires and cultural backgrounds can mean that these differences are a potential source of conflict.

#### Key Issues

- Accepting difference
- Changing expectations
- Commercialisation
- Community safety
- Urban design

#### Key Strategies

- Facilitate the review and continuation of the NCC Position Statement on Public Space to manage public domain issues eg address functionality of use, equity of use and potential for commercialisation
- Develop the Public Toilet Strategy
- Adopt an integrated service delivery model approach to managing facilities
- Explore the feasibility of developing public/private partnerships to meet the challenges of public expectations of what public assets should deliver
- Facilitate increased awareness of accessibility issues in the design and construction of community facilities and the public domain
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to increase usage of its open space and community facilities
- Develop a Graffiti Art Policy
- Implement and review the Inner City Crime Prevention Plan
- Facilitate enhanced access to pedestrian and shared facilities to meet the changing needs of the future population

### 3.1.11 Public Transport (PT)

Newcastle is the sixth largest city in Australia and is renowned for its focus on sustainability. It is important that Newcastle preserves and promotes the use of public transport for social, environmental and economic reasons. Local Government is not a provider of transport services but can play an important lobbying and facilitation role.

#### Key Issues

- Accessibility
- Social isolation
- Late night transport
- Need for effective use of available resources
- Proposed Broadmeadow Interchange

#### Key Strategies

- Advocate for the development of a Regional Transport Strategy, the introduction of an integrated fare and ticketing model and the application of concession fares to also be made available to International students
- Explore feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub
- Review and implement the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) and the Cycleway Plan
- Explore innovative models for car pooling and car sharing that could be implemented across the LGA
- Investigate the viability of establishing a 'Walking School Bus' program
- Encourage the provision of frequent, direct services between centres of activity
- Promotion and identification of park and ride initiatives

### 3.1.12 Recreation (R)

A recent survey has found a reduction in participation in active sport and recreation. The survey conducted by the Hunter Valley Research Foundation, showed Novocastrians prefer recreation that is unorganised and affordable like walking, swimming, cycling and surfing. Newcastle City Council manages 1200 hectares of open space, parks and sporting ovals, 5 swimming centres, 2 ocean baths, 6 patrolled beaches, a golf course and a golf driving range.

#### Key Issues

- Health and community wellbeing
- Access and use of services
- Provision of facilities and open space

#### Key Strategies

- Complete the development of the Recreation Plan and implement strategies from the Plan. It will identify current and future demand; identify requirements of special needs groups; identify the appropriate function of recreational facilities and open space including opportunities for multi-use, integrated or shared spaces; explore opportunities for providing programs; identify appropriate levels of service and identify potential partnerships and funding sources
- Explore feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub
- Explore the development of a 'sponsorship/support' model to increase participation of people who cannot afford to participate in organised sports
- Undertake a programming facilitation role to increase usage of existing facilities
- Adopt an integrated service delivery model approach to managing facilities
- Review the community management model for Council facilities given the trend of decreasing volunteer participation

### 3.1.13 Social Capital (SC)

Social Capital is defined by the OECD (2001) as *“Networks, together with shared norms, values and understandings which facilitate cooperation within or among groups.”* Decreasing social capital can be linked with less participation in voluntary organisations, an increase in crime and vandalism and less acceptance of difference.

#### Key Issues

- Social isolation and mobility
- Decreasing volunteer numbers
- Accepting diversity and difference
- Access to services

#### Key Strategies

- Develop an information delivery hub
- Develop a strategy for acknowledging the valuable contributions of volunteers in the community
- Use Council’s website as a tool to access information about the Newcastle community and to develop virtual communities
- Adopt an integrated service delivery model approach to managing facilities
- Support and promote the provision of affordable family-friendly events/programs particularly in the outer suburbs
- Explore the development of a ‘sponsorship/support’ model to increase participation of people who cannot afford to participate in organised sports
- Explore training requirements of Council Management Committees and how they should be delivered
- Promote and implement the street party concept
- Provide a leadership role in promoting the Compassionate Community concept by sponsoring 4–5 International/National days
- Encourage the development of databases promoting the availability of skilled people able to assist volunteer organisations
- Review the community management model for Council facilities given the trend of decreasing volunteer participation
- Work with the Hunter Council of Social Services to establish and promote insurance cover models
- Identify opportunities for developing/encouraging the provision of community service hubs
- Provide support to providers of potential new community services to develop consultation strategies, information about need, and to anticipate barriers

### 3.1.14 Unemployment (U)

Over the past 5 years, there has been a decrease in reported unemployment rates in the Lower Hunter. Beyond this statistic, our community needs to consider the types of local job opportunities and skills capacities that will interest our young people, the community costs of joblessness and underemployment, employment 'equity', as well as community and workforce age structure.

#### Key Issues

- Unemployment and under-employment
- Skills gap
- Ageing workforce
- Financial literacy
- Reliance on voluntary sector

#### Key Strategies

- Maintain Council's commitment to providing traineeships and apprenticeships
- Continue to provide a Business Attraction First Stop Shop (provides information to potential new businesses which maybe thinking of moving to Newcastle) service
- Continue to support Council's equity employment initiatives and evaluate them as models for other medium – large employers
- Encourage the development of innovative employment and learning models that will have positive outcomes for the local workforce
- Encourage partnerships between schools, VET providers, job network providers and employers to develop strategies that address the skills gap
- Encourage the development of models that enable businesses to be effective learning organisations
- Encourage the provision of frequent, direct transport services between centres of activity
- Support formal/informal learning programs that engage young people who have left school early
- Support programs that improve financial literacy of the Newcastle community
- Advocate for and facilitate the provision of flexible childcare models, which can respond to contract and shift work requirements
- Advocate that the Federal Government provide more structural support to volunteer organisations that participate in work for the dole programs to enhance their capacity to undertake governance responsibilities
- Monitor current and future skills shortages for Newcastle City Council and explore different models of skill acquisition and employment



## 3.2 PLANNING DISTRICTS

Several planning districts within the Newcastle Local Government Area were identified from the Community Plan Survey results (available at <http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/go/communityplan>) as needing further research into specific issues within those areas. Therefore, five place-based discussion papers have been developed to more clearly identify issues and develop strategies. The place-based papers are:

- ❖ Berotarwood (B)
- ❖ Blue Gum Hills (BGH)
- ❖ Inner City (IC)
- ❖ Jesmond (J)
- ❖ Mayfield and Inner North (M&IN)

Whilst this section focuses on specific planning districts, the majority of strategies in the Community Plan are generic and will be applied to the whole of the Newcastle Local Government Area.

### **3.2.1 Berotarwood (Beresfield, Tarro and Woodberry) Planning District (B)**

The Berotarwood Planning District incorporates the suburbs of Beresfield, Tarro and Woodberry which are all located within 4 kilometres of each other. The area falls on the boundary between Newcastle and Maitland City Councils. For the first time, both Councils have joined together to facilitate better planning of services and facilities in the area.

#### **Key Issues**

- Access to services
- Participation in recreational activities
- Community identity
- Environment
- Community safety
- Decline of mainstreet

#### **Key Strategies**

- Develop a memorandum of understanding between Newcastle City Council and Maitland City Council to work collaboratively
- Develop an environment education/preservation program as a means of engaging community and redefining a 'sense of place'
- Develop a comprehensive joint library service delivery model for the area and increasing service hours of Beresfield Library
- Review both Councils' desired character statements pertaining to the planning district and promote synergies
- Explore the short to long term viability of the Beresfield mainstreet
- Explore the possibility of developing/combining a joint urban forestry/green canopy project to ensure similar planting requirements etc
- Investigate the establishment of urban design guidelines for the commercial area
- Investigate the establishment of an information delivery hub
- Advocate for more outreach community services; longer funding windows; and skills training for young people
- Establish a cultural development program in the area, which will help to highlight and promote local artistic skills
- Conduct joint audits of community facilities and jointly review local services and planning on new services/facilities
- Hold regular meetings between Officers of both Councils to the implementation of agreed strategies
- Facilitate regular meetings between local service providers to enhance integrated planning and service delivery
- Encourage/facilitate the provision of multi-use and flexible facilities, and integrated models of service delivery
- Encourage/facilitate access to information technology in the area

### **3.2.2 Blue Gum Hills Planning District (BGH)**

The Blue Gum Hills area (from Maryland to Minmi) is predominantly greenfield release suburban areas that have been developed over the past 30 years. There are still some release areas to be developed. Minmi has a long history as a mining village. Households in the Blue Gum Hills are typically families. People in this area are dependent on cars to commute to workplaces and recreation outside the district.

#### **Key Issues**

- Access to services
- Social isolation
- Environmental concerns

#### **Key Strategies**

- Advocate for increased access to public transport, services for young children and families and youth recreational activities
- Encourage family-friendly access to areas providing passive and active recreational activities
- Encourage the provision of programs that develop a sense of community identity
- Develop an improved Council website and a hub program to facilitate improved access to local information
- Consider incorporating Blue Gum Hills in the Urban Forest Management Plan
- Continue to seek to develop a community awareness campaign regarding the efficient use of energy and water and ways to save on costs
- Promote the implementation of Council's consultation strategy with Council Officers

### **3.2.3 Inner City (IC)**

The Inner City has traditionally been the regional hub of the Hunter providing administrative and commercial services, employment, entertainment and integrating transport. The City Centre has been through a period of decline starting in the 1970s and lasting over two decades as industry closed, retail moved to suburban shopping malls and major employers moved to suburban stand-alone location. However, recent initiatives are seeing significant changes in types of activity available in the city and its spaces as people are moving back into the city to live and play.

#### **Key Issues**

- Image and viability of the Inner City
- Integration and connectivity
- Inner City - 24 hour city vs residential amenity
- Access to services

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to facilitate and support the local music, theatre and visual arts industry
- Continue to facilitate improved pedestrian amenity
- Support a coordinated response to marketing and project management of the area to regenerate the Inner City
- Provide support and resourcing for Nightlink, the Liquor Accord and associated initiatives
- Develop a Public Toilet Strategy
- Examine ways to encourage greater use of public transport to the Inner City
- Advocate for and facilitate the provision of more childcare centres
- Continue to investigate innovative means of addressing parking pressures

### 3.2.4 Jesmond Planning District (J)

This district covers Jesmond, Callaghan (University), Birmingham Gardens, Shortland and Sandgate, and was identified as a priority area for further research based on the Community Plan Survey 2004. The community is unique, as overall it is both highly transient and diverse. The discussion paper was developed in consultation with a range of local community services.

#### Key Issues

- Connectivity
- Access to services
- Social isolation
- Financial security
- Changing urban character
- Untapped potential for partnerships

#### Key Strategies

- Review the priorities and implementation of the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) and the Cycleway Plan
- Advocate for and support provision of improved public transport schedules and access to after hours transport; learning opportunities to enable children to be 'school ready', more respite care of all types, development of an Affordable Housing SEPP, programs that are sensitive to men's needs, programs that facilitate connectivity and intergenerational initiatives that reduce social isolation
- Clarify the role of management committees leasing Council assets in line with the Asset Operator Model
- Investigate the establishment of urban design guidelines for suburban commercial areas
- Facilitate partnerships to deliver greater access to facilities and programs in the area
- Provide leadership in the promotion and celebration of diversity as stated in the NCC Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement
- Conduct a safety audit of Heaton Park
- Conduct a community facilities review
- Support, promote and encourage the provision of affordable family-friendly events/activities particularly in the outer suburbs
- Explore the feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to further maximise utilisation of its open space and community facilities

### **3.2.5 Mayfield & Inner North (M&IN)**

Since the closure of BHP, significant social, economic and environmental change is occurring in the Mayfield and Inner North Planning Districts as the area gentrifies. These changes have implications for the local communities, as well as other community groups and services within the Newcastle Local Government Area.

#### **Key Issues**

- Location of community services
- Community identity
- Community safety
- Street prostitution
- Access to services
- Environmental concerns

#### **Key Strategies**

- Adopt an integrated service delivery model approach to managing facilities to meet the changing needs of the population in the future
- Develop a Public Toilet Strategy
- Implement the Mayfield Crime Prevention Strategy
- Support the development of a community calendar to enable wider community participation in local events and activities
- Facilitate the implementation of the street party concept.
- Monitor the need for and location of services in the planning district
- Implement and review the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan priorities
- Advocate for and support provision of an accessible and integrated public transport system; intergenerational strategies and initiatives to reduce social isolation; and implementation of the Mayfield Employment Program
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to increase usage of open space and community facilities
- Monitor and address street prostitution issues proactively through regular meetings of the Lord Mayor's group.

## 3.3 TARGET GROUPS

Councils must include in their social or community plans, data and information about the needs of particular target groups as well as broad community needs (see Issues). Newcastle City Council added Men and the Gay and Lesbian communities to the list of target groups in response to needs identified during the implementation of the Social Plan (2000 - 2005). The target groups for Newcastle are:

- ❖ Aboriginal Community (A)
- ❖ Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)
- ❖ Children and Families (C&F)
- ❖ Disability (D)
- ❖ Gay and Lesbian (G&L)
- ❖ Men (M)
- ❖ Senior Novocastrians (SN)
- ❖ Women (W)
- ❖ Youth (Y)

### 3.3.1 Aboriginal Community (A)

The Awabakal and Worimi People are the traditional custodians of the Newcastle LGA. Council is currently supporting initiatives that promote local Aboriginal heritage. Aboriginal people in Newcastle are more likely to be disadvantaged than non Aboriginal people. Aboriginal disadvantage is compounded by a lack of education opportunities as well as employment and economic resources and opportunities.

#### Key Issues

- Health
- Housing
- Learning and employment opportunities
- Connectivity/sense of belonging
- Environmental conservation

#### Key Strategies

- Continue to support the implementation of the Newcastle City Council Commitment to Aboriginal Peoples of the City of Newcastle
- Continue to increase Council and community awareness of Aboriginal culture and local Aboriginal history, reconciliation, and Native Title Claims
- Continue to implement Council's policy to provide welcome signage and dual signage where appropriate
- Advocate for and support provision of additional respite care for families in stress, flexible childcare, wider choice in detox services, complex needs services, learning opportunities for young people, late night supervised and affordable recreation activities for young people, family violence services and parenting support programs
- Advocate that the Aboriginal community receives a higher proportion of public housing allocated to it per head of population than the general community
- Support initiatives to increase access for Aboriginal people to meeting rooms and community facilities
- Explore the feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub, which can better promote availability of community halls and facilities
- Develop a Local Aboriginal Community Consultation Protocol
- Develop and implement the Aboriginal Heritage Study
- Review the effectiveness of the NCC Aboriginal Employment Strategy and promote it to other local large employers
- Encourage the incorporation of Aboriginal heritage in the design of new and existing Council facilities/structures
- Consider the preservation of local Aboriginal community heritage in the Stockton Beach Coastal Processes Study and Management Plan

### **3.3.2 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)**

Newcastle has a long history as a place which has attracted migrants who have made positive contributions to the community. A less cosmopolitan community can have adverse social and economic implications for our city. Council has proclaimed Newcastle a 'Welcome City' and is supporting initiatives that demonstrate support for migrants settling in the area.

#### **Key Issues**

- Culturally specific aged services
- New residents in Newcastle
- Economic and employment opportunities
- Community acceptance

#### **Key Strategies**

- Facilitate ongoing implementation and review of the NCC Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement 2004 – 2007
- Facilitate initiatives that promote and support cultural diversity and acceptance within the business and broader community
- Develop a new Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement in 2007
- Advocate for and support strategies that facilitate economic and employment opportunities for skilled migrants, refugees and international students and the provision of public transport concessions for international students and their children
- Promote the need for ongoing development of a coordinated community approach to refugee resettlement
- Promote and support the development of innovative capacity building programs for new residents
- Monitor potentially higher demands for culturally specific age related services and advocate as required

### **3.3.3 Children and Families (C&F)**

The importance of family units is fundamental to the way communities function. The increasing diversity of family types, increasing responsibilities of carers and the increased probability that both parents are working pose many challenges for service delivery. Families can be affected by unemployment, access to childcare, housing affordability, social isolation, financial concerns and the possibility of violence. Other significant issues include the roles of carers and fathers and access to recreational activities.

#### **Key Issues**

- Access to services
- Social isolation
- Financial security
- Role of fathers

#### **Key Strategies**

- Facilitate the provision of an additional childcare service in the Inner City for the short to medium term
- Review the need to continue to be involved in the provision of affordable childcare services in the longer term
- Support and promote the provision of affordable family-friendly events/programs particularly in the outer suburbs
- Support initiatives to establish a hub of children/family services being explored
- Encourage the feasibility of a mobile Aboriginal childcare model in the Newcastle LGA being explored
- Clarify the role of management committees leasing Council assets in line with the Asset Operator Model
- Use Council's website to provide information about where and how to access childcare services in Newcastle
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to increase usage of its open space and community facilities
- Advocate for and support provision of additional respite care (all types), development of an Affordable Housing SEPP, programs that are sensitive to men's needs as carers, financial literacy and parenting programs which enable children to be school ready

### 3.3.4 Disability (D)

Disability affects whole families. People can be born with a disability or acquire a disability during their lifetime due to a wide range of reasons. The presence of a disability should not prevent a person from participating equitably in the activities of the broader community. Taking care of the practicalities and necessities of living can be outside the control of people with disabilities and is often determined by government priorities and program administration. Many families are experiencing stress and uncertainty about the adequacy of support now and in the future.

#### Key Issues

- Funding issues
- Access to accommodation and support services
- Access issues in the public domain

#### Key Strategies

- Facilitate the implementation of the Disability Action Plan
- Facilitate a corporate service delivery model approach to ensure that Council services and facilities meet the changing needs of the population in the future
- Facilitate increased awareness of accessibility issues in the design and construction of community facilities and the public domain
- Monitor the need and advocate for adequate funding for facilities/support services to enable people with a disability to maintain independent living for as long as possible (high and low to moderate care needs), advocate for an accessible and integrated transport system and the provision of a case coordination approach
- Monitor emerging trends in housing under the residential tenancy agreements that target the low income market
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to increase usage of its open space and community facilities

### **3.3.5 Gay and Lesbian (G&L)**

Anecdotal evidence suggests that more gay and lesbian people are choosing Newcastle as a place to live based on the lifestyle choices that are available in Newcastle, as well as its accessibility to Sydney. Gay and lesbian communities are socially diverse due to their cultural backgrounds, religion, age and socio-economic status. The discussion paper examines pressures that they face, particularly for young people and Seniors, and concerns faced by the gay and lesbian community generally.

#### **Key Issues**

- Community and family tolerance
- Maintaining independence and financial security
- Community safety
- Community connections
- Community resources and services

#### **Key Strategies**

- Facilitate and encourage community initiatives that promote acceptance of diversity
- Facilitate and promote Youth Venue programs that engage with GLBTIQ youth and the broader community
- Facilitate the inclusion of GLBTIQ issues in the consideration of Senior Novocastrian issues
- Facilitate the inclusion of GLBTIQ issues in the development and reviews of Council's Community Safety Policy and Crime Prevention Plans
- Explore the feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub that can better promote availability of community halls and facilities
- Develop a Public Toilet Strategy

### **3.3.6 Men (M)**

Although men are living longer than they used to, they still have shorter lives on average than women. Just as there have been changes in the lives of women in recent years, there have also been changes in the roles and expectations for men, affecting the lives of men as individuals, now and in future generations. The discussion paper explores the types of support required to assist them with these changes.

#### **Key Issues**

- Health (physical and emotional)
- Parenting roles
- Access to services
- Meaningful contribution and accomplishment (outside work)

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to implement Council's Ageing Workforce Strategy and promote its outcomes to other employers
- Encourage the development of programs which address the emotional and physical health needs of men, particularly with regards to separation issues, parenting and carer's needs
- Encourage and support initiatives which explore alternative housing models for men who have separated and have access to their children
- Encourage service providers of community services to develop strategies for working with men more effectively eg childcare services, learning providers
- Encourage and support initiatives to develop the Men's Shed concept
- Explore the feasibility of establishing an information delivery hub

### **3.3.7 Senior Novocastrians (SN)**

The upward shift in the numbers of older people in the population has occurred as a result of factors such as the baby boomer cohort, a reduced infant mortality rate, lower fertility rates, increased standards of living and advances in medical technology and health promotion. Older people are far from being frail and continue to be a major resource to their families and communities. The discussion paper explores the implications for service delivery both now and in the future.

#### **Key Issues**

- Remaining active
- Engaging in learning
- Volunteer work participation
- Frail and disadvantaged aged care

#### **Key Strategies**

- Advocate for increased funding to enable independent living, improved coordination of services, accessible and adaptable housing requirements at State Government level and accessible and integrated public transport system
- Facilitate a corporate planning process to ensure that Council services and facilities meet the changing needs of the population in the future
- Implement the Disability Action Plan
- Explore the feasibility of developing an information package in partnership with the housing industry, to raise awareness of the housing requirements of seniors
- Monitor emerging trends in aged housing that operate under the residential tenancy agreement and target the low-income market
- Encourage greater safety awareness of scooters and other similar mobility aids
- Encourage development of intergenerational strategies and initiatives within the community
- Encourage, promote and facilitate the development of initiatives that may encourage more Senior Novocastrians to be involved in volunteer work
- Promote and coordinate programs across the Local Government Area to further maximise utilisation of its open space and community facilities
- Implement and promote Council's Ageing Workforce Strategy
- Monitor the provision of and need for daycare facilities
- Facilitate the development and implementation of a Senior Novocastrian policy

### **3.3.8 Women (W)**

During the 1970's women's issues were prominent on the world agenda. In Australia, policy and legislation were developed to enable "equal rights, equal pay and equal say." Since then, there have also been structural changes in the economy increasing the availability of casual and part-time work. This greater flexibility combined with increased formal childcare arrangements has allowed more women to combine work with family responsibilities. Therefore, the discussion paper explores the associated challenges being faced by women today.

#### **Key Issues**

- Access to affordable and flexible childcare
- Lack of respite/home care services
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- Financial security

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to implement Council's Ageing Workforce Strategy and promote outcomes to other employers
- Encourage and facilitate the provision of additional childcare services
- Advocate for improved access to respite care services, and the development and promotion of healthy lifestyle activities for women and their families
- Promote and coordinate programs across the LGA to further maximise utilisation of its open space and community facilities
- Promote programs that assist women to become more financially secure

### **3.3.9 Youth (Y)**

For young people, the period of transition from childhood to adulthood is a very important and often difficult time. For many, it involves transition from school to work, moving from reliance to independence and becoming a partner and perhaps a parent. It is also a time of discovering more about oneself. Over the past three decades, there have been significant changes in those things most important to young people – families, schools and the wider community.

#### **Key Issues**

- Acceptance of diversity and difference
- Self image and wellbeing
- Financial hardship
- Homelessness
- Public transport

#### **Key Strategies**

- Continue to support and endorse Council's Commitment to Youth
- Facilitate and encourage community initiatives/campaigns that promote acceptance of difference and diversity within the business and broader community
- Implement Council's Consultation Policy
- Advocate for and support provision of improved access to accessible and integrated public transport, training and labour market programs that target youth, alternative education programs, improved career counselling programs and means of engaging young people who have not completed school
- Support the need for changes to/new learning programs that provide for young people who do not complete school
- Encourage exploration of the development of partnerships between schools and youth workers
- Actively contribute to the Newcastle Hunter Homelessness Interagency Network
- Provide support for the PCYC Activity Van operating in the Newcastle area