Moira Shire Council
Community Safety Strategy 2016 - 2021

Moira Shire Council endeavours to be a leader in community safety.

Moira Shire is a diverse, safe and welcoming community, where all people feel included and respected.

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Mayor's Message

Welcome to Moira Shire Council's Community Safety Strategy 2016 to 2021.

Community safety is an important priority for our Council as we work to provide an exceptional quality of life for our residents. We do this through improving social cohesion and building community capacity to reduce the risk of crime and its harmful effects.

Crime prevention at all levels is the shared responsibility of the community. In some instances, this may be a more passive role, such as reporting suspicious behaviour or simply keeping an eye out for your neighbours' property.

In other instances, it may be a more active role, such as having input through our Community Safety Committee (CSC) or giving feedback about your perceptions of safety. This feedback allows us as a Council to have a better understanding about how safety is impacting you and what we should be doing to improve this.

As a Council, we will continue to develop and strengthen relationships with Police and other emergency response agencies to ensure that community safety remains a priority.

Our role in community safety will include:

- Leadership and facilitation of partnerships.
- Advocacy to all levels of government and key local agencies.
- Developing individual and community responsibility.
- Connecting people in community life

through supporting and delivering programs.
- Education.
- Regulatory control and enforcement.
- Planning and design.
- Emergency management planning.

To ensure a holistic approach to improving the safety and liveability of our Shire, the strategy is based on four focus areas:

1. Personal safety.
2. Safety in the home.
3. Safety in the community.
4. Road safety.

Already, the Council facilitates a number of programs which are run in partnership with service providers and we will continue to place importance on working with these groups for a positive outcome for all. In particular, we look forward to continuing our work with the CSC, which has played an important role in developing this strategy and helping to define priorities.

The implementation of this strategy is outlined in the accompanying 12 month action plan, which will be developed each year in partnership with the CSC. The strategy will also be reviewed each year to ensure it remains timely and effective.

It is my pleasure to endorse this strategy on behalf of my fellow councillors.

Cr Libro Mustica
Moira Shire Council Mayor
December 2019

Introduction

All community members want to live in a place where it feels safe.

This strategy will play a major role in setting strategic direction to improve safety in the Moira Shire through the provision of community education and collaborative partnerships that support sharing information, knowledge, resources and responsibility.

This strategy provides the foundation for a safe and thriving community and will guide the actions undertaken by Council, community agencies and the community, to reduce the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour and improve community perceptions of safety.

This strategy is listed as an action in the Council Plan, which recognises the importance of safety in building strong and resilient communities.

In developing this three-year strategy, input was provided by the Moira Shire Community Safety Committee (CSC) and community members through community consultation.

This is reflected in the objectives of the strategy, which are to:

- Form and maintain a strong, active and effective team consisting of Council, emergency services, community representatives and other key stakeholders that can deliver positive outcomes.
- Establish a model of solution-focused communication and promotion to all levels of the community and its agencies.
- Set clear, achievable goals that will have beneficial and effective outcomes for the wider community.
- Provide direction and understanding of current issues and challenges to encourage the community to offer positive recommendations.
- Raise public awareness in a positive manner.

Other factors that contribute to community safety include the creation of education and employment opportunities and the health and wellbeing of our residents, which are addressed in a number of other strategies and plans which the Council is delivering for its community. This strategy has endeavoured, where possible, not to duplicate actions contained within other Council strategies and plans.

The successful implementation of this strategy, which enforces the cycle of education, monitoring and action, requires collaboration and action between a wide range of groups and organisations to ensure effective crime prevention is embedded.

The strategy also recognises the work and considerable efforts of groups which already exist and which the Council supports to improve community safety.

The Council will co-ordinate its efforts to produce and encourage a safer and more inclusive community.

The initiatives in this strategy build collaborative relationships with various community stakeholders, and highlight Council's commitment to maintaining strong partnerships with primary law enforcement and local agencies to increase community safety across Moira Shire.

What is community safety?

By definition, community safety is not only about reducing and preventing injury and crime - it is about building strong, cohesive, vibrant, participatory communities.

A safe community is a place that is attractive to live, work and visit.

It is a liveable community, where people can go about their daily activities in an environment without fear, risk of harm, or injury.

In a safe community, people have realistic perceptions of risk and safety, and interact in their community accordingly.

According to the Victorian Safe Communities Network[1], community safety:

> *"is characterised by community-wide participation in developing and delivering initiatives to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of populations at the local level in order to reduce the impact of unintentional injury, crime, violence and emergency situations on communities."*

Furthermore, the Australian Safe Communities Foundation[2] states that a safe community is:

> *"one in which all sectors of the community work together in a coordinated and collaborative way, forming partnerships to promote safety, manage risk, increase the overall safety of all its members and reduce the fear of harm.*
>
> *The key feature is the creation of a local infrastructure (ie. coalition of community business, government and non-government leaders) that combine their resources and interests to address local concerns about injuries, crashes, anti-social behaviour and crime in a co-ordinated and sustainable manner."*

Moira Shire Council's role in community safety

· Leadership and facilitation of partnerships.
· Advocacy to all levels of government and key local agencies.
· Developing individual and community responsibility.
· Connecting people in community life through supporting and delivering programs.
· Education.
· Regulatory control and enforcement.
· Planning and design.
· Emergency management planning.

Moira Shire Community Safety Committee

Moira Shire Council has been a long-time supporter of community safety, with part of its role being to co-ordinate a Community Safety Committee (CSC).

The CSC aims to advocate and promote a prosperous future through ensuring safety and security for all of the Shire's residents and visitors.

The goals of the CSC are:

1. To form and maintain a strong, active and effective committee consisting of Council, emergency services, community representatives and other key stakeholders to provide clear advice and actions on community safety.

2. To establish a communication model to all levels of the community and its agencies that will achieve beneficial and effective outcomes relating to community safety.

3. To provide direction and understanding of current issues and challenges to encourage the community to offer positive recommendations to the committee.

4. To raise public awareness in a positive manner.

The CSC is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- Moira Shire Council
- Victoria Police
- Country Fire Authority
- Ambulance Victoria
- State Emergency Service
- Regional Roads Victoria
- VicRoads
- Goulburn Valley RoadSafe
- Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Department of Education and Training
- Berry Street Victoria
- Community.

The CSC also draws on the experience of other organisations and individuals as required.

Snapshot of the Moira Shire community

In the 2016 Census[3], there were 29,112 people in Moira. Of these:

- 49.9% were male and 50.1% were female.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 1.7% of the population.

- 81.6% of people were born in Australia, which is considerably higher than the Victorian and Australian populations.

- 71.7% of people had both parents born in Australia and 12.2% of people had both parents born overseas.

- 87.8% of people speak only English at home, with Italian, Arabic and Indo-Aryan (eg. Punjabi) the most common non-English languages.

- The median age of Moira's population is 47 years, which is higher than the Victorian and Australian medians of 37 years.

- Children aged 0 to 14 years made up 17.6% of the population and people aged 65 years and over made up 25% of the population.

- The highest proportion of the population (27.5%) is aged between 45 and 64.

- Index of relative socio-economic disadvantage is 951.

- 47% of individuals have less than $400/week income, compared to Victoria (39.9%) and Moira is ranked 10 out of 79 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Victoria.

- Moira has a higher percentage of volunteers (24.6%) than Victoria (19.2%).

- Moira (68.8%) is ranked 7 out of 79 LGAs for people who did not complete year 12.

- Female life expectancy in Moira (84.1 years) is lower than Victoria (84.4 years).

- Male life expectancy in Moira (76.4 years) is lower than Victoria (80.3 years).

Vision for community safety

Moira Shire is a diverse, safe and welcoming community, where all people feel included and respected.

Personal Safety

- Reduce the harmful impact of drugs and alcohol.
- Improve the community's awareness of and access to mental health services.

Safety in the Home

- Reduce the incidence of family violence.
- Demonstrate leadership in the prevention of family violence.
- Ensure elderly persons are safe and well-cared for.
- Ensure Home and Community Care staff continue to report instances of elder abuse and abuse by carers, and to confidentially provide information on support services to those in need.
- Promote awareness of current issues, such as scams and itinerant traders.
- Reduce the vulnerability of residents as a result of isolation.
- Empower the community to make their homes safe.
- Ensure the community is educated about the importance of cyber safety.

Safety in the Community

- Enhance opportunities to work collaboratively on community safety initiatives.
- Ensure public spaces and facilities are planned and managed to reduce crime, and that they are safe and accessible.
- Ensure young people have activities, services and support to keep them engaged with their community.
- Develop community programs and capacity building projects to increase community connectedness and resilience.
- Ensure people are prepared for, respond to, and recover from emergency situations.
- Enhance perceptions of safety in the community.

Road Safety

- Provide safe road networks, and walking and cycling paths.
- Promote safe driver behaviour, for both motorised and non-motorised vehicles.

Personal Safety

Drug and alcohol use

Despite its acceptance throughout Australia, alcohol consumption is a leading cause of health issues. Excessive drinking can be triggered by many reasons, including personal pressures and concerns, social acceptance and the ready availability of alcohol.

Excessive alcohol consumption is a major risk factor and contributes to crime, road accidents, ill-health and mortality. Alcohol intoxication is implicated in almost half of all assaults, contributes to a third of road accidents leading to injury or death, and causes at least 3300 deaths each year across Australia[4].

Locally, the 2013 Victorian Population Health Profile[5] found 17.2% of the Moira population is at risk of short-term harm from alcohol consumption, compared to Victoria (10.2%) and Hume (13.6%). Moira is ranked 3 out of 79 Local Government Areas (LGAs) for this measure. The profile also showed that approximately 4% of males and 2% of women in Moira were at long-term risk of alcohol related harm.

As with alcohol, people consume illicit drugs for a variety of reasons including recreation, to be part of a group, out of curiosity or to avoid physical and/ or psychological pain. Drug use is influenced by a number of factors including their perceived benefits.

The use of illicit drugs has considerable health risks for people who use them and impacts their family, friends and the wider community. Exposure to significant illness and disease including hepatitis C and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which women are biologically more vulnerable to, can dramatically reduce quality of life. Maintaining employment can be difficult for drug users, further exacerbating their lack of financial security.

Victoria Police figures[6] show Moira reported drug usage and possession offences of 1.9%, which was identical to the Victorian figure and lower than the Hume region figure of 2.2%.

Moira, like all areas of Australia, has been impacted by the relatively recent surge in crystal methamphetamine 'ice' use in Victoria, which poses a great concern for the general community, justice and health services. The detrimental effects of 'ice' include physical, psychological, legal and financial impacts on users and their families.

While reliable municipality based data is unavailable, police arrests and ambulance data across Victoria indicate that the use of 'ice' is quickly increasing. In addition, the purity of this substance has risen from approximately 20% in 2010-11 to more than 75% in the 2012-13 period. This has resulted in more than a 250% increase in the number of fatal overdoses as a result of 'ice' use since 2010[7].

Data from the 2013 Victorian Population Health Profile[8] showed that the rate of drug usage and possession offences per 1000 of population in Moira was three, compared with the Victorian rate of 3.4 and the Hume rate of 3.9. Moira was ranked 31 out of the 79 LGAs. Those most at risk from alcohol misuse and illicit drug use include:

• Young people engaging in risky behaviours.

• Women, children and young people experiencing family violence.

• Individuals or groups from culturally diverse backgrounds.

• People dealing with mental health issues and/or other challenging life situations.

• People who are homeless or living in insecure accommodation, such as rooming houses.

• People who are isolated from community life and their family.

Local governments are often confronted with the consequences of alcohol misuse and illicit drug use, including alcohol-related assaults, injuries, car crashes, property damage and other forms of anti-social or illegal behaviour[9].

Mental health

Around 4.5 million adult Australians (nearly 20% of the population) experience mental illness each year. More than 45% of the adult population will have a mental illness at some point in their lives[10].

Mental health issues affect the entire community, either directly or as a family member, carer, friend or workmate of a person with a mental illness. Mental health and the criminal justice system have long been intertwined. Mental illness in prison populations are up to four times higher than those in the general population.

A strong link also exists between illicit drug use and mental health problems with those who have been incarcerated reporting almost five times the incidence of substance-use disorders than other individuals.

The impact of mental health issues on both health and wellbeing can be severe. People with mental illness generally have poorer physical health, are more likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs and have higher rates of suicide. They are also more likely than the rest of the population to experience homelessness, be imprisoned, have their children placed in out-of-home care or be unemployed.

In the 2013 Victorian Population Health Profile[11], 9.8% of Moira residents reported a high to very high degree of psychological distress, compared with the Victorian rate of 11.4% and the Hume average of 11.2%. Moira ranked 59 when compared across Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Victoria.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people, there is greater prevalence of mental health issues compared to the general population. Research indicates that 27% of ATSI people experience high or very high levels of psychological distress; twice the rate of the non-Indigenous population. Additionally, ATSI people are hospitalised at twice the rate of non-Indigenous people for instances of self-harm[12].

The Dropping Off The Edge report[13] released in 2015 revealed the rate of psychiatric admissions per 1000 of population aged 18 years and over (ranking in the state out of 667 localities – 1 most disadvantaged, 667 most advantaged) for Moira is:

- Nathalia (postcode 3638) – 225;
- Numurkah (postcode 3636) – 230;
- Yarrawonga (postcode 3730) – 188; and
- Cobram (postcode 3644) – 247.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
Reduce the harmful impact of drugs and alcohol.	• Facilitate and promote drug and alcohol harm minimisation/ education programs for secondary school students. • Continue to advocate for additional resources in drug and alcohol support services. • Encourage membership of the Good Sports Program to sporting clubs to reduce alcohol related problems such as binge drinking and underage drinking. • Provide alternatives to alcohol at council events, and set limits on the supply of alcohol in council-owned facilities.
Improve the community's awareness of and access to mental health services.	• Advocate for additional clinical and non-clinical services for mental health. • Support and promote programs that address youth mental health issues. • Promote mental health initiatives such as Beyond Blue and R U OK? Day.

Safety in the Home

Family violence

Family violence affects people in every locality and all social circumstances. Children and young people are usually affected by family violence, either as witnesses to such behaviour (one in four children or young people witnesses violence against their mother) or as victims of violence themselves. Effects include depression and low self-esteem; aggressive and bullying behaviour; sleeplessness; bedwetting; loss of interests or friends; poor school performance; suicidal or antisocial behaviour; alcohol and substance abuse; parent-child conflict and abuse; and suicide[14].

Victoria Police[15] report that one out of 10 call-outs is in response to adolescent violence in the home − largely directed towards women.

Family incidents recorded by police in Moira Shire are:

- 456 between April 2016 and March 2017 (1,537.8 per 100,000 of population).
- 521 between April 2017 and March 2018 (1,748.4 per 100,000 of population).
- 454 between April 2018 and March 2019 (1,511.5 per 100,000 of population)
- 12.9% decrease between March 2017and March 2018.

The rate of domestic / family violence orders (ranking in the state out of 667 localities – 1 most disadvantaged, 667 most advantaged) for Moira is:

- Nathalia (postcode 3638) − 298.
- Numurkah (postcode 3636) − 176.
- Yarrawonga (postcode 3730) − 173.
- Cobram (postcode 3644) − 439.[16]

Older persons

Moira has a significantly higher older population than the State average, with 21.8% aged 65 to 84 years, compared with the Victorian rate of 13.7%. Furthermore, 3.2% of its population are aged over 85, compared with the State figure of 2.1%.

The Moira aged population at the 2016 Census was:

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
65-69 years	1,083	1,139	2,218
70-74 years	873	865	1,744
75-79 years	695	684	1,386
80-84 years	478	517	996
85-89 years	263	354	614
90-94 years	108	156	260
95-99 years	13	41	52
100 years +	6	3	11

At least one in 20 older people across Australia, as well as many people living with a disability, experience violence and abuse in their homes and care settings at the hands of carers or others[17].

For older people, regular visits by services such as Home and Community Care and Meals on Wheels are often a way to increase safety as people know they will be receiving a scheduled service and anything untoward during these visits will be reported and acted upon.

In the 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey[18], Moira was rated 69 for performance in elderly support services, although it was ranked the 10th most important issue by those surveyed.

Isolation

Belonging to a social network of communication and mutual obligation makes people feel loved, cared for, esteemed and valued. Supportive relationships may also encourage healthier behaviour patterns.

People who receive less social and emotional support experience lower level of wellbeing, more depression, increased risk of pregnancy complications and higher levels of disability from chronic disease.

Women are more vulnerable to the effects of social isolation, and experience a heightened risk due to gender-related issues such as:

- Childbearing and rearing becoming increasingly private, often conducted with a lack of support.
- 83% of single parents in Australia being female – single mothers often express feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- Violence against women restricting their social engagement, either by their own personal fear or restriction from partners.
- Women generally living longer, resulting in many living in isolation in their later years.
- Women engaging in less paid work, missing an opportunity for social interaction.
- Rumours and lack of confidentiality for rural women is a barrier to social connection.[19]

A higher proportion of Moira residents (56.7%) feel valued by society in comparison with Victorian (52.4%) and Hume region (53.9%) statistics. In a 2008 Department of Planning and Community Development survey, respondents were asked if they could get help from friends, family or neighbours when they needed it, either definitely, sometimes or not at all. In Moira, 90.9% of persons living within Moira reported that they could definitely get help from friends, family or neighbours when they needed it, as compared to 91.8% in the Hume Region.

However, the following figures[20] point to some levels of disadvantage for social connectedness:

Indicator	Vic	Moira
Internet - % internet accessed from dwellings	83.7%	73.1%
Transport - % pop. near public transport	74%	23%
Transport - households with no vehicle	7.9%	4.9%

The proportion of households without access to the internet (ranking in the state out of 667 localities – 1 most disadvantaged, 667 most advantaged):

- Nathalia (postcode 3638) – 67.
- Numurkah (postcode 3636) – 130.
- Yarrawonga (postcode 3730) – 112.
- Cobram (postcode 3644) – 119.[21]

Safe homes

The Council and its partners have a role in assisting residents to make their homes safer. This can include initiatives such as helping residents be more aware of extreme weather warnings, including ensuring identified vulnerable people are assisted during heatwaves, making people aware of scams which put people's financial means at risk and promoting health and wellbeing, including physical fitness.

There is an abundance of resources available to encourage people to do things to improve their personal safety at home, including locking their cars and homes, putting valuables out of site and not leaving keys outside, however it is important that these messages are constantly reinforced through all methods available.

Cyber safety

For many people, the internet is a great source of information on home safety. However, it comes with risks which the Council and its community safety partners can help raise awareness of. Increased use of the internet has led to on-line scams and other predatory behaviours that result in adverse financial, health and wellbeing outcomes.

In 2013, the reported financial losses for scams reached $90 million nationwide, though this figure is expected to be higher due to likely underreporting. Aside from financial losses, victims of on-line scams suffer impacts on their mental health, work capacity and personal relationships.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
Reduce the incidence of family violence.	• Demonstrate leadership in the prevention of family violence. • Partner with a significant employer in Moira Shire to establish a pilot program for a series of gender equality and family violence training, to be rolled out to other major employers. • Host and promote events and activities which promote gender equity and the prevention of violence. • Encourage the participation of women and girls in sporting clubs and recreation activities to provide opportunities for women's and girl's leadership and achievement. • Strengthen and promote criteria for Council-funded community projects that require clubs and groups to demonstrate how they are including women and girls in their activities. • Advocate for a greater availability of emergency and short-term housing options for family violence victims. • Prepare and distribute information on what someone should do if they believe a neighbour, friend or family member is experiencing family violence.
Ensure elderly persons are safe and well-cared for.	• Ensure Home and Community Care staff continue to report instances of elder abuse and abuse by carers, and to confidentially provide information on support services to those in need. • Promote awareness of current issues, such as scams and itinerant traders.
Reduce the vulnerability of residents as a result of isolation.	• Encourage community members to build relationships with their neighbours. • Promote training on new technologies to vulnerable community members. • Promote services and facilities available to the community, such as libraries and community centres. • Encourage newly arrived refugees, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Indigenous community members to participate in community activities and events. • Develop a New Residents' Kit that provides information on community groups, events and activities. • Improve access to Home and Community Care services for people from diverse backgrounds. • Identify and develop community-based methods of support such as babysitting clubs, walking groups and food cooperatives. • Support local efforts to engage more people in community volunteering and citizenship activities, such as volunteer groups, churches, service clubs, and professional or political associations. • Advocate for improvements to mobile black spot areas. • Ensure information, services and infrastructure support the needs of homeless community members.
Empower the community to make their homes safe.	• Promote safe home practices. • Promote pool safety legislation and practices.
Enhance perceptions of safety in the community.	• Provide information on local crime trends and safety initiatives.

Safety in the Community

Community safety initiatives

Community safety in Moira Shire requires a whole of community approach and a number of initiatives in partnership with other agencies have been put in place.

These include:

- Looking After Our Mates
- Town and Business Audits
- Older Driver Programs
- Scooter Forums
- Not So Fast Program
- Drug Bus Initiatives
- Food Handling Training
- Responsible Service of Alcohol training and audits
- Drug and Alcohol Programs
- Keys Please Program
- SafeTow Program
- L Plate Driver Programs
- Young Driver Programs
- Good Sports Program
- Drive Smart
- Go Safe
- Looking Out for Pedestrians
- Making Motorcycling Safer.

The Council also supports Neighbourhood Watch and works closely with Victoria Police on initiatives to report suspicious behaviour, particularly in rural and isolated areas.

The CSC is another example of a collaborative partnership.

Public spaces and facilities

The quality of public places can significantly affect a community's overall level of health and wellbeing. The design and maintenance of public places affect how individuals feel about the safety of their surroundings and their sense of involvement in community life.

Public places include streets, parks, reserves, shopping centres, car parks and squares. Good design and regular maintenance can encourage people to use spaces, interact with each other and feel positive about their communities.

Research in Australia and overseas[22] shows overwhelming evidence that older people, particularly women, are fearful of particular situations including:

- Modes of transport other than the car.
- Going out at night.
- Use of public transport, in particular to travel at night.
- The situation at either end of a public transport journey, ie. waiting at a bus stop or walking to a parked car.
- The use of city centre car parks particularly at night and if multi-storeyed.
- Open spaces and pathways (alleyways and underpasses).

Like all local governments, Moira has been subjected to acts of vandalism and crime, with the offences recorded by police being[23]:

- 1397 between October 2010 and September 2011.
- 1512 between October 2014 and September 2015.
- 3% change between September 2014 (1472) and September 2015 (1512).

Young people

Young people are frequent and visible users of public spaces, using such places to construct their social identities by interacting with their peers and others.[24] Young people are often noticeable at public facilities, shopping centres, skate bowls and libraries, frequently attracting unwarranted negative attention based on ill-informed stereotypes.

Despite many achievements in improving safety in public places, many local young people have also reported feeling unsafe especially around people affected by alcohol or other drugs, or where they are targets of racism.

Violence experienced and perpetrated by young people is often a symptom of poverty, low education attainment, inadequacy of parenting or role modelling, family dysfunction, or the influence of alcohol and other drugs[25].

Community feedback given to the Council is often about a lack of activities for young people to do, particularly given the difficulty in getting to larger cities which provide a greater range of entertainment options.

Moira has a lower percentage of young population than Victoria[26].

Indicator	Vic	Moira
0 - 14 years	18.3%	17.6% (5,131 people)
15 - 24 years	13%	13% (3,089 people)

Moira also has a significant proportion of young people aged 17-24 neither engaged in full time study or work, with its towns ranking in the state (out of 667 localities, with 1 most disadvantaged, 667 most advantaged) being:

• Nathalia (postcode 3638) – 194.
• Numurkah (postcode 3636) – 154.
• Yarrawonga (postcode 3730) – 204.
• Cobram (postcode 3644) – 98.[27]

Young people aged 18 to 34 years were also the most unlikely to have contact with the Council.[28]

Community connectedness

Moira has challenges in terms of isolation through lack of internet and vehicle options which would impact the levels at which people feel connected with their community.

Despite this, its higher than average levels of volunteerism indicate that there is a strong sense of belonging and civic pride among residents. Volunteering contributes to community on a number of levels. It has a strong association to the economic capacity of a community because of its value and relationship with unpaid work. Volunteering also has a role in building social networks and increasing social cohesion. These factors can cultivate or contribute to a sense of belonging in the community, which benefits both the individual and the community.[29]

In the 2013 Population Health Profile[30], a total of 26.7% of Moira residents surveyed said they had helped as a volunteer in the past 12 months, compared with the Victorian figure of 19.3% and the Hume figure of 25.8%. Moira was rated 31st in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) for volunteerism.

The average Community Connection score across Australia is 70. In comparison, the average Community Connection score for persons living in Moira was 76.7 in 2011, while the Hume Region was 77.4 and Victoria was 72.3.[31]

Emergency situations

Given the scale of natural and man-made disasters in Victoria in recent years, it is important local government plans for emergencies. In particular, local government plays a role in emergency preparedness and emergency response and in dire situations, members of the public will be looking to the Council to provide direction.

Within Victoria's emergency management arrangements, the Council is responsible for managing and coordinating municipal resources for responding to and recovering from emergencies. Local and regional planning ensures that agencies' expectations of Council's services are based on a realistic assessment of Council capability. The fundamental change in recent years is that achieving increased disaster resilience is not solely the domain of emergency management agencies; rather, it is a shared responsibility across the whole of society.

Disasters do not impact everyone in the same way, and it is often our vulnerable community members who are the hardest hit. The Council is a key point at which people will seek information on preparing and recovering from emergency situations and the Council's role in communicating key messages on this is an important consideration.

Perceptions of safety

In a 2011 VicHealth survey[32] respondents were asked to rate how safe they felt when walking alone in their local area during the day and at night. When walking alone in their local area during the day 99.4% of persons in Moira felt safe or very safe, compared to 98.4% in the Hume Region and 97% across Victoria. When walking alone at night 78.5% of persons in Moira felt safe or very safe, compared to 75.4% in the Hume Region and 70.3% across Victoria.

Safety in the Community

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
Enhance opportunities to work collaboratively on community safety initiatives.	• Promote the Community Safety Committee and the Community Safety Strategy. • Ensure all agencies that are responsible for actions in the Community Safety Strategy sign an Memorandum of Understanding for their delivery. • Utilise arts and culture activities and events to enhance community safety initiatives. • Participate in relevant local, regional and state networks to enhance partnerships and gain insight on emerging community safety issues and perceptions of safety. • Promote and facilitate Community Safety Month (October).
Ensure public spaces and facilities are planned and managed to reduce crime, and that they are safe and accessible.	• Understand and implement the Safer by Design Guidelines for Victoria and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles within Council. • Ensure community infrastructure is maintained to a high standard to support safety in public places. • Promote safe swimming principles in all waterways. • Regularly review crime and community safety data, and feedback from key stakeholders and the community, to address location-specific issues.
Ensure young people have activities, services and support to keep them engaged with their community.	• Encourage opportunities to build positive relationships between Victoria Police and young people to address young people's local safety initiatives. • Work with young people to understand what programs and activities would help them to engage with their community.
Develop community programs and capacity building projects to increase community connectedness and resilience.	• Support community organisations to develop programs that reach out to community members who would not normally engage in community activities. • Work with business and traders to develop activities to encourage lively community and street environments. • Promote the Council's Community and Events Grants Scheme.
Ensure people are prepared for, respond to, and recover from emergency situations.	• Promote the principles of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan and other relevant plans (ie. Flood emergency plans). • Promote social media as an emergency management information source and tool for the community.
Enhance perceptions of safety in the community.	• Provide information on local crime trends and safety initiatives.

Road Safety

Road networks, walking and cycling paths

Due to the large geographical nature of Moira Shire, the Council is responsible for an extensive road network. As well, there are several major roads which are the responsibility of VicRoads.

The Council continues to allocate resources towards the improvement of these roads and improving connectedness of the network as the Shire continues to grow and change.

Both walking and cycling are important forms of recreation and modes of transport and the Council has tried to encourage both activities through the use of additional and improved infrastructure in recent years. There are also significant tourism benefits associated with providing walking and cycling networks and ensure the Shire is well connected by road.

Moira residents continue to be physically active. In 2011, 61.9% of males and 64.2% of females in the Moira shire met the physical activity guidelines of at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most, preferably all, days.[33]

Well-planned and safe infrastructure and environments encourage people of all ages and capacities to walk and ride for transport and recreation, delivering benefits including:

- Health benefits of leading an active life, including increased physical activity and reduced rates of chronic disease.
- Environmental benefits from reduced vehicle use.
- Using less energy than motor vehicles.
- Stronger and more liveable communities with more people interacting.
- Improved community safety, as 'peopled' places are safer places.[34]

Safe driver behaviour

Moira Shire promotes safe driver behaviour, partnering with those responsible for driver education programs, especially those aimed at young people. There are extensive resources available at a State level, particularly targeting speeding, drink driving, driver fatigue and texting while driving which are at a preventative level.

The Council plays a role in supporting the road safety messages set at a Federal and State level. Road accidents inflict an enormous social, emotional, physical and economic toll on the community, including death, permanent incapacity and loss of mobility, depression, anxiety, loss of earnings and property damage.

Despite education efforts, Moira Shire has been the scene of several fatalities and a number of serious accidents in recent years.

Collisions

YEAR	FATAL	SERIOUS INJURY	OTHER	TOTAL
2014	3	24	25	52
2015	5	25	40	70
2016	4	23	47	74
2017	8	20	34	62
2018	3	20	28	51

Source: Regional Roads Victoria, September 2019

People

YEAR	KILLED	SERIOUS INJURY	OTHER	NOT INJURED	TOTAL
2014	4	31	46	41	122
2015	6	35	60	53	154
2016	4	28	66	47	145
2017	8	29	52	35	124
2018	3	23	38	36	1

Source: Regional Roads Victoria, September 2019

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
Provide safe road networks, and walking and cycling paths.	• Work with VicRoads to identify and improve infrastructure on VicRoads managed roads. • Identify and deliver road, walking and cycling infrastructure improvement projects.
Promote safe driver behaviour, for both motorised and non-motorised vehicles.	• Develop local principles for motorised scooter safety. • Support the promotion and delivery of road safety education programs. • Engage with groups in the farming industry, such as the Victorian Farmers Federation and United Dairy Farmers, to promote safe driving practices on rural roads.

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