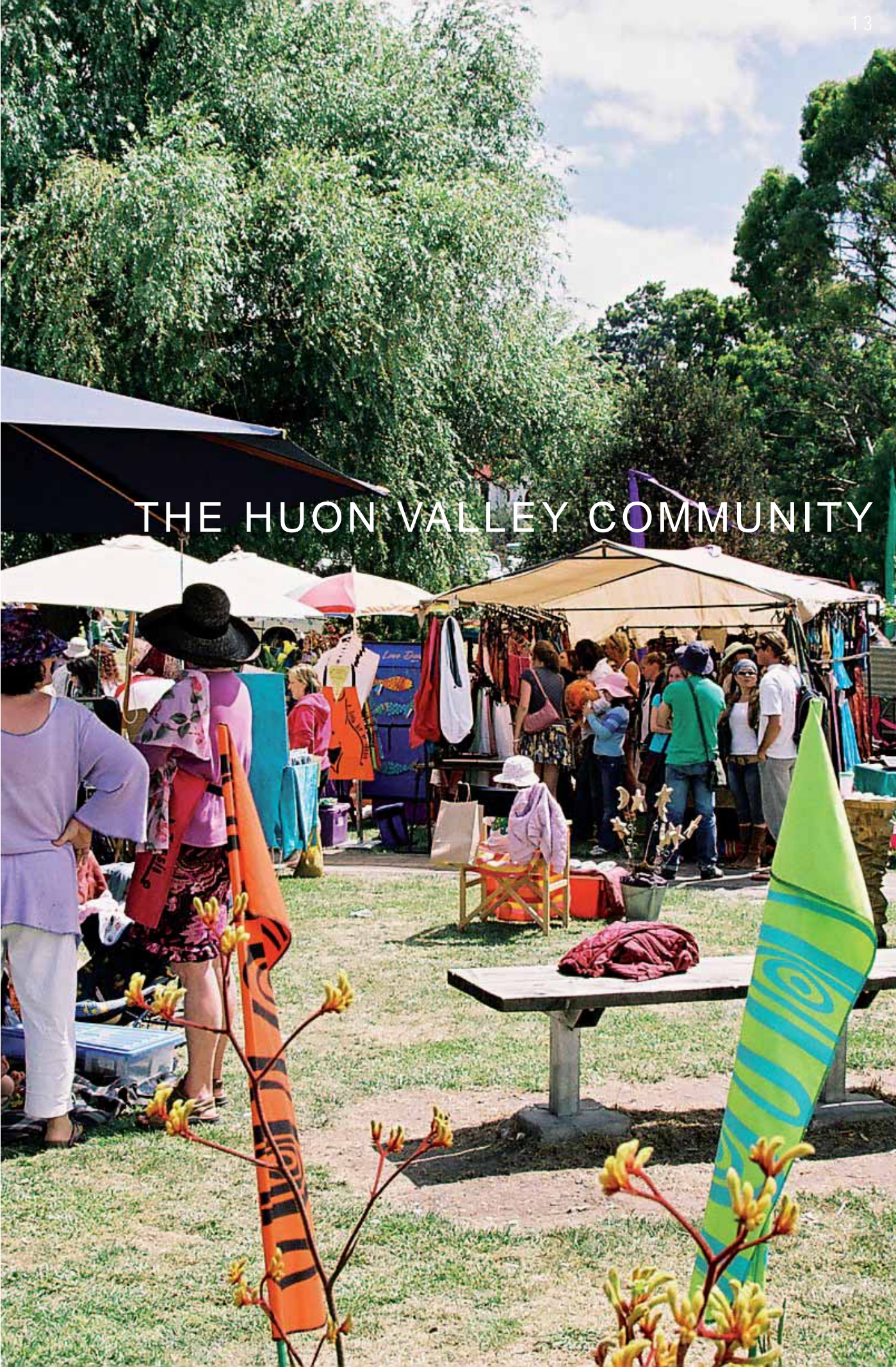


THE HUON VALLEY COMMUNITY



Population Characteristics

Tasmania's Ageing Population

Local Government Demographic Profiles for each Local Government area in Tasmania have been compiled by Population Tasmania.¹ The document looks into the impact of Tasmania's ageing population, where it is projected that "Tasmania's population aged 65+ years will increase across the projection period (to 2021) at an average rate of around 0.44 percentage points per year. Currently 14.3 per cent of the Tasmanian population is aged 65+ years (by comparison with Total Australia which has 13.0 per cent)".

The current (2004) and projected (2021) age-sex structures for Tasmania also indicate 'premature ageing', which is commonly caused by the migration-related loss of young working age people and a gain at older ages. The demographic profile also shows that Tasmania's population is projected to increase from 473,000 in 2004 to about 479,000, which is a 1.4% increase. However, the working age populations will decline, while the population of older people will substantially grow.

The Role of Local Governments in Planning for the Ageing Population

The findings documented in Jackson and Felmingham's research indicate that planning for the ageing population at only the State and national levels will be counterproductive, as population ageing will occur at the local government level. Accordingly, the changing population needs to be prepared for at the local government level and is an important consideration for the Huon Valley.

Huon Valley Population

The population of the municipal area was 14,001 at the 2006 census (an increase of 6% on the 13,141 people from the 2001 Census data). In addition, many holiday residences and tourists also visit the Huon Valley. Over the past few decades, the population has steadily grown at a rate of about 0.5 - 1%. Even when Tasmania's population as a whole was decreasing in the past, the local population increased.

Like all of Tasmania, the median age has increased markedly in recent years. The current median age is 39 (compared to the Tasmanian figure of 37.7) and this has increased from 36 in 2001, 34 in 1996 and from 31 in 1991. The age profile of the population has a significant 'bulge' in the 30–55 years age bracket. This is quite different to 30 years ago, when the main population group was children and young adults in the 0–25 years age bracket.

Research carried out by Population Tasmania indicates that positive growth in the Huon Valley population is expected. However, this growth will be characterised by negative growth in the population aged under 40-54, and a high increase in people in older age brackets. The projected 5% increase is higher than the Tasmanian projected increase of 1.4%. Tasmanian growth will also be characterised by negative growth under age 55 and positive growth in the age groups 55 and over.

¹ Jackson, N.O. and Felmingham, B. (2004) CEDA LGAT Population Ageing Project

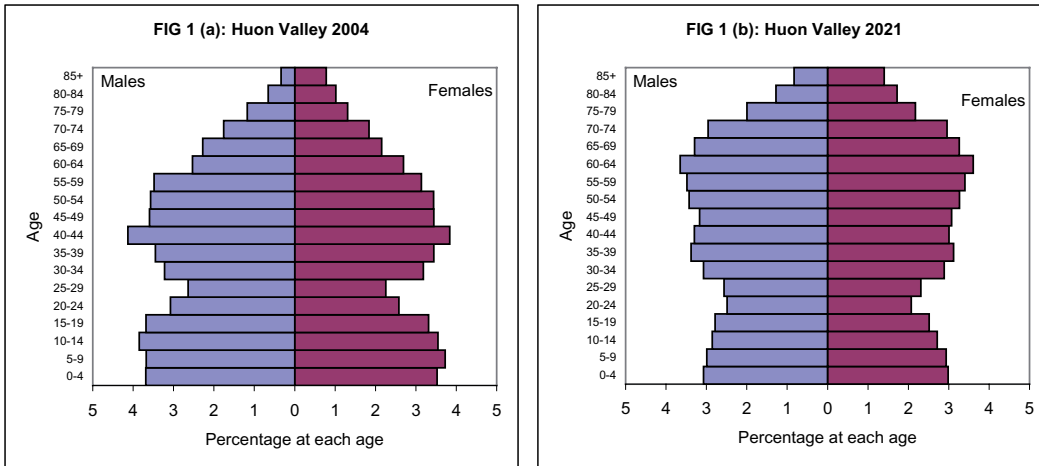


Figure 2: Age/sex structure 2004 and 2021 projections for the Huon Valley

Source: Local Government Demographic Profiles compiled by Population Tasmania

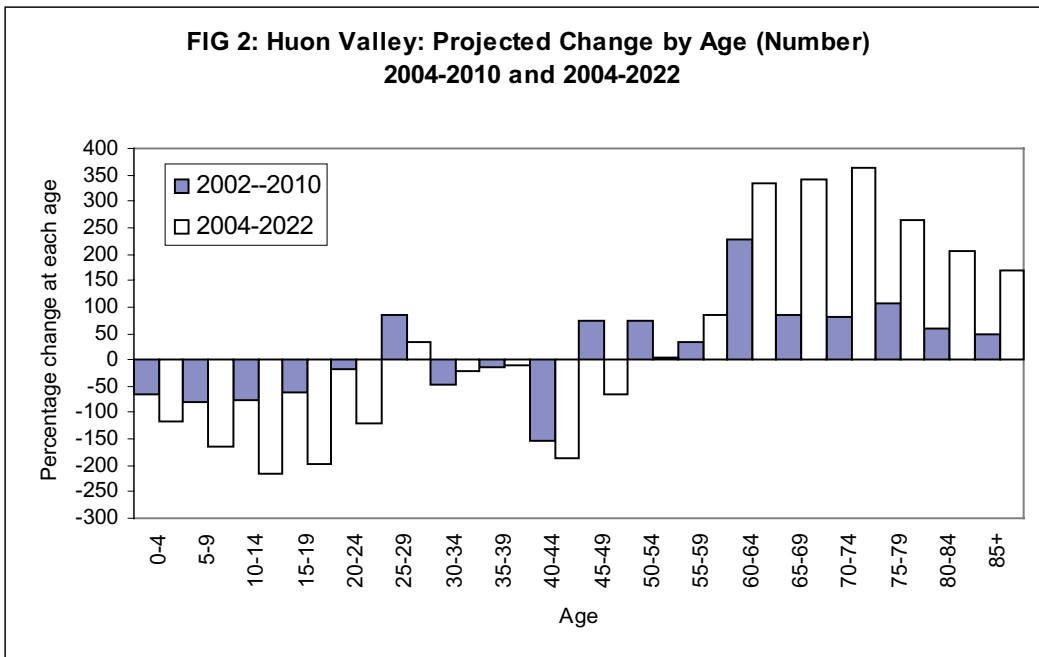


Figure 3: Projected population change in the Huon Valley by age

Source: Local Government Demographic Profiles compiled by Population Tasmania

Projected Change in Size of the Huon Valley population between 2004-2021

| Age group | 0-14 | 15-24 | 25-39 | 40-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75-84 | 85+ | Total | 15-64 | 65+ |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Projected Change (%) | -16.2 | -18.1 | 0.1 | -8.2 | 25.5 | 63.1 | 81.1 | 109.7 | 5 | -1.6 | 72.6 |

Source: Local Government Demographic Profiles compiled by Population Tasmania

Township Characteristics

This document provides an outline of selected characteristics within the towns of Cygnet, Dover, Franklin, Geeveston, Huonville and Ranelagh. The characteristics are based primarily on the latest 2006 Census data, however as not all statistics were released at the time that this Strategy was finalised, the *Census of Population and Housing –Selected Characteristics for Urban Centres* using the 2001 Census data has also been utilised.

It is important to note that comparison between the 2001 and 2006 statistics is limited. The boundaries for the town/suburbs within the municipal area was altered to encompass a wider geographical area for the 2006 Census and as a result there is a higher population in each town. These statistics do not demonstrate a greater centralisation of population. Indeed the collection boundaries include some of the surrounding rural residential areas to each town.

The Huonville-Ranelagh has the highest population with 2433 people in 2006. Cygnet and Geeveston have the next highest population at 1,267 and 1,583 people respectively. Dover and Franklin have smaller populations at 958 and 1,053 people in 2006.

There are relatively high proportions of people aged 0-14 and 64 and over within each of the towns, which indicates a high number of dependents within the municipal area who need to be catered for in planning for the future.

Franklin has the highest proportion of people aged 0-14 years, followed by Huonville-Ranelagh, Cygnet and Geeveston. Dover has the lowest proportion of people aged between 0-14 years. Over 25% of the Geeveston population is aged 65 years and over, 18.2% of Dover's population is 65 years and over. There is also a relatively high proportion of the Huonville and Cygnet population aged 65 years and over. Ranelagh has the lowest percentage of the population aged 65 years and over. This is interesting to note in conjunction with the comparatively high weekly income for Ranelagh, the lower median age and the greater percentage of the population between the ages of 20 and 45².

The median age for the towns range between 30 - 46, again indicating an ageing population.

Cygnet had the highest population of indigenous people in 2006, with almost 30% of the overall population. Geeveston had the second highest indigenous population, with over 23%. Overall, there was an increase in the number of people in the municipal area who are of indigenous origin between 2001 and 2006.

There was a substantial decrease in the unemployment rate within the Huon Valley between 1996 and 2001. The table below indicates that in 2001 Cygnet and Geeveston had the highest unemployment rates in 2001, whereas Dover had the lowest at 6.6%.

² *Population aged between 20 to 45 in Ranelagh is 34.6% compared with 29.9% in Hounville, 28.1% in Cygnet, 26.2% in Dover, 26.9% in Franklin and 27.6% in Geeveston.*

Characteristics of Huon Valley Towns

| <i>Township</i> | <i>Cygnets</i> | <i>Dover</i> | <i>Franklin</i> | <i>Geeveston</i> | <i>Huonville</i> | <i>Ranelagh</i> |
|--|----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Population 2006 (no.) | 1,267 | 958 | 1,053 | 1,583 | 1,933 | 500 |
| Population 2001 (no.) | 800 | 489 | 423 | 827 | 1708* | |
| Population 1996 (no.) | 852 | 481 | 454 | 788 | 1718* | |
| 2006 - Proportion of population aged 0-14 years (%) | 21.4% | 16.9% | 22.8% | 17.0% | 22.0% | 25.4% |
| 2001 - Proportion of population aged 0-14 years (%) | 24.3% | 17.6% | 22.9% | 26.5% | 24.7% | |
| 2006 - Proportion of population aged 65 years & over (%) | 14.7% | 18.2% | 17.8% | 12.1% | 16.5% | 8.2% |
| 2001 - Proportion of population aged 65 years & over (%) | 14.4% | 17.2% | 25.3% | 13.1% | 13.2%* | |
| 2006 - Median age | 40 | 46 | 40 | 39 | 38 | 30 |
| 2001 - Median age | 35 | 41 | 41 | 36 | 33* | |
| 2006 - Median Average Weekly individual income (\$) | \$326 | \$324 | \$325 | \$321 | \$358 | \$406 |
| 2001 - Median Average Weekly individual income (\$) | \$256 | \$331 | \$247 | \$264 | \$293* | |
| Indigenous (no.) | 225 (17.7%) | 75 (7.8%) | 66 (6.02%) | 176 (11.11%) | 157 (8.12%) | 42 (8.4%) |
| Non-Indigenous (no.) | 1002 | 841 | 953 | 1328 | 1689 | 455 |
| Unemployment rate (15 years and over) (2001 only) | 12.7% | 6.6% | 9.0% | 11.5% | 8.8%* | |

* Huonville & Ranelagh were included in the same township for the 2001 Census but separated in the 2006 Census.

Different Communities within Huon Valley

The Huon Valley community is diverse and can be seen as a collection of smaller quite different communities. The differences are partly due to the settlement pattern within the municipal area, with a collection of relatively small towns and other smaller settlements scattered across the largely rural area. Different industries influenced the development of the towns and this has also influenced the apparent differences between the communities. The number of residents from families with multi-generational ties to the towns also contributes substantially to these different senses of community.

In the past people usually saw themselves as coming from Cygnets or Geeveston for example, rather than the Huon Valley itself. These different communities have different attitudes and ways of interacting. For example, the Cygnets and 'far south' communities are often characterised as more 'alternate' or interested in the arts and cultural activities. In contrast, the Geeveston and Dover communities focus more on traditional industries such as forestry and fishing.

There are a growing number of Hobart commuters living in the outlying areas (for example Lucaston and Mountain River). This group generally includes hobby farmers and professionals who have moved to the area for the lifestyle but work in Hobart. This has in part been influenced by the upgrade in the highway access into the municipal area during the 1980s which although not resulting in a direct population increase has stabilised a decline in population and due to the quicker journey time encouraged this type of rural residential living for commuters. Franklin is becoming more active as a community that is involved in arts and cultural activities and has an increasing tourist and small business focus.

The arrival of many new residents coming to live in all parts of the municipal area has influenced the community characteristics. The attraction for new residents is often the countryside lifestyle and the inherent natural beauty of the Huon Valley.

| NEED OF INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES | |
|--|--|
| Strategic Directions | Guiding Principles |
| <i>Cater for differing community values, to foster a stronger sense of identity within the Huon Valley as a whole.</i> | <i>Involve members of different communities in planning for the Huon Valley in the development of the planning scheme.</i> <i>Ensure the strategy and planning scheme recognises and responds to the needs and interests of the different communities within the Huon Valley.</i> |

Planning for the Changing Community Profile

By ensuring that land use and development standards are in place which take into account the likely impact of predicted population trends and changes in community profiles, Council can contribute to the creation and maintenance of liveable and healthy communities. Of particular importance is catering for the ageing population. The number of older people within a municipal area has a substantial influence on the needs of a community, particularly in terms of requirements and preferences for the location and types of housing, as well as services and facilities.

People have strong ties to the Huon Valley and wish to remain in the area into their later years. It is therefore important that provision is made within the municipal area to cater for the needs of older people. Council can assist in ensuring that the community is catered for through ensuring that a number of factors are considered in planning for the area.

Some residential dwellings are situated in inappropriate locations for older people. This does not only apply to rural areas, but also to conventional residential areas in the key settlements, as they are often situated at a distance from services and facilities that makes accessibility for older people difficult. This often contributes to social isolation and general disadvantage for older people due to lack of access to services and activities. In some cases, inability to access important services forces older people to move out of their homes into unfamiliar areas at some distance from their social networks.

Aged Care Facilities

The municipal area has aged care facilities in Franklin, Cygnet, Dover and Geeveston, the most prominent being Eldercare in Franklin.

The strategy and planning scheme needs to respond to the ever increasing demand for aged care facilities by providing flexibility for the extension or adaptation of existing facilities and development of new facilities within settlement boundaries. Given the expected increase in the

number of older people, the planning scheme must also encourage alternatives for appropriate accommodation for older people.

For instance, the planning scheme can be structured in such a way that it assists families in caring for older relatives by making it easier to establish ancillary dwellings for dependant older people. This will be particularly important in areas where options for appropriate re-housing are limited.

The ageing population will increase the demand for community facilities and other services to be located within close distance to homes and close to public transport routes. The strategy can respond to this need by encouraging the consolidation of existing settlements.

The ageing population will also have implications for access issues within the Huon Valley. Maintaining a relatively independent lifestyle is often central to well-being for older people. Therefore, it will be necessary that they have appropriate access to services and activities. This can be achieved through ensuing safe access to buildings and provision of appropriate footpath linkages between services. As well as enabling older people to maintain their independence, improving access for older people will also assist them in maintaining community networks and participating in activities.

Planning for Young People

Retaining and attracting young people to the Huon Valley is essential for sustainable economic and social development and adds to the social mix and vitality of the community. As indicated by the ABS statistics included above, there has been a trend of reduced numbers of young people in the municipal area and a substantial increase in the number of people within the 65 years and over age group. Although unlikely to significantly alter these trends, the strategy can assist in promoting sustainable economic development to provide employment opportunities and also for flexibility in catering for housing needs.

Young people in particular need informal recreation spaces and these should be encouraged as part of new development. This has been acknowledged in the Huon Valley and has resulted in the development of skate parks in Huonville, Geeveston and Dover. Bike parks have been proposed for Geeveston, Franklin and Cygnet, however, identification of an appropriate location has thus far proven difficult. A Youth Centre operates in Dover and Huonville, although the latter may be superseded by the PCYC facility when this is completed. In addition to the existing facilities, Council operates a mobile youth van to bring activities to each town on a regular basis. The establishment of further informal recreation spaces will be encouraged as part of new residential development.

Accessibility is an important issue for younger people as they rely on alternative forms of transport. It will be important that the strategy encourages new developments to include linkages for cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, improving public transport linkages between services, activities and dwellings will assist in making the Huon Valley more conducive to the needs of younger people.

Similar to the issue of aged care, the planning scheme can assist in encouraging young people to stay at school longer through making ancillary dwellings in family homes easier to achieve. This may also assist young people in completing higher education by avoiding high rentals.

The strategy also needs to address the current demand for low cost rental accommodation in order to retain young people in the municipal area. The specific need for short term crisis accommodation for young people will also need to be addressed within the municipal.

PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY OF AGE

| Strategic Directions | Guiding Principles |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Respond to the ageing population, while also taking into consideration the needs of young people.</i></p> | <p><i>Encourage the establishment of additional aged care facilities in appropriate areas.</i></p> <p><i>Allow ancillary dwellings in residential areas where there is a demonstrated need.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure new developments consider linkages between services and activities via alternative transport modes.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage new services and activities to be located in areas that are accessible to people within all social groups and mobility levels.</i></p> |

Affordable Housing Issues

The needs of people on low incomes must be considered in the strategy and planning scheme. One important issue is the availability of affordable housing.

In working with Housing Tasmania to meet affordable housing goals, Council can assist in reinforcing vital social communities within the municipal area and also assist in providing a vital socio-economic well being. Therefore, the needs to respond to Housing Tasmania initiatives and to the issues relating to public housing in the Huon Valley.

At present, there is insufficient stock of public housing in the Huon Valley and no emergency crisis accommodation. The closest crisis accommodation facilities are in Kingston. In addition, affordable private rental properties are at some distance from important basic services, therefore contributing to the social isolation of a number of low income residents and creating significant problems for mobility restricted individuals. Another issue is that the existing housing stock largely consists of detached houses, suitable for larger families and there is a lack of resources to cater for smaller families and single people.

Demand for additional low cost private rentals is high in the Huon Valley, and increases in property values has not only increased rental prices, but also the number of people requiring assistance from Housing Tasmania. The current high demand for additional low cost private rentals in Huon Valley exceeds supply.

In response to such issues, Housing Tasmania's strategy includes the development of communal housing. Communal models of housing are cost effective and promote community support. Communal housing is also more appropriate than detached housing for smaller family structures and for those living alone. This strategy is appropriate to cater for the needs of low income earners in the Huon Valley and provides increased accessibility to employment and services and more environmentally sustainable public housing.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

| Strategic Directions | Guiding Principles |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Respond to Housing Tasmania initiatives and policies, which will assist in providing affordable housing, increased accessibility and promotes socio-economic well-being in the Huon Valley.</i></p> | <p><i>Provide flexibility to allow the establishment of low cost and temporary crisis accommodation.</i></p> <p><i>Provide flexibility for communal housing within the key settlements, and generally promote choice in housing alternatives.</i></p> |

Community Facilities

Community infrastructure and services are essential in promoting sustainable economic and social development. Community infrastructure and services are provided by the State and Commonwealth Governments, Council, as well as non-government organisations. They include schools and other educational facilities, public open space and reserves, health care facilities, aged care establishments, community halls, recreation grounds and the like. With changes in community profiles, some community facilities can become more important, while others can become obsolete or change in the roles and services provided.

Most towns have a community hall. These are older style facilities that are used to varying degrees by their respective local communities. Council undertook a review of all its halls in 2000 and came up with recommendations for upgrading or disposal of individual facilities. There are still a number of halls that are under utilised but are nonetheless seen as important by the local community who strongly oppose any moves to sell or dispose of them.

It is important at a local level to ensure that land use planning policy can respond to the changing needs of service providers. In this way, benefits for the community can be optimised. In this regard the Strategy encourages a flexible approach where community services are allowed to operate where they are required. The strategy also promotes a system of developer contributions towards providing better community facilities. New residential development facilitates greater demand for community facilities. It is in the interest of both Council and developers to create a built environment that ensure the social and health of the community. This in turn creates a more attractive living environment within the municipal area and assist in driving economic development.

| COMMUNITY FACILITIES | |
|---|---|
| Strategic Directions | Guiding Principles |
| <p><i>Acknowledge the requirements of different service providers and allow flexibility to provide services that are responsive to the changing community profile.</i></p> <p><i>Identify preferred locations for education, community and health facilities.</i></p> | <p><i>Provide flexibility in the planning scheme for the location of community facilities within the major settlements.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage the development of facilities in highly accessible locations and in areas of highest need.</i></p> <p><i>Regional facilities should generally be located within Huonville unless the broader needs of the community are best served by an alternative location within the Huon Valley.</i></p> <p><i>Provide mechanisms for implementation of a contribution system towards community infrastructure.</i></p> |

Recreation and Open Space

Role of Open Space

Council managed sports grounds, parks, reserves and open spaces play important roles in the health and well being of the community, and are also highly valued by the community for their recreational and aesthetic qualities.

Changing community profiles influence the need for recreational facilities and open space. For example, the ageing population may call for more socially oriented recreational activities, rather than facilities for such activities as competitive sports.

Amenity and impacts on the environment are important considerations in relation to recreational open space. Council can ensure, for example, that new subdivisions contribute 5% open space where that land will benefit the community and not place undue burden on ratepayers. In other cases, cash in lieu equal to 5% of the value of the land can be paid and used to improve existing open space and associated facilities. An open space strategy is necessary to match real needs, Councils resources and the range of available opportunities.

Passive Recreational Facilities in the Huon Valley

There are numerous walking opportunities available within the State Forests and National Parks within the municipal area. However, access to these for most of the community requires a journey by car. There is a need for walking trails linked to each of the main towns and Council has started to address this through the construction of facilities at Cygnet, Geeveston and Dover. There are currently no bike lanes on any Council roads and limited trails accessible to mountain bikes. The strategy will require future residential development to be designed to maximise connections and promote walking and cycling.

The Council has around 50 parks and reserves throughout the municipal area, many of which contain playground facilities. Council is working towards a strategy of providing a quality park and playground facility in each of the five main towns. There is sufficient public open space available in each of the towns to enable this to occur.

Active Recreational Facilities in the Huon Valley

The municipal area is well served for indoor sporting facilities, with a sports centre in Cygnet, Port Huon and Dover. The latter is has been constructed at the Dover District High School, having been relocated from its original location 2km south of the town centre. The Port Huon Centre includes a 25m pool, squash courts, sauna, gym, aerobics room and multi court. A Police and Citizens Youth Club is proposed for Huonville, which will include a gym, multi court, 25m lap pool and a hobby centre. Council has approved an area of land within the Huonville Recreation Area for the project and construction on the building is likely to commence in 2006. This facility is likely to impact upon the viability of Council's sports centres, in particular Port Huon, which is currently the closest facility available to Huonville residents.

Council operates the Huonville Swimming Pool, a 50m outdoor facility that is open to the public from November to April. The 25m pool at the Port Huon Centre is open all year round.

There is a recreation ground in each of the five main townships in the municipal area and a number of the smaller towns also have an oval. The ovals at Dover and Surges Bay are currently under utilised, lacking either a regular summer or winter user. Ovals at Glen Huon, Judbury and Ranelagh are currently only used for cricket during the summer. The Castle Forbes Bay Oval is in a similar position, although Council does not own it. The Franklin Oval is used for both cricket and soccer but has capacity for increased usage. The Huonville Oval and surrounding soccer grounds are currently operating beyond capacity and there is pressure to accommodate the growing popularity of soccer. Little Athletics is conducted at Huonville on a grass running track.

Council has outdoor tennis courts in Dover, Geeveston, Franklin and Huonville. The Geeveston and Franklin facilities have fallen into disrepair and are no longer utilised. There is an active tennis club at Cygnet that operates five courts. Cygnet, Geeveston, Huonville, Franklin and Dover all have a bowls club. There is a golf club at Dover, Geeveston, Cygnet, Glen Huon and Huonville. Sailing Clubs operate out of Port Cygnet and Port Huon and there is a rowing club based at Franklin. Outdoor netball courts are available at Huonville and at Burtons Reserve in Cygnet, although the latter are no longer used. Horse riding clubs are active in Huonville,

Cygnets and Mountain River and lease land from Council for their riding activities. There is a field and game shooting club based in Glen Huon.

There is only one commercial caravan park in the Huon Valley, located at Dover. There is a definite need for additional facilities at Huonville and Cygnets. There is currently a small park at Cygnets (10 powered sites only) that is operated as an adjunct to the Cygnets Hotel. An area of the Franklin Foreshore has been set aside for use by campervans and a fee is charged for camping at this site. Council has installed grey and black water dump points at Franklin and Burtons Reserve in Cygnets. The Dover caravan park also has a dump point available for use by patrons.

| RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE | |
|--|---|
| Strategic Directions | Guiding Principles |
| <p><i>Develop a comprehensive strategy that identifies a way forward for the improvement and upgrade of recreational and open space facilities within the municipal area.</i></p> <p><i>Prepare a capital works program to implement an Open Space & Recreation Strategy.</i></p> <p><i>Provide opportunities for the development of new facilities within existing areas.</i></p> | <p><i>Protect existing open space and recreational areas.</i></p> <p><i>Protect recreational amenity by ensuring surrounding development does not jeopardise the primary recreational purpose of any area.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure new subdivisions promote accessibility and where needed, provide usable land for recreational purposes. Alternatively, cash in lieu payments to contribute towards the improvement of open spaces.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure that public open space contributions are distributed across the municipal area in accordance with an Open Space & Recreation Strategy</i></p> |

Crime Prevention

Crime safety and crime reduction is now recognised as a key outcome in the planning of our built environments. The design and effective use of our environment can lead to a reduction in both fear and incidence of crime. Any such reduction can result in an improvement in the quality of life of the members of the community where the reduction occurs. Local government through its planning scheme and approval process can influence the design of development in a positive manner through the application of ‘Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design’ principles (CPTED). Application of CPTED to design and approval processes deliver a community environment designed to reduce the opportunities for the commission of crime and to reduce the fear of crime occurring. This, in turn, creates a more attractive place to live and assists with driving economic development.

Good planning can support safer communities through consideration of:

- ▶ Lighting;
- ▶ Natural surveillance and sightlines;
- ▶ Signage;
- ▶ Building Design
- ▶ Land Use mix;
- ▶ Landscaping;
- ▶ Places safe from entrapment; and
- ▶ Management and maintenance of structures and buildings.

This strategy therefore recognises the following planning outcomes for crime prevention:

- Access and Movement: development ensures places have well defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security;
- Structure: controls that ensure developments are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict;
- Surveillance: planning guidelines that promote places where all publicly accessible spaces can be overlooked;
- Ownership: developments promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community;
- Physical Protection: ensures that public buildings include well designed security features;
- Activity: ensuring places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and a sense of safety at all times;
- Management and Maintenance: places that are design with management and maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present and the future.

| CRIME PREVENTION | |
|---|---|
| Strategic Directions | Guiding principles |
| <i>The design of new built environments should consider measures to reduce crime.</i> | <i>Ensure new developments are designed with consideration of CPTED principles.</i> <i>Provide for a variety of uses within non-residential areas to facilitate passive surveillance.</i> <i>Discourage development that would result in reduction of passive surveillance of public areas.</i> |