

Lachlan Shire's Youth Strategy (2021 – 2030)

Realising our potential



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A vision for our young people

The Lachlan Shire community shares a vision for our young people to realise their potential.

As a community, we will work together to support our young people to live life well, with opportunities that enhance their physical and mental health, social, cultural and sporting opportunities, and opportunities for employment and education... in other words, we want our young people to have every opportunity to thrive and be valued members of our community.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge, and pay respect to, the Traditional Owners and ongoing custodians of our land – the Wiradjuri people.

Lachlan Shire Council believes it is important to engage effectively with our Aboriginal community members to build positive relationships and productive partnerships.

Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We recognise their strength and resilience and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Lachlan Shire community.

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| | Glossary | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|------|---|
| CWFSG | Central West Family Support Group | DTT | Down the Track program |
| LHD | Local Health District/s | LLCS | Lower Lachlan Community Services |
| LSC | Lachlan Shire Council | RTOs | Registered Training Organisations |
| wcc | Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation | WPRD | Western Plains Regional Development Inc |
| Youth service provider | providing services to young people | | |

Message from the Mayor



It is common to hear people say "our young people are our future". And yes, that is true. But they are also our here and now.

Young people (aged 12 to 24 years) are a key part of our community, contributing to our economy, participating in community life, developing new skills and embracing technology, and caring for our environment.

However, some of our young people face particular challenges that prevent them from participating fully in our community. Issues of family breakdown, disengagement from education, alcohol and other drug use, and experience of mental illness all present challenges to our young people achieving bright futures.

Lachlan Shire Council trusts that this Youth Strategy will bring our community together with a shared vision and collective purpose to support all of our young people to fulfil their potential and be active participants in our communities.



Emily Sinderberry (2021 Young Citizen of the Year), and nominees Holly Leighton, Katy Quinn and Tate Dwyer

We are blessed to have many young people in our community who are using their initiative, providing leadership and being role models for their peers and indeed the rest of the community.

Our 2021 citizenship awards recognised the contributions of a number of these young people from across our Shire (see photo on previous page).

This Youth Strategy identifies a series of actions that will help us to bring to life our vision for a bright future for our young people. While this is a Council plan, it includes opportunities for the contribution of everyone in our community, as well as many possibilities for collaboration – where through working together we can avoid duplication and make the best use of our available resources.

I hope that service providers across our community will be able to make good use of this Youth Strategy to inform their own planning and support grant applications to enhance their delivery of services to our local young people.

I commend this Youth Strategy to you, and look forward to seeing the fruits of its implementation over time.

John Medcalf Mayor April 2021



About this Youth Strategy

Under the NSW Local Government Act, Lachlan Shire Council has a responsibility to plan for its community's future.

Lachlan Shire Council recognises that adolescence and young adulthood is a key stage of life for all of us – it is that important time when we transition from childhood towards independent adulthood. It is a time of our lives when we discover who we are, and what we want to do with our lives. As a community, we all have a responsibility to support our young people through this important journey to becoming productive adults in our community.

This Youth Strategy has been developed with local young people's input to shape a vision for their future. It identifies priorities, establishes actions to address those priorities, and suggests who might be able to contribute to achieving those actions. It also identifies opportunities for future initiatives if additional resources become available.

This Youth Strategy draws on evidence collated through past youth planning activities, as well as hearing from young people, parents and carers, service providers and others in the community who share an interest in our young people's future.

This Youth Strategy has been prepared by Council on behalf of its community. While Council has responsibility for delivering some of the actions identified in this Strategy, if it is to succeed in addressing the community's priorities for its young people, it will require the commitment and actions of a range of service providers, families and young people themselves.

The strategies and actions identified in this Youth Strategy will be considered by the incoming Council (following each local government election) as it prepares its Delivery Program and annual Operational Plans and budgets. References are included to Council's current Delivery Program, which expires in June 2022.

Strategies and actions identified as the responsibility of others in the community can be considered as those organisations undertake their own service and operational planning processes, considering how best to support their youth clients.

Reporting on the progress of achieving this Youth Strategies actions and outcomes will be captured by Council in its existing reporting frameworks, including in its Annual Report. Other organisations that work towards progressing specific actions identified in this Strategy are encouraged to share their progress with Council so that the progress of the whole Strategy can be shared with the community.

It is hoped that this Youth Strategy will provide a central point of reference for all service delivery aimed at supporting the young people of our community. It is not intended that everything suggested in this Strategy will happen all at once. However, it may be used in service planning, resource allocation, grant applications and so on, so that over time our community can chip away with actions large and small that move us closer to our objectives. With this shared effort, we will work together to ensure a bright future and enable our young people to realise their potential.

Lachlan Shire's young people: a snapshot

According to 2016 Census data, Lachlan Shire's population was 6,194, with 1,069 aged between 10 and 24 years (or 17.3% of the Shire's population). In 2019, the population had reduced to 6,075 (with 16.6% aged 10 to 24 years), with NSW Government population projections forecasting a continuing decline in population to approximately 5,700 residents by 2041. It is forecast that the number of families with children will also decline over this time (from 1,050 families in 2016 to approximately 900 in 2041). The forecast for people aged under 30 years in 2041 is a reduction from 2,550 in 2016 to approximately 1,900 in 2041.

Approximately 16% of the Shire's total population are young people aged 12 to 24. It appears that a reasonably large proportion of those young people leave the Shire around the time that they are finishing their secondary education.

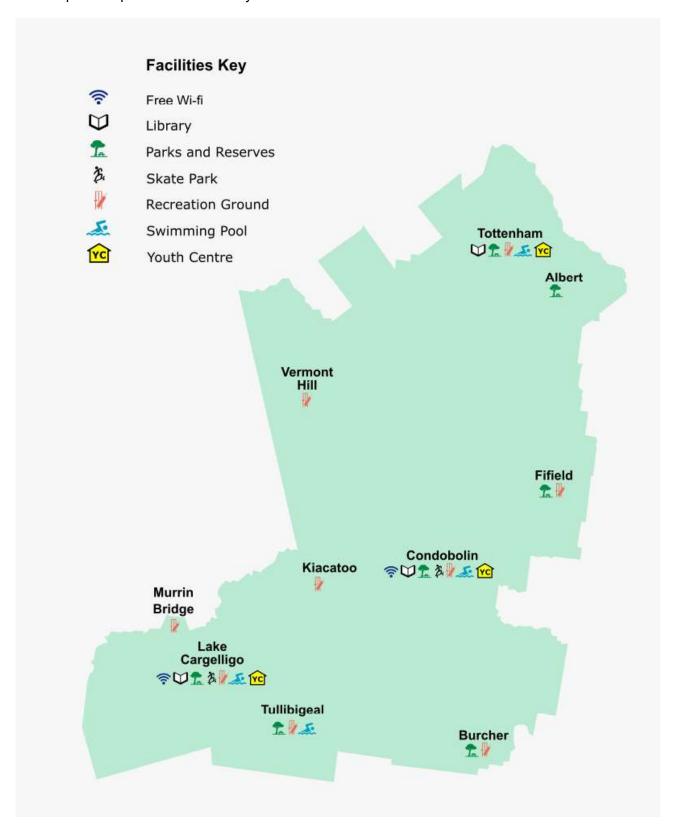
| | Lachlan Shire in 2019 | | Females | | Males | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Age group: | 10-14 yrs | 15-19 yrs | 20-24 yrs | 10-14 yrs | 15-19 yrs | 20-24 yrs | 10-14 yrs | 15-19 yrs | 20-24 yrs |
| Number: | 433 | 307 | 267 | 216 | 162 | 121 | 217 | 145 | 146 |
| | 1007 | | | 499 | | | | 508 | |
| % of Shire | 7.1% | 5.1% | 4.4% | 3.5% | 2.7% | 2.0% | 3.6% | 2.4% | 2.4% |
| population: | | 16.6% | | | 8.2% | | | 8.4% | |



Photo credit: Desert Pea Media - Condo Crew

Lachlan Shire facilities

A range of community facilities are provided in Lachlan Shire that our young people benefit from. The map below provides a summary of the facilities available across the Shire:



Drawing the threads together

This Youth Strategy brings together the outcomes of a significant body of work undertaken over several years to better understand the needs of young people across Lachlan Shire, and which heard from young people and service providers, as well as parents and others in the community, about how we can best work towards achieving a bright future for our young people.

The work undertaken over the past several years has consistently identified recurring themes about the issues that are important for young people, as well as identifying ideas for ways in which our community can best address young people's needs. This extensive evidence base has significantly informed the development of this Youth Strategy, and includes:

| 2020 | YOUth Talk: Hearing from young people, parents and service providers to inform a shire-wide youth strategy | Growing Lachlan and Western Plains Regional Development Inc, with Lachlan Shire Council |
|------|---|---|
| 2019 | Local futures for young people in Lachlan Shire: Connecting young people with careers in local business | Growing Lachlan (Shane Phillips: Lake Cargelligo Community Connector) |
| 2017 | Youth Strategy 2017-2020 | Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation and Life Without Barriers (Carol Vale: Murawin Consultancy) |
| 2016 | Growing Lachlan Report and Snapshot | Growing Lachlan (Regina Hill: Effective Consulting) |

Further community engagement was undertaken in early 2021 to confirm the themes and priorities identified by this previous work. Over January and February 2021, we spoke to 60 young people, 38 parents, carers and other interested adults, and 9 organisations that provide services to young people in Lachlan Shire. A draft of this Youth Strategy was made available for community feedback during March and April 2021, and that feedback has been incorporated within this final Youth Strategy.

Our 2021 community engagement confirmed what young people and others appreciate most about living in Lachlan Shire. There is a lot of agreement that our community, friends and family are part of what makes Lachlan Shire a good place to live. Natural assets such as the Lake and river, and the opportunities they provide for swimming, fishing and other activities are also appreciated. Built assets such as the swimming pools and skate parks are also very much appreciated.

There is also considerable agreement from young people, their parents and others, and service providers about what we'd like to have available to support our young people in the future. The pages that follow identify these aspirations and provide suggestions about the actions we can take as a community to bring them to fruition.

LACHLAN SHIRE YOUTH STRATEGY: Strategies and actions

The pages that follow are at the centre of this Lachlan Shire Youth Strategy. They seek to ask and answer the four key local government strategic planning questions:

Where are we now?

In 2021, what is the experience of young people living in our Shire?

Where do we want to be?

By 2030, what outcomes do we want to have achieved for our young people?

How will we get there?

What strategies and actions will we employ to help us to reach our goals? What resources will we need to undertake those activities? Who in the community can contribute to delivering those activities?

How will we know we've arrived?

What are the key indicators of successful outcomes that we will use to measure and monitor this Strategy's progress and performance over time? How will we know that the actions we are taking and the investments we are making are moving us towards our vision for our local young people?



Gum Bend Lake

This Youth Strategy is arranged under **four key themes** that draw together the information we heard through the community engagement conversations and other planning and research that informed this strategy:



Theme 1: Health and wellbeing



What's good now that supports our health and wellbeing?



What do we wish for that would support our health and wellbeing?



Three 'health and wellbeing' things for a good life



A snapshot of where we are now: YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH & WELLBEING

The information collated below gives an overview of health and wellbeing information related to young people in Lachlan Shire. Some information is not available by age group, but may indicate an issue that is having a community impact, and therefore likely to also be affecting young people in some way:

- In 2017-18, 16.2% of our children and young people (up to age 17) were **overweight** (compared to NSW average of 17%). And 10.5% of this age group were **obese** (compared to NSW average of 7.4%).
- In 2015, the average proportion of Lachlan Shire mothers who **smoked during pregnancy** was 64.3% for Aboriginal mothers (compared to NSW average of 43.7%) and 20.0% for non-Aboriginal mothers (compared to NSW average of 7.4%).
- In the five years to 2016, Lachlan Shire reported the lowest annual average **hospitalisation** rates for the Western NSW Local Health District (44% lower than the NSW average). In the same period, Emergency Department presentations relating to **illicit substance use** were the lowest in the Local Health District, and 80% lower than the NSW average).
- Lachlan Shire also has less than half the NSW average of notification rates for **chlamydia**.
- In 2017, HPV vaccination rates for females aged 15 years in Lachlan Shire was 81.9% (compared to the NSW average of 83%). For males aged 15 years in Lachlan Shire the HPV vaccination rate was 91.9% (compared to the NSW average of 78.2%).
- Lachlan Shire adults' adequate **fruit consumption** was on par with NSW rates.
- There are a range of health issues that impact Lachlan Shire's population, many of which are likely be the result of long-term unhealthy habits that start in childhood and adolescence. These include **smoking** and **alcohol** attributable hospitalisations and deaths, deaths and hospitalisations related to **overweight** or **obesity**, a very high rate of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and related deaths, and significant rates of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular and coronary heart disease, and stroke.
- In the five years to 2019, our Local Health Districts reported **births among women aged 19 years or under** was approximately three times the NSW average (of 2%).
- To ensure the best outcomes for mothers and babies, antenatal care should commence as early as possible in **pregnancy**. In Lachlan Shire, between 69% and 73% of pregnancies received antenatal care before 14 weeks gestation, and between 80 and 84% of pregnancies received antenatal care before 20 weeks gestation.
- Over recent years, our Local Health Districts have reported a significant increase in the rates
 of hospitalisation for intentional self-harm among 15-24 year-olds (approximately 65%
 higher than the NSW average).
- Between 2014 and 2016, a significant number of deaths and hospitalisations of Lachlan Shire residents related to injuries (including suicide, motor vehicle accidents, falls, burns and poisoning). 75% of motor vehicle accident hospitalisations were for males.
- A needs assessment undertaken by the Western NSW Primary Health Network identified 12-25 year-olds as a vulnerable population for **suicide**. Factors associated with suicide attempts included bullying, social media, family and relationship breakdown, study pressures and risk taking.

- The Primary Health Network's 2019 needs assessment also identified young people as a high-risk group in relation to alcohol and other drug abuse. Harm from alcohol-related accident or injury is experienced disproportionally by younger people, with over half of all serious alcohol-related road injuries occurring among 15-24 year-olds (across NSW).
- Lachlan Shire rates relatively high in terms of injury-related hospitalisations where
 interpersonal violence is listed as the cause. Lachlan Shire has a very high rate of family
 violence, with crime and hospital data indicating a strong relationship between alcoholrelated incidents and domestic violence.
- In 2019, young people aged 10-19 years were recorded as **victims of crime** in Lachlan Shire for intimidation, stalking and harassment (22). Other offences were not calculated to protect identities, and so total numbers are not calculated.
- In 2019, young people aged 10-19 years were recorded as alleged **offenders** in Lachlan Shire for the following criminal offences: domestic assault (2), other assault (3), assault Police (2), sexual offences (5), intimidation, stalking and harassment (5), break and enter non-dwelling (13), receive/handle stolen goods (1), motor vehicle theft (1), retail store theft (3), other theft (4), malicious property damage (8), drug offences (2), disorderly conduct (16), against justice offences, eg breaching bail conditions (8).
- Lachlan Shire is among the most disadvantaged NSW communities in relation to socioeconomic disadvantage.
- Lachlan Shire residents have a **lower life expectancy** (81.2 to 81.4 years) than in most other NSW communities.
- Lachlan Shire residents experience significantly higher rates of **avoidable deaths** than their NSW counterparts.
- The *Growing Lachlan* report identifies the need for improved **preventive health programs**, particularly for Aboriginal community members.
- The Growing Lachlan report also noted community concerns about lack of access to general
 counselling, mental health services and AOD (alcohol and other drug) services. Access to
 GPs and allied health service providers (dentists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, speech
 therapists, occupational therapists) was also identified in the report as an issue.
- Further investment in **sporting and recreational facilities**, as well as the provision of **activities** for children and young people (particularly in small towns, and after school and on weekends) were identified as issues in the *Growing Lachlan* report.
- The Growing Lachlan report and recent service provider engagement indicated that gambling is increasingly becoming a community issue that has impacts on young people's wellbeing.

By 2030, we'd like to achieve the following:

- Our childhood overweight or obesity rates do not exceed the NSW average.
- Young people have **access** to an affordable range of opportunities for active living and physical activity all year round.
- All Year 10 students (or equivalent) have completed their childhood immunisations.
- Young people have **access** to information and resources to support them to have safe, respectful and healthy relationships.
- Young people have **free or affordable access** to contraception, minimising unplanned pregnancies.
- Young women who become pregnant access antenatal care **before** the end of their first trimester, and **do not smoke** during their pregnancy.
- Families with children and young people living at home have access to affordable fresh food, enabling everyone in the family to eat 5 serves of vegetables and 2 serves of fruit per day.
- Young people have access to a range of safe and affordable activities that provide opportunities to relax and be calm, escape, have an adrenalin rush, and/or be sociable without needing to use alcohol or other drugs.
- Young people who experience anxiety, depression or other mental health challenges have access to **professional support in a timely way**.
- Young people are resilient and skilled to make good choices to support their health and wellbeing, including in relation to their sexual relationships, driving behaviour, and alcohol and other drug use.
- Young people are able to **respond positively and constructively** if they experience bullying, social media pressure, relationship breakdown or study pressures.
- Young people have good **role models** and up-to-date **information** to support them to be safe on our roads as they learn to drive.
- The number of young people who are offenders or victims of crime in our community is **reducing**.



Outdoor gym at Gum Bend Lake, Condobolin

How will we get there?

What strategies and actions will we employ to help us to reach our goals? What resources will we need to undertake those activities? Who in the community can contribute to delivering those activities?

What Council will endeavour to do:

| Ref | Health and Wellbeing Actions | Delivery Program |
|-------|---|---------------------|
| 1A.1 | Develop a community garden in Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin (with possibility of expanding into other communities), to provide opportunities for young people to grow and harvest vegetables and fruit, learn gardening and composting, and enhance intergenerational social skills. | 6.6.1 |
| 1A.2 | In consultation with the community, investigate the viability of extending the swimming season at Council-operated swimming pools. | new |
| 1A.3 | Complete a Sport & Recreation Review to ensure that Council-owned facilities reflect the preferred sporting activities of the community (are there new or emerging sports that our local fields could cater for with some adjustments?). | new |
| 1A.4 | Progress the development of themed water parks in Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin (similar to the Lake Talbot facility in Narrandera). | 6.1.3 |
| 1A.5 | Work with licencees of Council facilities to ensure kiosks serve a variety of affordable healthy food options, including whole fresh fruit, vegetable snacks and salads. | new |
| 1A.6 | In the next update of Council's Active Travel Plan, consult with young people about primary active transport routes in each of the main towns, and take action to provide safe surfaces, adequate street lighting and separation from motor vehicles where possible, and consider how conflicts of use may best be addressed. | 3.2.1 |
| 1A.7 | Prepare an Affordable Housing Strategy to encourage investment in housing across the Shire (including the creation of more affordable rental accommodation). | 2.6.1 |
| 1A.8 | Install additional outdoor gym equipment in locations determined in consultation with young people and others in the community. | new |
| 1A.9 | Advocate for a permanent and full-time mental health worker (with experience working in Adolescent Mental Health) in the Shire. | 1.6.4 |
| 1A.10 | Continue to participate in the Community Drug Action Team, and support and promote initiatives which address inappropriate alcohol and other drug use by young people. | 1.8.3 |
| 1A.11 | Advocate for a fostering allowance to be made available for medium and long-term fostering arrangements where extended family become the carers | new |

What others in the community could do:

| Ref | Health and Wellbeing Actions | Who could help? | |
|-------|---|---|--|
| 1B.1 | Run programs to address specific risk factors such as mental health issues and substance abuse. | LHD Health Promotion, Aboriginal Health | |
| 1B.2 | Provide preventive health programs, particularly targeting Aboriginal young people, to address behaviours which may contribute to chronic disease in later life (eg smoking cessation and healthy eating programs). | Aboriginal Health | |
| 1B.3 | Respect/family violence prevention programs, such as Ochre Ribbon and White Ribbon activities. | CWFSG, WPRD, LLCS | |
| 1B.4 | When funding allows, continue to facilitate Mental Health First Aider programs annually. | WPRD | |
| 1B.5 | Continue to facilitate suicide prevention training for service providers who engage with young people who are at risk (if funding permits). | WPRD | |
| 1B.6 | Run programs that support young people to make healthy food choices (eg supermarket tours, cooking classes, nutrition requirements for developing bodies). | CWFSG, WPRD, LHD Health Promotion | |
| 1B.7 | Establish a Wellness Hub at Condobolin High School which brings together service providers to provide targeted health and wellbeing activities and information once per term. | CWFSG, WPRD, Condobolin HS, LHD Health Promotion, Aboriginal Health | |
| 1B.8 | Expand case coordination partnerships across the Shire through a multi-service consent form that allows services to work together to support a young person. | CWFSG, Service providers | |
| 1B.9 | Offer affordable yoga and meditation classes to young people across the Shire. | Private providers | |
| 1B.10 | Continue to run outreach programs that create positive relationships and constructive experiences for young people and the Police. | PCYC, local Police, CWFSG, WPRD | |

Our health and wellbeing wish list for the future:

If resources become available in the future, these are some additional actions that would support young people's health and wellbeing:

- Heat our local pools so that they are available for physical activity all year round.
- Invest in a 'Flip Out' or similar trampoline park facility.
- Invest in an ice-skating rink.
- Open a ten-pin bowling alley.
- Build a BMX track.

Health and wellbeing resources:

| Aboriginal Health Service | Telephone: 02 6895 4311 (Condobolin) 02 6898 0200 (Lake Cargelligo/Murrin Bridge) |
|--|--|
| Australian Dietary Guidelines 2020 | https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/ The%20Guidelines/n55a australian dietary guidelines summary 131014 1.pdf |
| Beyond Blue | https://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/young-people |
| Condo Crew: How Ya Feelin' 2018 | https://ictv.com.au/video/item/5631 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOe1FXn8-7s |
| Fruit & vegetable serves | https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/heart-health-education/fruit-vegetables-and-heart-health |
| Headspace | Telephone: 1800 650 890 https://headspace.org.au/ https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/griffith/ |
| Kids Help Line | Telephone: 1800 55 1800 https://kidshelpline.com.au/ |
| Lifeline | Telephone: 13 1114 |
| Local Health Districts | Murrumbidgee: https://www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/healthy-living Western NSW: https://wnswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/keeping-healthy |
| NSW Health Immunisation schedule | https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/publications/nsw-immunisation-schedule.pdf |
| Rural Youth Mental Health | Telephone: 1800 236 762 or 0401 673 747 rymh@benevolent.org.au |
| Suicide Prevention Program | https://wprd.org.au/suicide-prevention-project/ |
| Swimming Pools | Condobolin: (02) 6895 2475 Lake Cargelligo: (02) 6898 1475 Tottenham: (02) 6892 4142 |

Theme 2: Community and culture



What's good now about our community and culture?

friends no rush being with friends mates community friends mates mates is supportive community supportive community the people supportive community small, quiet place sense of community feels safe facilities at the Lake freedom not bad mates the boys mates people family sense of community community groups

What do we wish for that would support our community and culture?



Three 'community and culture' things for a good life



A snapshot of where we are now: COMMUNITY & CULTURE

- In 2016, **Aboriginal** people made up approximately 18% of Lachlan Shire's population (compared to the NSW average of 2.9%), and of these 31.5% were young people aged 10-24 years. The median age of Aboriginal people in Lachlan Shire is 22 years.
- In 2016, 20 (1.8%) young people living in Lachlan Shire were **born overseas**. Of all Lachlan Shire residents born overseas, the following were the top five countries of birth: England, New Zealand, the Philippines, India and South Africa.
- In 2016, 86.9% of Lachlan Shire residents spoke only English at home (compared to 68.5 across NSW). Other than English, the top five languages spoken in Lachlan Shire (by less than 1% of the population each) are Tagalog, Filipino, Arabic, Greek and Thai. There does not appear to currently be significant use of First Nations languages in the Lachlan community.
- In 2016, there were 609 **families** in Lachlan Shire with children under 15 years. 25.5% of these were single parent families. 17.7% of Lachlan Shire's families were **jobless families** (compared to the NSW average of 12.0%), which included 240 children under 15 years.
- In 2016, up to 10% of Lachlan Shire residents were in **social housing**, up to 15% were experiencing **rental or mortgage stress**, 15-20% of our Aboriginal residents experienced **crowded dwellings**, and 2-4% of our dwellings provided **unsuitable housing**.
- The Growing Lachlan report identified concerns about young people not having enough
 constructive activities to do, and that improving recreation opportunities for young people
 was seen as a priority.
- The *Growing Lachlan* report noted that the closure of local businesses, particularly retail shops, has had a noticeable impact not only on the economy but on **community vibrancy** and morale.
- Service providers report high levels of Aboriginal young people living in **out-of-home care** arrangements, often with grandparents who feel ill-equipped and unsupported in this significant caring role.
- A need for stronger **youth justice** responses (including early intervention and diversion) was identified in the *Growing Lachlan* report.
- Past community engagement identified a desire to create a community that is youth friendly.
- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings report identified that **remoteness and isolation** of families and young people is a key barrier to accessing service provision. **Equitable access** to youth services and activities was also identified as an issue.
- The YOUth Talk Discover Findings report also identified the issue of **communication** and finding out about what's happening in the community, as well as lack of **transport** access to activities as barriers for some young people's participation.



Photo credit: LakeCargelligo.net.au

By 2030, we'd like to achieve the following:

- We would like opportunities for our young people, particularly our First Nations young people, to learn about Wiradjuri culture, participate in Aboriginal cultural events and activities, and to know some Aboriginal language.
- Young people who move with their families into Lachlan Shire **feel welcome** and are provided with information about local activities and events within one month of their arrival.
- Young people in our community who are from non-English speaking backgrounds have opportunities to **celebrate and share** their cultures with our community.
- The percentage of families in Lachlan Shire who are considered 'jobless' is decreasing, with a target of **not more than the State average** by 2030.
- Young people living with their families/carers or independently have access to affordable and appropriate housing, with the number of residents experiencing rental or mortgage stress decreasing to **less than 10%**.
- Carers of young people living in out-of-home care are **well supported** to undertake this role.
- There will be a **regular calendar of events** across the Shire that includes activities that are attractive to young people, including opportunities to perform at or attend live music gigs.
- There will be **affordable options** for our young people to purchase new clothing and other items locally.
- Information will be **communicated** in a timely way so that young people and their families are aware of opportunities and activities that are available.

How will we get there?

What strategies and actions will we employ to help us to reach our goals? What resources will we need to undertake those activities? Who in the community can contribute to delivering those activities?

What Council will endeavour to do:

| Ref | Community and Culture Actions | Delivery Program |
|------|--|---------------------|
| 2A.1 | Prepare a Reconciliation Action Plan for Lachlan Shire Council. | new |
| 2A.2 | Celebrate Harmony Day each year to acknowledge and honour all of the cultures and communities who are part of Lachlan Shire. | new |
| 2A.3 | Provide funding for and promote annual NAIDOC Week celebrations, including promotions which target local young people's participation. | 1.1.2 |
| 2A.4 | Create a new residents kit which provides essential information to support families moving into the Shire, including information about facilities and activities for young people. | 2.6.1 |
| 2A.5 | Facilitate opportunities for and encourage further investment in affordable housing across the Shire, for example through sub-division approvals and new house builds. | 2.6.1, 2.3.6 |

| 2A.6 | Create and promote a calendar of events which includes opportunities for young people to perform, create, sell and participate. | 1.8.2 1.8.3, 2.1.6 |
|-------|---|--------------------------|
| 2A.7 | Foster and support a cultural exchange program that provides arts training opportunities for young people (eg through the Penrith Alliance) | 1.5.1 |
| 2A.8 | Identify and promote incentives for attracting more shops and a large retail outlet back into the Shire. | 2.2.2 |
| 2A.9 | Create a Youth Portal on Council's website (on the 'Community' page) which can be a central clearinghouse for all events, programs and activities on offer for young people across the Shire. | new |
| 2A.10 | Facilitate community working bees, encouraging young people's participation, to beautify towns and villages and raise community pride and spirit (eg Clean Up Australia Day activities). | 2.5.1 |
| 2A.11 | Liaise with property owners of vacant retail space to be utilised for temporary pop-up galleries, small music gigs, etc. | 2.2.2 |
| 2A.12 | In collaboration with youth service providers, host a 'Men as Mentors' program at Condobolin Library to provide positive role models to young people. | new |
| 2A.13 | Through our Disability Inclusion Action Planning, implement actions that will enable the increased participation of young people with disability in community activities. | 1.7.2 1.7.3 3.2.1 |
| 2A.14 | Create pleasant, shaded seating areas in our towns' main streets and parks to provide safe places for young people to meet up with one another. | 2.5.1 |
| 2A.15 | Negotiate will swimming pool operators to make one evening per week (Friday or Saturday) late opening for youth programs. | 6.2.3 |
| 2A.16 | Work with the police to get funding to establish a PCYC. | 1.8.3 |



Lachlan River

What others in the community could do:

| Ref | Community and Culture Actions | Who could help? |
|-------|--|---|
| 2B.1 | Advocacy on behalf of public housing tenants to remedy faults and damage in a timely way. Service providers | |
| 2B.2 | Identify emergency housing and 'safe space' options for young people at risk. Youth service CWFSG | |
| 2B.3 | Make vacant main street properties available for pop-up cultural activities. | CBD landlords |
| 2B.4 | Pursue opportunities to run community events that create options for young people as providers and participants (markets, mini music festivals, Harmony Day celebrations etc). | Town & village committees, CWFSG, WPRD, LLCS |
| 2B.5 | Strengthen youth services (increase or revise opening hours of Youth Centres to better align with when young people are looking for somewhere to hang out). | WPRD, LLCS, CWFSG |
| 2B.6 | Utilise school newsletters, local newspapers, social media and online apps to share information about activities, events and other opportunities in a targeted and timely way. | Everyone |
| 2B.7 | Continue to build and maintain relationships with youth service providers outside Lachlan Shire (such as the PCYC) to broaden the options available to local young people. | Youth service providers |
| 2B.8 | Promote and deliver a program of activities for young people of different ages, particularly during school holidays and (at least some) weekends. | Youth service providers |
| 2B.9 | Identify, create and implement opportunities for young people to establish positive relationships (particularly with a focus on male role models and relationships with the Police), including continuing to deliver the Active Citizen program. | Police, Youth service providers, CWFSG |
| 2B.10 | Utilise the Youth Services bus to create opportunities for intra-Shire town and village activities and regional visits to support our remoter communities' young people. | WPRD |
| 2B.11 | Investigate expanding the Down the Track and Condo Crew programs to other communities across the Shire. | DTT, LLCS, WPRD |
| 2B.12 | Utilise the Youth Portal on Council's website to share information about all events, programs and activities on offer for young people, and regularly reference the Portal in social media and other communications to clients. | All service providers, Events coordinators |
| 2B.13 | Provide programs and activities that cater to a wide range of ages and interests: cooking, music, outings, socialising opportunities, board games, gardening, e-sports, art and craft, a variety of sports, movies, camping, fishing etc. | Youth service providers |
| 2B.14 | Offer youth services and activities in accessible places, or provide transport options where this is not possible. | Youth service providers |

| 2B.15 | Work with young people to provide arts and cultural activities at the Libraries and Study Centre. | WCC |
|-------|---|----------------|
| 2B.16 | Provide local options for affordable clothing that young people want to wear. | Retailers |
| 2B.17 | Use the NSW Government's <i>Creative & Active Kids</i> vouchers to increase young people's participation in cultural and creative activities. | Parents/carers |

Our community and culture wish list for the future:

If resources become available in the future, these are some additional actions that would support community and culture for our young people (also refer to *YOUth Talk* summary on next page):

- Investment in a cinema, or regular movie nights that featured films attractive to young people.
- A motorcross track.
- Host a festival event with live music.
- Establish a Youth Café (or local businesses which operate long hours, seven days a week, eg a 24-hour service station) that includes food and seating and provides a safe place to meet with friends after hours.

Community and culture resources:

| Create NSW | https://www.create.nsw.gov.au/ |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Harmony Day | https://www.harmony.gov.au/ |
| Youth Week | https://www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au/ |
| Reconciliation Action Plans | https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/ |



Members of the Galari Bila Wagadhaanys Dance Group (photo credit: Condobolin Argus)

The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings report heard ideas from young people across the Shire about community and cultural activities they would like to see available locally. These ideas are captured below and may help our community to decide what types of activities are resourced in the future:



Realising our potential...

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Lachlan Shire Youth Strategy

Theme 3:

Education and employment



What's good now that supports our education and employment?

good schools in the towns and villages doing farm work

What do we wish for that would support our education and employment?

traineeships more work opportunities

Online University

opportunities for further education More training and work opportunities Distance Education

proper education Online TAFE

Use my qualifications

Develop tourism for job creation

local apprenticeships

Three 'education and employment' things for a good life

education Provide student support Use TAFE campus education encourage uou employment support from school

A snapshot of where we are now: YOUNG PEOPLE'S EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

- In 2016, the number of young people in Lachlan Shire who **left school at Year 10 or earlier**, or did not go to school, was 43.8%, compared to the NSW average of 33.3%. The *Growing Lachlan* report found there were concerns about disruptive and anti-social behaviour being linked to **early disengagement** from school.
- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings report identified that in 2016 only 31% of Lachlan Shire students **completed Year 12**, compared to the State average of 52%.
- In 2016, 75% of 16 year-olds in Lachlan Shire were participating in full-time secondary education.
- In 2017, 26.6% of Lachlan Shire residents were participating in **vocational education and training** (compared to the NSW average of 19.2%), with a subject pass rate of 77.8% (compared to the NSW average of 81.5%).
- In 2017, 11.1% of Lachlan Shire school leavers were **enrolled in higher education** (compared to the NSW average of 28.9%).
- In 2016, 71.3% of all 15-24 year-olds were in education or employment (compared to the NSW average of 85%).
- In 2018, Lachlan Shire had a higher proportion (11.1%) than the NSW average (9.6%) of children who were **developmentally vulnerable** in two or more of the following childhood development domains: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge.
- The *Growing Lachlan* report identified improving local **early childhood development**, **education** and **employment** opportunities for young people as priorities.
- In 2016, the percentage of children in families in Lachlan Shire where the mother had low educational attainment was 25.4% (compared to the NSW average of 19.6%).
- In 2019, Lachlan Shire's **unemployment rate** was 7.2% (compared to the NSW rate of 4.5%), which was up from 6.8% in 2016. Youth unemployment rate in 2016 was higher still, at approximately 21% (a significant increase on previous Census rates of around 10% and 9% in 2006 and 2011 respectively).
- In 2016, 32.3% of Lachlan Shire dwellings had **no internet access** (compared to the NSW average of 14.7%).
- In 2016, **Centrelink** payments were made to 77 Lachlan Shire residents for Youth Allowance, and 12 for AbStudy. 20 children received Assistance for Isolated Children.
- In 2016, 5.9% of Lachlan Shire dwellings had **no motor vehicle** (compared to the NSW average of 9.2%).
- The Shire's population is at risk of continuing decline in numbers. The Growing Lachlan report noted that the closure of shops means more online purchases, with money going out of the area rather than contributing to the local economy. This may lead to further shop closures if people choose to make more of their purchases online. As options lessen, further population decline is a risk.
- The community feedback that informed the *Growing Lachlan* report noted the challenges associated with **recruiting and retaining staff** across the Shire.
- Some community members have identified access to **transport** as a barrier to participation in education and employment.
- The *Growing Lachlan* report noted that many local young people **exit the community** to pursue education and work opportunities.

- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings paper noted the need for more skilled youth workers, and upskilling current workers through avenues such as school-based traineeships and apprenticeships.
- Past community engagement identified the need to encourage more employment and training opportunities for young people.

By 2030, we'd like to achieve the following:

- We'd like at least 70% of our young people to complete their secondary education.
- At least 75% of 15-24 year-olds will be in either education and/or employment, with an increasing trend towards the State average.
- Less than 10% of our children will be developmentally vulnerable in two or more child development domains.
- The Shire's unemployment rate will be on a downward trend towards the State average, and not more than 6.5%, with the youth unemployment rate at not more than 10%.
- At least 80% of Lachlan Shire dwellings will have internet access.
- At least 10 new opportunities for apprenticeships, cadetships and traineeships will be
 available each year for local young people, and provide opportunities to transition into
 ongoing employment.
- Our schools will be community hubs, providing opportunities for parents and carers to create positive relationships with educational institutions that contribute positively to a culture that values education.
- Parents and carers are proactively engaged in discussions with young people where postschool options are being considered.
- School leavers who wish to pursue further education will have opportunities and support
 to achieve this locally (eg through TAFE curriculum choices, through a Country Universities
 Centre).
- Our young people leave school with adequate skills for further education or job-seeking.
- New retail businesses will be attracted into the Shire, creating shopping and employment opportunities, and strengthening the local economy.
- Partnerships will be established with tertiary education institutions that bring final-year students and new graduates from a range of disciplines into the Shire for work experience, particularly in professions that will provide support and services to our young people.
- There will be regular opportunities for young people across the Shire to shape and participate in career expos and visits to other communities to see employment opportunities and career pathways not on offer locally.
- Young people are well equipped with the skills needed for a productive adult life.

How will we get there?

What strategies and actions will we employ to help us to reach our goals? What resources will we need to undertake those activities? Who in the community can contribute to delivering those activities?

What Council will endeavour to do:

| Ref | Education and Employment Actions | Delivery Program |
|------|---|---------------------------|
| 3A.1 | Offer employment opportunities to young people at Council, including an annual program of apprenticeships, cadetships, traineeships. | 1.2.1, 1.3.1 |
| 3A.2 | Investigate options with neighbouring councils in the region for traineeships and job pathways (consider development of a regional workforce plan, with each council specialising in particular skills development for sharing with others). Its focus will be on recruiting and retaining staff, and providing opportunities for local young people. | 1.1.3, 1.3.1, 4.2.8 |
| 3A.3 | Advocate to establish a Country Universities Centre within Lachlan Shire to support young people who want to pursue a tertiary education. | new |
| 3A.4 | Implement Council's Economic Development Strategy, focusing on attracting new retail business and other industries that will provide training and employment opportunities for young people (eg tourism and hospitality). | 2.3.2 |
| 3A.5 | Through our Workforce Strategy, identify opportunities for employing young people across Council, and utilise innovative recruitment processes to support young people through the application and interview process. | 1.1.3 |
| 3A.6 | Continue to advocate for additional internet coverage across the Shire until all residents have adequate internet access. | new |

What others in the community could do:

| Ref | Education and Employment Actions | Who could help? |
|------|--|-----------------------------|
| 3B.1 | Pursue a 'schools as community hubs' initiative in Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo, Tottenham and Tullibigeal to allow sports facilities and other school venues to be utilised for out-of-school-hours activities and events. | Schools, Youth services |
| 3B.2 | Strengthen local early childhood development and specialist maternal, child and family health services to give our young people the best start in life. | Preschools, LHDs, CWFSG |
| 3B.3 | Expand the <i>Teaching as Parents</i> (TAP) Program to secondary schools across the Shire to engage Indigenous parents/carers of students who are at risk of disengaging from the education system. | WPRD, schools |
| 3B.4 | Provide alternative education and training options that target at-risk and disengaged young people. | Condo Crew, DTT |
| 3B.5 | Provide employment support services and pathways to employment programs to support young people to be job-ready. | Employment support services |

| 3B.6 | Facilitate social enterprises that provide training and employment opportunities for young people. | Youth Service providers |
|-------|--|--|
| 3B.7 | Investigate opportunities for and work towards the establishment of a regional education, training and employment service (similar to the Regional Enterprise Development Institute in Dubbo). | WCC |
| 3B.8 | Proactively address and discipline anti-social behaviour, particularly in educational settings, to reduce impacts on learning outcomes. | Schools, parents/carers |
| 3B.9 | Support skills development and youth engagement through facilitating a community volunteer program. | WPRD, LLCS |
| 3B.10 | Align local TAFE curriculum with local skills shortages to encourage young people to pursue further education that will enable them to be employed locally. | TAFE |
| 3B.11 | Support young people to get their drivers' licence. | Driving instructors, Youth Service providers |
| 3B.12 | Identify options for and implement school-based apprenticeships and training options, including 'growing our own' youth workers. | Schools, RTOs |
| 3B.13 | Contribute to 'growing our own' workforce through providing cadetships, apprenticeships and traineeships in a range of industries across the Shire | Employers, schools |
| 3B.14 | Provide work experience opportunities to high school students, and student placements for tertiary students. | All employers |
| 3B.15 | Partner with universities to target identified professions to undertake university placements and graduate roles within the Shire | Central NSW Joint Organisation |
| 3B.16 | Continue to offer scholarships to support Wiradjuri students at University or TAFE | WCC |
| 3B.17 | Work with Regional NSW to include Lachlan Shire in their regional gap year program | Chambers of Commerce |

Our education and employment wish list for the future:

If resources become available in the future, these are some additional actions that would support young people's education and employment:

- Investment in and development of a resort or 'glamping' facility on Lake Cargelligo and/or Gum Bend Lake, which would partner with an RTO to become a youth training and employment enterprise, providing opportunities in cooking, waiting, tourism promotion, cleaning, gardening etc.
- Boost the subject options for secondary students at our local high schools so that fewer young people leave the Shire for their schooling.



Photo credit: NSW Dept of Education

Education and employment resources:

| Regional Job Creation fund | https://www.investregional.nsw.gov.au/investment-support/regional-job-creation-fund/ |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Regional gap year program | https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/gap-year |
| Country Universities Centre | https://www.cuc.edu.au/ |



Photo credit: Tottenham Central School

Theme 4: Participation and influence



What's good now that supports our participation and influence?

Youth surveys Opportunities to be heard Having a say in improving the community

What do we wish for that would support our participation and influence?

Youth Advisory Council

Three 'participation and influence' things for a good life

respect
be listened to
young local role models
Possibilities
role models
role models
have respect mentors

A snapshot of where are we now: YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION & INFLUENCE

- The need to **engage young people** more effectively was identified as an issue in the *Growing Lachlan* report.
- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings paper identified an opportunity to develop a Youth
 Advisory Council that works with Council to ensure local young people's needs are being
 addressed, and to create opportunities for leadership development and ongoing youth
 engagement.
- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings paper identified the cycles of **funding** and funding gaps as an issue for youth service provision.
- Past community engagement confirmed a desire to encourage young people to actively **participate in community life** and contribute to the future direction of the community.
- Past community engagement identified the need to minimise or remove the **barriers** to youth participation.
- The YOUth Talk Discovery Findings paper identified **safe spaces**, locations and the current state of some youth centre sites as concerns or issues to be addressed.

By 2030, we'd like to achieve the following:

- A Youth Advisory Council (or similar) will be in place, with a membership that is
 representative of young people across Lachlan Shire. The YAC will be actively engaged in
 decision-making processes about matters that impact on young people in our community.
- When any level of government is creating **plans**, **policies or programs** that impact our local young people, they have opportunities through online portals, forums and official social media channels to participate, share ideas and be involved.
- All 17 year-olds are enabled to enrol to vote ahead of their 18th birthday.
- Young people have access to facts and figures that enable them to make informed decisions when they vote at Federal, State and local elections.
- Young people who have an interest in standing for elected public office are supported to **become a candidate**.
- Young people have opportunities to **volunteer** in the community in ways that are constructive, value-adding, developmental, and that are not exploitative.
- Young people feel empowered to **participate** in community life.
- Young people **influence** community decisions that will affect them.
- Joint **funding** applications or partnerships and collaborations are enabling quality, accessible youth services across the Shire.
- This Youth Strategy will be regularly reviewed (at least every four years), along with an evaluation of **youth service delivery** to ensure it is relevant and contemporary, and continues to meet young people's needs (including a review of service delivery locations, programs, funding and delivery modes).
- More activities will be **youth-lead** and inclusive of young people in the design phase.

How will we get there?

What strategies and actions will we employ to help us to reach our goals? What resources will we need to undertake those activities? Who in the community can contribute to delivering those activities?

What Council will endeavour to do:

| Ref | Participation and Influence Actions | Delivery Program |
|------|---|---------------------|
| 4A.1 | Establish a Youth Advisory Council to support Council and community planning and decision-making on issues that impact young people (including induction, training and ongoing support of YAC participants). | new |
| 4A.2 | Host local government candidate sessions ahead of each local government election, and ensure interested young people are encouraged to participate | new |
| 4A.3 | Develop and implement a Volunteering Program to support community programs and activities that provide benefit to our young people. The Program will include induction, recognition, placement (particularly in support of youth service provision/youth activities). | 4.1.1 |
| 4A.4 | In collaboration with the Youth Advisory Council, sponsor and host annual events and activities to celebrate Youth Week. | 4.1.3 |
| 4A.5 | In consultation with young people, continue to enhance and improve the youth centre facilities in Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo and Tottenham, and investigate venue options for youth activities in Tullibigeal and other small communities in the Shire. | 1.8.3 |

What others in the community could do:

| Ref | Participation and Influence Actions | Who could help? |
|------|---|---|
| 4B.1 | As part of community visits, conduct an annual youth-focused consultation. | Local MPs |
| 4B.2 | Deliver an annual Youth Leadership Forum which showcases youth leadership initiatives across the Shire, and provides a forum for planning and collaboration for future initiatives. | WCC, Secondary schools, Youth services, CWFSG |
| 4B.3 | Continue to deliver the <i>Active Citizen Program</i> in partnership with Condobolin and Lake Cargelligo High Schools. | Police (Parkes), CWFSG |
| 4B.4 | Deliver a mentoring program for young and emerging leaders which provides positive role models and support in a structured way. | WPRD |

Participation and influence resources

| Youth NSW | https://www.youth.nsw.gov.au/youth-participation-and-inclusion |
|--|---|
| Regional Youth Taskforce | https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/regional-youth-taskforce |
| United Nations (Australia) schools' program | https://unyouth.org.au/event/school-programs/nsw-schools-programs/ |
| Volunteering NSW | https://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au/home |
| ABC Vote Compass | https://votecompass.abc.net.au/ |
| Becoming a candidate for election | https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/about-councils/become-a-councillor/ https://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/FAQs/Candidate-FAQs https://www.aec.gov.au/elections/candidates/ |



Mural: Lake Cargelligo

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| Census of Population and Housing: Socio- Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2016 | https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2033.0.55.001~2016~Main%20Features~IRSAD%20Interactive%20Map~16 |
| Central West & Orana Regional Plan | https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/Central-West-and-Orana |
| Childhood early development profile – Lachlan 2018 | https://www.aedc.gov.au/data/data-explorer?id=135179 |
| Dept of Social Security payments demographic data | https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/dss-payment-demographic-data |
| Growing Lachlan Report 2016 | https://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/f.ashx/Growing-Lachlan-Report-Final-Edit-for-Print.pdf |
| plus Snapshot | https://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/f.ashx/Growing-Lachlan-Snapshot-8.pdf |
| Health of the Population report, Western NSW Local Health District | https://wnswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/ and direct correspondence |
| Health Statistics by Local Health District | http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/IndicatorGroup/LocationBasedAllIndicatorGroup? Locationcode=18413&LocationType=Local%20Health%20District |

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| Lachlan Shire Council Annual Reports | https://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/council/annual-financial-and-statutory-reports/annual-reports.aspx |
| Lachlan Shire Council Asset Management Plans | https://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/council/annual-financial-and-statutory-reports/resourcing-strategy.aspx |
| Lachlan Shire Council Delivery Program 2017-2021 | https://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/f.ashx/FINAL-Budget-with-Delivery-and-Operational-Plan-20.21-adopted.pdf |
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| Multicultural NSW community profiles | https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/ https://www.myschool.edu.au/ |
| Murrumbidgee Local Health District, Health Atlas 2019, and 2018 Summary & Population Health Profile | https://mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/ https://www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/about-us/population-data-and-health-statistics |

| National Youth Policy Framework | https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-youth-policy-framework |
|--|--|
| NSW Education Department statistics | https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/ https://www.myschool.edu.au/ |
| NSW Health Epidemiology | https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/epidemiology/Pages/default.aspx |
| NSW Health snapshot, 2019-20 Annual Report | https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/annualreport/Publications/2020/snapshot.pdf |
| NSW Planning Population Projections | https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/population/ |
| Regional Wellbeing Survey, University of Canberra, 2020 | https://www.canberra.edu.au/research/institutes/health-research-institute/regional-wellbeing-survey |
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| Western NSW Local Health District Strategic Plan 2020-25 | https://wnswlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/our-organisation/our-story/our-strategic-plan |
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| Youth Strategy 2017- 2020 | Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation and Life Without Barriers https://wiradjuricc.com/ |



Lachlan Shire: in the middle of everywhere!

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Karen

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