

Toongabbie

*'land of the hills near
the water'*



Latrobe Valley
Gippsland

The following document outlines our existing issues and objectives of the current Community Building Initiative (CBI) project and notes priorities, achievements as well as barriers to success. With the cessation of the current CBI project in June 2011, this document is the beginning of a sustainability plan that aims to guide & progress the community of Toongabbie into the next 5 year stage of management and governance with an aim to progress Toongabbie forward economically, socially, whilst respecting our historic roots and provide a safe environment for our community.

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 - In partnership with DPCD & Latrobe City Council

- Chairperson of:
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 - Toongabbie Recreation Reserve Committee of Management

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Executive Summary

Toongabbie has a strong & committed community. Our encouragement of widespread participation of volunteers, combined with a number of respected, willing and capable local leaders, has generated many outstanding outcomes.

Our residents are rightly proud of their township, and wish to retain and nurture its strengths. They also recognise that the township will continue to evolve, and that their tradition of community involvement requires regular renewal. There remain many outstanding tasks, such as improving the town's infrastructure, extending existing recreational opportunities & facilities, strengthening connections between the people of the community, continuing to support and build community leadership, improving access to funding opportunities, and improving the promotion of the township.

Toongabbie is proud of its "can-do" ethic, which has led to many of its achievements of the past 15-20 years. Through imagination, creativity, organisation, practicality and hard work we have managed to identify and carry out a range of impressive projects around the township. We have done this without a carefully prepared and widely understood structure plan or master plan for the township, and without an umbrella group to drive our planning and development. Our community leaders have a remarkably extensive and active network of overlapping community organisations that have managed to maintain communication links and represent the interests of the township.

At the same time, a considerable amount of community development and planning work has been carried out. However, in consultation with our local council, Latrobe City, and other government and non-government bodies it has become evident that the longer-term organisation of Toongabbie's township activities would be better served by establishing a group that can effectively represent a wide range of the township's interest at the one time. Hence, the development of Toongabbie Township Planning & Development Group, TTP&DG, who will act as a peak body to progress Toongabbie's interests.

The need for a long term master plan has now become necessary due to all government bodies and the like adopting community consultative approaches concerning all future small township strategy plans controlled and limited by their annual budgets and agreed time frames. As the Toongabbie town ship is dependent on various government departments and private organisations for resources, we need to develop strategies and formulate responses that will enhance our opportunity to source funding and resources from these groups to create a thriving Toongabbie township.

Our newly developed action plan with listed priorities is, how we, as your township representatives, will successfully address the needs of this community, to develop a way forward giving the residents of our community the motivation and desire to invest in the future of Toongabbie.

VISION STATEMENT

Toongabbie has a vision which reflects and respects our past whilst accommodating and predicting the future needs of a growing community.

Our valued residents will endeavour to work together through active participation to improve social, cultural and physical aspects of our community.

Our local clubs, groups and associations will strive to promote and provide learning and leadership opportunities and to inspire and sustain creative and civic engagement through inclusiveness and community ownership;

We will celebrate and communicate the past by building on meaningful connections across generations and cultures through social interaction.

And we will create network and partnership relationships giving the residents of our community the motivation and desire to invest in the future of Toongabbie

TOONGABBIE ACHIEVEMENTS

with assistance of volunteers and grant funding:

- 1990/01 - Outside public toilets constructed at Rec. Reserve
- 1991/92 - External restoration of Mechanics Institute
- 1992 - New concrete cricket pitch at Village Green
- 1993 - New underground drainage & water lines built at Village Green
- 1993 - Rebuilt oval
- 1993/04 - New football Social Club facilities built
- 1994 - Toongabbie included in Latrobe City
- 1995/96 - Internal restoration of Mechanics Institute
- 1996 - Toongabbie Sewerage Scheme
- 1996 - New 60' X 20' Shed at Rec. Reserve
- 1997 - Festival of Roses
- 1998/99 - New Rose Garden
- 2000/01 - Federation Grandstand
- 2001 - New Playground
- 2002 - New Skate Board Park established on old netball court
- 2002 - Friends of Toongabbie Wetlands Committee formed
- 2003 - New Public Toilets at Village Green
- 2003 - Installing 11 Interpretive Signs depicting historic sites around the town
- 2003/04 - Landscaping of Village Green
- 2004 - New concrete footpaths around Mechanics Institute, BBQ building & Grandstand constructed
- 2005 - New BBQ at Village Green
- 2005 - Resurfacing of Tennis courts
- 2005/06 - Wetlands Interpretive Shelter Building constructed
- 2006 - New Playground protective area built
- 2006 - Main oval fence at Rec. Reserve completely refurbished & painted
- 2006 - St. David's Church interior & exterior refurbishment & painting
- 2006 - Wetlands car park
- 2007 - Wetlands bridge connecting rail trail
- 2007 - Seating to BBQ area at Village Green
- 2008 - 3 x Rain Water tanks at Recreation Reserve
- 2008 - Bore sunk on Toongabbie golf grounds
- 2008 - Resealing of parquet flooring for cricket social rooms and Rec. Reserve hall
- 2009 - New synthetic surfacing for cricket wicket Village Green
- 2009 - New kitchen improvements for Toongabbie Mechanics Institute
- 2009 - New Village Green sign erected on south side
- 2009 - New connecting bike/walking tract from Victoria St to Village green
- 2009 - Ongoing works to Wetlands and ponds
- 2009 - Presently purchasing water rights for water bore
- 2009 - Commenced construction of new tennis club rooms
- 2010 - Installation of new seating to wetlands recreational area
- 2010 - Purchasing of new equip & BBQ trailer for community groups
- 2010 - Replacement of ageing water pipe system at Recreation Reserve
- 2010 - New CFA community hub constructed
- 2010 - Repairs to tennis court surface
- 2010 - New gateway constructed to pony club

THE ORGANISATION

• TOONGABBIE TOWNSHIP PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT GROUP (TTP&DG)

A sub committee of the Toongabbie Recreation Reserve Committee of Management providing TTP&DG with incorporated status & financial management of any funding that may become available.

Statement of Purpose:

- Our aim is to value our residents, engage & encourage community participation & leadership, promote our historical heritage, provide a safe and liveable environment & support economic development to the betterment of our community.

Focus of group:

- Positive feedback within community groups by changing the priority from individual goals to a community focus
- Create a plan of action for the township to ensure that there is a clear outline indicating priority projects and those funds are directed appropriately and in consultation.
- Ensure ongoing input from community representatives to access and co-ordinate grants and funding and gain support from other partners that have been established.
- Networking with Latrobe City and create new partnership with appropriate agencies and organizations.
- Utilize council information services to promote township activities
- Minor capital grants,
 - Co-ordinate an approach within the township as well as develop possible partnerships with adjoining townships that identify major priorities
- Creation of presentation packs for township promotion.
- To work as a community and develop relations with State govt departments to assist in solving ownership and consequent concerns of 'grey areas' between crown land, private, Vic Roads etc
- Committee continues to network with Latrobe City for advice and expertise in dealing with associated concerns.



The strengths of our community

- Rural landscape
- Quiet, peaceful country living
- Community spirit/friendliness
- Active sporting and recreational community
- Restored historic buildings
- Wetlands
- Rail trail (incomplete)
- Affordable properties
- Close to regional shopping
- Access to public and private secondary school
- Employment & business opportunities within regional areas
- Access to state forest, snowfields and historic sights of Latrobe Valley

The issues of our community: **It currently lacks:**

- Completed shared paving & connecting pathways for recreation and safety **In progress**
- Quality entry signage with awareness of significant attractions **In progress**
- Weed control **In progress**
- Improved mobile phone & internet connection for some areas
- Responsible use of motor bikes within township
- Adequate water supplies for the future **-addressed**
- Completed Rail Trail from Traralgon > Cowwarr - **In progress**
- Accommodation facilities (B&B)
- Collective Logo tagging to encourage a more professional approach with marketing
- Promotion of township events/fundraisers
- Good subdivisions options as requirements are cost inhibited for double block and farm lots to subdivide for residential **-will be addressed by township structure plan 2011/12**
- Adequate township communication > presently no newsletter or community website **-In progress**
- Poor and unsafe road conditions to Cowwarr Weir
- Good community involvement

By: The objectives of our community:

'To improve the liveability of Toongabbie'

Upgrading the towns:

- infrastructure
- all sporting facilities in the Township for physical & social connection
- connecting town pathways
- Town entrances
- Township communication
- Mail service

Address:

- Unsafe & unsightly issues around township roads particularly, speed limits, spoon drains, drain pits in the area and road edging
- Action in relation to road completion to Cowwarr Weir with Wellington Shire.
- Ongoing community consultation and mapping needs to ensure that there is a collective consultative approach to decision making **Achieved**
- Vandalism **-very rare**
- Improved mobile phone & internet connection for some areas **improved**
- Weed management for flood and fire control **achieved in some areas**
- Knowledge of funding opportunities **improved**
- Improved working partnerships between township group **Achieved**
- Poor community involvement in township activities and groups
- Forward planning of priorities to access available funding **achieved via action plan**

Promotion of:

- walking tracks and trails to encourage physical activity in the area
- Sustainability of clubs, associations, community groups project and programs.
- Continued growth and development for the future of the Township of Toongabbie
- Township events/fundraisers
- Community internet website
- Township and municipality in regard to tourism and historic sights.
- Business opportunities after 'completion' of rail trail
- Inter town communication

Threats:

- Viable existence of community groups through reduced community involvement
- Flood & Fire damage through poor management by governing bodies

THE PRESENT TOONGABBIE - MARCH 2011

Our objective to improve the liveability of Toongabbie has and continues to be successfully addressed as our community leaders are/have –

- Near completion of upgrading all sporting facilities
- Last stage to complete town entrance signs
- Solved the poor mail service pickup
- Built new CFA community hub
- Accessed adequate water supplies
- Logo
- Community consultation
- Improved knowledge of funding opportunities.
- Improved working partnership/networks with govt. & non govt. agencies
- Forward planning with 5 yr action plan
- Commencing tourism promotions
- Reconnecting historical significant information.

Still to be addressed/completed (short term)

Council initiated:

- Completed share pathways – LCC budget constraints. Part of 3yr bicycle strategy that should have seen the plan finished.

Non-govt departments:

- Weed management for fire & flood control Submission in place.
(DSE & Catchment authority)

Where to now (short term)

Infrastructure:

1/ The township is presently awaiting resurfacing of the side roads surrounding the shop > **achieved April 2011**

- Has been a long term issue concerning boundaries and maintenance with all parties denying ownership and/or responsibility (VicRoads, LCC, Shop owners)
LCC initiated

2/ Clarification of costings to utilise left over MCW funding for drains, etc. **CBI rep**

3/ New Tourism signage upgrades **community initiated**

4/ Address potential subdivision and township planning when township structure plan to be consulted. (2011/12) **LCC**

Communication: community initiative

In the process of obtaining community website licence > **Achieved May 2011**

- Envisaged to improve township communication
- Hope to attract volunteers for township maintenance

Arts/Cultural: community initiative

Do have local artists

- Need to create beautification plan for rail trail and/or township sculptures and access funding

Youth: community initiative

Community website will assist communicating with youth for projects with -

- Advertised council initiatives
- Local Police community liaison officer for current information
- Improve communication with primary school to address any local issues

Social interaction: community initiative

Website to improve information targeting all ages and interests for-

- Recreation/lifestyle options
- events/fundraisers