

Youth PLAN



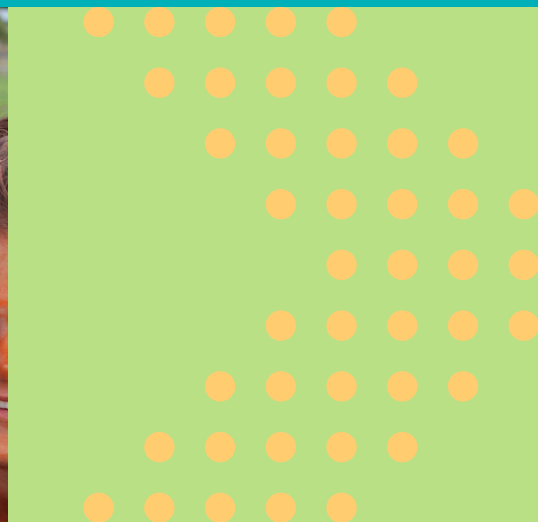
July 2025



INTRODUCTION

Sorell Council is committed to addressing the needs and aspirations of young people aged 12-19 years in the region. This Youth Plan is built on a collective impact model, fostering collaboration, shared responsibility, and coordinated actions to enhance youth engagement, well-being, and opportunities in the south east.

This Youth Plan aims to foster a connected, engaged, and thriving youth community in Sorell. By working collectively, leveraging resources, and prioritising youth voices, we can create lasting positive change for young people in the region.



ABOUT US

Located just 25 kilometres from Hobart, Sorell is one of Tasmania's oldest towns. Our Municipal area covers some 583 square kilometres, characterised by rolling countryside, low forested hills and long coastlines filled with beautiful beaches.

This rich and fertile land and its waterways was home to the Mumirimina people of the Oyster Bay tribe for many thousands of years until dispossessed of their homeland in the early 1800s. European settlement and farming across the district began from 1808 and the town of Sorell was formally established in 1821.

Our key entrance points are Midway Point, Dunalley and Orielson, with our Municipal borders extending east through Orielson and further south east around our scenic coastline, encasing the townships of Dodges Ferry, Lewisham, Carlton, Primrose Sands, Dunalley, Marion Bay and Boomer Bay. Our border also extends through enchanting hillsides and unique Tasmanian forests, incorporating the townships of Forcett, Copping, Nugent and Kellevie.

Rich in history, the Municipality has a vibrant artistic community and is popular for its relaxed rural lifestyle and unique townships. It is home to one of Australia's oldest continuously operating schools and the regional South East Sporting Complex at Pembroke Park.

The Sorell Township provides a regional commercial focus for residents of the Municipality, as well as servicing the Tasman and Forestier Peninsulas and the east coast as far north as Swansea. Sorell is the heart of the south east.

With suburban, beachside, semi-rural or rural living options available, our Municipality is popular for its affordable housing, natural coastline, rolling hills and the convenience of major shops and services all within close proximity to Hobart.





OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

10 - 14 Years

Population **987**
Representing **5.9%**
of the population

15 - 19 Years

Population **862**
Representing **5.1%**
of the population

Number of
Families with
children

4,707

YOUTH CONSULTATION

THE EVIDENCE



were delivered in partnership with organisations working directly with young people, and sought to engage people from different communities and population groups such as sporting clubs, religious groups, after school drop in programs, and secondary schools. An open, online workshop was offered for people who were not engaged in the identified institutions, clubs or programs.

- **Stakeholder Workshops and individual interviews:** held between January and March 2024 to capture feedback and perspectives from service providers, community organisations and volunteers working with young people.

Over 245 young people and 34 organisations were engaged with, and 71 online youth survey and written feedback cards were received, during the consultation period.

Sorell Council secured grant funding from Tasmanian Community Fund to engage the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) to undertake an extensive consultation with young people aged 12-19 years living in the South East region.

The consultation:

- Targeted young people 12-19 years and relevant stakeholders.
- Helped understand the experiences and needs of young people living in the South East.
- Identified the gaps and priority areas impacting the engagement and participation of young people in their local communities.
- Targeted eight (8) locations: Bicheno, Swansea, Triabunna/Orford, Sorell, Southern Beaches, Primrose Sands, Dunalley and Nubeena.

The following consultation mechanisms were used:

- **Online Survey:** open for four (4) weeks between February and March 2024. This method was used to capture general feedback from young people and community.
- **Youth Workshops:** held throughout February and March 2024. Workshops

YOUTH CONSULTATION

THE EVIDENCE

Key Findings:

- Likes: Young people value the natural environment, strong community ties, outdoor activities, and local youth programs.
- Dislikes: They experience boredom, limited transport options, safety concerns in public spaces, and lack of accessible youth services.
- Suggestions:
 - More youth-focused events and activities.
 - Youth Hub in Sorell for socialising and support services.
 - Affordable and accessible transport options.
 - Safer public spaces with better lighting and supervision.
 - A public pool for recreation and employment opportunities.

Feedback from the consultation was used to provide recommendations to inform future programs, services and/or activities design to address youth engagement and improve participation of young people in their local communities.

The nine recommendations were:

Co-design Initiatives

Co-design initiatives with young people.

Affordable Transport

Provide affordable, reliable and appropriate transport that meets their needs.

Collective Impact

Collective Impact - a strategic and collaborative approach to youth participation and engagement.

Youth Workers

Invest in youth development officers and youth workers.

Targeted Programs

Develop targeted youth-focused programs for young people.

Holistic Responses

Invest in holistic, therapeutic, strengths-based responses for young people who are vulnerable, disengaged or at risk of becoming disengaged.

Communication Platform

Develop a targeted communication and information sharing platform for young people and other stakeholders.

Safe Spaces

Invest in safe spaces and places for young people.


Formal Engagement

Establish formal mechanisms for young people to engage with Local Government and decision-makers.





KEY PRIORITIES



From these recommendations we have developed 5 key priority areas and associated actions.



PRIORITY 1:
Establish Safe
Spaces &
Youth Hubs



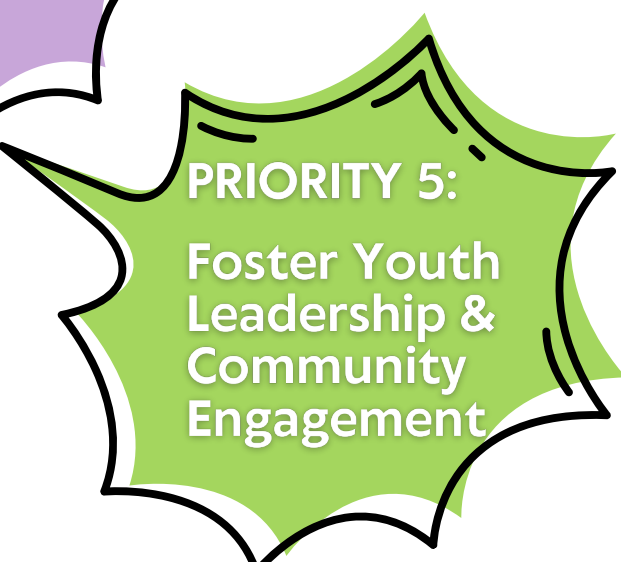
PRIORITY 2:
Improve
Transport
Accessibility




PRIORITY 3:
Expand Social
& Recreational
Opportunities



PRIORITY 4:
Strengthen
Mental Health
& Wellbeing
Support



PRIORITY 5:
Foster Youth
Leadership &
Community
Engagement



KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PRIORITY 1: ESTABLISH SAFE SPACES AND YOUTH HUBS

Build capacity of local organisations to work effectively with young people and compliant to the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework.

What We Will Do:


- ✓ Establish a Youth Hub in Sorell, providing a safe space for young people to socialise, access services, and participate in structured activities. Follow Child Safe Practices and Frameworks. Create the first 1,000 Days of being a teenager
- ✓ Support drop-in programs at existing community spaces (e.g. Neighbourhood Houses/Community centres, libraries).
- ✓ Improve public safety in key youth areas such as parks, skate parks, and bus stops through increased lighting, monitoring, and youth-friendly infrastructure.
- ✓ Create designated safe spaces within community centres, equipped with games, food, charging stations, and youth-friendly support services.

Partnerships we will utilise and build upon:

South East Salvos, Psyche Mental Health, The Link, Life without Barriers, BEST, Schools, Local Business, external service providers, Advice and Referral Line (ARL) – Child Safety, Integrated Family Support Services, Tasmania Police, Neighbourhood Houses & Community Centres, Sorell Library, Neighbourhood Watch, Security companies, Foodbank, Loaves and Fishes, sports providers, arts and education, Mental Health support providers.

Funding opportunities:

Investigate State & Federal youth grants, community development funds, annual Council budget allocation and facilities maintenance budget.



KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PRIORITY 2: IMPROVE TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY

Transport is essential for young people to access school, work, essential services, and social and recreational opportunities. It strongly contributes towards their overall wellbeing and socioeconomic participation.

We will explore opportunities to better utilise existing community and public transport, and invest in youth-targeted transport services that allow young people to readily move about within and between their communities.

What We Will Do:


- ✓ Advocate for extended school bus services to allow participation in after-school activities.
- ✓ Collaborate with transport providers to expand bus routes and schedules and provide affordable public transport options to meet the needs of young people and better connect them to services, activities, and social opportunities.
- ✓ Explore community-led youth transport solutions, such as a subsidised youth bus service or taxi vouchers.
- ✓ Work with service providers to expand driver mentorship programs.
- ✓ Develop free transport programs for youth attending events, youth programs, and sports activities.
- ✓ Implement Active Transport Strategy priority projects to improve the connectivity between our Townships, enhancing safety and access for youth.

Partnerships we will utilise and build upon:

State Government, Local transport operators, Driver Mentoring Tasmania, BEST, PCYC, Sorell School, Area Connect, support local driver training programs.

Funding opportunities:

Government transport grants, corporate sponsorships.



KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PRIORITY 3:

EXPAND SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Social and recreational opportunities are the foundation of youth participation and engagement, and create a sense of belonging and social cohesion in local communities

What We Will Do:


- ✓ Support youth-targeted community events, including arts, music, and sports festivals.
- ✓ Establish affordable and accessible school holiday programs and weekend activities.
- ✓ Upgrade local skate parks, sports grounds, and public spaces with improved lighting, shelters, and safety measures.
- ✓ Develop a Youth Advisory Squad (YAS) to provide ongoing input into local programs and events. Reporting directly to Council.
- ✓ Work with event organisers to make existing events and activities more youth-friendly.

Partnerships we will utilise and build upon:

Sporting Clubs, PCYC, Reclink Australia, Youth Matters, local Artists, South East Arts, Youth Week, Youth Homelessness Week, Neighbourhood Houses & Community Centres, Sorell School, Indie School, Home school students, Local community groups, Sout East Salvos, Home Base, A Fairer World.

Funding opportunities:

Local business sponsorships, Council annual budget, event grants.



KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PRIORITY 4:

STRENGTHEN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT

Initiatives must prioritise mental and emotional wellbeing, use a trauma informed approach, be strengths-based and age-appropriate. Emphasis should also be placed on building resilience and confidence, responding to individual needs, and fostering positive relationships.

Young people can be empowered to overcome their challenges and thrive given the right interventions at the right time and with the right approach.

What We Will Do:


- ✓ Increase youth-friendly mental health services with both in-person and online access.
- ✓ Advocate for more outreach support programs (e.g., Headspace, Rural Alive & Well).
- ✓ Provide opportunities for training for youth workers, teachers, and community leaders in mental health first aid.
- ✓ Advocate for after-hours and weekend services to improve access to support when young people need it most.
- ✓ Provide assistance and support for service providers to run their programs locally (e.g. Psyche Mental Health Love Bites – Healthy Relationships Program)

Partnerships we will utilise and build upon:

Department of Health, Psyche Mental Health, Life without Barriers, Anglicare, Centrelink, Rural Alive and Well, Headspace, Pulse Youth Health Services, Sexual Assault Support Services, Transcend, Relationship Australia, Wellways, Australian Childhood Foundation, Speak Up Stay Chatty, PCYC, St Johns, Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Workplace Alive and Well, Morton Group Training, Headspace, The Link, local community groups, music groups and art groups.

Funding opportunities:

Health grants, Tas Community Fund.



KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PRIORITY 5:

FOSTER YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community and Government must work collaboratively with young people to design, implement and evaluate policies, programs, and services designed for them.

Participation mechanisms must be meaningful and purposeful, empower young people, build trust and build capacity to engage in decision-making processes. Providing youth with genuine opportunities for co-design is priority.

What We Will Do:

- ✓ Establish a Sorell Youth Advisory Squad (YAS) to provide input into decision-making – direct report to Council.
- ✓ Take opportunities for community engagement directly to young people – e.g NRM, Community Cultural Precinct, South East Sports Complex, Play Space Audit and Plan, Arts and Culture, to provide them a direct pathway for engagement with Council as appropriate to them.
- ✓ Support peer mentoring initiatives connecting younger youth with older role models
Host regular forums and consultations with young people to ensure their concerns and ideas are considered.
- ✓ Implement youth-friendly communication channels, including social media platforms and interactive online surveys.
- ✓ Provide opportunities in local and state government for young people to have their say on issues that affect them e.g Tasmanian Youth Forum
Implement mentorship programs pairing young people with positive role models and community leaders

Partnerships we will utilise and build upon:

Sorell School, Indie School, Copping youth group, Youth Matters, Trade Training Centre, Rural Alive and Well, Headspace, Wellways, Aged Care providers, The Nest, Community events - Youth Week, Youth Homelessness, local community groups, Youth Advisory Squad.

Funding opportunities:

Health grants, Tas Community Fund.




PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Business and Employment Southeast Tasmania

BEST deliver employment and skills and training development opportunities for youth including:

- Facilitating job opportunities.
- Access to training opportunities.
- Personalised job matching services.
- Delivering interview coaching to boost confidence.



This action plan will not happen without partnerships and collaboration. Delivery of initiatives will be dependent on participation of children and young people, their families, community leaders, service providers, organisations and state agencies. Some activities may be dependent on external funding.

Strengthening partnerships will ensure a coordinated approach to youth services and engagement.

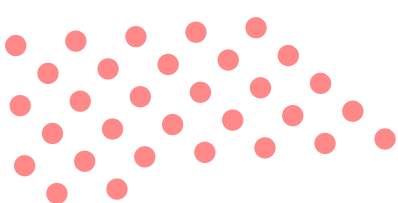
Collective Impact Model

The Collective Impact Model will be utilised to address complex local issues through structured collaboration with stakeholders who are best placed to offer services in their area of expertise. These include:

South East Tasmania Salvos


The Salvos offer a range of youth and family services which complement and work with our Youth Plan. The local Salvos team are committed to working collaboratively in this space with Council. There is recognition that their service delivery in the youth area will likely increase and diversify once their new facility in Sorell is built. Council's commitment to Youth and the required resourcing will be reviewed and updated accordingly to reflect these changes.

Council will work with a variety of other external partners to deliver required programs and services, including:

- Sorell School
 - Indie School
 - Community groups
 - Sporting clubs
 - Service providers
 - Commissioner for Children & Young People
 - Jobs Tasmania
 - Advice and Referral Line
 - Home Base
 - A Fairer World
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Premier and Cabinet – “It takes a Village” strategy. Transferring first 1000 days model into teenage years
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COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE YOUTH PLAN



Sorell Council will play a facilitating and coordinating role, ensuring that youth initiatives align with community needs.

Council will:

- ✓ Employ a dedicated Youth resource - Invest in an appropriately trained, skilled youth worker to facilitate and support the development of youth-targeted programs and opportunities. This role should work collaboratively with local government, schools and local youth services, to support holistic development and wellbeing of young people. Importantly, they will be crucial in fostering positive engagement and visibility of young people with community, empower them to participate in decision-making processes, and can advocate to government and community on their behalf
 - ✓ Utilise Council's building at 11 Fitzroy Street as a dedicated Youth Hub to provide a safe, inclusive space where young people can access support, assistance and recreational activities.
 - ✓ Work with young people to create a range of opportunities for young people aged 12-19 years to socialise and recreate, explore their talents and passions, support learning and workforce readiness, respond to their individual needs, and build their capacity and confidence to actively participate in school, work and community. Programs must be accessible to all young people, address known barriers to participation and engagement, and offer services available to them after school, on weekends and during school holidays.
 - ✓ Develop a shared information and communication platform for young people to find out about different social and recreational opportunities, local services and supports, and resources and information that is relevant to them.
 - ✓ Act as a connector between young people and service providers.
 - ✓ Provide infrastructure and logistical support for youth programs and safe spaces.
 - ✓ Advocate for policy changes and funding to enhance local youth opportunities.
 - ✓ Monitor and evaluate progress to ensure continuous improvement and adaptation to emerging needs.
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FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY



To support this plan, Sorell Council will:

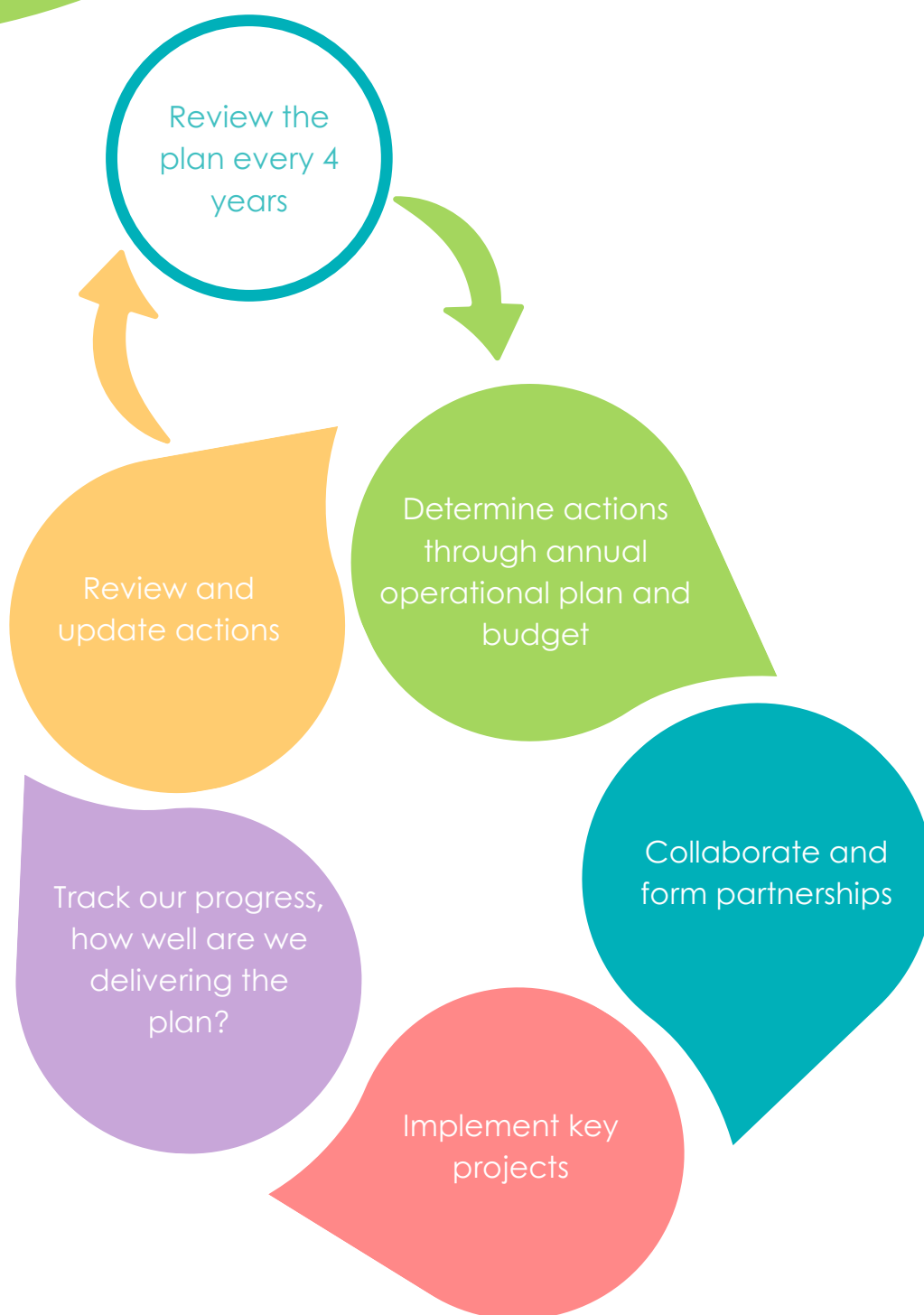
- Provide an annual budget provision and work plan for key projects and priorities.
- Apply for grant funding from State and Federal youth initiatives.
- Explore the potential of partnering with local businesses for sponsorship and support.
- Leverage existing resources within Council and community organisations to maximise impact.
- Explore social enterprise opportunities, such as youth-led events and community projects, to create sustainable funding sources.



PROJECT DELIVERY

This Youth Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness. The cycle of delivery and review of this action plan is shown in the figure below.

This action plan will remain in effect from 2025 to 2029. Projects to deliver each key action will be identified each year through the Annual Plan and Budget process.



MONITORING, EVALUATION & REPORTING

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of this Youth Plan and report on its progress we will:

- Develop a shared measurement framework with the young people to track impact and progress.
- Conduct annual youth consultations to assess emerging needs, including surveys aimed at youth utilising the Hub and stakeholders/service providers.
- Publish a Youth Engagement Report annually to update stakeholders and community on Plan progress.
- Include youth as a standing item in the Community Relations workgroup Council Meeting Agenda Report each month. This allows regular monitoring of activities, provide opportunities to address emerging issues, and ensure that engagement efforts remain on track throughout the year.

