

# Youth Engagement Commitment Statement

2024 - 2028









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# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that the activities of Yarriambiack Shire Council are held under the traditional skies and in the waterways and lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people and Council pays respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



# Introduction

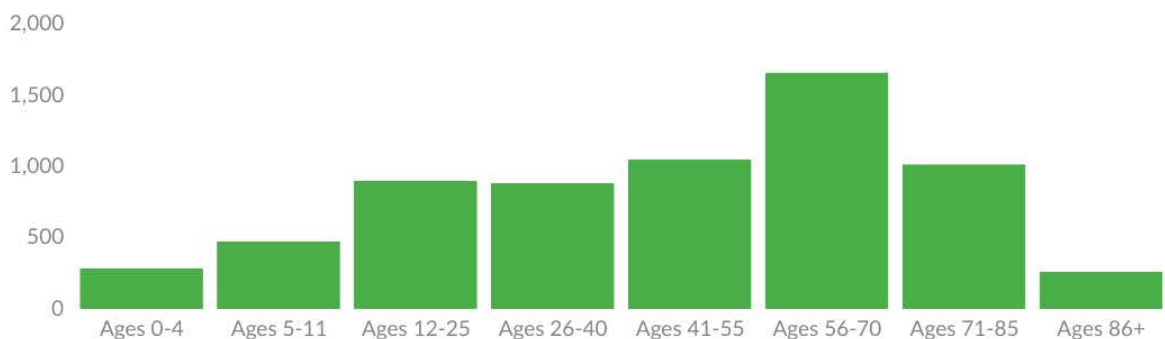
This Commitment Statement and Action Plan establishes a clear focus for the Council and identifies where our role can create the most positive, social and collective impact, through direct engagement with young people.

This document outlines the key priorities we will focus on in the coming years to effectively engage with our young people.

For the purpose of this document, the terms “young people” and “youth” are used interchangeably and they refer to a person who is aged between 12 and 25 years old, and lives, learns, earns and socialises or has a significant connection to the Yarriambiack Shire.

# Profile of Yarriambiack Shire’s Young People

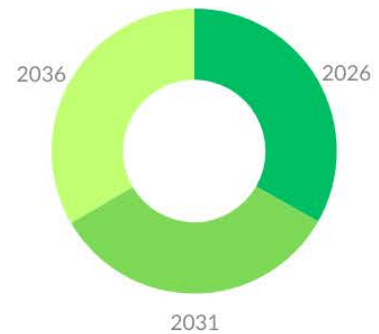
The Shire population in accordance with the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021 was 6,501, with 984 people aged between 10 and 24 years (15% of the population). The median age of a resident in Yarriambiack Shire Council is 52 years.



# YSC Economic Development Strategy Projections

We are projecting that over the next 15 years, the youth population (10 to 24) will increase 1% by 2026, and then be relatively stable as a percentage of total population of shire. (2026 projection is 16.5%, 2031 projection is 16.3%, 2036 projection is 16.2%).

The major cohort that this change can be attributed to is an increase of 20-24 year olds in the next 5 years.



## SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics. Yarriambiack Shire rated 10th in the most disadvantaged in the State in 2021.

**The state's youth unemployment rate is 11.4 per cent, just above the national rate of 11.2 per cent. The Greater Wimmera Region (Including Yarriambiack) has a rate of nearly 14% placing it 4th worst in the state.**

Country of Birth for Yarriambiack residents reflects a very strong Australian born population, with 84.7% born in Australia, compared with 66.9% of all Australians born here and 65% of all Victorians born in Australia. The most common countries of birth in Yarriambiack after Australia being: England 1.6%, New Zealand 0.8%, India 0.6%, Philippines 0.5% and Netherlands 0.3%. This is supported by nearly 90% of the Shire's people only speaking English at home against the state average of 67.2.

# Commitment to Engagement

Council has adopted a Community Engagement Strategy that outlines how Council will engage overarchingly with the community.

The Commitment Statement outlines Council's key priorities for engagement and actions to ensure our projects, investment activities, programs and services meet the needs of our young people.

Council's key engagement commitments are as follows;

## Listening to Us: We are Committed to Listening to our Young People

We will do this by:

- Meeting quarterly with the three Secondary Colleges across our Shire and engaging with their School Representative Council's. We will seek feedback on services, projects and initiatives with the aim of ensuring a young persons view and ideas are reflected in our service and infrastructure commitments.
- Inviting feedback from young people across our Shire on Services, Infrastructure and Projects utilising social media, schools, newsletters, newspapers and workplaces.

## Engaging with Us: We are committed to engaging with our Young People

Unfortunately, we have not secured funding to support the employment of a Youth Engagement Officer, which limits our ability to offer events that are delivered by the Shire. We are however committed to finding and resourcing alternative ways to engage and offer programs to meet our Young Peoples requirements.

We will do this by;

- Offering programs within our Community Libraries that meet a diverse range of ages and needs.
- Seeking expressions of interest from organisations and community groups to facilitate programs across our Shire during the school holidays, that meet the needs of our Young People.
- Establishing a 12-month Youth Holiday Program, based on feedback from our Young People. We will actively advertise this program to encourage participation.
- Applying for future funding opportunities to facilitate the employment of a Youth Engagement Officer.
- Engaging with Schools and Sporting Groups via our Sport and Recreation Coordinator, on all Sport and Active Recreation Projects to ensure a Young Person's voice and lense is applied to all Sport and Active Recreation projects.



## Empowering Us: We are committed to developing and supporting our Young People

We ran an extensive advertising campaign to recruit Youth to our Youth Advisory Committee. This campaign was unsuccessful. We recognise that our Shire is 7,326 square kilometres, and the tyranny of distance can be a barrier to youth participation. Especially when transport is limited across our Shire. To reduce the barriers for youth engagement we are committed to empowering our young people to have a voice and for their views to be heard and recognised.

We will do this by;

- Exploring leadership programs and funding opportunities for our youth to participate in across the Shire.
- Providing diverse mediums and opportunities for our youth to provide feedback on projects, services, infrastructure and programs.
- Encouraging, welcoming and supporting feedback from our youth, with an aim of celebrating their advocacy and vision.

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## Commitment to Partnerships and Networks

We recognise as a small rural Shire we have limited revenue generating opportunities, and therefore must partner and network with other organisations and providers to deliver Youth Services.

We are committed to continuing to enhance our relationships with service delivery partners such as (but not limited to);

- Neighbourhood Houses (Warracknabeal, Hopetoun and Murtoa)
- Rural North West Health
- West Wimmera Health Service
- Uniting Victoria
- Grampians Community Health
- Hopetoun P-12 College
- Warracknabeal Secondary College
- Murtoa College
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network





**Yarriambiack**  
SHIRE COUNCIL