

Sunshine Coast  
**Community Strategy**  
**Annual Report 2023-24**



Edition Month September 2024

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### **Acknowledgements**

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### **Reference document**

This document should  
be cited as follows:

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## **Traditional acknowledgement**

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country, home of the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples, the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures, deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We commit to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) communities to support self-determination through economic and community development.

Truth telling is a significant part of our journey. We are committed to better understanding the collective histories of the Sunshine Coast and the experiences of First Nations peoples. Legacy issues resulting from colonisation are still experienced by Traditional Custodians and First Nations peoples.

We recognise our shared history and will continue to work in partnership to provide a foundation for building a shared future with the Kabi Kabi peoples and the Jinibara peoples.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations peoples continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Together, we are all stronger.





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# A message from our Mayor and Community Portfolio Councillors

**We are proud of the work our community does to achieve our shared vision of a strong community, where together we thrive.**

Through the sharing of stories, data and insights, we present this 2023-24 annual report for the Community Strategy.

The report provides an opportunity to pause and reflect on our achievements. It highlights how Council, our community and partners have worked together through collaboration, advocacy and cooperation to deliver on the five outcome areas.

This is Council's fourth annual report for the Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041 and the final report for the Community Strategy Action Plan 2019-2024.

Council has been actively engaging with our community over the past year as we prepare a refreshed Community Strategy and a new Action Plan for 2024-2029.

Through this engagement with internal and external stakeholders and the broader community, we can better understand community priorities now and into the future.

We worked to make our residents healthier and more active, our places and spaces activated and vibrant and our communities inclusive, connected and resilient. We continue to recognise and celebrate our heritage, culture and arts.

Some key highlights include the adoption and implementation of the All Abilities Action Plan, the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, the Lived Experience Inclusion Project and the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan.

We opened Altitude Nine and Community Co-Lab, our new community spaces at Sunshine Coast City Hall. We awarded 1071 grants to continue supporting our community groups and the amazing work they do.

Our Council is honoured to help support our community to grow and prosper.

Council thanks the members of the Community Strategy Leadership Group for their valued contribution over the past five years. We also thank our partners and the community for working with us to deliver the Community Strategy.

As we look forward, we continue to acknowledge we can't do this alone. In partnership with our internal and external stakeholders and our community organisations, we strengthen our commitment to continue building a strong community where together we thrive.

**Mayor Rosanna Natoli**  
**Councillor David Law**  
**Councillor Taylor Bunnag**



## One vision – three strategies



**Council's vision is supported by three long-term strategies that have been developed in consultation with our community. These regional strategies collectively provide the strategic framework and desired outcomes for Council to work collaboratively across our community, with business and other tiers of government to advance our vision as Australia's most sustainable region.**

To achieve the vision for the region, it is critical to progress our community, environment and economic objectives, understanding that all three are integrated and critical to the success and overall sustainability and liveability of our region.



# Vision

Together we thrive

## Goal

### Our Strong Community

The Community Strategy outlines Council's commitment to working with our community to reach our vision where together we thrive.

It provides the long-term direction for how Council and our community will work together to ensure that people and places remain connected, inclusive and cohesive as we grow.

The Sunshine Coast Community Strategy provides the strategic pathways towards a future where together we thrive. We thrive through connection with people, places and spaces and where we stay true to our values as a welcoming, caring and vibrant community, with opportunities for all to participate.

The strategy provides a clear framework for a strong community, built on the following five outcomes:



#### 01 Healthy, active communities



#### 02 Vibrant communities



#### 03 Inclusive communities



#### 04 Connected, resilient communities



#### 05 Creative, innovative communities



# United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

As we advance our vision as Australia’s most sustainable region – Healthy. Smart. Creative. the environmental, social, cultural and economic activities across the region must be carefully balanced to ensure we advance our vision sustainably.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) for peace, prosperity, people and planet provide a comprehensive and internationally recognised framework for us to collectively align

the way we each live, work, learn and play every day – and form an important foundation of the performance measurement framework of our Biosphere.

Council is demonstrating regional leadership by committing to embed the UNSDGs in our strategies, plans and associated progress reporting. Each Corporate Plan goal identifies how it contributes to the UNSDGs and, in doing so, assists to progress our Sunshine Coast Biosphere aim and objectives.

<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION 	<b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY 	<b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 
<b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	<b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS</b> 







# This Annual Report

**This report draws together a range of data, stories and insights to highlight and celebrate the valuable work achieved over the past year to deliver on the priorities of the Community Strategy, in collaboration with our community partners.**

This is the fourth annual report since the Community Strategy came into effect in November 2019.

Council continues to measure and report on the progress towards our community outcomes drawing upon both quantitative and qualitative data to capture the broad range of outcomes that result from our work.





# Our progress

Council uses a range of measures to help us monitor and track progress.

## Overall measure:

The Sunshine Coast is a strong community: 68% agreed or strongly agreed.

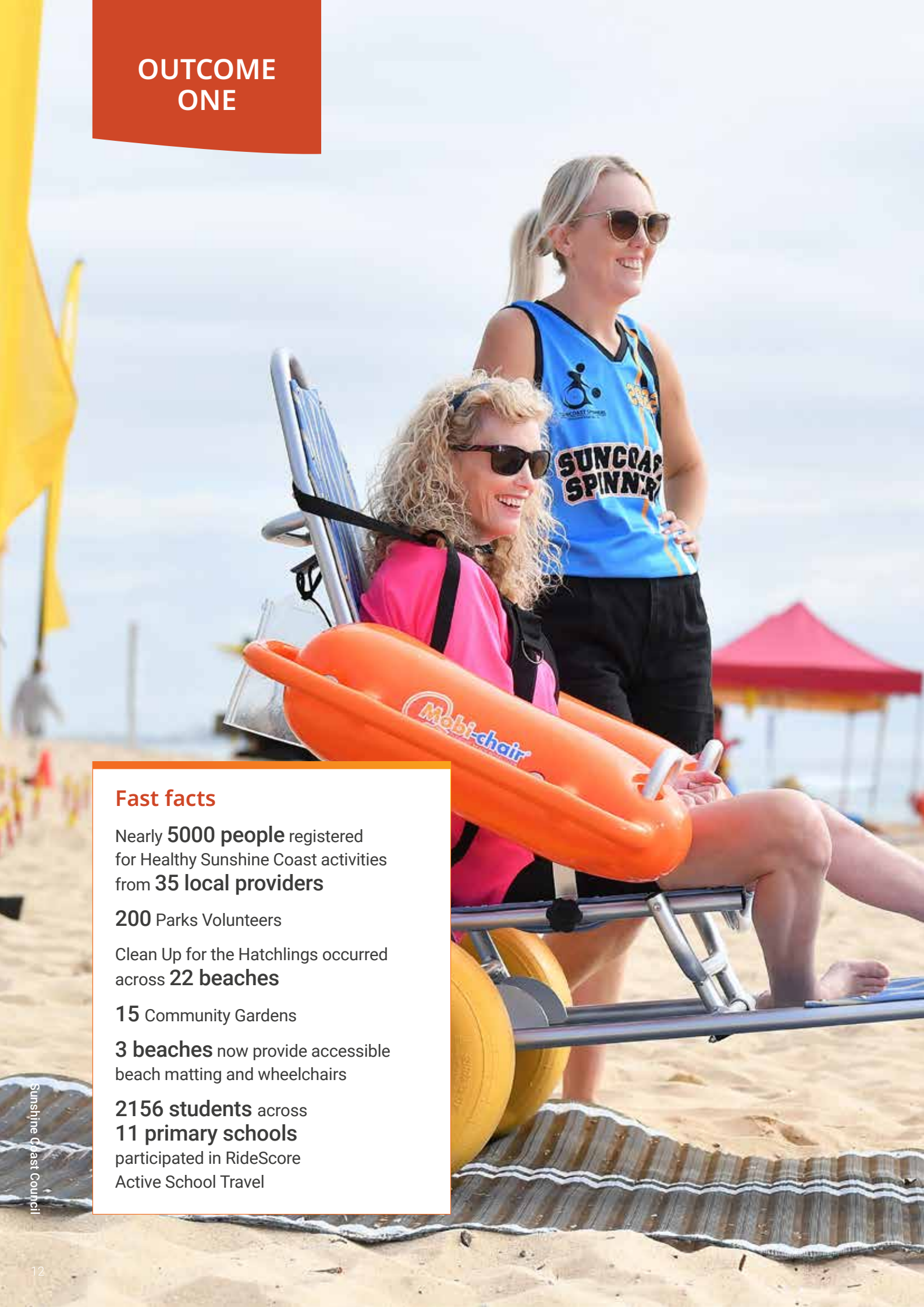
The following indicators are the headline measures for the five outcome areas.

 <p><b>Outcome 1:</b> <b>Healthy, active communities</b></p>	<p>Our community is one of the healthiest regional communities in Queensland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84% (Above Target)</li> <li>• Percentage of community who report being in good / very good health (CCS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target:</b> ≥ 82% to 2041 <b>Baseline:</b> 82% in 2016</p>
 <p><b>Outcome 2:</b> <b>Vibrant communities</b></p>	<p>Residents agree that Council's community infrastructure meets the needs of their community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 82% (Above Target)</li> <li>• Percentage of residents who are neutral, agree or strongly agree that Council's community infrastructure meets the needs of their community (CCS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target:</b> ≥ 80% to 2041 <b>Baseline:</b> 70% in 2021</p>
 <p><b>Outcome 3:</b> <b>Inclusive communities</b></p>	<p>Improving social and economic opportunities relative to other South-East Queensland local government areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Index: 60.3 (Watch target)</li> <li>• Measured by overall liveability index (LSC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target:</b> 63.9 at 2026 and equal to Regional Qld result (but no less than 63.9) to 2041 <b>Baseline:</b> 60.9 in 2021</p>
 <p><b>Outcome 4:</b> <b>Connected, resilient communities</b></p>	<p>Residents agree that they can get help from friends, family, neighbours or community organisations when they need it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% (Above target)</li> <li>• Percentage of residents who agree that they can get help from friends, family, neighbours or community organisations when they need it (CCS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target:</b> ≥85% to 2041 <b>Baseline:</b> 93% in 2016</p>
 <p><b>Outcome 5:</b> <b>Creative, innovative communities</b></p>	<p>Growth in social enterprises in the Sunshine Coast local government area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 organisations (Watch Target)</li> <li>• Growth in social enterprises operating in the Sunshine Coast local government area (QSEC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target:</b> ≥22 at 2025 (20% increase on 2018 baseline) <b>Baseline:</b> 18 in 2021</p>

**Abbreviations and Sources:** CCS: Sunshine Coast Council's Community Connections Survey, LSC: id Consulting's Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey 2024, QSEC: Queensland Social Enterprise Council count of social enterprise members 2024. Measures for Outcomes 1, 2 and 4 are based on the 2022/23 CCS Survey.



# OUTCOME ONE



## Fast facts

Nearly **5000 people** registered for Healthy Sunshine Coast activities from **35 local providers**

**200** Parks Volunteers

Clean Up for the Hatchlings occurred across **22 beaches**

**15** Community Gardens

**3 beaches** now provide accessible beach matting and wheelchairs

**2156 students** across **11 primary schools** participated in RideScore Active School Travel



## My story



### Healthy, active communities

**My name is Freyja Gunn. I've been living on the Sunshine Coast for 16 years, having emigrated from the United Kingdom and Ireland in 2008. The Sunshine Coast has been the perfect location to raise my two sons who are now in their late teens and venturing into their own independent lives on the Coast.**

I'm currently Operations Manager at Resolve Fitness and Resolve Exercise Physiology, which have approximately 700 gym members and numerous clients accessing a range of allied health services.

In 2016, we found that our community was in need of more low-cost activities focusing not only on physical fitness, but also on mental health. As a result, we became interested in the Healthy Sunshine Coast program provided by Sunshine Coast Council. We started up a new group fitness session, which now runs weekly, on Wednesdays at 9.30am, for 45 minutes at Caloundra.

The sessions have been a great success. We get around 50 wonderful attendees each week, and some attendees who started out with us in 2016 are still coming!

It makes my team and I extremely happy to meet and greet this amazing group of people each week. They understand

**'Everyone is so thankful and happy for these sessions. It is almost like one big family that meet once a week.'**

the importance of working on their physical fitness, and we love the opportunities for personal connection that are created through the gathering of like-minded people. This is so important for our mental health and helps to prevent feelings of isolation. So, not only does the fitness aspects of the sessions help with our physical health and balance, via aerobic and strength activities to music, but it is also hugely significant for our mental health and sense of belonging.

Everyone is so thankful and happy for these sessions. It is almost like one big family that meet once a week.

The team and I want to continue to create an environment where everyone feels included, whatever ability and age. We want to continue to share our knowledge and provide opportunities for health and fitness. **Above all, we want people to leave our sessions feeling happier, healthier and more positive – walking out the door with smiling faces!**





## Outcome one: Healthy, active communities

### Our community

- Residents rated their physical health as 7.4 out of 10, and their mental health as 7.6 out of 10 (higher than the Australian averages of 7.0 and 7.2 respectively).
- Residents rated their social wellbeing as 7.3 out of 10 (higher than the Australian average of 6.9).
- Residents rated their access to the natural environment as 8.1 out of 10 (higher than the Australian average of 7.9).
- Residents rated their ability to view and participate in sports and recreation as 6.8 out of 10 (lower than the Australian average of 7.2).

Source: LSC: id Consulting's Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey 2024

### Healthy Sunshine Coast

Healthy Sunshine Coast has continued to deliver low-cost community health and wellbeing activities over the past year. The program encourages connections, having fun and participation from people across all ages and abilities while supporting positive physical and mental health and resilience. Some of the activities included a new Pilates class held at the Maroochy Bushland Botanic Gardens, Laughter Yoga in Maleny and Caloundra, weekday Outdoor Fitness Circuit classes in Mudjimba and Carer's Health and Fitness classes in Dicky Beach, to name just a few.

In August 2023, Healthy Sunshine Coast partnered with Held Outside and a number of community organisations to host a free family activity day – "Healthy Forests – Healthy Us" at the Eric Joseph Foote Sanctuary in Buderim. The intent of the day was to come together to celebrate, experience and learn about the interconnections between nature and human health.

During October 2023, Council co-hosted numerous Healthy Ageing Forums in partnership with the Healthy Ageing Partnership (HAP) at various locations on the Coast. The purpose of the forums was to collaborate and share information, create and strengthen social connection, and hear what the topical issues were for older people.

In November 2023, Healthy Sunshine Coast joined Council's Biosphere team for BiospHERO Day, a fun and educative community festival held at the MET Maroochydore. With over 1000 people in attendance, the event was a culmination of a week-long program of events, celebrating people and nature in our Sunshine Coast Biosphere.

During Parks Week in March 2024, Healthy Sunshine Coast encouraged everyone to spend time in nature, enjoying our local parks and open spaces with the regular series of low-cost sessions available outdoors. The week celebrated the positive influence spending time in nature has on our wellbeing and our ability to thrive.

The Healthy Sunshine Coast program has continued to enjoy strong membership growth with close to 5,000 registered members as of the end of June 2024. There are over 60 regular health and wellbeing activities offered across the region facilitated by more than 30 providers.

A survey conducted in March 2024 (379 responses) showed very positive feedback on the program with 87 per cent of participants indicating their health and wellbeing had improved since commencing the program and 93 per cent indicating that the lower cost of classes had enabled them to participate in activities that might normally be beyond their means.

### 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games update

As a co-host city for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Sunshine Coast is proud to be hosting the Olympic and Paralympic competition events of mountain biking, road-based cycling, marathon, race walking, kiteboarding, football and basketball.

Life-sized Olympic Rings and the Paralympic Agitos made their debut on the Sunshine Coast on the weekend of July 22 and 23, 2023 as the region celebrated '9 Years to Go' until the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. To mark this milestone, Council held free events giving the community the opportunity to "meet" and capture photos alongside the Rings and Agitos, together with Olympic and Paralympic Athletes, at Alexandra Headland, Coolumb, Nambour and North Arm.

Council continued working on Games legacy with our Sunshine Coast Legacy Community Reference Group and Games Delivery Partners to develop the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Strategy - Elevate 2042. Launched in November 2023, Elevate 2042 is the product of the collective effort of all of the Games Delivery Partners and is a unifying statement of the joint commitment ensuring Games impact drives lasting benefits beyond the Games themselves.

A funding commitment of almost \$300 million by the Queensland and Australian Governments in May 2024, signalled the largest ever investment in community sporting infrastructure in our region. A \$148 million Sunshine Coast Stadium expansion, a \$142 million new Indoor Sports Centre in Kawana and a \$14 million Mountain Bike Centre at Parklands are on track to be delivered in 2027 – the delivery of these community facilities at this time will enable significant community outcomes well before the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## Lifeguards

Over the past year, our Sunshine Coast beaches had over 7 million visitors, with 660 rescues performed by lifeguards on our beaches in the 2023-24 financial year.

Council's strong partnership with Surf Life Saving Queensland continues with Council endorsing the joint Lifeguard Service Plan 2023-2028 in July 2023. The new five-year agreement between Surf Life Saving Queensland and Council, guides how services will identify and respond to the needs, risks and demands placed on our beaches due to growing population, visitations and environmental risks to ensure that our beaches remain as safe as possible year-round.

Some of the modifications to service include new lifeguard services at Happy Valley Beach (commenced in September 2023), service relocation in Wurtulla, increased services in Bokarina, Buddina/Kawana Waters, Coolum North, Maroochy River Mouth (and new tower), Mudjimba and Marcoola. Safety cameras at Moffat Beach and Mooloolaba will enable lifeguards to assess data and ensure required service levels and implement emergency responses.

## Volunteers keeping our beaches clean

Volunteers continued to make a positive impact in 2023-24, with 1214 volunteers collectively removing over 583kg of rubbish from 22 beaches across the Sunshine Coast. In 2023-24, Council coordinated seven major clean ups including two Plastic Free July events, Big Beach Clean Up at Happy Valley,



Clean Up for the Hatchlings, Clean Up Australia Day and Lake Kawana Clean Up, collecting 22,866 pieces of rubbish from our beaches. In November 2023, 183 students from five schools participated in the Schools Beach Clean-Up. The schools involved included Woombye State School, Coolum State School, Sunshine Coast Grammar, Our Lady of the Rosary and Chancellor State College. There are many other organisations working hard to keep our beaches clean with clean-up activities such as Sea Life Beach Clean Up, Night Eyes, Beach Matters and Co-Exist.

## Project spotlight: Better access to our beaches

Our Sunshine Coast beaches are becoming more accessible with the Accessible Beach Program. The program provides beach matting, a wheelchair and life jackets as part of its service, improving beach and ocean accessibility for people in wheelchairs, as well as people with vision impairment, walkers, parents and carers with prams and people on crutches. Beach wheelchairs are also available for hire at no cost from the Compass Institute in Caloundra for use on any patrolled beach.

Following a successful three-month trial in 2023, Dicky Beach was added to the program alongside Coolum and Mooloolaba. Council and Dicky Beach Surf Lifesaving Club are committed to providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment between the flags at Dicky Beach, so all members of the community can enjoy a positive beach experience and the associated benefits to their physical and mental health.

**'I love seeing the sheer joy expressed on people's faces when they get onto the beach and into the water, made possible by the matting and the beach wheelchair.'**  
– Lifeguard



## OUTCOME TWO

### Fast facts

**512** amenity reserves

**376** playgrounds

**30** new parks and open spaces

Our open spaces have

**329** barbecues,

**386** drinking fountains and

**59** exercise stations

Average of **80%** occupancy  
across Holiday Parks

**400** capital projects within  
the Parks and Gardens programs

**126,595** library members



## My story



### Vibrant communities

**My name is Kate Baker. I moved to Nambour as an 8-year-old with my family, as my dad had a transfer with his work. Some of the earliest memories I have of Nambour involve the local pool, with Tuesday night swim club and training and school swimming events and carnivals.**

I'm now the Venue Manager at the Nambour Aquatic Centre, managed by Belgravia Leisure Group on behalf of Sunshine Coast Council.

Here at the aquatic centre, we are creating a hub for members of the community to connect in meaningful ways that embrace fitness, fun and inclusion. Our services contribute to health and wellbeing and improve water safety. We have one of the oldest swimming clubs in Queensland, the 'Nambour Piranhas', providing pathways to state and national swimming competitions. And we host water polo and underwater hockey.

We have seen significant growth in attendance in the past two years because of the facilities we have and

**'We have seen significant growth in attendance in the past two years because of the facilities we have and our welcoming team.'**

our welcoming team. Investment in the multi-functional Splash Park has contributed to an almost doubling of attendance. The Splash Park encourages physical and sensory development through water play. We also rolled out the Cerge companion app to ensure people with disability are welcomed into the centre. Our pool hoist and changing facility also facilitate inclusive access. Of course, we also cannot deliver a welcoming and inclusive experience without our dedicated and friendly team.

**Our pool has become a place for our community to celebrate family, learning, access and inclusion, diversity, and sustainability. We would love to see you soon!**





## Outcome two: Vibrant communities

### Our community

- Residents rated their access to cultural facilities as 4.9 out of 10 (lower than the Australian average of 6.2).
- Residents rated their access to shopping, leisure and dining experiences as 6.1 out of 10 (lower than the Australian average of 6.5).

Source: LSC: id Consulting's Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey 2024

#### Busy places and spaces

##### Aquatic centres

**1.3 million** visits across **9** aquatic centres

##### Historic houses

**12,094** visits

**19%** increase since 2022/23

##### Libraries

**930,259** visitors

**11%** increase since 2022/23

**95%** customer high satisfaction

##### Venue 114

**45,323** attendees across **398** events

##### Caloundra Indoor Stadium

**108,081** attendees across **2265** event bookings

##### Sunshine Coast Stadium

**115,012** attendees at **14** major events

**100%** Venue Hirer Satisfaction

### Libraries

Council's library services had a busy year as they continued to provide a hybrid offering of online and in person programs and services, supported strongly by community volunteers.

Key highlights and initiatives from the 2023-24 year include:

- Baringa Book Locker - Book vending kiosk located inside Baringa Community Centre launched, including adult fiction and non-fiction, young adult, junior and toddler books and picture books
- Construction works commenced at Caloundra Library for a new library, multipurpose community spaces and corporate facilities – due for completion mid-2025
- StoryCast Studio at Kawana Library opened in November 2023 - Acoustically treated room with access to quality microphones, podcast production mixer/interface, audacity editing software. Studio is free for community members with library membership
- Future Engineers program launched with 333 participants in 26 sessions
- Implementation of inclusion membership category for people experiencing homelessness, children in care or experiencing domestic and family violence
- Customer Service Satisfaction Survey – 94 per cent satisfaction
- 800 Adult Programs delivered to 22,305 attendees
- 238 Lifelong Learning Sessions with 8,428 attendees
- Seniors Programs delivered to 30 attendees
- 1790 participants in 118 Digital Literacy Sessions
- 15,756 participants attended 262 holiday programs delivered by Young Peoples Services
- 74,007 people attended 1,239 children's sessions such as Storytime and Rhymetime
- 250 active volunteers providing 19,491 hours of their time (increase of 9 per cent in hours)
- In December 2023, Caloundra Library opened for seven days per week based on positive feedback from the community.

## New community spaces at Sunshine Coast City Hall

Altitude Nine opened its doors to community, business, and charity functions in October 2023. The venue, located on the ninth floor of Sunshine Coast City Hall, offers panoramic views of the Sunshine Coast and can accommodate up to 180 people. The venue has hosted the Brisbane Lions Leadership Lunch, Migrant Work Ready Graduation, a sold-out International Women's Day event and the Sunshine Coast Lightning Partnership Forum.

Community CoLab opened in May 2024. The purpose-built versatile space is located on the Ground Floor at City Hall, as a low-cost and accessible venue-for-hire. Accommodating up to 20 people, the purpose of the space is to foster community connection and collaboration.



## Our community venues have been highly activated...

### Venue 114

- 45,323 attendees across 398 events
- Significant events included:
  - Big Day In
  - Conscious Life Festival
  - REWIRED Youth Mental Health Summit
  - Sunshine Coast Wedding Showcase

### The Caloundra Events Centre

- 161 events and bookings
- Significant events included:
  - Frozen with the Sunshine Coast Youth Theatre
  - Sleeping Beauty performed by the Royal Czech Ballet
  - Sunshine Coast Comedy Festival
  - The Nutcracker
  - Queensland Ballet on Tour
  - Tommy Little, Anh Do and Kate Bush

### Maroochydore Multi Sports Complex

- 1565 event bookings
- Significant events included:
  - AFL Masters Carnival
  - Western Bulldogs Pre-Season camp
  - Brisbane Lions Pre-Season Camp
  - Sunshine Coast Netball fixtures

### Sunshine Coast Stadium

- 383,359 attendees across 2922 event bookings
- Significant events included:
  - National Rugby League Women's Game between Brisbane Broncos and Sydney Roosters
  - 16,000 people attended the Queensland Oztog Junior State Cup
  - Sold out crowd for NRL Pre-Season Dolphins vs Gold Coast Titans
  - England Women's Football team 10-day camp before FIFA World Cup 2023
  - Sold out crowd for South Sydney Rabbitohs vs Brisbane Broncos
  - Touch Football Australia National Youth Championships with approximately 12,000 attendees
  - Sunshine Coast Camping and Caravanning Expo
  - AFL Masters Carnival

### Caloundra Indoor Stadium

- 42,014 attendees across 18 Major Events
- Significant events included:
  - 1300 people attended the Regional Disability Expo
  - National Senior Pickleball Tournament
  - Suncoast Spinners Wheelchair Basketball Tournament
  - Fashion Thrift Society
  - Antiques and Collectables Shows
  - QLD School Sport State Netball Titles



## New and upgraded facilities

- Caloundra Indoor Stadium roof replacement (\$3.7 million project with 140 kilowatts of solar panels)
- Honey Farm Sports and Recreation Precinct – earthworks commenced
- Maleny Skate Park renewal – community engagement program
- Nambour-Yandina United Football Clubhouse upgrade completed in April 2024
- Stage 1 Works at Kawana Aquatic centre are complete with new program pool and car park upgrades
- Cotton Tree Aquatic Centre had new pool lights installed
- A 4WD wheelchair purchased and delivered for use at Mary Cairncross Reserve
- Mobility Mapping has been completed for Coolum, Beerwah and Montville (publicly accessible mapping under development)
- Glenbrook Downs Park installed a Disability Discrimination Act compliant picnic setting
- Field lighting upgrades for Caloundra Cricket Club and Caloundra Rugby Union Club
- Nambour Aquatic Centre received an all-abilities portable hoist
- New camp kitchen at Cotton Tree Holiday Park
- North Arm Park playground upgrade.

**'Rhymetime is a lovely opportunity for my baby to be exposed to song, books and other babies!' – Library Rhymetime participant**



## Project spotlight: Early Literacy Sessions preparing our little ones

Our little ones have been enjoying early literacy sessions such as Storytime and Rhymetime this past year. With early literacy sessions being offered online and in person at libraries, more than 48,370 participants attended 824 sessions.

The early literacy sessions have been developed and delivered by our libraries to engage parents, caregivers, and their children to model and foster early literacy practices that can be replicated at home.

The free weekly session held at libraries and online, have been so popular (with a 20 per cent increase over the past year), that an additional 42 Storytime and 43 Rhymetime sessions have been added across a number of branches to meet the growing demand. For those who could not attend a session in real time, two online programs have been created and made available on the library website. Rhymes with Ryan and Sofa Storytime starring Ryan and Codie from Library Services, feature songs that are part of the regular library session as well as favourite classic stories. Rhymes with Ryan features Auslan translations. Codie is one of the best storytellers in Australia and New Zealand, receiving a second place in the 2022 Librarian Storyteller of the Year awards.

Storytime sessions highlight and promote the importance of reading to children from birth with library staff reading a number of books to the participants. Rhymetime sessions focus on vocabulary and literacy development through songs with library staff guiding parents and little ones through a set of nursery rhymes and action songs. The sessions all involve music, books, movement and often an arts-based activity to foster motor skill development. The sessions also provide a wonderful opportunity to create and foster connections, socialise and build community with other families.

Storytime and Rhymetime work in conjunction with First 5 Forever, a Queensland State Government universal family literacy program aimed at supporting strong language and literacy environments for young children from 0–5 years and their families. Other projects funded by First 5 Forever include Story Seats and Communication boards situated in our parks across the region to aid in early literacy development and provide tools to be used by preverbal toddlers or children with any form of communication barrier.





## OUTCOME THREE



### Fast facts

**34** residents graduated from the Migrant Work Ready program

Youth Council partnered with Zero+ Positive for Schools to plant **400** trees at the Maleny Ecological Park

Council raised the Pride Flag at Maroochydore City Hall on 11 June 2024, in celebration of Pride Month

**60** young people attended the Rewired Youth Mental Health event at Venue 114



## My story



### Inclusive communities

**My name is Ian. I moved to the Sunshine Coast in 2000 and I worked around the area as a carpenter. In 2005, after an accident at work, I damaged one of my eyes and went blind in that eye. A little while later, I slipped on some rocks while fishing and cracked a couple of vertebrae. I had nerve damage. I was unable to work, depressed and using drugs for pain. My marriage broke down. I couldn't see my daughter. My dad passed away, my mum died a year later, and my younger brother a year after that.**

This was my transition to homelessness. They were difficult times. Very few people I've met have made a conscious choice to become homeless. They have been injured, unable to work, had a marriage breakdown, depression, difficulty finding accommodation, their rent goes up, they are experiencing domestic violence.

There is a stigma attached to being homeless, and there's a fear in part of the community about homeless people. Sometimes it might be justified. Sometimes it isn't. Everybody's a human being. We all have compassion and understanding within us.

Now I'm transitioning out of homelessness. I'm living in a unit. I'm doing a little bit of work. I volunteer in the

**'Now I'm transitioning out of homelessness. I'm living in a unit. I'm doing a little bit of work. I volunteer in the community. I'm thinking of going back to finish my degree.'**

community. I'm thinking of going back to finish my degree. I'm doing stuff like Street Up, a group where we publicly share our stories of homelessness to raise awareness.

This project has been good for my mental health as I feel valued. I feel like I am contributing to something important. It has enabled me to connect with other people and help lift up some people too, which has given me some meaning and purpose to my days. We have received positive feedback that perceptions and policies have changed which may aid those who are enduring periods of homelessness. I didn't know sharing our lived experience would have such an effect.





## Outcome three: Inclusive communities

### Our community

- The overall liveability index of the Sunshine Coast was 60.3 in 2024, this was slightly below the averages for South-East Queensland (63.8), Queensland (62.2) and Australia (63.4).
- Residents rated social cohesion in their communities as 6.4 out of 10 (lower than the Australian average of 6.7).
- Residents rated access to education opportunities as 6.7 out of 10.
- Residents rated access to job opportunities as 5.1 out of 10 and access to affordable housing as 4.2 out of 10 (lower than the Australian averages – 5.9 and 4.7 respectively).
- Overall, residents rated access to opportunities for all as 6.1 out of 10 (lower than the Australian average of 6.3).

Source: LSC: id Consulting's Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey 2024

### First Nations partnerships

Council is committed to partnering with our First Nations community to advance a shared future of reconciliation. Over the past year, the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021-22 was finalised and development of the Stretch RAP commenced. A Stretch RAP recognises that an organisation has demonstrated strong meaningful engagement with First Nations stakeholders and places Council as a leader in reconciliation. Engagement was undertaken across the community with key First Nations stakeholders to inform the RAP and continue to strengthen relationships. A RAP Advisory Group of First Nations community members was established to play an important role in guiding the development and implementation of the RAP and partner with Council on First Nations community priorities.

Council partnered with the community to celebrate First Nations culture throughout NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week. The NAIDOC Week Flag

Raising Event was held in Nambour in July 2023 and the Wan'Diny NAIDOC Family Fun Day held at Cotton Tree in October 2023. These events provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the vital role our Elders play in our communities and families as Custodians of cultural knowledge, wisdom, nurturers and advocates. National Reconciliation Week celebrations included a community celebration at TribalLink and the Sunshine Coast Lightning First Nations Round, highlighting the importance of the week's theme Now More Than Ever 2024.

The First Nations Supplier Networking Kickstarter event was held in November 2023 to continue to nurture important connections and conversations. In partnership with the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, the event supported and celebrated First Nations economic participation on the Sunshine Coast. It brought together local First Nation's businesses and key stakeholders to explore ways that we can foster and support the First Nations business community and strengthen a resilient community which prioritises local First Nations businesses as suppliers of choice. Council also partnered with GATHAA First Nations Market, a First Nations led initiative aimed at showcasing local First Nations artisans and entrepreneurs. Originally staged as a series of six markets occurring between December 2023 and July 2024, Council aims to support the markets to establish as a permanent fixture.

As part of ongoing work, Council supported a strong and connected community through a range of engagement activities. Meetings were held with Kabi Kabi and Jinibara Traditional Custodian groups to strengthen relationships, understand priorities and engagement protocols. Monthly First Nations community meetings were held in Nambour to provide a platform for community members to share information and discuss priorities. The Sunshine Coast First Nations Networking Group continued to deliver an important role of keeping key stakeholders in the First Nations community connected through regular meetings and information sharing. In May 2024, Council launched the First Nations Partnership Facebook page as a place to share information, opportunities and stories from Council and the First Nations community.

## Migrant Work Ready and Business Ready

In November 2023, the Migrant Work Ready and Diverse Queensland Workforce networking event was held at Altitude Nine, Sunshine Coast City Hall. The event celebrated program outcomes and provided an opportunity for participants to thank contributing employers. The initiative attracted 44 new businesses interested in employing a culturally diverse workforce. Welcoming Australia CEO, Aleem Ali, shared insights on the value of a culturally diverse workforce.

In May 2024, the Migrant Business Ready Scholarship Program commenced with 13 people participating.

Council partnered to deliver the Multicultural Jobs Fair and Business Expo at Baringa Community Centre in May 2024, which was attended by over 300 jobseekers, with some successfully gaining employment through the expo.

## Working towards welcome

On 16 August 2023, Council reinforced its commitment to cultural diversity and inclusion by becoming a member of the Welcoming Cities Network. Over the past year, engagement has occurred across Council branches and teams to examine current cultural diversity and inclusion practices against the National Welcoming Cities Standard to establish our current accreditation status.

Three community presentations have been delivered on the Welcoming Cities vision for the region.



## Multicultural Advisory Group

The Multicultural Advisory Group (MAG) has continued to advise Council on advancing communities where everyone can belong and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life. In September 2023, members of MAG led Council's Executive Leadership Team and Councillors in Anti-Racism Active Bystander Training.

In October 2023, the MAG attended the annual Sunshine Coast Libraries Staff Forum themed 'No One Left Behind,' attended by 130 staff. The MAG participated in a panel discussion, sharing insights on the structural, social, and environmental challenges faced by migrants when accessing library services and discussing how migrant communities envision using these community spaces.

In June 2024, they met with the 2032 Games Legacy team and will continue to collaborate to ensure our region implements best diversity and inclusion practices for the 2032 Olympic Games.

## Harmony Week

In March 2023, Council supported Sunshine Coast community groups in coordinating a vibrant week of activities celebrating Harmony Week. The community embraced the theme 'Everyone Belongs on the Sunshine Coast.' A diverse program featured gatherings, cultural exchanges, traditional performances, and immersive workshops aimed at fostering a welcoming community. Council's Harmony Week initiatives included the launch of the Staff Language Bank and Diversity and Inclusion 101 Training. Taste of Harmony lunches were held at Maroochydore City Hall and Nambour offices.

## Non-Christian prayers for Council's Ordinary Meetings

Council has committed to having four non-Christian groups per year deliver multifaith blessings/prayers at the start of Council's Ordinary Meetings. Acknowledging the religious diversity on the Sunshine Coast in this manner is another important step towards a more inclusive and welcoming region. At the opening of four meetings, representatives from Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, and Sikh faiths provided blessings focused on Councillors making wise decisions for the community and blessing the meeting.



## Youth focussed/led action

Our young people proved just how capable they are in leading, planning and delivering the inaugural Youth Mental Health Summit – Rewired. The event held at Venue 114 in October 2023, was designed by young people, for young people, creating space to have open and honest conversations about mental health experiences and sharing tips for prioritising wellbeing and developing good mental health habits. Attendees heard from pro-surfer and mental health advocate Cooper Chapman, Australian Paralympic swimmer Alexa Leary and a lived experience panel. With a range of wellbeing activities and workshops including yoga, boxing, meditation, great live music and good food, the event fostered connections and conversations, challenged stigmas, and encouraged positive mental health habits.

In February 2024, the inaugural Young Leaders Academy was launched, comprising eight Sunshine Coast locals aged from 16 to 25 years. The purpose of the year-long academy is to nurture a generation of leaders to actively contribute to the betterment of their communities and gain a deeper understanding of community and participatory leadership practices, enabling them to drive sustainable and positive change in their communities. Young people in the Academy have grown in their capacity to listen deeply to the needs of others in their communities and leadership paradigms have been challenged as they have discovered ways they can work towards community change in a participatory way.

Young Leaders participated in a Youth Week panel where they informed Council officers of the concerns they are hearing from young people in their communities. Throughout the year young people in the Academy appeared several times on ABC radio, were nominated in both the Biosphere awards and Next Gen wards, hosted Council's Reconciliation Week event, and participated in Council reference groups.

Council worked alongside other youth organisations to elevate the celebration of young people throughout Youth Week in April 2024. The calendar of events was expanded throughout the week to include a colour run, basketball competition and learn to surf experience. Youth Fest 24 was initiated alongside Stockland. This was a festival for young people on the Sunshine Coast which included a hotly contested Battle of the Bands, skate competition, art exhibition and variety of other activities and games.

## All Abilities Action Plan

Council adopted the Sunshine Coast All Abilities Action Plan 2024-2028 in November 2023.

This plan represents Council's commitment to working towards a more inclusive Sunshine Coast for people with disability and is a powerful representation of ways that we can work with people with lived experience to create meaningful directions and outcomes with our community.

The action plan was developed through extensive community engagement, with particular focus on connecting with people with disability, carers, and support workers. A reference group, made up of people with lived experience of disability was fundamental in developing the action plan. Priority areas for action include awareness and education; built environment and public spaces; employment and training; events and programs; participation and communication.

A Disability Action Week Regional Calendar of Events was created to highlight a variety of accessible and inclusive events for and by people with disabilities. Local residents and businesses were invited to celebrate Disability Action Week from 25 November to 2 December 2023 with a range of activities and events on offer across the region including All Access Day at the Beach at Mooloolaba. An Accessible Sunshine Coast Photo competition was held during Disability Action Week, to celebrate and promote places that are accessible and inclusive. Residents were encouraged to capture and share photos and their stories.

Council's Community Land Permits Team have included Access and Equity criteria in the permit application form, taking steps to create more awareness and more accessible community events.



## Housing and Homelessness Action Plan

The Sunshine Coast Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2023, endorsed by Council on 27 July 2023, brings together the various activities undertaken by Council to enable housing availability and diversity, reduce housing stress and respond to homelessness in our community.

Council continues to build and maintain strong collaborative partnerships with housing and homelessness services and community organisations to support people experiencing homelessness to access services and have more positive outcomes. Key priorities included facilitating efforts of the State Government and community housing providers to deliver social and affordable housing projects, temporary housing fee waiver, supporting community-led transitional housing projects and the provision of free access to shower facilities at nine aquatic centres for people experiencing homelessness.

**'Hearing someone's experience better helps us to understand those experiences, adapt our service and delivery and maintain empathy, kindness and compassion.'**

**– Sunshine Coast Council Library Staff Member**

**'Listening to my peers, being listened to, and connecting with service providers, policy and decision makers has given me a space to raise awareness and influence change... I am one of many women that has experienced homelessness due to domestic violence, and it is powerful to share my story and raise awareness about these complex issues and how they are linked.'**

**– Lived Experience Leader**



## Project spotlight: Lived Experience Inclusion Project

Council is committed to elevating and amplifying the voices of lived experience through the Lived Experience Inclusion Project, which aims to raise awareness and understanding of the impacts and causes of homelessness, as well as improve policy and practice responses and solutions. The project has delivered trauma informed leadership training whereby people with living and lived experience of homelessness on the Sunshine Coast have the skills, knowledge, confidence, and support to have a voice and contribute to meaningful change alongside Council and other stakeholders. The Lived Experience Inclusion Project has had wide-ranging impact across Council teams to deepen understanding of homelessness and influence policy and practice, including the actions outlined in the Sunshine Coast Council Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2023.

The project is facilitated by Council, and in partnership with Lived Experience Leaders and the Caloundra and Nambour Community Centres, has extended into the co-designed initiative, Street Up, to continue providing opportunities for people with living and lived experience to be included in decisions that impact them.

The Lived Experience Inclusion Project was a finalist in the 2024 Local Government Managers Australia Awards for Excellence in the Innovation Category which recognises the innovation and commitment that Council has to working collaboratively to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness on the Sunshine Coast.





## OUTCOME FOUR

### Fast facts

Continuation of the Kenilworth Trial and Flexilink Bus services in the Hinterland

More than **480** community engagement surveys were completed identifying priorities for the new Active Transport Plan

Local Disaster Management Plan adopted in August 2023

More than **8300** submissions have been made on the Have Your Say engagement platform across **39** projects





## My story



### Connected, resilient communities

My name is David Aubrey and I'm currently the President of the Glass House Mountains Community Hall. I feel lucky to live in the Glass House township and to be amongst all the different community groups and active community members. My wife's family is from the Sunshine Coast, and we have called the hinterland our home since 2015.

In 2016 I became involved in the Glass House Community Hall in response to an ad in the local paper calling for new members to help continue the legacy established by the founders back in 1916.

The primary focus of the Hall over the last 18 months has been to strengthen our connection to our community overall and community groups in the area.

By creating a web of interconnections between people and groups we have resilience to face floods, fire and multiple days without power. Being surrounded by forest and farmland means we can be isolated for days before support resources can come in, so we need to support each other.

One way the interconnections across the community have been strengthened was working together to deliver a collective Glass House Community Christmas Party instead of multiple community group parties.

The combined Christmas Party was a great success and showed that when groups work together, we can build a

'A community will thrive when we have enough people who are connected and feel this is where I live and belong – I'm proud to call this place home'.

connected community. Despite multiple storms and no power during the event, we all pushed on with the food, entertainment, Santa on the fire truck and carols literally by candlelight.

Building on the combined Christmas Party idea we've now started a Neighbours Day to help new residents meet their neighbours and showcase all the community groups in the area. These initiatives help build connections across different groups and show that if you are connected to at least one group in your community, we're connected to lots of other community groups and members.

I encourage everyone in any township or neighbourhood to build connections by just saying 'Hi' to somebody you often see but don't know, or to get involved with a community group. A community will thrive when we have enough people who are connected and feel 'this is where I live and belong – I'm proud to call this place home'.





## Outcome four: Connected, resilient communities

### Our community

- Residents rated their experience of a strong sense of community as 6.7 out of 10.
- Residents rated their experience of feeling safe as 6.8 out of 10.
- Residents rated their ability to make their way to and from services with relative ease as 5.3 out of 10 but rated their access to public transport as 4.4 out of 10 (both lower than the Australian averages at 6.4 and 5.6 respectively).

Source: LSC: id Consulting's Living on the Sunshine Coast Survey 2024

### Domestic and Family Violence Prevention

Council remains strong in its commitment to preventing domestic and family violence and building a deeper understanding and awareness in our community.

The global 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence campaign commenced on 25 November 2023, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and ran through to Friday 10 December 2023, Human Rights Day. The theme for this year was Love ≠ Control. In an act of solidarity and support for victims of domestic and family violence, Council joined forces with volunteers to #OrangetheWorld and planted 500 native trees along the foreshore at Alexandra Headlands at the Seeds of Hope tree planting day.

The community came together during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May 2024, with a number of activities undertaken across our region to raise awareness of domestic and family violence and the support services available. The annual Candlelight Vigil and March held in partnership with Centacare at Cotton Tree Park was incredibly powerful. The event saw a significant increase in participation where community was asked to pause, reflect and hear the voices, stories and perspectives from victims and survivors of domestic and family violence and to remember the women and children who have lost their lives because of domestic

and family violence in the past 12 months. Volunteers again stepped up to assist at our stall at the Sunshine Coast Lightning game, where 4000 purple ribbons were distributed to the crowds. Star Making Workshops were hosted at seven libraries across our region, bringing people together, and creating safe spaces for conversation to build understanding around issues of violence in our communities.

Council is continuing discussions with a group of men representing a range of community organisations exploring how men and boys can play a more active role in prevention work. Council's internal Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Supporters Network is working to build a deeper understanding and awareness of domestic and family violence and how we can respond and support colleagues in our work community. Staff participated in Domestic and Family Violence Prevention training with Active Bystander Training also made available.

### Transport

Council continued to work towards creating a healthier, more connected and sustainable Sunshine Coast with a continued focus on reducing our car use through its ThinkChange Travel Behaviour Change program and commencement on development of the new Active Transport Plan. Community engagement for the new Active Transport Plan took place between May and June 2024, inviting community members to guide the priorities for improving active transport for our region, receiving more than 480 survey submissions.

RideScore Active Schools travel program continued with students registering across 11 local state primary schools. Talara State School and Palmview state School joined the 2024 program. Council has secured the approval for five new School Transport Infrastructure Program projects that will enhance pedestrian safety around schools and provide safer active transport infrastructure for students travelling to and from school.

Work continues on the Sunshine Coast Public Transport Project, with the Detailed Business Case being finalised by the Department of Transport and Main Roads in collaboration with Council.



## Grants positively impacting our communities

### Sports Field Maintenance Funding Program

Forty-eight Sunshine Coast sporting organisations shared in more than \$895,000 to help maintain their sporting fields and keep them in tip-top shape. The Sports Field Maintenance Funding Program offers up to three years of funding to help clubs with maintenance field costs and provides expert advice on keeping sports fields to appropriate competition and training standards. This funding is a huge help to our sporting groups, many of which are primarily run by volunteers. Bli Bli United Football Club Vice President Eddie Muller said the funding program was great and the experience and advice they received through the program was phenomenal.

'As a club we manage the field before, during and after the football season, making sure we get the best result we can to ensure its longevity. We're a non-for-profit organisation and with the support from Sunshine Coast Council through this funding program, we're able to reduce our members' fees and get kids out on the fields playing. Thank you to Sunshine Coast Council and the Community Sports Team for their round-the-clock support for our field maintenance.' – Eddie Muller



## Community Grants Program 2023-24

Council's Community Grants Program continues to enable and support community groups and individuals to deliver sustainable community-led initiatives in response to community needs and opportunities.

**Total Grants related to Community Strategy outcomes 1071 grants awarded, Over \$5.28m allocated**



### Partnership grants

\$1.96 million for 197 groups

**\$991,495**

for 144 partner community groups

**\$895,657**

for 48 sports fields groups

**\$70,00**

for 5 recreation trail groups

### Community grants

\$1.98 million for 710 projects

**\$1,359,630**

for 218 major grants

**\$133,749**

for 80 minor grants

**\$32,192**

for 13 emergency grants

**\$144,057**

for 51 festive and commemorative events grants

**\$55,550**

for 171 individual development grants

**\$254,657**

for Councillor Discretionary Funding over 177 grants

### Arts and Heritage

\$418,474 for 54 projects

**\$59,858**

for 13 heritage groups

**\$183,616**

for 31 regional arts development projects

**\$175,000**

to support 10 creative industry investment programs

### Environment Levy

\$915,593 for 110 grants awarded

**\$290,579**

or 87 landholder grants

**\$15,014**

for 4 Environment projects

**\$610,000**

for 19 partnerships with environment groups

## Project spotlight: We Recover Better Together

The 'We Recover Better Together' project was delivered by Council as part of the Community Recovery Resilience Officer Program, funded by State and Federal government, to strengthen the community's recovery following the 2022 floods.

These floods severely impacted parts of the Sunshine Coast, in particular Glasshouse Country including the towns of Eudlo, Mooloolah Valley, Glasshouse Mountains, Beerwah and Landsborough.

This project focused on the community being at the centre of disaster recovery and resilience and the importance of building social connections and neighbourhood/street level connections to call on in times of need.

Council contracted and worked alongside Community Praxis Co-op to co-design and facilitate 'Building Connected Communities' and 'Community Connector' courses. These six courses delivered throughout the Glasshouse Country, enabled community members to explore the strengths and barriers are to building effective and well-connected communities. A core value of this project was that community members know their communities better than we do, so listening and following the lead of active citizens meant the collaboration between community and Council took place effortlessly.

As a result of the course, five Eudlo community members came together to form the group Eudlo Connecting. The group decided the best way to hold a conversation around recovery and for people to feel connected and belong in their community was to host a community dinner. The dinner was a collaborative effort between community members from the community post office, community hall and the general store, all members of Eudlo Connecting. Over 60 community members attended the event with the hosts sharing their thoughts and insights about the importance of being connected to neighbours and the importance of knowing who in your street may need extra help in a disaster.

Twelve community members from Eudlo completed the Community Connector course and as a result were inspired to do more in their community. Since participating in the course, several community members of Eudlo have created a 'Cooking Group' which meets at the hall to cook food for vulnerable people in the community; a 'Men's Working Bee' which meets up at each other's properties to clear, weed and also support others to maintain their properties; and a 'Dad's Support Group' who meet up fortnightly at the Eudlo General Store

providing a safe space to chat and support those going through family struggles or mental health challenges.

In Beerwah, the Flourish Connection (disability service), Glass House Community Hall Committee, Glass House Neighbourhood Centre, the local daycare and local nursery are now working together to create a community garden for people in the community. As a result of one of the courses, the "Glass House Collective" comprising Glass House Mountains Neighbourhood Centre, the Glasshouse Hall, a few churches and small community groups came together to hold a combined Christmas Party. Several Neighbour Day events have also been organised throughout the year which have assisted residents to meet their neighbours and have showcased community groups within the area.

The project also identified formal and informal systems within the community which could be strengthened and explored, identifying how existing systems could support disaster recovery. The project resulted in:

- A 'Recovery Sub-group' being formed and incorporated into the existing 'Glasshouse Country Disaster Management Network'
- Provision of a meals system, and the development of a guide, directory and group of community members to coordinate the provision of meals for people who may not be able to return home due to the impacts of a disaster
- A single point of reference through the Glasshouse Country News Facebook Page to provide clearer communication and messaging during times of disaster, and ways community organisations can connect and work together during disasters and community recovery.

**'Best thing the state government and Council have ever done for the hall/ community. Eudlo is buzzing more than before.'** – Eudlo resident

**'I feel like I am falling in love with my community again.'** – Eudlo resident



# OUTCOME FIVE

## Fast facts

Bankfoot House welcomed **6179** visitors and Landsborough Museum hosted **5915** visitors

**20** Heritage education programs delivered

**94%** of Horizon respondents rated the experience as good to excellent

Sunshine Coast National Art Prize had **452** entries, representing every Australian state and territory



## My story



### Creative, innovative communities

Hi, my name is Melissa Stannard. I have lived on the Sunshine Coast for around 12 years. I love living on Kabi Kabi Country. I love the coastal liminal spaces through the Wallum and heathlands, estuaries and into sclerophyll and rural forests through to the mountainous zones and rainforests. The Sunshine Coast is such an artistic and entrepreneurial community with a lot of support growing for artists/musicians and creatives.

I know of the Artist in Residency program and its success from following the journeys of other artists and seeing their personal and professional growth from these experiences. I have been a mentor, artist in the shared studio and an artist in residence, and this experience has supported my practice and professional development. I think it's integral to give back and share our collective skills with others, and the residency programs allow for this in a culturally and emotionally safe way.

Being a part of the residency programs has helped me become more proficient in public engagement and public speaking and I've had an enormous amount of growth through my artistic practice. I have benefited from the space and freedom to expand on my current themes as well as explore new ideas. There is also the bonus of having a collective community of artists at 2ND Space to interact with and gain support from.

'When opportunities to engage in artistic practice are shared, we all grow and succeed.'

When opportunities to engage in artistic practice are shared, we all grow and succeed. We have such a wealth of creative passion and power on the Sunshine Coast, so being able to connect, share and learn from each other is beneficial for all and grows a stronger more cohesive community in the long term.

I would love there to be more and permanent creative hubs like this on the Sunshine Coast, it's a tribute to all who have been involved. I hope to see more support towards a thriving and highly visible arts and cultural scene on the Sunshine Coast.





## Outcome five: Creative, innovative communities

### Celebrating our heritage

The annual Historian in Residence program, now in its third year, delivered new research into Sunshine Coast Cemeteries and the lives of the people who lived at Bankfoot House. Our heritage facilities remain popular, with over 19 per cent increase in visitation (12,094 for the year), with heritage talks, holiday programs and educational programs attracting increasing participation. Ongoing support for regional heritage groups and museums is provided through expert advice, training workshops, marketing campaigns and grants. This year, Council staff met with every heritage group and museum in the region to provide information and advice on Council's Community Partnership Funding Program.

### Horizon Festival

Horizon Festival 2023 did not disappoint, with the 10-day multi-arts festival held across 27 locations from 25 August to 3 September, bringing art, music, comedy and more across the Sunshine Coast. The festival delivered 168 events from 490 local and visiting artists, attracting more than 25,000 attendees. Highlights of the festival included the signature Dawn Awakening event at Coolum's Stumers Beach, which attracted a record audience of 2000 people, alongside 22 sold-out performances including Circus Wonderland, Dirty Laundry and Homegrown. This year the Horizon Festival partnered with UniSC to deliver internships for two students who worked closely with Council to deliver a number of programs.



### Sunshine Coast Arts

The Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan 2023-2038 was endorsed in August 2023, following a review and update of the previous plan to ensure that the goals, strategies, and actions continue to grow and strengthen the local arts sector. It supports Council's vision of being a region that is healthy, smart, and creative, acknowledging that creativity can broaden our perspective, help us to explore ideas, find solutions and build resilience.

The updated plan recognises the unique opportunities we currently have and provides a framework of goals and commitments that will direct our ongoing progress. The plan has five distinct goals including empowering First Nations, building capacity, strengthening engagement, boosting infrastructure, and cultivating identity.

In 2023-24 more than 740 employment opportunities for local artists and art workers were provided through projects that were supported by the plan (167 of these were First Nations artists). These projects also engaged 53 volunteers.

Notable Creative Arts Plan outcomes for artists include:

- ProjectLab, which provided a 3-month mentorship program for 10 local artists
- Project 24 that supported 12 artists-in-residence space at 2ND SPACE in Nambour
- 'Spaces for Creatives' providing subsidised studio space to four local creative enterprises
- 364 local artists featured, and 161 First Nations artists involved or profiled in Caloundra Regional Gallery programming
- 287 local artists engaged by Horizon Festival programming in 2023.

## Project spotlight: Blak Creatives

Council has partnered with Munimba-ja to deliver Blak Creatives, a First Nations networking space and series of Indigenous-led professional development opportunities embedding cultural safety. The partnership is funded through our three-year Creative Industries Investment Program through the Regional Arts Development Fund and Council's Arts and Heritage Levy.

In 2022, Blak Creatives was born out of community voice and provides a culturally safe feedback loop through ongoing relationship building, ensuring it remains responsive to First Nations needs. A team of cultural workers formed to develop and deliver a program designed by Munimba-ja, embedding cultural safety to consult with community. The outcome of this project was the creation and initiation of Blak Creatives which hosts ongoing networking events, an online forum, master classes, professional development opportunities, and safe spaces for First Nations artists to discuss and determine their needs and priorities for their arts and cultural sectors and how they would like to achieve them.

Blak Creative is designed to build profile, recognition, and capacity of First Nations artists - both Traditional Custodians and First Nations community. The project focuses on delivering work through cultural protocol, informal mentorship, contemporary/urban Indigenous practice, industry development, presentation, and pathways for emerging and mid-career artists. Munimba-ja Art Centre on Jinibara land is more than an art gallery for Blak Creatives, it is a welcome space, where First Nations people can create art on their own terms, centring country in all they do. Blak Creatives also hosts BLAK camp – a mob only artist camp/residency on Kabi Kabi Country, where First Nations artists are selected to work with senior practitioners, mentors and industry leaders. Together they explore creative practice and opportunities within the arts industry through multi-disciplinary pathways. The camp also provides participating artists opportunities for further support through networks, business development and creative partnerships.

'It's important for me to have a safe blak space like Munimba-ja to work from.'

– First Nations Artist

'Munimba-ja feels like a true welcome place.'

– Local participant





# Focus for the year ahead

In 2024-25, we will continue to work towards achieving the outcomes outlined in the refreshed Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041 and the new Community Strategy Action Plan 2024-2029.

- In collaboration with Games Delivery Partners, progress the Elevate 2042 Implementation Plan and planning, design and delivery of the region's games venues.
- Implement health and wellbeing initiatives that support healthy and active lifestyles through the Healthy Sunshine Coast program.
- Work to strengthen the substantial and ongoing participation of and contribution by volunteers to community life.
- Continue to plan for an invest in our network of sports, art and community infrastructure and its activation to meet diverse community needs.
- Finalise the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan and implement actions.
- Continue to implement the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.
- Work collaboratively to advocate for, raise awareness and implement initiatives on domestic and family violence prevention.
- Work collaboratively to deliver initiatives and outcomes that build a welcoming and inclusive community and progress the Welcoming Cities Standard.
- Continue to ensure the voices and needs of our community are heard using best practice engagement approaches to inform Council action and decision-making.

- Commence the development of a Youth Action Plan and deliver youth-led and youth focussed initiatives that foster and support participatory youth leadership.
- Continue collaboration and partnerships that support local community-led resilience and recovery activities.
- Deliver the Horizon Festival, engaging the community in arts, heritage, and culture while building capacity of the local arts sector.
- Deliver the new Community Strategy Action Plan 2024-2029, once adopted, to further build on our shared goal of a strong community.
- Implement and deliver actions from the All Abilities Action Plan to improve accessibility and inclusion for people of all abilities.
- Deliver the Community Grants Program, enabling community organisations to respond to community needs and opportunities aligned with strategic priorities.
- Implement the Sunshine Coast Creative Arts Plan.
- Develop the new Active Transport Plan and continue to implement the ThinkChange program.
- Actively include and engage the community in the legacy planning for the Sunshine Coast as a key delivery partner in the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.









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