

***Shire of Wentworth***

***Social Plan 2004/2009***

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This document and other supporting information about the Wentworth Shire is available on the Wentworth Shire Council website  
**[www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au)**



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## ***Acknowledgements***

The Wentworth Shire Council would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the Social Plan

These include:

- The Mayor, Councillors and Staff of the Wentworth Shire Council
- The Wentworth Shire Community Action Teams for working with local priorities and Community Action Plans
- The Sense of Place Project (2003) for data, surveys, community consultation and establishment of Action Teams and local community Action Plans
- Members of the community who contributed to the Sense of Place consultation and enabled that data to be captured
- Service providers who have provided valuable information on community needs and service levels to the Sense of Place consultations
- Greater Western Area Health Service, Dareton.

## **Abbreviations**

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACE	Adult Community Education
AJAC	Aboriginal Justice Advisory Commission
Att. Gen Dept	Attorney General's Dept
B. Biosphere	Barkindji Biosphere
CAHS	Coomealla Aboriginal Health Service
CATs	Community Action Teams
CWP	Community Working Party
DADHC	Dept of Aging, Disability and Home Care
DOCs	Dept of Community Services
Ed Dept	Education Department
GWAHS	Greater Western Area Health Service
HACC	Home and Community Care
MFC	Mallee Family Care
SACC	Sunraysia Area Consultative Committee
TAFE	Coomealla TAFE (Technical & Further Education)
WSC	Wentworth Shire Council
YAP	Youth Action Project



## **Executive Summary**

The Shire of Wentworth Social Plan 2004 - 2009 describes the demographic makeup of the shire, summarises the key social issues impacting on the community and puts forward strategies to assist both Council and agencies respond in a socially equitable manner. The Social Plan is designed to comply with the NSW Department for Local Government Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines (2002).

The information and strategies contained in the Social Plan have been drawn from two primary sources. Demographic figures are based on data from the 2001 ABS Census for Population and Housing. Community issues and priorities have been drawn from the community consultation and planning undertaken in 2003 as part of the Wentworth Shire Sense of Place project.

The Social Plan addresses needs and strategies for the population as a whole (Section 4, Generic Community Needs and Strategies) and also the specific target groups identified by the Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines (Section 5, Target Groups and Strategies).

### **Shire Profile in Brief**

- The total population for the Shire of Wentworth at the 2001 Census was 6,984.
- The population had declined 6.1% during the decade 1991-2001.
- 13.0% of the population at 2001 was aged 65 years and over.
- For the town of Wentworth, 19.7% of the population were over the age of 65.
- The proportion of the population 65 years and over increased by 15.9% during the decade 1991-2001.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Shire was 545 people; this was 7.8% of the total Shire population.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population had increased 13.9% over the decade 1991-2001.
- 28.5% of the Non-Indigenous population within the Shire was in the 0-24 year age bracket in 2001.
- 55.4% of the Indigenous population within the Shire was in the 0-24 year age bracket in 2001.
- The population in the labour force was 3048 in 2001, of this group, 2023 were employed full time and 903 part time.
- 384 persons or 5.5% of the population in the Shire were on a Disability Support Pension. (Source: ABS, National Regional Profile ABS Cat. No. 1379.0.55.001, (FaCS Data, June 2002)
- a majority of Non-Family Households (65.3%) earned less than \$500 per week in 2001.
- 49.4% of Family Households were in the \$600 to \$1999 bracket.
- The average annual taxable income for individuals in the Wentworth Shire in 2000-2001 was \$29,311
- The average wage and salary income for the Wentworth Shire in 2000-2001 was \$25,828.

(Source: 2001 ABS Census of Population and Housing unless stated otherwise.)

## **Strategies**

### ***Generic Social Issues***

#### Strategy 1

Improve community safety and security.

#### Strategy 2

Increase access to education and employment for disadvantaged groups.

#### Strategy 3

Support a range of Community Health programs and services which promote community well-being.

#### Strategy 4

Investigate a community facility/ neighbourhood centre for programs, learning, events and community self-help activities in Dareton.

#### Strategy 5

Improve access to public transport.

#### Strategy 6

Improve access to affordable housing.

### ***Target Group Strategies***

#### Strategy 7

Promote increased access to accommodation and aged care services for Older People.

#### Strategy 8

Ensure children and families have the widest access possible to appropriate support including early intervention programs and programs for young families.

#### Strategy 9

Actively promote the implementation of the Youth Strategy and foster a positive climate for youth development.

#### Strategy 10

Encourage and support the establishment and /or continuation of programs for women.

#### Strategy 11

Increase support services and improved access for people with a disability.

#### Strategy 12

Promote the development of a network of support services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

#### Strategy 13

Develop a comprehensive social strategy to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in social, environmental, economic and cultural areas.

#### Strategy 14

Seek greater recognition of Wentworth's Rural and Remote Area location.

## **1 The Social Plan**

A social or community plan describes the make-up of the local community, summarises the key issues impacting on the community and develops strategies for local government and other government and non-government agencies to meet community needs. The aims and requirements for the Social Plan outlined in this section are based on the NSW Department for Local Government Social and Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines, December 2002.

### **1.1 Legislative Requirements**

The Local Government (General) Regulation 1998 requires all councils in NSW to:

- develop a social plan at least once every five years
- include a statement about proposed access and equity activities for the identified target groups in their management plan
- report on these identified activities in their annual reports.

It is mandatory that the social plan identifies and addresses the needs of specific target groups including:

- Children
- Young people
- Women
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The process undertaken to develop the plan must be participatory. It should provide the opportunity for all stakeholders, residents, business, community groups and government and non-government agencies to participate in the development of the plan and contribute their views.

Finally, the plan should include recommendations that can be taken on board by Council and other stakeholders with the aim of meeting the needs of the general community.

### **1.2 Implementation of the Social Plan**

The implementation of the social plan has three basic steps:

1. To incorporate access and equity activities into the management plan
2. To work with relevant agencies to implement the identified activities
3. To monitor and evaluate the activities to ensure the identified outcomes are being achieved. .

While the Council is responsible for the production of the social plan, the plan is a document that is owned by all stakeholders who are involved in the process of improving the social well-being of residents of the Shire.

### **1.3 Social Planning Goals**

#### **Aims and Objectives**

The intent of the social plan is to improve community well-being through a process of assisting councils to understand and to respond to the needs and concerns of their local communities and to do this with the cooperation and participation of the community.

The objectives are:

- To establish a series of strategies to be implemented over a four year period in response to identified community needs
- To ensure the needs of the residents of the Shire of Wentworth, in terms of the provision of facilities and services, are adequately met
- To take into account the capacity of existing facilities and services provided in the local government area in assessing these needs
- To consult with the community in determining perceived needs

The expected outcomes from the social plan will:

- develop a positive role for council as a leader in addressing social issues
- enhance community well-being through improved services and facilities
- produce economic benefits by encouraging a planned and orderly approach to delivering services
- improve risk management and compliance with relevant legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act
- promote partnerships between various agencies and the community
- provide environmental benefits such as community input into environmental planning processes and the development of local environmental projects.

Social planning is based on social justice principles including:

- Equity – fairness in resource distribution
- Access – fairer access for everyone to the resources and services essential to meet basic needs and improve their quality of life that affect their daily lives
- Rights – recognition and promotion of civil rights
- Participation – better opportunities for everyone to participate in decisions.

### **1.4 The Process for Developing the Plan**

The 2004/2005 – 2009/2010 Social Plan has been primarily based on the Wentworth Shire Sense of Place project undertaken in 2003. This process included wide spread community consultation and action planning and issues identified by key service agencies in the Shire.

Between February & July 2003 the Sense of Place project undertook consultation and data collection that included:

- a Shire side Community Survey
- a Business Survey
- interviews & group consultations
- asset mapping & servicing mapping
- youth workshops & planning day
- 8 "community" or public meetings
- 41 regular "Action Team" meetings and 3 Saturday Planning workshops

For a full outline of the methodology and summary of this project, please see the Wentworth Shire Sense of Place Report Volume I, Community Profile and Volume III, Community Action Plans (French, 2003).

Strategy development for the Social Plan has included references to specific areas and groups and local community plans including the:

- Community Action Plans for (a) Wentworth, (b) Buronga/Gol Gol, (c) Pooncarie and (d) Dareton/Coomealla
- Wentworth Shire Crime Prevention Plan (draft)
- Wentworth Shire Youth Development Strategy (draft)
- Dareton Community Working Party Community Plan
- Proposed Wentworth Shire Cultural Plan.
- The Wentworth Shire Management Plan

ABS Data was collected from various sources including:

- ABS 2001 Basic Community Profile
- ABS 2001, Basic Community Profile, Expanded Series
- ABS 2001, Community Profile Series, Time Series Profile Catalogue No 2003.0
- ABS 2001 Cat. No. 32180
- ABS 2001 National Regional Profile Catalogue No 1379.0.55.001

## **1.5 How to Read the Plan**

The Wentworth Shire Social Community Plan is divided into five main Sections.

1. The Social Plan and process
2. Characteristics of the Wentworth Shire
3. Demographic Data
4. Generic Needs Plan
5. Target Group Plan

Sections 1 to 3 introduce the Social Planning process, the characteristics of the local area, and statistical tables that provide an overview of the socio-economic character of the Shire.

Section 4, the Generic Needs Plan, identifies the generic areas of need and strategies for future development, refers to current community planning documents, and identifies agencies who are essential to the implementation of strategies. Section 5, the Target Group Plan, follows a similar format, identifying any relevant plans, a brief review of the needs of each group, and strategies and plans.

Recommendations have identified the need for further research and development of plans for specific areas if sufficient information has not been available.

## 2 Characteristics of the Shire of Wentworth

### 2.1 The Shire

The Wentworth Shire is sited in a semi-arid area located within the Lower Murray Darling Basin region of NSW. It comprises an area of 26170 sq. kilometres and in 2001 supported a population of 6,982.

The landscape is arid and dry but Australia's two longest rivers, the Murray and Darling, maintain a dominant influence in the environment, the economy, social life and culture of the Shire. The extensive dryland farming and grazing areas account for 96% of the landuse within the Shire however the economic base is now being dominated by the irrigated horticultural industry and wineries. The outer areas of the Shire are sparsely populated with special problems and difficulties concerning road maintenance and access to education facilities.

The area contains World Heritage environmental sites and many archaeological sites of international significance. Management of the riverine environment, water quality and quantity, and salinity are major issues for the region. For environmental management and planning purposes the Shire is included in the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Strategy and the Lower Murray Darling Rangeland Management Action Plan, and the Shire forms part of the NSW Southern Mallee Regional Planning area.

### 2.2 Towns and Villages

The key urban areas in the Shire are the towns of Wentworth, Dareton, and Buronga /Gol Gol urban environs.

- Wentworth, with a population of 1427 is the traditional centre for administration in the Shire.
- Dareton, the centre of the Coomealla Irrigation district, has a population of 620 people. A number of Government services are located at Dareton including the Coomealla High School and Riverina TAFE Campus. The Aboriginal settlement of Namatjira is situated close to Dareton.
- The communities of Buronga and Gol Gol are the nucleus for a rapidly expanding urban cluster and industrial area that extends from Buronga along the Murray River frontage through River Bend estate towards Trentham Cliffs. While the population is difficult to assess accurately because of the population flows across Census boundaries, estimates place the Buronga Gol Gol cluster in the vicinity of 2000 (ABS 2001).

Villages include Pooncarie, Palinyewah and Pomona. In addition, the irrigation areas of Ellerslie, Pomona, Curlwaa, Coomealla, Mourquong, Boeill Creek and Trentham Cliffs are intensely settled rural areas within the Shire.

For more details on these communities, see Sense of Place Report Volume I, Community Profile and Volume III, Action Plans, Facilities and Services (French 2003).

From the perspective of the **Category of Remoteness**, the ABS (National Regional Profile, Cat. No. 137.0.55.001) state that within the Wentworth SLA:

- 91.7% of the population reside in an area classified as "outer regional" and
- 8.3% reside in an area classified as being "remote".

"Rural and Remote" is one of the six major indicators of social disadvantage as used by the Commonwealth Government.

### 3 Demographic Data

#### 3.1 Population Change and Age Profile

The 2001 ABS Census of Population and Housing identified the population for the Shire of Wentworth at 6,984. This represents an overall decline of 6.1% during the decade 1991-2001.

**Table 1: Selected Population Characteristics, 1991/01 Wentworth Shire**

	1991	1996	2001	Trend %	% of Total Population
Total Population	7,432	7,245	6,984	-6.1%	
Population aged 15 years and over	5,699	5,534	5,483	-3.8%	
Population aged 65 years and over	792	895	918	+15.9%	13.0%
Indigenous Population	476	819	542	+13.9%	7.8%

ABS, Census 2001, Time Series Profile, ABS Catalogue No 2003.0

Table 1, above, demonstrates there was a steady decline in the total population however there were two significant variations. The population aged "65 years and over" increased by 15.9% or 126 persons.

The Indigenous population rose sharply in 1996 but over the decade 1991-2001 showed a steady increase of 13.9% or 66 persons, which is consistent with Indigenous communities across rural Australia. Interestingly, around the 1996 census there was a significant increase to a total of 819 persons and a subsequent decrease of 34% or 277 persons within the Indigenous community.

**Table 2: Age Profile and Population Change, 1991-2001, Wentworth Shire**

Age	1991 Census Persons	1996 Census Persons	2001 Census Persons	Change 1991/2001 Persons	Change 1991/2001 % for Group
0-4	569	562	446	-123	-21.6
5-9	591	576	513	-78	-13.2
10-14	572	573	542	-30	-5.2
15-19	595	489	472	-123	-20.0
20-24	479	396	319	-160	-33.4
25-29	521	428	414	-107	-20.5
30-34	529	503	425	-104	-19.7
35-39	575	543	486	-89	-15.8
40-44	544	527	525	-19	-3.5
45-49	469	553	507	+38	+8.1
50-54	444	471	564	+120	+27.0
55-59	367	383	463	+96	+26.2
60-64	379	341	381	+3	+0.5
65-69	304	312	290	-14	-4.6
70-74	228	237	259	+31	+13.6
75-79	132	175	183	+51	+38.6
80+	129	168	183	+54	+29.5
O/seas visitors	8	8	12	+4	+50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,435**</b>	<b>7,245</b>	<b>6,984</b>	<b>-451</b>	<b>-6.1</b>

ABS, Census 2001, Community Profile. Time Series Profile, ABS Catalogue No 2003.0

\*\*Note slight differences between Usually Resident Data (Table 1) and Enumerated data (Table 2).

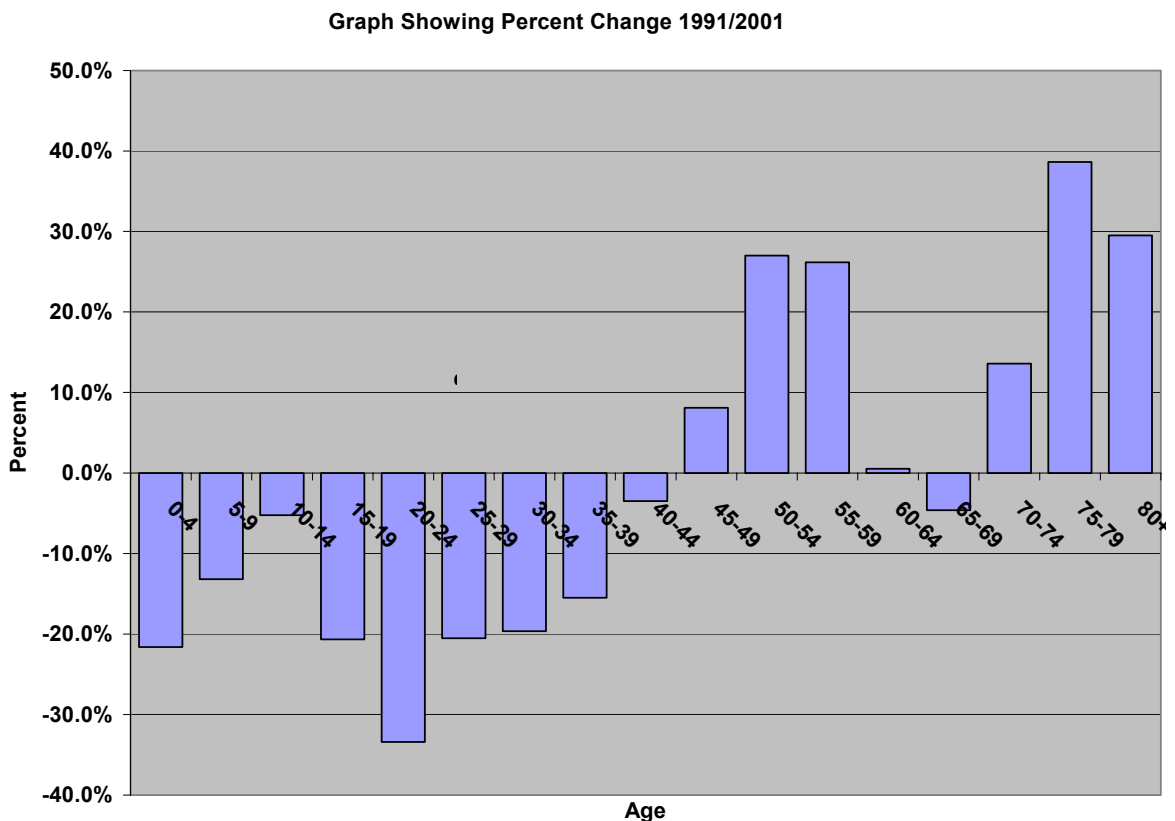
Table 2 outlines the age profile of the Shire for the years 1991, 1996 and 2001 in more detail and shows the difference in five-year groupings and the percentage change over the decade.

- The highest decrease was for 15 to 29 year group, this represents the outward flow of young persons who generally leave to seek an education and employment in the metropolitan centres.
- The outward exodus of population begins to reverse as the over 35/40s return to bring up their children in the rural areas.
- There is a very strong increase in the numbers over 70 years of age, a very significant 38.6% increase (51 persons) in the 75-79 age bracket.

Analysis of the 0-24 year old group shows that in 2001 there were:

- 28.5% of the non-Indigenous population in the 0-24 year age bracket.
- 55.4% of the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander population in the 0-24 year age bracket.

Figure 1 below, illustrates the degree of change in percentages for each 5 year age cohort during the decade 1991-2001 as identified in Table 2. The largest population declines were in the 20-24 year old cohort and the 0-4 cohort. The largest increases in population were in the 75-79 and over 80 year cohorts.



**Figure 1. Graph representing population trends over the decade 1991-2001, Wentworth Shire.**

From a geographical perspective there are considerable variations within the Shire. Tables 3 and 4 show the town on Wentworth has 19.7% of its population over the age of 65 compared to 13.0% for the Shire as a whole. Higher numbers of young people live in the Buronga/ Gol Gol area.

The general decline in the population was in line with the declining population for the rural sectors of the neighbouring Local Government of Mildura Rural City and rural Australia in general. The age profile within the Shire was reasonably similar to non-Metropolitan New South Wales and rural Victoria as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Comparative Population Rates by Age Groups, Wentworth Town, Wentworth Shire, the Balance of Victoria (rural) and Non-Metropolitan NSW.**

Age	Wentworth Township	Wentworth Shire	Balance of Victoria	Non-Metropolitan NSW **
0 – 9	12.26	13.73	14.29	14.13
10 - 14	7.78	7.76	7.87	7.86
15-19	6.24	6.76	7.20	7.92
20-24	2.94	4.57	5.33	4.96
25-39	15.70	18.98	19.35	18.27
40 – 54	22.21	22.86	21.60	21.23
55-64	12.97	12.09	9.73	10.66
65+	19.69	13.08	14.23	15.48
O/s yrs Diff.	0.21	0.17	0.40	0.49
TOTALS	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: ABS Census 2001. Community Profile, Expanded Series. (Enumerated Data) (Sense of Place Report, French 2003).  
 \*\* Non-Metropolitan New South Wales is based on State figures with the exception of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

**Table 4: Distribution of Key Population Age Groups across selected Local Areas, Wentworth Shire**

Age	Wentworth	Dareton/ Namatjira	Curlwaa	Buronga/ Gol Gol/ Trentham Cliffs	Pooncarie & East	Rural /Other	Total
0-9	175	127	63	317	40	237	959
10-24	242	147	89	481	12	362	1333
25-39	224	145	88	469	40	359	1325
40-54	317	118	99	546	45	471	1596
55-64	185	101	37	261	28	232	844
64-69	65	34	15	86	21	69	290
65-80+	281	125	39	256	52	160	913
O/s yrs Diff.	3	0	0	5	0	4	12
TOTALS	1427	763	415	2337	217	1825	6984

Source: ABS Census 2001, Community Profile, Expanded Series (Enumerated Data), (Sense of Place Report, French 2003).

Table 4 above demonstrates the younger age of the population in the eastern end of the Shire.

### 3.2 Country of Birth

The ethnic composition of the Shire has remained fairly constant. A total of 6049, or 86.6% of residents were born in Australia, higher than the NSW average of 69.9%.

Of the remainder, 487 did not state where they were born. Of those born overseas, 928 were born in a European country, 6 were from Fiji, 57 were from New Zealand, 15 from Asian countries, and another 57 elsewhere.

**Table 5: Composition of Population by Country of Birth, Wentworth Shire**

Country of Birth	Persons 2001	Country of Birth	Persons 2001
Australia	6049	New Zealand	57
Croatia	8	Philippines	6
Fiji	6	South Africa	3
Germany	18	United Kingdom(c)	140
Greece	10	Viet Nam	3
India	6	Yugoslavia, Federal Republic of	6
Ireland	3	Born elsewhere overseas(d)	57
Italy	89	Not stated	487
Netherlands	16	Overseas visitors	12
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6976</b>

Source: ABS 2001 Census on Population and Housing

(c) Includes 'England', 'Scotland', 'Wales', 'Northern Ireland', 'Channel Islands', 'Isle of Man' and 'United Kingdom, nfd'

(d) Includes 'inadequately described', 'at sea' and 'not elsewhere classified'.

### 3.3 Language Spoken at Home

The majority of residents, 96%, were English speaking compared with 75% the State of NSW where English is the second language. In 2001, 270 persons spoke a language other than English at home; this had decreased since 1991, when the total was 367 persons.

There was little change in the non-English languages spoken in the last ten years. Italian, Greek, Croatian and Australian Indigenous languages are still the most common. Other languages included French, Persian, Polish, Spanish, Tagalog (Filipino), Turkish, and Vietnamese.

**Table 6: Languages other than English, Wentworth Shire**

Language	Persons 1991	Persons 2001
Australian Indigenous languages	10	11
Croatian	17	13
German	8	11
Greek	20	14
Italian	233	132

Source: ABS, Census 2001, Community Profile Series, Time Series Profile, ABS Catalogue No 2003.0

### 3.4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) population of the Wentworth Shire totaled 545 people in the 2001 census. This was 7.8% of the total Shire population. The comparative figure for the State of NSW is 1.9%.

A breakdown of ABS data by age shows that there were 302 people under the age of 24 and that:

- 24.2% of the ATSI population was in the 0-9 years bracket and
- 31.2% of the ATSI population was in the 10-24 age bracket.

**Table 7: Indigenous Population Profile, Wentworth Shire**

Age	1991 Persons	1996 Persons	2001 Persons
0-4 years	73	129	49
5-9 years	63	127	83
10-14 years	47	102	88
15-19 years	57	61	54
20-24 years	37	65	28
<b>Subtotal 0-24</b>	<b>277</b>		<b>302</b>
25-29 years	52	68	48
30-34 years	31	67	42
35-39 years	21	56	46
40-44 years	29	31	22
45-49 years	22	32	27
50-54 years	16	31	23
55-59 years	12	16	15
60-64 years	7	18	10
65 years and over	6	16	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>545</b>

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile, Time Series Profile Cat. No. 2003.0

The time-series data demonstrate the mobility of the Indigenous people with very significant population variations over the decade.

It should be noted that there was an increase in the Indigenous population of Mildura City of about 300 between the 1996 and 2001 Census 2001 (French & Boyce, 2004). A "cross border" drift of people may account for some of the variation in numbers.

The growth rate in the Indigenous community was a 13.9% increase over the decade 1991-2001 even though 2001 ABS shows a decline in the local indigenous population figures since 1996. General trends indicate an increasing Aboriginal population in the western sector of the State. The National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 1999, p. 17 states that

**"between 1981 and 1996 the indigenous population of the eight SLAs in the Western Division [of NSW] increased by 67%, in acute contrast to then decline of 16% in the non-indigenous population (in absolute terms, an increase of 2027 compared with a decline of 8 218)".**

There will be an increasing demand for services and facilities for youth and early childhood groups across all service sectors such as health, education, housing and recreation.

"The social and economic benefits are not well distributed however, and a significant proportion of the population falls into the lower socio-economic bracket, have poor skills and poor employment prospects while particular geographic areas within Wentworth Shire are poorly serviced. While the gross value of production for the Wentworth Region exceeded \$1.7 billion in 1996/97, an extensive group within the Wentworth community endure poor social and economic conditions." (NIEIR 1999). For further information, see the Sense of Place Report (French 2003)

The comments from the NIEIR report emphasised the fact that the Indigenous population is expanding, and is younger than the general population. As a consequence, the social characteristics and social needs of this group differ to that of the general population.

**Table 8: Indigenous Labour Force Data, Wentworth Shire**

Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over (excluding overseas visitors)	1991	1996	2001
<b>Employed(a):</b>			
Full-time (b)	19	64	51
Part-time	35	25	47
Not stated(c)	0	18	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>109</b>
Unemployed	50	55	15
<b>Total labour force</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>124</b>
Not in the labour force	154	235	183
Not stated (d)	34	64	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>324</b>

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile, Time Series Profile Cat. No. 2003.0

- (a) For Census purposes, persons participating in the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) are classified as 'employed'.  
 (b) In 2001 and 1996, 'full-time' is defined as having worked 35 hours or more in all jobs during the week prior to Census night. 1991, 'full-time' is defined as having worked 35 hours or more in the main job during the week prior to Census night.  
 (c) Includes employed persons who did not state their hours worked.

Indigenous people are more likely to be unemployed than non-Indigenous, it is estimated about 45% of the unemployed people in Wentworth Shire were Indigenous in 2001.

The table below demonstrates the distribution of the Indigenous population across the Shire. The majority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population resided in three areas, Dareton and Namatjira, Wentworth town, and the Buronga/Gol Gol area.

**Table 9: Indigenous Population, Distribution across Wentworth Shire**

Groupings by Townships & Collector Districts	Indigenous Population 2001
Wentworth	119
Dareton	147
Namatjira	111
Buronga, Gol Gol, Gol Gol & North, Trentham Cliffs & South	101
Rural Areas (outer – mostly dryland)	38
Rural Areas (inner - mostly irrigation)	7
<b>Total for Shire</b>	<b>539</b>

Source: ABS 2001, Basic Community Profile, Expanded Series, (Enumerated Data)

### 3.5 People with Disabilities

In the absence of relevant 2001 Census data on People with a Disability, statistics from the Department of Family and Community Services, June 2002 have been used. These indicated that the number of persons in the Shire on a Disability Support Pension were 384, or 5.5% of the population. This can only be considered indicative as not all people with a disability are on a support pension. (Source: ABS National Regional Profile ABS cat. no. 1379.0.55.001)

According to the NSW Disability Service Act of 1993, "a person is regarded as having a disability if their impairment (or combination of impairments) is likely to be permanent, resulting in significantly reduced capacity in one or more major life activities, and requiring the need for support." Impairment is any disturbance in the normal structure and functions of the body, including mental function.

### 3.6 Marital Status

Marital Status for persons aged over 15 years, Wentworth Shire included the following statistics:

**Table 10: Marital status, Persons over 15 Years, 2001 Census, Wentworth Shire**

Category over 15	Persons 2001	% of Population Over 15 Yrs	% NSW
Married	3075	56.1	51.5
Separated	219	4.0	3.3
Divorced	358	6.5	7.2
Widowed	333	6.1	6.4
Never Married	1497	278.3	31.6
Persons over 15 yrs	5482	100%	100.0%

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile Series, Time Series ABS Cat. No 2003.0

### 3.7 Family Structure

Table 7 below examines the type of household and family structure, see the definition below. Figures include multi-family, group and lone person households (excluding overseas visitors).

**Table 11: Household Type And Family Type, Wentworth Shire**

Households	Persons		
	1991	1996	2001
One family household:			
Couple family with children	4,146	3,753	3,178
Couple family without children	1,233	1,381	1,457
One parent family	442	529	622
Other family	47	51	54
Total	5,868	5,714	5,311
Multi-family household	144	164	124
Lone person household	505	622	621
Group household	147	96	102
Total	6,664	6,596	6,158

ABS, Census 2001, Community Profile Series, Time Series Profile, ABS Catalogue No 2003.0

A family is defined as two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household. Family tables include same sex couples unless otherwise indicated. Definitions (Source: ABS Census 2001, Time Series Profile)

### 3.8 Average Household Size

Average household size within the Wentworth Statistical Local Area (SLA) generally decreased between the 1996 and 2001 Census, in line with national trends. However there were significant variations between Collector Districts, the greatest decline in household size was in the outer rural areas.

Definition of a household:

- A household is defined as a group of two or more related or unrelated people who usually reside in the same dwelling, who regard themselves as a household and who make common provision for food or other essentials for living; or a person living in a dwelling who makes provision for his/her own food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person.. (Source: ABS Census 2001, Time Series Profile)
- For Census purposes, the total number of households is equal to the total number of occupied private dwellings.

**Table 12: Average Household Size, by Collector District in 2001, Wentworth Shire**

Household sizes had declined in the Shire of Wentworth to 2.5 persons per household from an average of 2.8 persons per household in 1996.

The mean household size for the state of NSW was 2.6 persons per household.

<b>Average Population per Household Collector Districts</b>	<b>2001</b>
Wentworth East/Wentworth West	2.2
Dareton	2.3
Namatjira	5.0
Buronga	2.5
Gol Gol	2.2
Gol Gol & North	2.9
Trentham Cliffs & South	2.4
<b>Outer Rural Areas (mostly dryland)</b>	
• Ellerslie & East	2.0
• Pomona & Area	2.3
• Darling & North	1.8
• Anabranch (a & b)	2.7
• Pooncarie & East	2.0
<b>Inner - Rural Areas (mostly irrigation)</b>	
• Boeill Creek & Mourquong	2.6
• Coomealla Coomealla West (708)	2.4
<b>Total Average for Wentworth SLA</b>	<b>2.5</b>

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile, Expanded Series. (Cited from the Sense of Place Report, French 2003)

(Source: ABS, 2001, NSW Community Profile, Cat. No. 2001.0)

### 3.9 Weekly Household Income

The majority, 65.3%, of Non-Family Households, earned under \$500 per week compared with 25.2% of Family Households. The bulk of Family Households, 49.4% were in the \$600 to \$1999 bracket.

**Table 13: Weekly Household Income by Household Type, 2001, Wentworth Shire**

Weekly Income	Family Households		Non-Family Households		Total No. of Households
	No.	%	No.	%	
Negative Income	19	1.1	9	1.5	28
\$1 - \$299	50	2.8	248	41.2	298
\$300 - \$399	208	11.6	64	10.6	272
\$400 - \$499	174	9.7	72	12.0	246
\$500 - \$599	111	6.2	52	8.6	163
\$600 - \$799	252	14.1	46	7.6	298
\$800 - \$1199	352	19.6	43	7.1	395
\$1200 - \$1999	281	15.7	17	2.8	298
\$2000 or more	108	6.0	0	-	108
Part Income Stated	161	9.0	0	-	161
Not Stated	76	4.2	52	8.6	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>1792</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2395</b>

The median weekly household income for the State of NSW in 2001 was \$800-\$999. (Source: ABS, 2001, NSW Community Profile, Cat. No. 2001.0)

Definitions (Source: ABS Census 2001, Time Series Profile)

- Median weekly individual income is applicable to persons aged 15 years and over.
- Median weekly family income is applicable to families in occupied private dwellings. It excludes families where at least one family member aged 15 years and over did not state an income and families where at least one family member aged 15 years and over was temporarily absent.
- Median weekly household income is applicable to occupied private dwellings. It excludes households where at least one member aged 15 years and over did not state an income and households where at least one member aged 15 years and over was temporarily absent.

### 3.10 Annual Average Incomes

Supplementary data on incomes from the National Regional Profile, not the Basic Community Profile, has been used in this section.

The Australian Tax Office has assessed income for the Shire as:

- The average wage and salary income for the Wentworth Shire in 2000-2001 was \$25,828.
- The average annual taxable income (includes wage and salary income, business and benefits) for individual the Wentworth Shire in 2000-2001 was \$29,311.

(Source: ABS, National Regional Profile, Cat. No. 1379.0.55.001)

### 3.11 Labour Force Status

In 2001, the total number of the population in the labour force was 3048, of those 2023 were full time and 903 were employed part time. Another 171 persons were unemployed and a total 1920, 773 males and 1147 females, were not in the labour force.

**Table 14: Labour Force, Population 15 Years and Above, Wentworth Shire**

Labour Force Status	Males	Females	Total
Employed			
Full Time	1417	606	2023
Part Time	312	591	903
Not Stated	75	47	122
Total Employed	1804	1244	3048
Unemployed	109	62	171
Not in Labour Force	773	1147	1920
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2686</b>	<b>2453</b>	<b>5139</b>

Source: ABS Census of Population & Housing, 2001, B22, Selected Characteristics. (Enumerated Data)

### 3.12 Income Support

Income support data does not come from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. It is derived from estimates by the Dept of Family and Community Services (FaCS) but published through the ABS.

FaCS identified the following numbers receiving income support in the Wentworth Shire at June 2002.

**Table 15: Estimates of Persons receiving income support in the Wentworth Shire**

Type of Income Support	Persons
Age Pension	712
Disability Support Pension	384
Newstart allowance	349
Parenting payment - single	246
Youth allowance	169
Other pensions and allowances	305
<b>Total selected income support customers</b>	<b>2,165</b>

Source: ABS, National Regional Profile ABS Cat. No. 1379.0.55.001, (FaCS Data June 2002)

### 3.13 Education and Qualifications

Since 1991 there has been a considerable increase in the number of people resident in the Shire who held formal qualifications.

**Table 16: Qualification Level of residents 15 years and over, Wentworth Shire**

Persons aged 15 years and over	1991 Persons	1996 Persons	2001 Persons
Postgraduate Degree	14	10	15
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	30	30	51
Bachelor Degree	133	165	250
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	239	240	217
Certificate:			
Certificate Level, nfd (b)	n.a.	n.a.	9
Certificate III & IV	413	441	642
Certificate I & II	151	146	84
Not stated(c)	604	660	725
Not applicable (d)	4,109	3,835	3,478
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,693</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>5,471</b>

(a) Excludes schooling up to Year 12; (b) In 1991 and 1996 separate data were not available. (c) Includes 'Inadequately described'. (d) Includes persons who do not have a qualification and persons who have a qualification out of scope of the Australian Standard Classification of Education

#### Attendance at Educational Institution

The table below demonstrates attendance figures. There were 669 students attending primary school in Wentworth Shire in 2001, 496 at secondary school and a further 149 and 57 at TAFE and University respectively.

**Table 17: Breakdown of Population by Full Time/ Part Time Attendance & by Sex, and Type of Educational Institution Attending, Wentworth Shire**

Institution	Females	Males	Total
Pre School	53	54	107
Primary School			
Government	304	245	549
Catholic	48	39	87
Other (Independent)	16	17	33
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>669</b>
Secondary School			
Government	201	217	418
Catholic	31	34	65
Other (Independent)	7	6	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>496</b>
TAFE			
Full Time	17	34	51
Part Time	60	38	98
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>149</b>
University or other tertiary			
Full Time	7	9	16
Part Time	9	32	41
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>57</b>
Other			
Full Time	3	3	6
Part Time	15	15	30
Not Stated	3	0	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>
Not Attending	2672	2353	5025
Not Stated	232	207	432
Overseas Visitors	7	5	12
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3676</b>	<b>3310</b>	<b>6986*</b>

Source: ABS 2001 Basic Community Profile (\*Enumerated Data as opposed to number of persons Usually Resident)

## 4 Generic Community Needs and Strategies

### 4.1 Generic Social Planning Initiatives, Shire of Wentworth

#### Shire of Wentworth Social Plan

The Wentworth Shire developed its first Social Plan during 1999. The document identified a range of social issues and allocated responsibilities however the document would have benefited from a supporting policy framework to legitimise its role and strategy and ensure the implementation of its priorities.

The 1999/2000 Plan made recommendations around the target groups and these will be evaluated where relevant under the particular target groups outlined in Section 5.

The 2004/2009 Social Plan emphasises the need to integrate planning and the role of the Social Plan as an agent to bring together a coherent blueprint for planning and decision-making for the community and the Shire of Wentworth.

#### Shire of Wentworth Management Plan

The Wentworth Shire Council is required to include a statement about proposed access and equity activities in its Management Plan, as identified under the Social Plan. The current Management Plan provides an overview of activities for Community and Cultural Services activities and planning in the Shire. Relevant items are identified in Table 15 below. It is envisaged that the Management Plan will be updated following endorsement of the 2004/2009 Social Plan.

**Table 18: Shire of Wentworth social planning activities**

	<b>The Management Plan</b>
<b>Health</b>	To maintain facilities for monitoring children's health and development To provide an accredited Medical Practice for the community (Dareton and Wentworth)
<b>Community Services</b>	To provide community services through support to youth, aged and disabled, early education and the implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan
<b>Recreation and Culture</b>	In the absence of a Cultural Plan or Policy, the Management Plan gives the only statement of intent in the Recreation and Cultural area. The Shire does provide a variety of recreational and cultural facilities including Swimming pools at Wentworth and Dareton Parks and playgrounds at all centres Sporting ovals and public halls across the Shire Arts – support mainly to West Darling Arts, the Wentworth Art Prize and Art Show, Mildura Wentworth Arts Festival  While it is not noted in the management plan, the Shire consistently provides logistical support for community functions.

#### Shire of Wentworth Library Service

Two active providers of general community services and support to community groups within the Shire are the Shire Library Services and the Greater Western Area Health Service. There are a number of other agencies operating in the Shire in specific areas.

### **The Library Service**

The Shire Library services are based at Wentworth and have branches at Dareton, Buronga and Pooncarie.

It supplies recreational reading and provision of information and access to computers, Internet and email. The library is currently targeting services towards children and elderly people, Aboriginal youth, unemployed people and small business and has programs to increase computer skills and access to Internet and email in the community.

The Library hosts the NSW Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC) and also the DI@LL Drug Information at Local Library programs. It assists special needs groups with access to NES Language stocks and provides home deliveries for those with mobility issues and sponsors writing workshops and hosts school holiday activities.

Services are now reflecting changes in the local community. For Wentworth, there are increasing numbers of young families and elderly in the area while the service at Dareton has fewer young families but more elderly and younger aboriginal children who are increasing their demands on library for information, computers, and access to facilities and holiday programs.

Library plans emphasise the need to promote access and resources for youth and also to expand services to Pooncarie, which has established a Rural Transaction Service during 2004.

### **Greater Western Area Health Service**

The Greater Western Area Health Service has a major service centre in Dareton servicing the Wentworth and Balranald Shires. Visiting specialists and access to Telehealth services supports these services. Services are delivered through the Dareton Community Health Centre and the Wentworth Hospital, plus a regular clinic at Buronga and Pooncarie. For a full listing of the extensive services available see *Sense of Place Report, Volume III, Section 4 (Community Action Plans, Services and Facilities)*.

Medical services are available at Dareton and Wentworth and the Flying Doctor has a regular scheduled visit to Pooncarie. Wentworth District Hospital has a 24-hour emergency service and also provides acute care, long-term care, palliative care, respite care and diversional therapy and Community Health services. Mildura has a range of medical services available through the Mildura Base Hospital.

### **Social Planning Initiatives, Shire of Wentworth**

Table 19 below contains a brief outline of current or potential plans and reports, their key objectives, operational status and activities. Social planning includes environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects, which impact on community well being and the livability of an area. All these plans have relevance for the Shire of Wentworth.

**Table 19 : Social Planning Initiatives, Wentworth Shire**

Plan	Objectives	Status	Action
<p><b>The Sense of Place Community Action Plans 2003</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community participation in community social and economic development, community design and planning</li> <li>• Leadership and development skills</li> <li>• Plans for four local communities covering social, economic, cultural and environmental issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of Place Project completed, Community Action Plans completed in 2003</li> <li>• Now monitored by local Action Teams</li> <li>• To be revised annually</li> <li>• Detailed implementation strategies for most areas</li> <li>• Groups now linked to Wentworth Regional Development Inc</li> </ul>	<p>Community Action Plans to be reviewed annually.</p> <p>There are numerous small actions, which are in various stages of completion plus an on-going community advocacy role.</p> <p>Current projects include:                      Wentworth – Wharf Precinct project                      Dareton – Basketball courts and playground, &amp; Neighbourhood Centre project in 2005                      Buronga/Gol Gol – community and town planning project</p>
<p><b>The draft Wentworth Crime Prevention Plan (CPP)</b></p>	<p>Three Key Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public safety strategies</li> <li>• Family intervention and support strategies</li> <li>• Youth development strategies</li> </ul>	<p>The draft Wentworth Crime Prevention Plan (CPP) is now five years on from its initial consultation in 1999</p> <p>The status of this document is that it is still not finalized, minor changes are still pending (October 2004).</p>	<p>Issues and identified actions strongly overlap with the Community Action Plans and Youth Development Strategy.</p> <p>Additional inter-agency liaison between groups within the Shire and an integration of efforts would be beneficial .</p> <p>The CPP needs to be formally linked with Community Action Plans, the Youth Strategy (draft), and the Dareton CWP Community Plan and to involve community groups to promote engagement and implementation.</p>
<p><b>The Dareton/ Wentworth Community Working Party - Community Plan</b></p>	<p>Key Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual, social &amp; emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• Citizenship &amp; political engagement</li> <li>• A culture of success</li> <li>• Economic independence &amp; sustainability</li> <li>• Integrated service delivery</li> <li>• Devolved community decision making</li> </ul>	<p>The status of the Community Plan is that the CWP signed a memorandum of Understanding with the WSC (July, 04).</p> <p>The CWP are waiting to do appoint a Community Coordinator, this is an identified indigenous position, to work with community service providers and the community.</p>	<p>The CWP Community Plan needs to be strongly linked with the WSC Social Plan, Community Action Plans, and the Youth Strategy and with community groups to promote engagement and community participation.</p>

Plan	Objectives	Status	Action
<b>Wentworth Shire Youth Strategy (draft)</b>	<p>Key objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishment of a youth development framework</li> <li>• recreation and leisure</li> <li>• citizenship development and education</li> <li>• Indigenous youth development</li> </ul>	Endorsed by WSC and under review.	Following completion of the Social Plan interlocking strategies will be reviewed.
<b>Wentworth Shire State of the Environment Report</b>	<p>State of the Environment Report (NSW State Government) collects data on natural resource activities and planning including Land, Air, Water, Biodiversity, Waste, Noise, Aboriginal Heritage and Non- Aboriginal Heritage This includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council details on water use, consumption, analysis, waste, sewerage, storm water, buildings and subdivisions</li> <li>• Information from government and non-government agencies and landholders on land use &amp; feral animals, weeds, cultural heritage work and</li> <li>• Community planning issues dealing with natural resource issues such as under the Sense of Place Community Action Plans</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>A document which will provide the data to drive natural resource planning in the area.</p> <p>Valuable data for WSC's own records and for community and industry groups.</p>	The State of the Environment Report is currently being updated.
<b>Wentworth Shire Cultural Plan (pending in 2005)</b>	<p>The NSW government now requires a Cultural Plan to be developed by all Local Government.</p> <p>Cultural plans encompass visual, performing and literary art, social events and activities, educational activities leading to the development of cultural skills and knowledge, festivals, commemorative events, community and urban planning and design, public art and cultural planning.</p>	See Sense of Place Community Action Plans, which contain a range of cultural activities especially those centred on community and urban planning, events. A Cultural Plan can greatly assist the social and economic revitalisation of communities and lead to a more equitable distribution of resources within the Shire	. It is believed that the West Darling Arts Regional Arts Development Office will assist the Wentworth Shire Council with the development of a Cultural Plan for the Shire

## 4.2 Generic Social Issues

Social issues in this section were identified through the Sense of Place Community Consultation process in 2003. This process included community meetings, audits, and interviews with service providers and community surveys.

The purpose of that process was to consult with the community to outline the key facilities and services; to identify critical gaps, and develop community action plans. The original report was based on the diverse needs as identified by the different communities within the Shire and it reported on those individual communities. Priorities for each community are acknowledged within this section and under the "Target Groups" as appropriate. This list reflects the outcomes of the consultation and research at that time, they should be read as an indication of issues and concerns as they are perceived by the community as opposed to a comprehensive analysis of health or youth needs.

Social issues which impact on community well-being as identified in the Sense of Place Community Consultation are outlined below (in no particular order). A more complete review of issues and an audit of community services and facilities is contained in the Sense of Place report (See WSC website)

**Table 19: Social needs by community meetings and surveys**

Community	Issues
Buronga/Gol Gol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• urban planning</li> <li>• child care services and vacation care,</li> <li>• activities for young people</li> <li>• public transport</li> <li>• local aged care and respite care facilities (urgent)</li> <li>• public access to the River front</li> </ul>
Dareton/Coomealla /Namatjira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved community safety and security</li> <li>• implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan</li> <li>• improved responses into substance abuse</li> <li>• programs against domestic violence</li> <li>• employment programs for disadvantaged groups, youth</li> <li>• more recreational activities and facilities for young people</li> <li>• aged care facilities</li> <li>• public transport</li> <li>• a community managed facility</li> </ul>
Pooncarie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to community services such as HACC and youth activities</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Improved emergency services</li> </ul>
Wentworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• youth development activities, employment for youth, local place</li> <li>• sport and recreational activities</li> <li>• more security and safety and implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan,</li> <li>• better access to health services (improved waiting times),</li> <li>• ambulance upgrade</li> <li>• public transport</li> <li>• housing</li> </ul>

(Source: Sense of Place Report, French 2003)

The shire being located in a rural and remote area compounds many of the above issues. Some needs will be dealt with under the relevant Target groups. Please see Section 5.

**Strategy 1: Improve community safety and security**

**Justification**

The issues around community safety and security have been prominent in the Sense of Place surveys and are confirmed by Police data, Wentworth Shire Crime Prevention Plan consultation, Far West Area Health reports especially those concerning domestic violence\*, the specialist input sought by the Dareton Community Action Team, and youth activities.

This need/strategy is closely related to those for education, training and employment, health, and the provision of appropriate services and community development in Dareton.

Strategy	Outcome	Responsibility	Time-frame
Investigate the option of establishing a Working Party to work with the CPP and identified safety & security strategies from the Dareton & Wentworth Community Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of ideas, efforts</li> <li>• Prioritizing and greater involvement of participating agencies</li> <li>• Common goals and support across agencies with similar programs</li> </ul>	WSC CATS Police MFC AJAC	2005/2009
Actively encourage implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan and other community plans relating to safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced crime rates</li> <li>• Better information and coordination</li> <li>• Better community relations</li> <li>• Reduced domestic violence</li> <li>• Early intervention</li> </ul>	WSC CATs Att. Gen Dept Police MFC GWAHS, CAHS AJAC CWP	2005/2009

\*Domestic violence – see also special needs groups, Women and Men

**Strategy 2: Increase access to education and employment for disadvantaged groups**

**Justification**

Identified under the Sense of Place consultation, ABS Indigenous Unemployment statistics, the WSC Crime Prevention Plan, the Sunraysia Area Consultative Committee, the Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network Environmental Scan (2004) and others.

Several major studies highlighting Indigenous youth needs and education have been released in the last year including the Bob Beadman report, "Do Indigenous Youth Have a Dream" (Beadman 2004). They are very relevant to this social plan and to the provision of some level of social justice and equity in the Wentworth Shire.

The opening of the Coomealla Campus of the Riverina TAFE in 2003 was a major step forward for education for the Indigenous population in the Shire, especially as the campus has taken a "community based campus approach" and is providing tailored courses for local young people including the KOOL group. This latter group has been very successful during 2004.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Continue to work with the Sunraysia Area Consultative Committee Indigenous Employment Consultant (Bill Carroll) to provide more traineeships in the Shire and the WSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher employment levels with resulting increases in social and economic well-being</li> <li>• Improved health for disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Decreased levels of crime and domestic violence</li> </ul>	WSC SACC Coomealla TAFE ACE	2004/2009
Facilitate partnerships with the private sector and innovative projects focusing on Indigenous employment such as the Barkindji Biosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher employment levels with resulting increases in social and economic well-being</li> </ul>	Wentworth Reg. Development Inc GWAHS B. Biosphere Coomealla TAFE Dareton CWP	2004/2009

**Strategy 3: Support a range of Community Health programs and services which promote community well-being**

**Justification**

Significant issues identified by community consultation and confirmed by local Health professionals working in the Wentworth and Dareton Community Health Services include:

- high rates of substance abuse, and alcohol induced domestic violence in the community
- community awareness and information days for men and women around issues of violence and the impact for children
- youth between 12-19 years especially to address parenting skills, the development of community support systems, young mothers/parents groups etc.
- trained para-medics and an improved ambulance service.
- Court Support programs and a safe house identified by the community as a priority for 2005
- Other - hospital access and improved ambulance services

A limited ambulance service is based at the Wentworth District Hospital but there are no trained paramedics available. This leaves the Shire very dependent on services based across the Victorian border, adding considerably to response times in an emergency

Strategy	Outcome	Responsibility	Time-frame
Support the delivery of Early Intervention strategies for families, children, youth such as through the NSW Families First initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	All agencies (an interagency managed program)	2004/2009
Support ongoing funding and delivery of the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) Adult training programs are happening successfully across the Wentworth Shire targeting self-selecting groups of Women; Men; Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced domestic violence</li> <li>• Improved parenting</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	GWAHS, CAHS  Training programs at Dubbo	2005/2009
Support initiatives in 2005 for the PADV to develop Court Support Programs in partnership with the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced crime</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	TAFE & GWAHS Police CAT	2005
Investigate options for the establishment of a community safe house or refuge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced DV &amp; crime</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	WSC GWAHS, CAHS Women's groups CAT	2005/2009
Investigate improved Ambulance services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	WSC CATs	2005/2009
To provide programs for families, parenting, nutrition, cooking, budgeting in a community environment, which encourages learning and self help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life skills and an ability to manage health and family issues</li> </ul>	GWAHS, CAHS	2005/2009

**Strategy 4: Investigate a community facility/ neighbourhood centre for programs, learning, events and community self-help activities in Dareton**

**Justification**

High priority in both the Sense of Place community consultation process in Dareton/Coomealla/Namatjira and in the subsequent discussions and research by the Action Team around the survey outcomes and the development of strategies and Action Plans in Dareton.

Access to a "neighbourhood centre" style venue would assist the implementation and delivery of social programs and activities including the Community Action Plans, the Crime Prevention Plan, the Greater Western Area Health programs, Coomealla Aboriginal Health Service, Dareton Community Working Party Programs, Mallee Family Care and youth programs in that community. It would support service delivery and increase access and has the capacity to foster self-help programs for the target groups such as women, children and families, youth and Indigenous groups.

A Dareton Neighbourhood Centre would have a host of uses, including access to information about programs and services, community activities and meetings, community education and self-help projects including a community kitchen, support the delivery of family and parenting programs, health and nutrition programs, the training of volunteers etc, which are fundamental to improving community well-being, health, managing domestic violence and crime levels in the Dareton area.

Apart from the Coomealla Club, which is a licensed premises, the Fire Service Training Room and the Senior Citizens Room, there are few appropriate venues for the community to run programs, as opposed to agency managed programs. Many social programs are now restricted because of this. See also Generic Need 4: Community Health Programs and Services

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<p>The WSC in conjunction with the Dareton CAT is to investigate federal, state and local funding and local fundraising for a community venue as its priority for 2005.</p> <p>This will include lobbying at all levels including the Attorney General's Dept.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health, employment and overall well-being for disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Decreased levels of crime and domestic violence</li> <li>• Empowerment of disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Community building, self esteem and integration</li> </ul>	<p>Dareton CAT Wentworth Regional Dev. Inc WSC Government agencies Including GWAHS &amp; CAHS</p>	<p>2005/2009</p>

**Strategy 5: Improve access to public transport**

**Justification**

Transport and mobility is a high social need in the Shire. Public transport is limited because of the sparse population. Regular services run several times a day Monday to Friday but there are no late or weekend services which impacts heavily on young people seeking to play sport and access recreation activities and those adults without access to private transport.

Inadequate services on weekends and after hours raises the need for a transport strategy.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Research the development of a long-term transport Strategy	Better access for equity groups to services	WSC Agencies CATs Youth programs	2005/2009
Investigate innovative models and specialist transport for young people, link with youth strategy.	Support and a partial solution for high priority social planning issues around youth, crime prevention, and access to services.		

**Strategy 6: Improve access to affordable housing**

**Justification**

People with a range of different housing needs has increased, the Sense of Place consultation identified that there were unmet needs for affordable and flexible housing for youth, people with disabilities, and elderly in addition to those on low incomes.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Research options and seek innovative development ideas.  eg. the YouBuild program	Better access for equity groups to affordable accommodation	WSC Agencies Wentworth Reg. Development Inc	2005/2009

## 5 Target Groups and Strategies

### 5.1 Older People

In 2001, there were 915 persons in the 65 and over group, 13.1% of the total population. The Indigenous community represent 7.8% of the total population of the Shire but only 0.1% (ten persons) of the over 65 category, which demonstrates the high morbidity rates and poor health in the Indigenous community.

The increase of numbers in the Over 65 bracket between 1991 and 2001 was 122 persons or 13.3%.

**Table 18. Profile of the Over 65 Group, Wentworth Shire**

Age	2001 Census	Change 1991/2001	Change 1991/2001
65-69	290	-14	-4.6
70-74	259	+31	+13.6
75-79	183	+51	+38.6
80+	183	+54	+29.5

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile, and Time Series Profile Cat. No. 2003.0

Numbers of residents of the Shire at June 2002 who were recipients of the Age Pension numbered 712 persons (FaCS Selected Income Support Customers, ABS National Regional Profile ABS cat. no. 1379.0.55.001)

Table 19, below, demonstrates the distribution of people in the over 65 bracket across the Shire and identifies the populations of the small towns and rural areas. The issue of where the older residents reside in the Wentworth Shire is an issue for the delivery of health and recreation services and access to public transport.

**Table 19: Distribution of Population, 65 Years and Over in Shire**

Groupings by Townships & Collector Districts	Population 65 Years & Older	
	1996	2001
Wentworth East/Wentworth West	260	287
Dareton	72	125
Namatjira	15	3
Buronga, Gol Gol, Gol Gol & North, Trentham Cliffs & South	201	247
Rural Areas (outer – mostly dryland)	75	105
Rural Areas (inner - mostly irrigation)	75	73
<b>Total for Shire</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>917</b>

Source: ABS 2001, Community Profile, Expanded Series (Enumerated Data).

**Strategy 7: Promote increased access to accommodation and aged care services for Older People**

**Justification**

Accommodation for older people is limited in Wentworth and non-existent in other areas and demand is increasing. As demonstrated by the population profile, the Shire has an aging population in its western areas and very few resources to support this sector except Murray House in Wentworth. Suitable accommodation and access to services is an identified issue for aged people in the Wentworth Shire.

Aged care services need to be monitored and increased to ensure accessibility for residents.

Flexible and affordable housing is required to give a range of choices covering all stages from independent living, supported independent to hostel and nursing home level of care.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
For the WSC to lead an investigation around the needs of aged care in the Shire and identify possible solutions with concerned agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the extent and urgency of the needs for Elderly</li> </ul>	WSC HACC	2004/2009
For the WSC to actively promote development of flexible and affordable accommodation for older people in the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To overcome current and future shortages of appropriate and diverse aged care facilities in the Shire</li> </ul>	WSC Developers	2004/2009

## 5.2 Children (and families)

A total of 959 children in the 0-9 year age group are resident in the Wentworth Shire. In the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community, children 0-9 years make up 24.2% of the population.

Children 0-9 years	% Of the population
Wentworth Shire Total 959 persons	13.7% of the general population
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander 132 persons	24.2% of the ATSI population

The largest cluster of young people, 670 or approximately one third of the 0-19 group, are resident in the Buronga, Gol Gol and environs.

The Dept of Community Service (DOCS) provides a range of services both directly to clients and through supporting community service organisations. It is supported in some areas of its work by Mallee Family Care, which set up operations in Dareton during 2003.

### **Strategy 8: Ensure children and families have the widest access possible to appropriate support including early intervention programs and programs for young families**

#### **Justification**

As identified under Community Health and through community consultation, there is a high need for all services to focus on early intervention programs for the 0-5 age group and these programs should be linked with parenting programs. There are high numbers of young children in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and numbers of young children in the At Risk category.

Strategy	Outcome	Responsibility	Time-frame
Foster Early Intervention programs such as Families First program in the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive parenting skills for young families</li> <li>Supported playgroups to foster education and training</li> </ul>	GWAHS in partnership with other agencies, WSC, and community organizations.	2004-2009
Investigate the establishment of the NEW PIN** program (New Parent and Infant Network)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break the cyclical effect of destructive and negative family behaviour.</li> <li>Prevent child abuse</li> <li>Encourage self-help and lasting change</li> <li>Inspire good parenting</li> </ul>	GWAHS may send people to Sydney to examine the NEWPIN program	2005/2009
Investigate the levels of child care facilities in all communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children &amp; families have access to appropriate and safe childcare.</li> </ul>	WSC can promote the delivery of appropriate child care services	2005/2009

NEWPIN is a self-help early intervention family support program. It works with families under stress to break the cycle of destructive family behaviour and enhance parent/child relationships. A UK based program, it has now been established in Australia and has two Centres in Bidwill (a suburb of Mt Druitt), and Doonside, nearby. NEWPIN has four key values: Respect, Support, Equality, and Empathy.

### 5.3 Youth

- 33.0% of the Shire's total population is under 24
- 55.4% of the Indigenous population within the Shire is in the 0-24 year age bracket.
- 28.5% of the non-Indigenous population within the Shire is in the 0-24 year age bracket.

**Strategy 9: Actively promote the implementation of the Youth Strategy and foster a positive climate for youth development**

#### Justification

Youth development issues and activities were identified as high priority under the Sense of Place project and Action Plans and the Crime Prevention Plan. There is a need for policy to focus on:

- an expansion of youth support and crisis services
- family health with a focus on inclusive services, family relationships, and general family support.
- positive parenting skills. The ensure access by those who need these skills, training information and delivery needs to be linked in with child care services
- life skills for young people and awareness of drugs, alcohol, teenage pregnancies
- mental health services including local social workers and endorse policy to promote value and respect in and for young people
- services and resources for young people with disabilities and disadvantages, a key one is transport.

Strategy	Outcome	Responsibility	Time-frame
Implementation of the key strategies and activities under the Youth Development Strategy which include: 1. Establishment of a youth development framework 2. Recreation and leisure 3. Citizenship dev. & education 4. Indigenous youth development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to increased resources for youth</li> <li>• Funding for programs</li> <li>• Life skills and self esteem for young people</li> <li>• Leadership skills and citizenship</li> </ul>	WSC State agencies GWAHS, CAHS MFC CATs Police Lead-On	2005/2009
Implementation of the Crime Prevention Strategy as soon as it is endorsed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing crime</li> <li>• Early intervention programs</li> </ul>	WSC Att. Gen. Dept MFC, CATs Police YAP	2005/2009
Address safety and security issues (there are 20 actions) from the Dareton Community Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing crime</li> <li>• Early intervention programs</li> <li>• Community unity and well-being</li> </ul>	WSC Att. Gen. Dept MFC, CATs Police YAP, DOCs Ed. Dept,	2004/2009
Support funding applications to support the implementation of the above plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to programs and resources</li> </ul>	WSC Agencies	2005/2009
Promote family and parenting programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaking of the negative cycle of disadvantage</li> </ul>	GWAHS, CAHS CATs	2005/2009

## 5.4 Women

### **Strategy 10: Encourage and support the establishment and /or continuation of programs for women**

#### **Justification**

Needs identified through the Community Consultation process and through consultation with Health professionals from the Greater Western Area Health Service include:

- domestic and community violence
- access to affordable housing
- access to adequate education and training to allow full participation in the work force
- self esteem and leadership training
- access to adequate child care and support services

Some needs for women have also been dealt with under the Community Health strategy.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Promote the implementation of measures outlined in the CPP for the reduction of domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of assaults</li> <li>• Women's health</li> <li>• Family stability</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	WSC Att. Gen Dept	2004/2009
Promote Partnerships Against Domestic Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of assaults</li> <li>• Women's health</li> <li>• Family stability</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	GWAHS, CAHS	2004/2005
<p>Promote programs for capacity building such as Women of Wisdom (WOW program)</p> <p>This program has been very successful, and numbers are restricted as it requires a larger venue. Currently it is operating from the Public School.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self esteem and empowerment for women</li> </ul>	TAFE & GWAHS CAHS	2004/2005
Provide support for local Aboriginal women who are setting up a local Aboriginal Women's Cooperative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business skills and empowerment</li> </ul>	Dept of Women TAFE & GWAHS CATs SACC	2004/2009

## 5.5 People with a Disability

### **Strategy 11: Increase support services and improved access for people with a disability.**

#### **Justification**

A total 384 persons, or 5.5% of the population are on a disability support pension; there will be others who are not on a pension so the numbers maybe quite extensive.

Identified needs from the Sense of Place Community Consultation and consultation with Health professionals relating to access to local disability programs and general services and facilities include:

- access to respite services
- difficulties in providing day programs for disability clients
- limited access to employment and training programs within the district and
- transport services for disability clients.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
To investigate the possibility of an audit and needs analysis of access and services for People with Disabilities in the Wentworth Shire  This includes access to shops, post offices etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access and practical support</li> <li>• Equity and access re services</li> </ul>	WSC DADHC	2005/2009
Foster partnerships with Dept of Aging, Disability and Home Care to encourage a more coordinated approach to service planning for people with a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access and more effective service delivery</li> </ul>	WSC DADHC GWAHS	
Investigate improving housing and respite services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical support and well-being</li> </ul>	DADHC GWAHS CAHS	2004/2009
Foster/promote Disability Support Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical support and well-being</li> </ul>	DADHC GWAHS WSC	2004/2009

## 5.6 People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

There are a limited number of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the Shire and there were no identified needs arising from the Community Consultation. Books in languages other than English are available through the Shire Library service and this facility is appreciated. SBS television services are now available locally. The Northern Mallee Migrant Services operate in Mildura as a support service for migrants.

### **Strategy 12: Promote the development of a network of support services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds**

#### **Justification**

To provide a readily available information service and ensure equity of access to information for all residents.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Foster the development of a network of services and contacts  e.g. the Northern Mallee Migrant Services (Mildura) and obtain details of their support and language services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local resources are identified</li> </ul>	WSC	2005/2009
Continue to promote the Adult Migrant English Services available through MADEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contacts identified and promoted</li> </ul>	WSC	2005/2009

## 5.7 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

The Indigenous population of the Wentworth Shire totaled 545 people in the 2001 census; this is 7.8% of the total Shire population. The comparative figure for the State of NSW is 1.9%.

The Indigenous population in the Shire shows a steady increase of 13.9% over the decade 1991-2001.

### **Strategy 13: Develop a comprehensive social strategy to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in social, environmental, economic and cultural areas**

#### **Justification**

Needs identified from the Community Consultation, local agencies and the data all indicate that the Indigenous community requires comprehensive and consistent measures to deal with immediate issues such as high levels of domestic /community violence, poor health and limited economic opportunities. The community also requires support through early intervention programs to break the cycle of destructive and negative family behaviour and deliver appropriate real opportunities for families and the community to improve well-being and to achieve social and economical stability.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
Support the endorsement and implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced crime</li> <li>• Better environment for families</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> <li>• Youth activities</li> </ul>	WSC Police Dareton CWP Att. Gen Dept CAHS GWAHS CATs	2004/09
Support implementation of the Community Working Party Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community well-being</li> <li>• Leadership</li> </ul>	WSC Dareton CWP Police CAHS	2004/09
Support implementation of Community Action Plans. A significant number of actions relate to community well-being, safety and security, learning and training for the Indigenous community, cultural heritage issues, youth etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viable and united communities</li> <li>• Community well-being</li> </ul>	WSC CATs GWAHS CAHS	2004/2009
Investigate improved facilities for the uptake of programs and activities such as the proposed Dareton Neighbourhood Centre	A community managed venue supporting the delivery of a range of family and community programs	WSC CATs GWAHS CAHS	2005/06

## 5.8 Rural and Remote Area Location

### **Strategy 14: Seek greater recognition of Wentworth's Rural and Remote Area location**

#### **Justification**

While not strictly a special needs group, "Rural and Remote" is one of the six major indicators of social disadvantage used by the Commonwealth Government.

The ABS (National Regional Profile, Cat. No. 137.0.55.001) state that within the Wentworth SLA:

- 91.7% of the population reside in an area classified as "outer regional" and
- 8.3% reside in an area classified as being "remote".

Rural and Remote status:

- cuts across all social groups and this barrier has a profound impact on equity and access for the whole population.
- tends to reduce the ability of the population in general and the Local Government Authority to access programs and support for the identified social equity groups
- compounds the difficulties for all agencies charged with providing support services for specific target groups
- contributes to many people experiencing multiple social disadvantage.

From the perspective of rural and remote, the whole population is a special needs group.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<p>To investigate ways of improving links with city based agencies and increasing their understanding of the time and costs of travel as a barrier to accessing services and to service delivery.</p> <p>For instance, the Shire organising quarterly inter-meetings and regular communications with a range of human service agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved relationships with externally based agencies</li> <li>• More effective service delivery</li> <li>• Increased access to services</li> </ul>	WSC	2005/2009

## **Appendix I: Key objectives from the Community Action Plans**

Key objectives from the Community Action Plans are set out below, Complete Community Action Plans are available on the Wentworth Shire Website and they contain detailed actions and proposals under each objective, agencies responsible, and indicators for evaluation.

### **Buronga/Gol Gol**

Objective 1: To promote a comprehensive approach to planning and zoning to ensure balanced development of residential, commercial, industrial, horticultural and open space areas

Objective 2 : To improve management and conservation of local environmental assets

Objective 3: To expand the range of community services and facilities & improve public transport links into the area

Objective 4: To improve road & traffic safety in Buronga & Gol Gol

Objective 5: Promote community image & events including sport & recreation

### **Dareton, Coomealla and Namatjira**

Objective 1: To support local development through appropriate planning and zoning

Objective 2: To improve access to open space areas and promote conservation and environmental protection

Objective 3: To encourage growth of existing business and development of new business, technology & employment

Objective 4: To provide enhanced training and employment opportunities for the community

Objective 5: To improve community safety and security

Objective 6: Build community participation, identity, and image.

### **Pooncarie**

Objective 1: Improve emergency services in Pooncarie

Objective 2: Improve road safety & security in Pooncarie

Objective 3: Conserve and develop local heritage and tourism assets in Pooncarie district

Objective 4: Improve access to transport services for Pooncarie

Objective 5: Improve access to community services & secure on-going viability of the Telecentre/ Rural Transaction Centre

Objective 6: To promote community leadership and community development activity in Pooncarie

### **Wentworth, Pomona and Curlwaa**

Objective 1: To initiate & support local economic development in order to enhance existing business and attract new businesses and professionals to Wentworth

Objective 2: Support development of tourism strategy & service infrastructure

Objective 3: To promote and support conservation and management of the local environmental & cultural assets

Objective 4: To promote community building, community services & youth activities

Objective 5: To improve security, law and order in Wentworth