Clarence Valley Council

Social Plan 2006 – 2009

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GLOSSARY

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
A-G	NSW Attorney General's Department
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CCT	Clarence Community Transport Inc
CPI	Community Programs Incorporated
CV	Clarence Valley
CVC	Clarence Valley Council
CVSS	Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy
CVWI	Clarence Valley Women Incorporated
CVWR	Clarence Valley Women's Refuge
DADHC	NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
DET	NSW Department of Education and Training
DIMA	Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
Div GP	Division of General Practice
DOCS	NSW Department of Community Services
DOH	NSW Department of Housing
DSR	NSW Department of Sport and Recreation
DV	Domestic Violence
EDU	Economic development Unit
FACSIA	Commonwealth Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
LAC	NSW Legal Aid Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
MNCSD	Mid North Coast Statistical Division
MOT	NSW Ministry of Transport
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NC	Neighbourhood Centre
NCAHS	North Coast Area Health Service
NCI TAFE-NSW	North Coast Institute of Tertiary and Further Education – New South Wales
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NHS	National Housing Strategy
NR	Northern Rivers
NRCLC	Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre
NRSDC	Northern Rivers Social Development Council
NSOA	New School of Arts
OT	Occupational Therapist
PADP	Program of Appliances for Disabled People
PMT	Project Management Team
CVPTWG	Clarence Valley Public Transport Working Group
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SPAG	Social Plan Advisory Group
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre
VET	Vocational Education and Training

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 1998 the New South Wales (NSW) State Government introduced the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999 requiring all Councils in NSW to develop a social/community plan every five years, commencing with the 1999 – 2004 period, and to report on the identified access and equity activities in their annual reports.

The Regulation was introduced to ensure service delivery to the community by local government meets the principles of equity, access, participation and rights. Seven population groups that are frequently overlooked in local government planning are identified in the Regulation to ensure their needs are included in the Social Plan. The population groups the Social Plan must address are:

- Children (0-11 years);

- Young people (12 – 24 years);

- Older people (Aboriginal people aged 45 years and over and non-Aboriginal people aged 55 years and over);

- Women;

- People with a disability;

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and

- People from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Councils in NSW prepared their second Social Plan by late 2004 for the period 2005 – 2009. With the formation of the amalgamated council of Clarence Valley in 2004 the Department of Local Government granted an extension to November 2006 for Clarence Valley Council (CVC) to prepare the 2006 – 2009 Social Plan.

The purpose of the 2006-2009 Clarence Valley Social Plan is to promote a more inclusive community by identifying and advocating responses by local government and other agencies and services to community needs and diversity, in accordance with social justice principles.

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- Promote fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those most in need;

- Recognise and promote people's rights and improve the accountability of decision makers;

- Ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving their quality of life; and

- Give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

Clarence Valley Sustainability Framework

The Clarence Valley Sustainability Framework identifies the key values of the Clarence Valley community and seeks to improve the understanding and management of the Valley's ecological, social, cultural and economic assets.

Context

The Clarence Valley Council with a population of approximately 50,000 residents is located in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, approximately 600 kilometres north of Sydney and 300 kilometres south of Brisbane.

The Clarence Valley Council area is predominantly rural, with expanding residential areas. It encompasses approximately a third of the Northern Rivers region with a total land mass of 10,440 square kilometres, of which a significant proportion is National Park, State Forest and nature reserves, including beaches, rainforests, mountains and rivers.

Settlement is based around the inland city of Grafton and the coastal townships of Yamba, Maclean and Iluka, with numerous small villages and rural localities along the coast and inland. The mighty Clarence River winds through the LGA and a large percentage of the coastline is preserved in State National Parks.

The original inhabitants of the Clarence Valley area were the Bundjalung, Gumbaingirr and Yaegl Aboriginal groups.

The Clarence Valley is being impacted by a number of factors that are changing the Valley's social and economic life. These include, but are not limited to:

1. The change in settlement patterns in the Valley with the growth in coastal towns and villages;

2. The large proportion of retirees in the coastal areas;

3. The decline in local primary and resource based industries;

4. The maintenance of the population number in the major centre of Greater Grafton;

5. The rapid growth in the neighbouring centres of Ballina, Lismore and Coffs Harbour and the resulting movement of government administration from Grafton to these centres;

6. The focus on these regional centres outside the Clarence Valley, and the physical distance regionally based services have to reach Clarence Valley residents is exacerbated when regional services are not adequately resourced to provide for travel time to cover all areas of the region.

There are also a number of factors which in turn may influence the pattern of government grants:

1. The loss of long-term state and federal members with Ministerial influence;

2. The size and division of the Valley between the two federal electorates of Cowper and Page; the former with its centre in Lismore and the latter with its centre in Coffs Harbour;

3. Inaccuracies in government perceptions of the Clarence Valley's population size and growth. Some local community leaders note the inability of government agencies to separate the concept of the Valley from the former Grafton City and the decline in the city's immediate population.

Other characteristics of the Clarence Valley which may have influenced the demand and growth for government services include:

•   Limited community activism or engagement in decision-making; and

•   A high degree of community self-reliance, resilience and cohesiveness.

Demographic Snapshot – generally based on 2001 ABS Census

The Clarence Valley has:

•   A total population of 47,673 in 2001, with an estimated population as at June 30th 2005 of 49,538;

•   The second most populous LGA in the Northern Rivers region of NSW;

•   Significantly higher proportion of the population in the 60-84 year age group (22.3%) compared to NSW (15.9%);

•   Higher proportion of population in the 5-17 years age group (19.8%) compared to NSW (18.3%);

•   The Clarence Valley unemployment rate as at June 2006 was 8.4% compared to NSW at 5.3%. The Clarence Valley rate is the average of the four previous LGAs and includes the rate of 10.1% for the Ulmarra Statistical Local Area of the previous Pristine Waters LGA;

•   As at 2001 there was a significantly higher unemployment rate of 14.2% compared to NSW at 7.2%, including youth unemployment of 24.1% compared to state average of 13.3%;

•   Low labour force participation rate at 50.0% well below the state average of 62.2%;

•   The population is markedly under qualified compared to NSW, MNCSD and the Northern Rivers region, with low completion of Year 12 schooling and low attainment of non-school qualifications;

•   Household income is significantly lower compared to NSW. The most frequent household income group is $300 - $399 per week, compared to $1,500 - $1,999 per week for NSW, with an average weekly household income of $662 compared to State average of $987 (ATO figures 2000/01);

- A high proportion (10.6%) of one parent families with children less than 15 years compared to NSW (8.6%);

- A low use of computers and internet. The percentage of the population who used computers and the internet in the week prior to the 2001 Census was 32.2% and 24.3% respectively. This is significantly less than the proportion for NSW at 41.2% and 36.4%. It is also marginally less then the use in the MNC (34.2% and 26.4%) and the Northern Rivers (34.9% and 28.4%); and

- A significantly higher percentage of the population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander at 4.1% compared to NSW at 1.9%. The proportion is also higher than for the MNCSD (3.8%) and Northern Rivers (3.1%).

The Clarence Coast:

- Has a significantly older population with 24% aged 60 years and over compared to NSW at 17.3%; and

- Is experiencing the greatest growth in population in the Clarence Valley with an increase of 1,116 persons between 1996 and 2001 or 6.14% growth.

Key Issues

Seven Key Issues were identified through the consultation process. Each Key Issue has a sub-set of issues and needs as listed below the heading.

Health

Identified issue or need

- Capacity of health services – need for better infrastructure and services, insufficient health workforce, redevelopment of hospitals required and demand for preventative health services
- Use and abuse of alcohol
- Difficulty accessing existing services both within the Valley and outside the Valley due to lack of the service or cost of public transport
- The growing level of childhood obesity in the Clarence Valley

Community Support Services, Information, Participation and Governance

Identified issue or need

- Limited supply of support services for families, children, young people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) population & women
- Lack of information about existing services and difficulty in accessing this information
- Limited opportunities to meet people other than sport and pubs–need more cultural activities
- Limited participation of the community in decision-making and establishment and support of services

Transport

Identified issue or need

- Public transport is inadequate
- Affordability of transport –the cost of transport, both public and private, is prohibitive to use for many disadvantaged groups
- Lack of information on available public transport
- Accessibility of transport for less mobile people

Housing

Identified issue or need

- Lack of affordable and suitable housing, both for purchase and for rent leading to homelessness, and people having to leave the area – for all target groups such as:
  - women who are re-settling after Domestic Violence experiences
  - lack of housing options for older people
  - difficulty in finding housing for people with a disability- accessible, supported, trying to live singly, people with mental health problems. Includes the need for accessible and adaptable respite and holiday accommodation
  - lack of crisis accommodation – what is available is difficult to find
  - need Affordable and appropriate housing for young people

Employment, Education and Training

Identified issue or need

- There are insufficient training courses and study options available. Course fees restrict access for low income people who are not eligible for subsidies via Job Network
- Migrants with non-English speaking backgrounds experience difficulty in accessing educational and employment opportunities due to:
  - Training and/or qualifications from other countries not always recognised here
  - Lack of affordable literacy and conversation courses
- Lack of employment opportunities for target groups – young people, people with a disability, older people, CALD and women
- Employment insecurity due to casualisation of the workforce, the changes to Industrial relations law and low wages

Crime and Legal Services

Identified issue or need

- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault rates are very high in the Valley – although much is unreported
- Misuse and abuse of drugs and alcohol and their affect on safety in the Valley
- Young people and crime, and anti-social behaviour, particularly on weekends and holidays
- Fear of crime & perception of policing

Infrastructure

Identified issue or need

- Infrastructure to provide for people with a disability and older people, eg. physical access to public facilities, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, public toilets, recreational and leisure facilities
- Inadequate facilities to encourage social opportunities and participation. Community, recreational and cultural infrastructure provides important components of the framework to develop a healthy, well-functioning and strong community

Summary of Issues by Target Groups

This section summarises for each of the target groups the key issues discussed earlier.

Children

- Limited community support services for children and families apart from child care to assist families at an early stage before inadequate parenting skills impact on children.
- Parents of children with a disability find it difficult to access overnight respite.
- Long waiting list for the speech pathologist in Grafton as there has been a spike in children requiring intervention and position not filled when on leave.
- No regular children's interagency.

- Parents of children with a disability in the Lower Clarence find it difficult to access the service in Early Intervention Service Grafton.
- Young mothers need support services.
- Childhood obesity increasing in the Valley.
- Coffs Child Sexual Assault Service covers the Clarence Valley but has a long waiting list.
- Lack of suitable affordable housing impacting on families and children.

Young People

- Higher proportion of the 12-17 age cohorts than for NSW, but significant lack of services and facilities to support.
- Significantly high youth unemployment.
- Poorly behaved few tarnish the public image of the rest.

- High rate of birth to mothers 20 years and less.
- Limited adolescent health services.
- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.

Older People

- Limited aged health services for the size of the population.
- Need an increase to community transport due to huge demand.

- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.
- There is a gap in up-market retirement housing provided by the private market that does not require government subsidy. Provides more choice in housing arrangements.

People with a Disability

- There is little rentable accessible housing.
- Lack of a community Occupational Therapist for modification assessments.
- There is a lack of physical access to commercial, retail premises and public toilets.
- There is only 1 disabled taxi in Grafton and none in the Lower Clarence.
- Long waiting time for PADP equipment.

- Lack of pedestrian crossings generally, but particularly in Grafton and Yamba.
- Footpaths are a major issue. There are obstacles that make access difficult.
- Impacted by lack of public accessible transport and cost to be involved in activities.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People

- There are language barriers when trying to access services. Services not accessing telephone interpreters.
- Need a greater understanding of cultural differences within the community through cultural activities.

- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.
- Information about services needs to be promoted to the migrant community.
- Need more opportunities/places for people to meet.

Women

• Limited women's health services.	• High level of domestic violence.
• Limited access to information and support.	• High level of (unreported) sexual assault.
• Limited housing options.	• Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.
• Limited employment opportunities – mostly in low paid, casual jobs.	• Limited representation of women in leadership roles.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Social Plan will be monitored and evaluated through the following mechanisms.

• Reports to the Quarterly Management Review of Council.

• Reports by Community Development Officers (CDO) to the relevant Interagencies and Section 355 Advisory Committees.

• The Annual review on the progress of Council's access and equity strategies.

• Annual Report of Council.

• Monitoring will occur through assessment of the CDOs work plans.

• Monitoring and evaluation will be part of the Service Agreements developed with Agencies.

Implementation and the Access and Equity Strategies

The Access and Equity Plan provides draft strategies and/or possible actions to minimise or resolve the needs and issues prioritised in the Social Plan.

The issues raised in the Key Issues section are addressed in the Access and Equity Plan. Following the final adoption of the Social Plan by Council, the Social Planning and Community Development Department will organise a series of workshops with key agencies and interested community members to identify:

• the lead agency/ies or existing forums to address the findings in each category;
• refine the analysis of factors contributing to the problems and needs identified; and
• develop practical and sustainable action plans to address the contributing factors.

A summary of the Access and Equity Plan follows.

Summary Access and Equity Plan

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Health		
A significant shortfall in health services, workforce and infrastructure	1. Strengthening of the Clarence Valley Health Forum (CVHF) to establish a series of health priorities and plans 2. Clarence Valley Council through the CVHF to negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement with the NCAHS to • Support the implementation of the Grafton and Community Health Clinical Services Plan (GCHCSP) and the development of the CV wide Plan • Prioritise the gaps in service provision identified in the Social Plan that are omitted from the GCHCSP • Collaborate on attracting an equitable allocation of the new Mental Health resources • Progress the implementation of the redevelopment of the Grafton and Maclean hospitals and establishment of the Community Well-being Health Centre in Yamba • Ensure the merger with Coffs Network does not disguise the under-servicing of the Clarence Valley • Develop strategies to attract and retain medical, nursing and allied health workforce to the CV	All
Shortfall in Health Related Transport	Increase the allocation of resources to the Health Related Transport budget in the Clarence Valley	Patients without access to private transport
Impact of alcohol	Support the Clarence Valley Community Drug Action Team to investigate and develop an action plan to address related issues	All
Community Support Services, Information, and Participation and Governance		
Community Support Services		
Limited supply of community support services	**Children and Families** 1. CVC and relevant agencies to negotiate with Federal and State Government Departments to address the shortfall in the range of support services for children and families 2. Council in partnership with key children services agencies to facilitate the development of a children's services interagency **Young People** Recognition and support for young people by CVC and community 3. Establish effective mechanisms for engagement with young people across all areas to identify specific needs and to develop strategies to address the needs through the development of a CVC Youth Strategic Plan 4. CVC and relevant agencies to negotiate with Federal and State Government Departments to address the shortfall in the range of support services for young people, including early intervention health services and youth transport 5. Develop agreement with DADHC to address the long-term care of severely disabled young adults who are inappropriately housed in Nursing Homes and to provide overnight centre based respite for children and young adults **Women** 6. Support and assist the Clarence Valley Women's Refuge to further develop Women's Resource Centres in the Clarence Valley 7. Develop agreement with the Clarence Valley Women Inc to support the implementation of its Strategic Plan **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) People** 8. Investigate the feasibility of enhancing the current CALD support services in the Clarence Valley	All
Meeting the needs of an ageing population	Council to develop an implementation plan arising from its Older Persons Policy	Older people
Adequate resourcing of services for people with a disability	Council to continue to support the Access Committees and associated Disability Action Plans	People with a disability
Growing population of CALD residents including new trend of recent arrivals	1. CVC to develop an Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement 2. Provide opportunities to increase understanding of cultural differences through cultural activities such as the Festival of the Five Senses 3. Promote to services and businesses the availability and use of interpreters	CALD
Information		
Limited access to information	Develop a Community Information Dissemination Strategy: A) For CVC information 1. Develop the libraries as a recognised community information distributor and point of access 2. Council to develop a partnership with rural stores, clubs etc to distribute information throughout the LGA – eg. Notice board at village stores, rural stores, and to promote its use to the public 3. Promote use of CVC website B) For General Information 4. Support for either the use of written community directories or updating of on-line	All

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
	directories – with promotion of how to access the information	
	5. Council to assist in determining a coordinated approach to collect relevant statistics by services to use for lobbying for additional resources	
	6. Noticeboard at town entrances to promote events and functions	
Participation and Governance		
Participation by the community	1. Clarence Valley Community Development Officers (CDO) to be responsible for a geographic area of the Valley in addition to their area of interest/target group to provide a contact for residents of the area	All
	2. Community Information Strategy will assist in raising awareness of issues, facilities and activities to provide for greater participation by residents	
	3. Development of the CV Cultural Plan and the Community and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan will increase the range of activities available to residents	
Ageing of volunteers	Develop and implement campaign to assist community groups and Valley Volunteers to promote volunteering to newly retired and to younger people	All
Limited number of NGOs in Lower Clarence	Treelands Drive Community Centre Development Officer to investigate the establishment of a new entity and to support existing CV non-government organisations to diversify services in the Lower Clarence	All
Decrease in strategic collaboration and partnership between NGOs, CVC and Gov't agencies	Develop a Clarence Valley Human Services Strategic Alliance at a senior level to build trust, share information and work collaboratively to enhance the human services sector in the Clarence Valley	All

Transport

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Inadequate public transport Insufficient affordability or accessible transport and information about services	1. CV Public Transport Working Group (PTWG) to negotiate with the Ministry of Transport (MOT) to develop a set of priority service improvements for public transport, including the recommendations of the Grafton Bus Strategy	All
	2. Campaign to attract additional Community Transport funding	

Housing

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Shortfall in affordable and accessible housing in suitable Clarence Valley locations	Completion of the Clarence Valley Affordable Housing Strategy and implement identified strategies including Investigation into the potential for the provision of a range of retirement housing options, including private developments	All

Employment, Education and Training

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Skilling of the workforce	The strategies below are from the CV Economic Development Plan Strengthen the linkages between industry and training providers to ensure the required training needs of industry are met and facilitated by providers 1. Establish training industry reference group 2. Prepare training demand and needs assessments 3. Develop responsive training products and services 4. Develop a set of best practice examples 5. Raise awareness of training products and services	Youth Women People with a Disability (PWD) CALD
Migrants from a non-English speaking background experience difficulty in accessing educational and employment opportunities	1. Increase understanding of cultural diversity by local service providers through cross-cultural awareness training particularly in essential areas such as health, education, community welfare, housing, police and justice 2. More, and affordable English language literacy and conversation courses	CALD
Unemployment	Implementation of the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategy	All

Crime and Legal Services

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Crime and anti-social behaviour	1. Develop and implement Crime Prevention Plan e.g. (conduct audit on community safety and crime prevention at known "hot spots" to reduce risks to women and young people at night) 2. Link the Plan to the Cultural Development Plan, Youth Strategic Plan, Community Drug Action Team and negotiations with NCAHS to increase Sexual Assault Service 3. Police to visit communities – use the Police Accountability Community Team	All
Limited advice and assistance at both Courts re applications for Apprehended Violence Orders (AVO) and other Domestic Violence matters.	Develop an agreement with NSW Attorney Generals for an appropriately resourced DV Court support program to operate at both Grafton and Maclean Courts	Women
Access to affordable legal advice and information for individuals, and community organizations	1. Develop service agreement with Legal Aid Commission and NR Community Legal Centre to provide access to legal information 2. Promote the legal aid service 3. Investigate the opportunity to co-locate with the Aboriginal Legal Service commencing in Grafton 4. Council to assist community groups in accessing affordable Public Liability insurance	All

Infrastructure

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Shortfall of appropriate footpaths, road crossings, cycleways, gopher/scooter paths, access to buildings etc	1. Develop a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2. Develop a Council Bike Plan 3. Implement the Grafton Open Space Plan 4. Council to implement its Disability Policy- and apply it to the whole Clarence Valley. 5. Council to review and implement the Maclean and Grafton City Disability Action Plans, and apply to whole of the Clarence Valley Council 6. Appropriate Transport Infrastructure to be placed strategically throughout the CV 7. Develop internal service agreements with Council Divisions to implement access priorities	People with access mobility issues

Key Issue	Access and Equity Strategy	Target Group
Use of sporting facilities by children	Council to investigate the cost of sporting/recreational activities and ways to reduce these costs that can prohibit children participating in activities	Children Young people
Shortfall in Community and Cultural facilities	Preparation of a Community and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan	All
Lack of recreational activities in the Lower Clarence	Implement Council's priorities from the Lower Clarence Recreation Needs Assessment: 1. Detailed feasibility assessment into a multi function youth and indoor sports facility at the Yamba Sports Complex. 2. Further investigation into possible partnership for indoor sport and recreation at Maclean; 3. Further report be provided on recreational spaces and activities for young people	All in Lower Clarence

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Social Planning Legislation

In 1998 the New South Wales (NSW) State Government introduced the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999 requiring all Councils in NSW to develop a social/community plan every five years, commencing with the 1999 – 2004 period, and to report on the identified access and equity activities in their annual reports.

The Regulation was introduced to ensure service delivery to the community by local government meets the principles of equity, access, participation and rights. Seven population groups that are frequently overlooked in local government planning are identified in the Regulation to ensure their needs are included in the Social Plan. The population groups the Social Plan must address are:

- Children (0-11 years);
- Young people (12 – 24 years);
- Older people (Aboriginal people aged 45 years and over and non-Aboriginal people aged 55 years and over);
- Women;
- People with a disability;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
- People from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Councils may also consider other population groups such as men, persons living with HIV and AIDS, and Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual persons. The needs of these groups were not identified in the development of the brief for the Social Plan, and have not been included. However recognition is given that some examination of the specific needs will be required in future planning.

The Clarence Valley Council also required the needs of the general community to be included in the development of the Social Plan.

Councils in NSW prepared their second Social Plan by late 2004 for the period 2005 – 2009. With the formation of the amalgamated council of Clarence Valley in 2004 the Department of Local Government granted an extension to November 2006 for Clarence Valley Council (CVC) to prepare the 2006 – 2009 Social Plan.

1.2 Background to the Clarence Valley Social Plan

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Plan is to promote a more inclusive community by identifying and advocating responses by local government and other agencies and services to community needs and diversity, in accordance with social justice principles.

1.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- Promote fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those most in need;
- Recognise and promote people's rights and improve the accountability of decision makers;
- Ensure that people have fairer access to the economic resources and services essential to meeting their basic needs and improving their quality of life;
- Give people better opportunities for genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives.

1.2.3 Desired Outcomes:

The desired outcomes of the Plan are:

- Strong, cohesive communities;

- Better quality of life;

- Assistance to groups and areas experiencing disadvantage;

- A planned and orderly approach to delivering services and facilities – inform Council's landuse and facility planning;

- To bring individuals and organisations together to enable development of effective ways to address disadvantage in the Valley - enhanced partnerships;

- Economic benefits that will assist in addressing community adversity; and

- Environmental benefits that enhance community well-being.

The Social Plan is not exhaustive and it is recognised that there will be unidentified needs remaining in the community. It is also recognised that additional issues and needs may arise or be identified during the period the Plan is in operation.

1.2.4 Structure of the Social Plan

There are six main sections to the Clarence Valley Social Plan:

1. Introduction;
2. The review of the previous Social Plan;
3. Context;
4. Community profile and information about the target groups;
5. Identified Issues; and
6. Recommended strategies through an Access and Equity Plan.

1.3 Integrated Planning

The Social Plan provides key strategic directions to enhance the quality of life and social well-being of the Clarence Valley community.

Clarence Valley Council has a number of additional strategic plans that support the Sustainability Initiative detailed below.

1.3.1 Clarence Valley Sustainability Framework

The Clarence Valley Sustainability Framework identifies the key values of the Clarence Valley community and seeks to improve the understanding and management of the Valley's ecological, social, cultural and economic assets. The Framework facilitates consideration of the potential and likely impacts of decisions and actions on present and future generations. The aim is for continual improvement of assessment and decision making, with an emphasis on positive outcomes for the natural environment and community well-being. (Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: clarence valley sustainability initiative)

The Clarence Valley Social Plan has been developed within the context of the core aims and elements of the Framework in particular the three elements of society and culture: good community relations; creative culture and recreation; and community health and wellbeing.

1.3.2 Clarence Valley Council Plan of Management 2006/2007

Each year Clarence Valley Council prepares and revises its 3 year Management Plan which sets out the Council's vision, mission, corporate values and duties, and corporate goals based on its various strategic plans . (Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: council reports and documents → Budget and Management Plan)

The Clarence Valley Council's Vision is: "Maintaining the liveability of the Valley by balancing development with environment protection, by enhancing social and cultural values while developing public infrastructure."

The Social Plan provides access and equity strategies for incorporation in the Management Plan.

1.4 Other Strategic Plans

Other plans of Council that will impact on or being influenced by the Social Plan are:

- Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999;

- Maclean and Grafton Disability Action Plans;

- Review of the Clarence Valley Community Centres 2006;
  (www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/your community/community centres and halls)

- Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategy 2006;
  (Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: economic development plan)

- Lower Clarence Recreational Needs Assessment 2006;
  Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: lower clarence recreation needs assessment

- Clarence Valley Cultural Plan (due for completion March 2007);

- Clarence Valley Crime Prevention Plan (due for completion May 2007);

- Clarence Valley Affordable Housing Strategy (due for completion in 2007); and

- Clarence Valley Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (due for completion in 2007).

1.5 Methodology

Methodology Outline	
Task	**Output**
Stage 1 – December 2005 to April 2006: Establishment	
Identify and establish broad parameters of methodology.	Development of the Social Plan brief and Terms of Reference and membership of the Social Planning Advisory Group (SPAG) and the project Management Team (PMT) developed. Geographic Planning areas determined. Consultant engaged.
Stage 2 – April to June 2006: Data Gathering and Consultation	
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) demographic profiles	Community Profiles developed and finalised by id profiles.
Surveys	Surveys for individuals and community organisations and government agencies finalised and distributed networks and placed on CVC website.
Consultation meetings	Meetings held in localities and with target groups and community services to collect data re needs and issues.
Non-ABS demographic data identified	Data collected from other sources
Stage 3– June to August 2006: Analysis and Assessment of Needs and Issues	
Data analysis	Data from surveys and meetings analysed for trends re issues and needs
Identification of gaps in services and facilities.	Issues and needs sorted into identified gaps in services and facilities and key social issues by localities and target groups.
Prioritisation	Key issues and needs prioritised
First Draft of Plan Chapters	Consolidated needs assessment and analysis of data, including prioritisation.
Stage 4 –August to November 2006: Preparation of Social Plan	
Final Social Plan	Delivery of the final draft Plan to be placed on exhibition for public comment. Social Plan finalised after exhibition and delivered to the NSW Department of Local Government

1.6 Indigenous Chapter of the Clarence Valley Social Plan 2001-2005

In 2004 the Clarence Valley Council's Social Plan Working Party engaged Durahrwa Consulting Services, to update the Indigenous Issues chapter of the 2001 Clarence Valley Social Plan. The process they followed was to consult widely with the Indigenous community on issues relevant to their needs. This was done through a

process of arranged meetings with Aboriginal communities of Baryulgil, Malabugilmah, Grafton, Maclean, and Yamba. Implementation commenced in 2005.

This Social Plan therefore does not include issues or strategies for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

The Chapter can be obtained from Council's Social Planning and Community Development Department on 0266417211 or from Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: aboriginal services and liaison and click on the link to "Indigenous Chapter of the Social Plan".

During consultations the communities expressed concern that resources were insufficient or unavailable to access services in:

- Training and employment;

- Housing;

- Health and safety including mental health and grief and loss;

- Transport; and

- Information.

Clarence Valley Council employs a Community Development Officer (Aboriginal Services) in the Social Planning and Community Development Department.

This Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Indigenous Chapter of the Social Plan 2004-2009. The implementation commenced with the establishment of Community Working Groups in the five major Aboriginal Communities within the Clarence Valley (Grafton, Maclean, Yamba, Baryulgil and Malabugilmah). Nominees from the Working Groups formed the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Advisory Committee (CVACC) (established August 2005).

The purpose of CVACC, along with Council representation is to oversee and guide the implementation of the Aboriginal Chapter of the Clarence Valley Social Plan and to establish a communication structure between the Aboriginal communities of the Clarence Valley, the Clarence Valley Council and service providers.

The CVACC has the responsibility to negotiate Service Agreements with service providers to secure the commitment of staff and resources to overcome identified problems and needs.

2 REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS PLAN

The Clarence Valley Social Plan 2001 was prepared by the Community Development Officers employed by the former Grafton, Maclean, Copmanhurst and Pristine Waters Councils and a consultant who prepared the chapter on Employment.

The plan was signed off by the four former Councils. Since the preparation of this plan the former Councils have been amalgamated into the Clarence Valley Council. It is a requirement that the previous Social Plan be reviewed as part of preparing a new Social Plan.

The 2004 amalgamation of these former councils has resolved difficulties which may have been experienced in coordination of a standard methodology including community consultations and formatting of reports. Similarly it is expected that the amalgamation will secure better coordination and hence achievement of the 2005 –2009 Social Plan findings.

The review of the 2001-2004 Social Plan has identified what has been achieved in the areas identified in the 2001 Social Plan. Achievements over this time reflect the work of local, state and commonwealth government and non-government agencies and local community groups.

Transport

- Improvements in level of services provided across the Clarence Valley but still insufficient in terms of accessibility and affordability.
- Regional transport workers appointed to both Northern Rivers Social Development Council and the Department of Transport.
- Transit centre opened in Grafton in 2002.
- Cycleways extended around Grafton.
- Two low floor buses on Grafton CBD routes.
- Aboriginal transport liaison position funded with Clarence Community Transport Inc (CCT) and health related transport funds increased.

Children

- Families First services were established in the Clarence Valley in 2001.
- There were no significant increases in service provision in areas listed including pre-schools, child protection, drug related and domestic violence all of which have a significant impact on children.
- Out of Schools Hours Care and Vacation Care is provided for 202 children under the age of 12 in Maclean and Yamba.
- Development of management options to save local pre school Jacaranda Pre-School (South Grafton).

Youth

- Some improvement in outreach services however a downgrading of some services from full-time to part time for example the Reconnect Program and also the loss of some services at Community Programs Inc. including out of home care and post release support program for juvenile offenders leaving the Grafton based Acmena Juvenile Detention Centre.
- Youth brokerage funds were used for a range of Community Development projects e.g. Youth housing and youth leadership.
- Improvement in links into schools e.g. Suspension intervention, local government week youth involvement, youth forums and increased funding for youth programmes. Schools are increasingly supportive of youth initiatives being driven by Council and are encouraging their young people to be involved with initiatives such as forums, Youth Advisory Committees, youth week planning and management.
- Improved education in healthy relationships. Community Health has been delivering the Love Bites program to year nine students. Rolling out into State Schools however is very expensive to run.

Community Programs Inc. is working with youth at risk regarding anger management and life-skills for example diet, budgeting etc.

⬧ Improved education in Drugs and Alcohol.

⬧ Youth Week program coordinated and funded.

⬧ Assisted South Grafton Tenants' Association with development of a School Suspension Support Project for young people in Grafton.

⬧ "Shout Out" a Clarence Valley Youth magazine commenced publication in 2006 supported by the North Coast Area Assistance Scheme.

Women

⬧ Lower Clarence Domestic Violence Liaison Committee formed – organised events and town signs, against domestic violence.

⬧ Women's Refuge has developed partnerships with court support, crisis accommodation and provides a Women's Resource Centre one day per week in Maclean with free legal service.

⬧ Clarence Valley Women Incorporated formed and the Discover Our Way development program completed with State government funding and a Strategic Plan developed for 2004-2007.

⬧ Families First programs are outreaching to isolated women and have provided improved antenatal care at Grafton and Maclean hospitals.

⬧ Discovery Ministry implemented young Aboriginal women's program in the Lower Clarence. Aboriginal women's group formed in Maclean through community health.

⬧ Aboriginal women's resource and health centre building allocated at Hillcrest, Maclean and refurbished using a North Coast Area Assistance Scheme grant.

⬧ Women's Health services remain limited with only one women's health nurse for the whole Valley. Advertising of the clinics in outlying areas was initially on some of the previous Councils' websites, however, since amalgamation, these notices have not been incorporated into the new Council's website. The sexual assault counselling service has difficulties in maintaining staff levels.

Older People

⬧ Significant increase in State and Commonwealth funded Home and Community Care services, including a new service, Social Support (Neighbour Aid).

⬧ Respite cottage established in Ulmarra and RSL day clubs established in Grafton, Brushgrove and Yamba.

⬧ Grafton community centre constructed with HACC and Council funding.

⬧ Village Life opened providing rental accommodation for 40 older people, meals and some cleaning.

⬧ Seniors Week programs held each year with a variety of activities and good support from the community, Council and other organisations.

People with Disabilities

⬧ Disability Discrimination Action Plans (DDAP) adopted by Grafton City and Maclean Shire Councils. No DDAP for amalgamated Council.

⬧ Active access committees have led to a reduction in physical barriers across the Valley.

⬧ Improved access to sport and recreation e.g. Wheelchair sports at high schools and Sailing for people with disabilities.

⬧ Active International Day of People with DisAbility (IDD) committee organises annual International Day of people with disability celebrations.

⬧ Limited increase in funding by State government e.g. Adult Training Learning and Support (ATLAS) programme and accommodation services through Caringa. There is still a shortfall especially for people with severe disabilities requiring equipment, respite and supported accommodation.

⬧ Limited support for students with disabilities in mainstream schools and to attend Vacation Care.

♦ Little improvement in affordability of living costs and access to employment, education, training opportunities.

Health

Health issues were not included separately in 2001 Plan, but included in strategies under specific target groups.

♦ HIV/AIDS – some Council staff have received training in sharps handling and disposal.

♦ Increase in health services with psychogeriatric nurse position, mental health for older people program, dementia rehabilitation program, aged care services manager, transitional care and access to video conferencing for geriatrician. Dental service in Grafton upgraded and antenatal care increased in Maclean and Grafton. Some nursing and paramedical positions are funded but not successfully recruited.

♦ Other issues as listed have not been addressed by the Area Health Service: No community Occupational Therapy position for Grafton, no rehabilitation centre, lack of resources for health promotion, no re-development of Grafton or Maclean hospitals and community health, no community well being centre at Yamba. No 24 hour sexual assault service, lack of bulk billing by GPs, limited progress on Women's Health Strategic Plan, no MOU or partnership between women's refuge and mental health service. Long waiting times for essential equipment through PADP.

Employment

♦ Council has established Economic Development Unit and developed a broad reaching Economic Development Strategic Plan.

♦ Community Economic Development Strategic Plans developed and implemented for a number of locations across the Valley.

♦ TAFE courses broadened into arts and culture but experienced loss in some trades resulting in young people having to travel outside the Valley for training.

♦ Information about the National Harvest Trail now available from the internet.

♦ New School of Arts provides training to organisations that use volunteers and policy and procedures manual.

♦ Women in Business seminars partnership between Business Enterprise centre (BEC) Lower Clarence, Department of State and Regional Development, Clarence Valley Women – Discover Our Way (NSW Department for Women).

♦ Lower Clarence BEC Women in Home Based Business seminars funded by NSW Department for Women.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

♦ Improved access to transport as a result of CCT appointing an Aboriginal Transport Development Worker.

♦ A co-ordinated approach to health issues between Community Health Services and the Aboriginal Medical Service. As a result the two organisations worked co-operatively in particular to deal with mental health issues in the remote communities of Baryulgil and Malabugilmah.

♦ The appointment of a Community Development Officer Aboriginal Services (CDO-AB) position which in turn led to regular interagency meetings, an e-mail database of all Aboriginal Services and regular visits to the communities by the CDO-AB.

♦ Women's group formed in Maclean in conjunction with community health.

♦ Women's resource and health centre building allocated at Maclean.

♦ Recent development of support for programs which directly support economic opportunities for Aboriginal people and communities.

♦ Lower Clarence Valley Aboriginal Youth Program Partnerships project was funded in 2002 for two years, by the National Suicide Prevention Strategy – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Projects.

- Aboriginal Consultative Committee a Section 355 Committee of Council established. This committee is supported by working groups in five major communities.

- Developed draft Service Agreements to commit agencies to implementation of Indigenous Chapter of Social Plan 2004-2009 finding and recommendations.

- Negotiation of Council commitments to implementing relevant sections (engineering, planning, social, economic, human resources) of the Indigenous Chapter of the Social Plan.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

- Council is the auspice and provides support and facilitation for local committee to hold annual multi-cultural street festival, Festival of the 5 Senses. The festival was held on the Sunday 28 May 2006.

- Cross Cultural Training for local service providers was offered in partnership with Department Immigration Community Services Settlement Scheme Officer.

- Council supported the Grafton Women's Group (CALD) to organise Harmony Day Event at the Grafton Community and Function Centre.

- An Advisory Group has been established in the Lower Clarence.

3   CONTEXT

3.1   Environmental and Cultural Context

The needs and strategies to achieve the desired outcomes of the Clarence Valley Social Plan are influenced by the environmental and cultural context of the Clarence Valley. This is more than the demographics of its population. Landscape and the culture of the community influence how a community develops and the needs of an area.

3.1.1   Settlement Patterns and the Historical Impact of Landscape, Land Use and Road Access

The Clarence Valley is a broad river valley with rich alluvial soils formed by repeated inundation from the largest river on the eastern seaboard.

Settlement occurred on the flood plain from the early 1880's but was restricted in the latter part of the twentieth century to the localities protected by levy walls. The higher ground tends towards poorer quality soil, unlike the Richmond and Tweed Valleys with their hills of rich volcanic soils that support the smaller intensive farming movement of the past few decades.

The width of the Clarence River which dissects the valley from west to east was a major barrier to transport and was not bridged until the 1930's when South and North Grafton were connected by the train and road bridge and 1966 when the vehicular ferry linking the Pacific Highway at Harwood was replaced by an opening 4 lane bridge.

The Pacific Highway runs close to the coast to the north and south of the Clarence Valley, but for its Clarence Valley corridor detours inland through South Grafton. The residential growth that has occurred on the North Coast in recent decades has tended to occur along the coastal villages in close proximity to the Highway. The Clarence coastal villages have been insulated by the isolation of the single access roads of considerable distance from the highway.

The undeveloped state of the Clarence Coast resulted in the vast majority of the coastline being declared National Parks during the 1980's and 1990's. The Clarence Valley now has the largest track of coastal National Park in NSW. All coastal villages are surrounded by National Park restricting the spread of urban development.

Bernard Salt a partner with KPMG Australia who specialises in the demographics of Seachangers (households moving to coastal areas for a change in lifestyle) recently indicated on regional radio[1] that the ratio of Seachangers who settle on the narrow coastal margin compared to Treechangers, who settle further inland, is 10:1.

The combination of these factors has resulted in the Clarence Valley growing at a slower rate than many neighbouring areas, and without the same degree of population pressure.

3.1.2   Changes to the Centre of North Coast Administration

A number of factors resulted in Grafton historically being the (unofficial) regional headquarters for the North Coast, with government departmental offices, and a city of administrative and political influence:

• Grafton was the site of the first European settlement on the Far North Coast and was the first City gazetted in the region in 1885.

• In 1914 the Anglican Diocese of Grafton was established with the Bishopric based in Grafton.

• Sir John See, the member for the State seat of Grafton, was the Premier of NSW at Federation and until 1904.

• Dr Earl Page was elected to the Federal seat of Cowper based on Grafton in 1919. He later formed and headed the Country Party and was deputy Prime Minister during 1923 – 1929 and 1934, and was Prime Minister for a short time in 1939.

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[1] North Coast ABC Regional Radio, interview with Bernard Salt, Friday 3 November 2006

- The Clarence Valley has, over the decades, been frequently represented by State members who held Ministerial positions.

As a result a perception of a culture of power and the expectation that the area would be "looked after" developed in the Clarence Valley and the community was rarely expected to lobby or agitate for services.

So too the wealth of the area based on timber and grazing insulated the Clarence Valley from adversity.

The transfer of services and regional headquarters to faster growing areas north and south has occurred gradually since the 1980's. In recent years a limited degree of community activism has been undertaken in an attempt to retain services.

More recently the North Coast Region has focused administration in the centres of Lismore, Ballina and Coffs Harbour. The North Coast is divided into two sub regions the Mid North Coast and the Far North Coast or more frequently the Northern Rivers. The Northern Rivers takes in the local government areas from Clarence Valley to Tweed and the Mid North Coast from the Clarence Valley for some government agencies (eg NSW Planning Department) or more frequently from Coffs Harbour to either Port Macquarie-Hastings or Greater Taree.

The inconsistency of the placement of the Clarence Valley and the focus of administration in Lismore, Ballina, and Coffs Harbour has seen limited growth in new services and a decline in some in the Clarence. The Clarence Valley can suffer from oversight as though it is in the peripheral shadows compared to other areas in the "spotlight of attention."

Clarence Valley Council has a vital role to play to more adequately attract and to retain services and to represent an accurate profile of a large community which is a community experiencing significant population growth and one with a high level of economic and social disadvantage.

Clarence Valley Council has chosen three key planning areas, Clarence Coast with its distinctive growth patterns attracting Seachangers and retirees, Greater Grafton representing much of the former local government areas of Nymboida, Ulmarra, Copmanhurst and Grafton and an area of more limited growth, and Clarence Country with its distinctive features of smaller rural village settlement patterns attracting "tree changers".

3.1.3 Demographics of Settlers

The alternate lifestyle movement commenced in the Richmond Valley area in the mid 1970's with flow on to the Clarence Valley. However the alternate lifestyle settlers did not move to the Clarence Valley in the same numbers and many later moved to a location with a larger population of like minded people.

The growth that occurred from the 1990's on the Clarence Coast is part of the sea change trend, however data[2] indicates a smaller proportion of these settlers than for NSW coastal areas to the north and south are self-funded retirees.

In 2001 the Clarence Coast compared to the Mid North Coast Statistical Division (MNCSD) and the Northern Rivers had a significantly larger proportion of its population in the 60-84 year range.

The 60 plus age group as at 2001 have not generally benefited from the Superannuation Guarantee, introduced in 1992, nor from the wide spread promotion to encourage providing for one's retirement through contributing to superannuation.

A greater proportion of Clarence Valley residents, compared to the majority of LGAs on the MNC and Northern Rivers in this age range, are recipients of the aged pension[3].

It is purported, although research to support has not been sourced, that persons in this age group who are self funded retirees are more likely to have been state and federal public servants as superannuation was a condition of public sector employment for a substantial period prior to 1992, or senior business managers or owners who accumulated assets to provide for retirement.

It is consequently asserted that members of these groups tend to understand how to participate in community action to lobby for services and facilities and also expect and demand to have them available. A

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[2] ABS Experimental Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, 1995/96 to 2000/01
[3] Op cit

following assertion is that a community with fewer numbers of self funded retirees is less likely to secure services and facilities.

3.1.4 Low Income and Social Exclusion

The Clarence Valley experiences severe community adversity, that is, it has a high number of households with a low income, low educational levels, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (SEIFA) developed by the ABS and based on the 2001 census is derived from these attributes and indicates the Clarence Valley has a low score at 946.99.

The Clarence Valley experiences a greater level of disadvantage than many areas within the Mid North Coast such as Bellingen, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie-Hastings. The Shire of Ulmarra, which was amalgamated with Nymboida Shire to form the previous LGA of Pristine Waters, was the lowest ranked LGA in NSW in 2001.

Other measures of disadvantage confirm the SEIFA indicator for the Clarence Valley. According to Tony Vinson's[4] research into community, adversity and resilience using postcodes, the postcode 2460, which includes Grafton and much of the Clarence Country planning area had a quintile ranking of 3 (1 being the lowest and 20 being the highest). Those in the lower quintiles are the most disadvantaged.

Clarenza, Minnie Water, Swan Creek, Ulmarra and Wooli were ranked in the lowest quintile, Iluka was placed in the 2nd quintile, and Maclean and Yamba were in quintile 5. This was the highest quintile ranking in the Clarence Valley.

Recent research on children at risk of social exclusion[5] indicates the Clarence Valley is placed in the top twenty LGAs in NSW for risk. Social exclusion is a multidimensional measure of disadvantage and is defined as "when people or places suffer from a series of problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, ill health and family breakdown."

3.1.5 Impact of Poverty and Minimum Social Standards

A community such as the Clarence Valley experiencing relative socio-economic disadvantage will have many of its residents experiencing difficulty in accessing their fair share of resources and services to meet their basic needs and to improve their quality of life. Socio economic disadvantage limits people's opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their lives. The Clarence Valley Social Plan is designed to identify the issues and needs of the general community and especially the most disadvantaged residents, and to identify strategies to enable them to achieve equitable personal outcomes compared to the general population.

Current research by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC)[6] provides insight to the experience of poverty and community adversity.

Stage 1of the research project draws on the concepts of deprivation and social exclusion and material deprivation.

The research reported thus far was principally directed at identifying what Australians in general, and low-income Australians in particular, regard as the essential components of a socially acceptable minimum standard of living and community participation for children, adults and households.

The findings show that factors that influence the quality of life are:

- Housing location and transport;
- Education including life skills, employment and financial resources;
- Health care;
- Social support and participation in civic life;
- Access to information; and

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[4] Vinson, Tony. Community Adversity and Resilience. March 2004
[5] Children at Risk of Social Exclusion, National Centre for Social & Economic Modelling, University of Canberra, 2006
[6] Experiencing Poverty: The Voices of Low Income Australians. SPRC; Brotherhood of St Laurence; Mission Australia; ACOSS; Anglicare. October 2005

- Respect and dignity.

3.1.6 Social Strengths and Community Culture of the Clarence Valley

The Department for Victorian Communities conducted research during 2004 and 2005 to gain an understanding of what contributes to a strong community[7], with the understanding that a strong community is more likely to increase the confidence and capacity of residents to have greater choice and control over their wellbeing and prosperity. The research identified the main indicators as:

- community attitudes (safety, feeling valued, opportunities to contribute an opinion on issues, appreciating multiculturalism and liking your community);

- participation (attendance at community events and sport, volunteering, membership of an organised group, involvement in community action, parental involvement in schools and involvement in decision making committees); and

- the ability to get help when needed.

The Survey of Individuals conducted for the Social Plan included questions to measure a number of these indicators. The survey indicated a relatively strong community in the Clarence Valley with the following results. It must be noted however that some sections of the community, such as full-time employed tend to have a greater positive response to these questions than the more disadvantaged groups. Ensuring the needs of these disadvantaged groups are heard and addressed so they can respond in more positive terms and contribute to a strong community is one of the main functions of the Social Plan.

The graph below indicates that of the 550 residents responding to the survey, the great majority of all population groups felt that they were part of their community or neighbourhood.
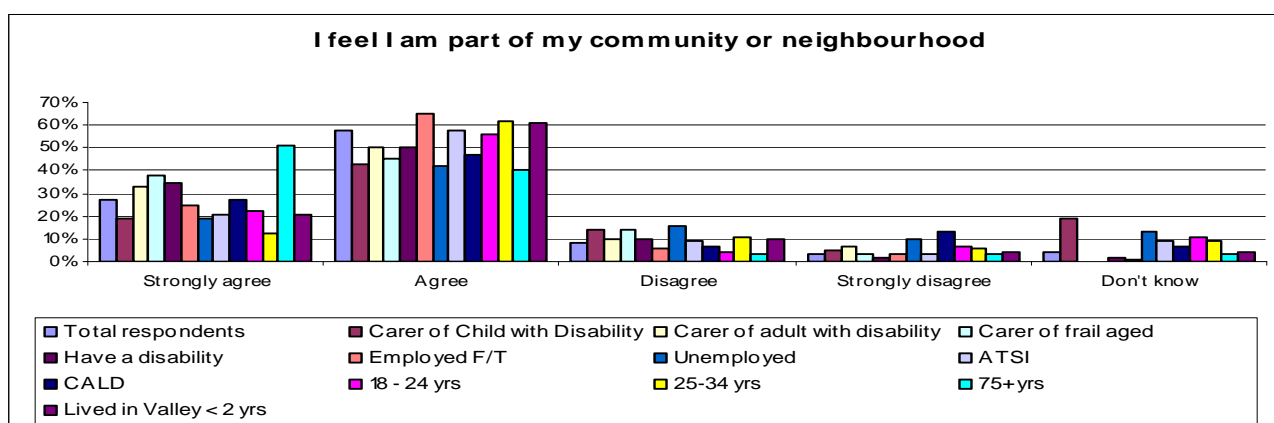
Again the large majority of residents believe that people around them are willing to help out.

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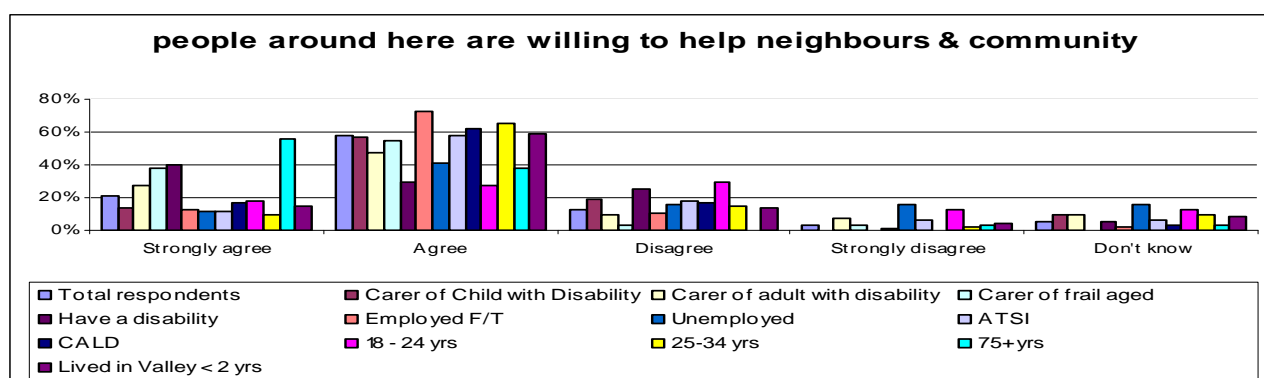
[7]Indicators of community strength at the Local Government Area level in Victoria, 2005 www.dvc.vic.gov.au/spar.htm

The graph below indicates that less than 50% of respondents believe their concerns and opinions can be heard.

Concerns & opinions can be heard
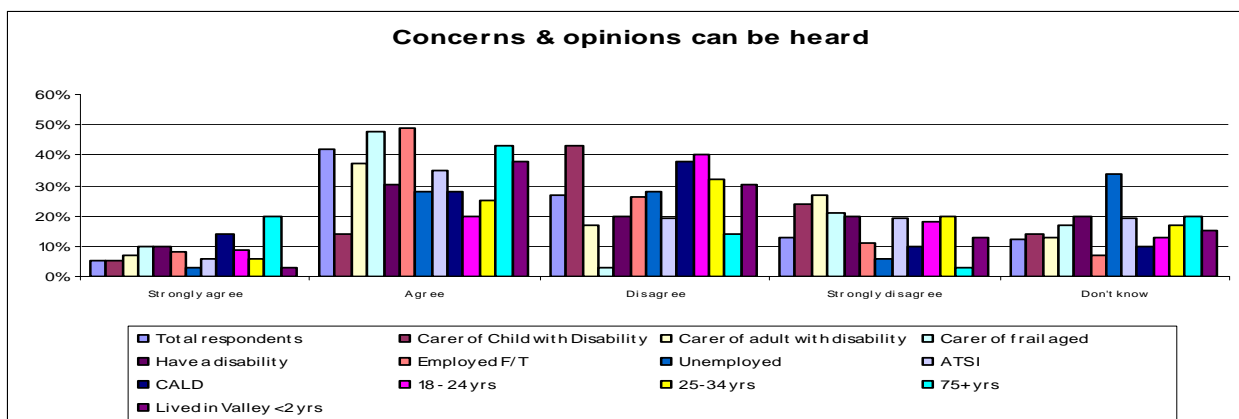
The majority of respondents have participated in a local group, project or event.

In the last 12 months I have been involved in a local community group, project or event
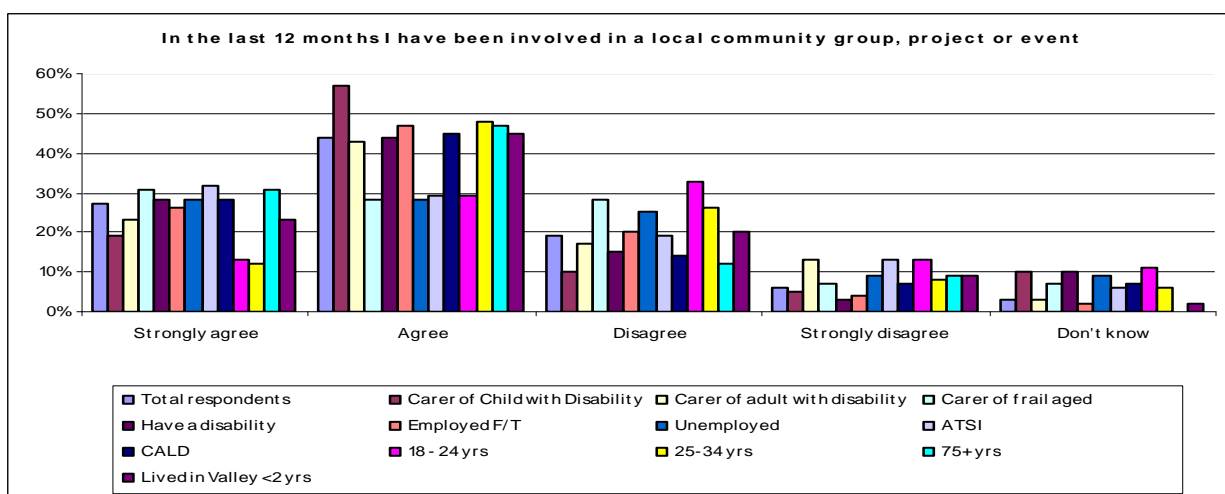
The large majority of respondents believe local businesses support their community.

Businesses in the Clarence Valley support their local community
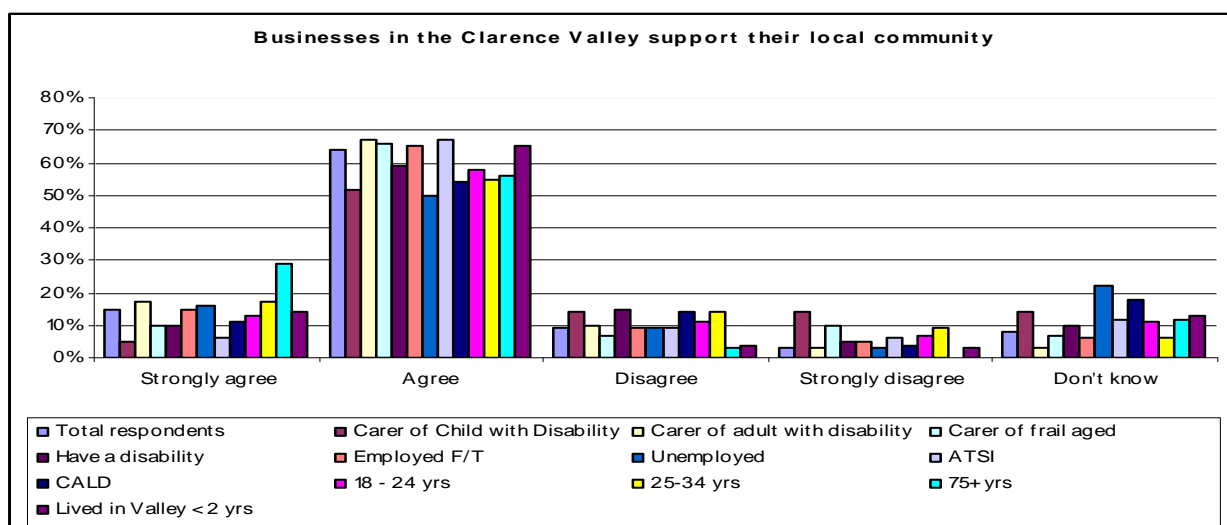
Other measures from the survey have been included in Section 5 dealing with Key Issues.

Historically the community of the Clarence has had a high degree of self-reliance with the ability to 'make-do'. This may reflect the history of settlement and the culture of the long established families who practiced

the concept of working together to provide services and facilities, such as community halls and bushfire brigades.

This is a major social strength that many areas try to cultivate. It is a characteristic to be supported to achieve other positive outcomes.

The Clarence Valley has a large number and range of community service organisations, hobby and self-help groups and clubs, resulting in a strong level of participation in that sphere. The range of these groups is another major strength contributing to the lifestyle enjoyed by residents.

The social strengths of the Clarence Valley have been recognised in a range of economic development forums held in the Valley in the past few years[8]. They include:

- a positive, welcoming and cohesive community;
- a range of lifestyle options from rural to urban to coastal;
- the impact of the environment on lifestyle including proximity to protected coastlines, the Clarence River, National Parks and rural vistas; and
- the availability of infrastructure such as reticulated water, transport, telecommunications and community and sporting infrastructure.

The Social Plan recognises that whilst these assets strengthen the community, there are sections of the community who are unable to access them.

Anecdotal reports indicate the Clarence Valley has a culture that differs from the coastal regions to the north and south.

Some of the characteristics include:

- Limited community activism in decision-making compared to areas such as Byron, Bellingen and Lismore; and

- A high degree of self-reliance, resilience and cohesiveness.

3.1.7 Human Services, Social Capital and Collaboration

For a population of 50,000 the Clarence Valley has a limited number of funded organisations providing support, community development and information services to the community.

The few agencies tend to be quite large providing a range of services across the Clarence Valley with a head office in Grafton, such as Community Programs Inc. There is a lack of service or community development infrastructure in the Valley's coastal growth centres.

In recent years numerous funding opportunities, particularly Commonwealth programs, have either not been pursued by organisations in the Clarence Valley or applications were unsuccessful. The residents of the Clarence Valley rely on politicians, the Council and organisations to seek funding from new government programs.

The Clarence Valley has been recognised in the past two decades for its strong interagency approach by services across the Valley. This culminated in Tony Vinson's 2000/01 research project, funded by the Northern Rivers Area Health Service and the Department of Community Services, "Visible Signs of a Well-functioning Community Service System", or its short title "Working Together."

The research developed a model that allowed local control of service funding and delivery across the spectrum of services, through three basic functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance. Intense and broad ranging participation and endorsement by service agencies and groups indicated the level of "working together" that already existed in the Clarence Valley. The model was however not further developed nor tested as funding for the implementation stage was not provided.

Since this high point of collaboration, agencies have not worked together as effectively. It was reported by Clarence Valley agencies during consultations that the development of competitive tendering for programs

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[8] Forums to develop the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategy and Community Economic Development Strategic Plans for Grafton, South Grafton, Yamba, Iluka, Maclean, Wooli and Minnie Waters, Waterview Heights and Glenreagh.

has been a major contributor to the decline, as information and ideas can be commercially valuable during the tendering process and are therefore kept confidential.

3.2 Social Policy Context

3.2.1 Australian Government Policy and Program Framework

The Federal government has initiated a number of programs with an impact on the social well being of communities across Australia.

- The Welfare to Work Reform commenced on 1 July 2006. The Reform introduces a system of payment suspensions on recipients who fail to meet requirements to attend training and or seek employment. The new reforms will apply to a range of beneficiaries including those on unemployment benefits, "principal carers" once their youngest child has turned six and people with disabilities who have a "partial capacity" to work. The penalty is a loss of benefit for 8 to 10 weeks. At this early stage the impact of the Reforms have yet to be measured.
- The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy is funded from 2004 - 2009. This is an initiative of programs to support families, their children and communities with early intervention services especially for children under 5 years of age. The Clarence Valley has yet to attract any significant funding under this initiative.
- The Commonwealth Indigenous Coordination Centres which replaced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) brings together a range of agencies to negotiate assistance to indigenous communities and negotiate Shared Responsibility Agreements. One of the earliest of these agreements has been negotiated with the local Malabugilmah community and involved a range of state and commonwealth agencies in addressing the needs of the community including environmental health, housing, employment and training.
- In 2005-2006 the Commonwealth introduced the Work Choices amendments to industrial relations law. The legislation encourages the use of Australian Workplace Agreements, a reduction in allowable award conditions to five, and the exemption of companies with less than 101 employees or with a bona fide operational reason from the unfair dismissal laws. The Commonwealth government proposes that this will encourage growth in business and more jobs. Opponents note the concern that the negotiating power and employment conditions of individuals will be reduced especially in low skilled jobs and areas with high unemployment. The impacts in Clarence Valley are yet to be assessed.

3.2.2 NSW Government Priorities

The NSW government recently circulated its draft State Plan. In the area of social justice there are a series of priorities.

- An increase in early intervention services for pre school children. The Department of Community Services has indicated a plan to double their staff levels in Clarence Valley for early intervention and child protection to 30 positions within the next year.
- A $940 million program of additional monies for care and support services for people with a mental illness to prevent problems escalating into acute episodes requiring hospital care.
- An emphasis on refocusing social housing programs on those "most in need" and a budget of $2.7 billion to replace and rebuild a significant portion of the housing stock to make it more appropriate for key groups including the frail and aged.
- In health, NSW proposes development of a comprehensive program to tackle childhood obesity and implement integrated primary care centres to reduce avoidable admissions and improve management of chronic and complex illnesses.
- Development of regional human service plans for co- located and integrated services.

3.2.3 Regional and Local Priorities

Northern Rivers Regional Social Priorities Project

In 2002 the Northern Rivers Social Development Council (NRSDC) consulted services across the region and identified the following five key service areas in need of strengthening:

- Housing including crisis accommodation and homelessness;

- Community based management;

- Transport;

- Youth; and

- Families affected by mental health, domestic violence and alcohol and other drug issues.

In 2002 the main concerns raised by Clarence Valley services were:

- Crisis accommodation needs are extreme;

- The cycle of poverty – unemployment, low income, drug and alcohol abuse, DV, sexual assault;

- Isolation, lack of transport and lack of access to health services caused by short staffing/part time staffing and inflexibility;

- Welfare workers are frequently only part-time, and are unable to meet needs, or to travel to the disadvantaged; and

- Economies of scale are not available in the Clarence – perception of Grafton City population declining does not represent an accurate picture of the rapidly growing Clarence Valley as a whole. Inland communities are not benefiting from increased tourism.

In 2005 the NRSDC revisited the project[9] to examine whether the issues had been addressed in the previous three years. Whilst some improvements had been made, the issues still remained as priorities.

Clarence Valley Social Plan Prioritisation Meeting

The meeting on August 1st 2006 to prioritise the issues and needs identified through the consultations and surveys indicated that the key issues could be categorised into the six priorities below. The prevalence of the issues across target groups and through the vicious cycle of the issues impacting upon each other indicates they are of paramount concern in the Clarence Valley. The prioritisation of 1 to 6 is based on the frequency the issue was raised across the spectrum of target groups and issues.

1.   Lack of services: health, support and other general services;

2.   Transport;

2.   Housing;

4.   Employment and Training;

4.   Access to Information; and

6.   Limited Planning for Services.

Following further analysis and review of the data by the Project Management Team, the key issues identified at the Prioritisation meeting were finalised as the following seven issues of significant impact across the target groups and the general population of the Clarence Valley:

1.   Health;

2.   Community Support Services, Information, Participation and Governance;

3.   Transport;

4.   Housing;

5.   Employment, Education and Training;

6.   Crime and Legal Services; and

7.   Infrastructure.

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[9] Northern Rivers Regional Priorities Project – Moving from consultation to action, NRSDC September 2005

4 COMMUNITY PROFILE

4.1 Introduction

Clarence Valley Council (CVC) was created in February 2004 with the amalgamation of the Copmanhurst, Grafton, Maclean and Pristine Waters Local Government Areas (LGA). Pristine Waters was formed in 1998 by an amalgamation of the two Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Nymboida and Ulmarra.

The Clarence Valley Council is located in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, approximately 600 kilometres north of Sydney and 300 kilometres south of Brisbane. The LGA is bounded by the Kyogle and Richmond Valley Council areas to the north, the Pacific Ocean to the east, Coffs Harbour City and Bellingen Shire to the south and Glen Innes Severn Council, Guyra Shire and Tenterfield Shire to the west.
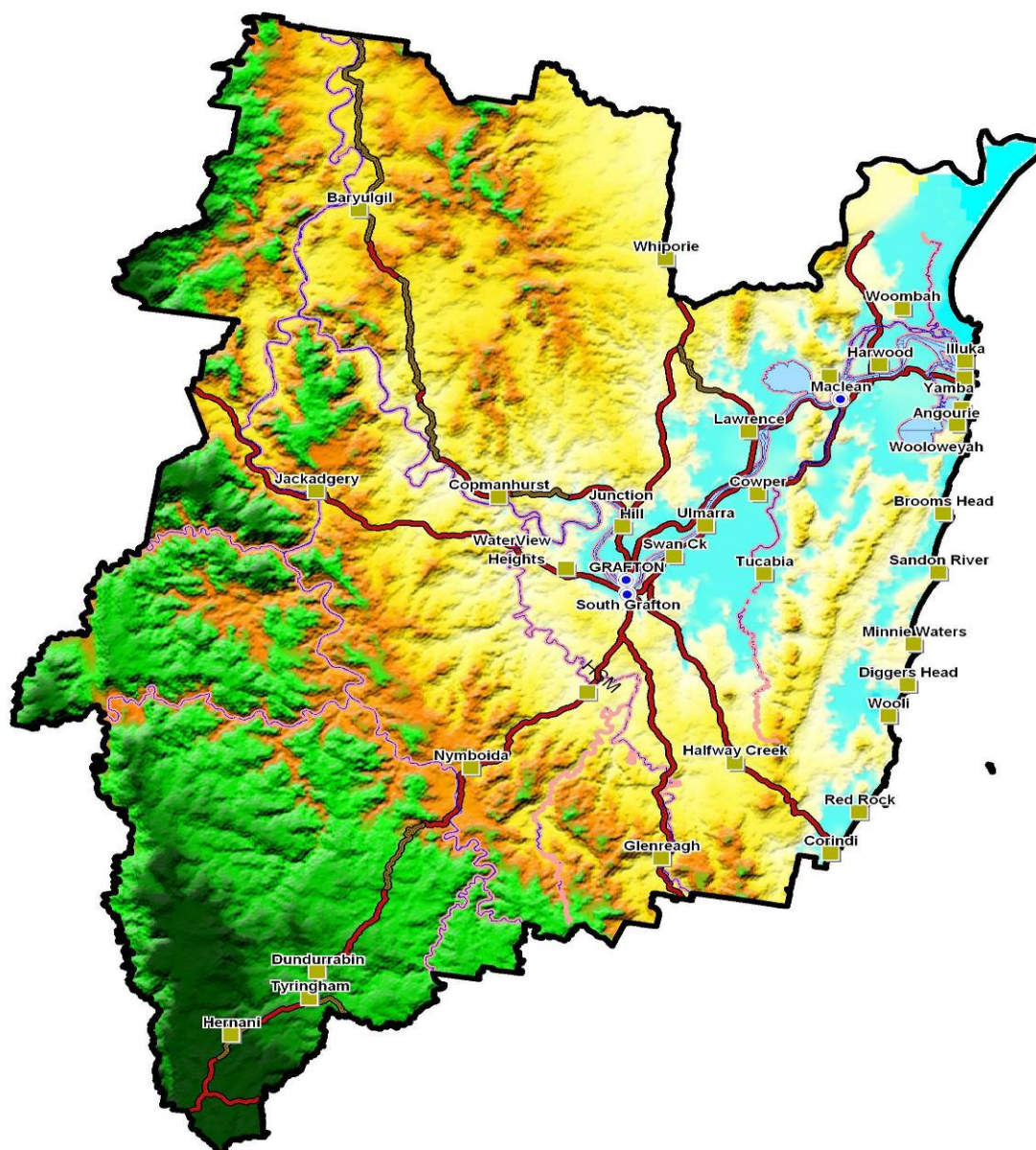
The Clarence Valley Council area is predominantly rural, with expanding residential areas. It encompasses a total land mass of 10,440 square kilometres, or approximately a third of the Northern Rivers region of which a significant proportion is National Park, State Forest and nature reserves, including beaches, rainforests, mountains and rivers. Much of the rural area is used for forestry, agriculture and grazing, including beef cattle and sugarcane growing. Fishing is also an

important industry. In more recent years tourism has become a major industry, especially along the coast.

Settlement is based around the city of Grafton and the townships of Yamba, Maclean and Iluka, with numerous small villages and rural localities along the coast and inland. The mighty Clarence River winds through the LGA and a large percentage of the coastline is preserved in State National Parks.

The original inhabitants of the Clarence Valley area were the Bundjalung, Gumbaingirr and Yaegl Aboriginal groups. The Clarence River forms the boundary between the Bundjalung Nation to the north and the Gumbaingirr and Yaegl Nations to the south. There are five significant Aboriginal communities: Grafton; Maclean; Yamba; Baryulgil; and Mulabugilmah.

The Clarence Valley was the site of the first European settlement of the NSW North Coast which dates from the 1830s when cedar timber cutters arrived. A village was established in Grafton from the 1850s, developing as the main town of the area. Land was used mainly for farming, including dairying, sugar cane plantations and maize. Towns developed along the Clarence River, becoming important river ports, while harbours were established at Iluka and Yamba.

Growth took place in the late 1800s, and Grafton developed as the administrative headquarters for the North Coast, with high level political influence, regional offices and the Bishopric of the Anglican Diocese of Grafton. This was aided by the break-up of large pastoral properties and the establishment of fishing and mining industries. The most significant development occurred in the post-war period, particularly from the 1960s.

In the last few decades, population growth in the Valley has been concentrated in the coastal areas.

4.1.1 Planning Areas

The Clarence Valley Council has identified three geographic planning areas within the Local Government Area (LGA): Clarence Coast, Greater Grafton and Clarence Country. The Planning Area boundaries are influenced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Districts, the smallest geographic collection base for the Census.

The following communities are located within each of these planning areas.

Clarence Coast

- Yamba/Angourie/Wooloweyah;

- Iluka/Woombah;

- Maclean/Townsend/Gulmarrad; and

- Rural Coast, which includes: Minnie Water/Wooli, Brooms Head, Lower River Villages (Brushgrove, Lawrence, Harwood).

It is comprised of the whole of the previous Maclean LGA and a large coastal section of the previous Pristine Waters LGA

Greater Grafton

- Grafton;

- South Grafton; and

- Grafton Surrounds which includes: Junction Hill, Waterview/Seelands/Eatonsville, Ulmarra, Coutts Crossing, and Tucabia.

It contains all of the previous Grafton City LGA and sections of the Copmanhurst and Pristine Waters LGAs.

Clarence Country

- Rural South-West (Halfway Creek/Lanitza, Glenreagh, Nymboida, Tyringham/ Hernani/Dundurrabin; and

- Rural North-West (Copmanhurst, Baryulgil/Mulabugilmah).

It contains large sections of the previous Copmanhurst and Pristine Waters LGAs.

4.1.2 Demographic Data

To provide an in-depth understanding of the community, Clarence Valley Council commissioned *id profiles[10]* to prepare demographic profiles for the planning areas of the LGA based on the 2001 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing. The profiles are available from the Council's web site www.clarence.nsw.gov.au or by contacting Council's Customer Service on 02 6643 0200.

The data used to prepare the Social Plan is sourced from these profiles and from other sources as identified. Comparisons are varyingly made with averages for NSW, the Mid North Coast Statistical Division (MNC SD)[11] and the Northern Rivers[12] region.

4.2 Clarence Valley Demographic Snapshot

The following data is based on the ABS 2001 Census unless otherwise stipulated.

- A total population of 47,673 in 2001, with an estimated population as at June 30th 2005 of 49,538.
- The second most populous LGA in the Northern Rivers region of NSW.
- Significantly higher proportion of the population in the 60-84 year age group (22.3%) compared to NSW (15.9%).
- Higher proportion of population in the 5-17 years age group (19.8%) compared to NSW (18.3%).
- Significantly higher unemployment rate of 14.2% compared to NSW at 7.2%, including youth unemployment of 24.1% compared to state average of 13.3%.
- As at June 2006 the Clarence Valley unemployment rate was 8.4% compared to NSW at 5.3%. The Clarence Valley rate is the average of the four previous LGAs and includes the rate of 10.1% for the Ulmarra Statistical Local Area of the previous Pristine Waters LGA;
- Low labour force participation rate at 50.0% well below state average of 62.2%.
- High rates of part-time employment at 33.0% compared to state average of 29.0%.
- The population is markedly under qualified compared to NSW, MNCSD and the Northern Rivers region, with low completion of Year 12 schooling and low attainment of non-school qualifications.
- Household income is significantly lower compared to NSW. The most frequent household income group is $300 - $399 per week, compared to $1,500 - $1,999 per week for NSW, with an average weekly household income of $662 compared to State average of $987 (ATO figures 2000/01)
- Income distribution is similar to MNCSD and Northern Rivers region.
- A high proportion (24.3%) of lone person households compared to NSW (22.3%), particularly in the Greater Grafton area. (26.2%)
- A low proportion (40%) of households of couples with children compared to NSW (47.8%).
- A high proportion (10.6%) of one parent families with children less than 15 years compared to NSW (8.6%).
- A high (69.8%) home ownership rate compared to NSW (67.7%).
- A low use of computers and internet. The percentage of the population who used computers and the internet in the week prior to the 2001 Census was 32.2% and 24.3% respectively. This is significantly less than the proportion for NSW at 41.2% and 36.4%. It is also marginally less then the use in the MNC (34.2% and 26.4%) and the Northern Rivers (34.9% and 28.4%).
- A significantly higher percentage of the population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander at 4.1% compared to NSW at 1.9%. The proportion is also higher than for the MNCSD and Northern Rivers.
- A low incidence of crime, with only liquor offences and malicious damage to property increasing in the 5 years to March 2006.

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[10] Id profiles   http://www.id.com.au/clarencevalley/commprofile/default.asp?id=256&bhcp=1
[11] MNC SD contains the LGAs of Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Nambucca, Kempsey, Port Macquarie-Hastings and Greater Taree.
[12] Northern Rivers contains the LGAs of Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Ballina, Byron and Tweed.

- Within the Northern Rivers region the Clarence Valley population has a high level of disability.
- 50.65% of persons 18 years and over are female.
- A significantly smaller percentage of the population were born in non-English speaking countries at 2.3% compared to 16.2% for NSW.
- Some change in migrant settlement is occurring in the Clarence Valley, with significant percentage increases for migrants from India and China. Numbers are still relatively low.
- The Clarence Coast has a significantly older population with 24% aged 60 years and over compared to NSW at 17.3%.
- The Clarence Coast is experiencing the greatest growth in population in the Clarence Valley with an increase of 1,116 persons between 1996 and 2001 or 6.14% growth.
- Clarence Country has the highest proportion of young people 12-17 years.
- The Greater Grafton area has the largest share of the Clarence Valley population at 22,397 or 46.9%. It maintained its population between 1996 and 2001.
- Greater Grafton has the highest proportion of young people 18-24 years.

4.3 Demographic Data by Key Indicators, Planning Areas and Target Groups

4.3.1 Population Growth

- The population has grown from approximately 44,000 in 1991 to 47,673 in 2001, with much of this growth between 1991 and 1996.

- The change between 2004 and 2005 was 297 persons. The increase in population resulted in a growth rate of 0.6% during 2004-2005.

- Recent projections by the NSW Department of Planning have estimated that the population of the LGA will reach 51,340 persons by 2031. In contrast the NSW Local Government Population Ageing Report[13] projected the population to grow to approximately 54,820 by 2022.

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[13] Jackson. NO NSW Local Government Population Ageing Project, 2004

4.3.2 Age Structure

Age structure of Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001

Legend: Clarence Valley Council / New South Wales
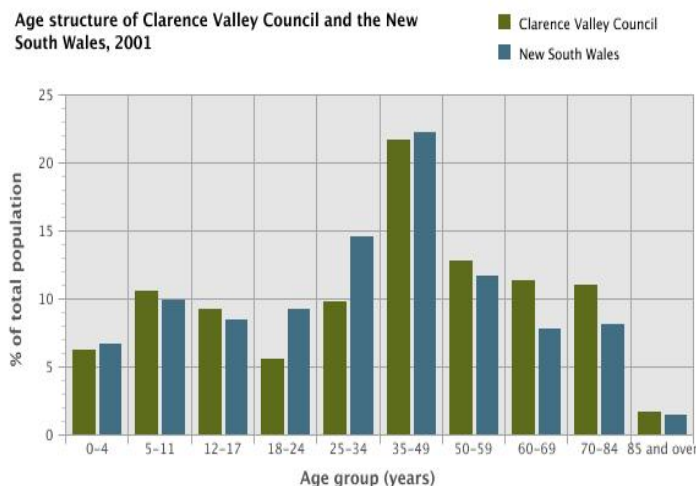
Key Data

- The Clarence Valley's age structure significantly varies to NSW in the 18-34 age range The proportion (15.4%) is significantly less than NSW (23.7%) and in the 60-84 years where the proportion (22.3%) is significantly greater than NSW (15.9%).

- Significant changes in age structure between 1996 and 2001: 50-59 year olds (+1,107 persons); 70-84 year olds (+622 persons); 25-34 year olds (-525 persons).

- Conversely the 5–17 years age group represents a higher proportion (19.8%) of the population in the Clarence Valley than for NSW (18.3%).

- The age structure is similar to that for the Northern Rivers and the MNC Statistical Division.

- The Clarence Coast 60 years and over age profile differs significantly from the MNC SD, Northern Rivers and NSW profiles at 30.6% of the population compared to 24.3%, 23.1% and 17.3% respectively.

Change in age structure of Clarence Valley Council, 1996 to 2001

- The 60-84 years age cohort has a significantly larger proportion of the total population of the Clarence Coast in comparison to the MNC SD and Northern Rivers region.
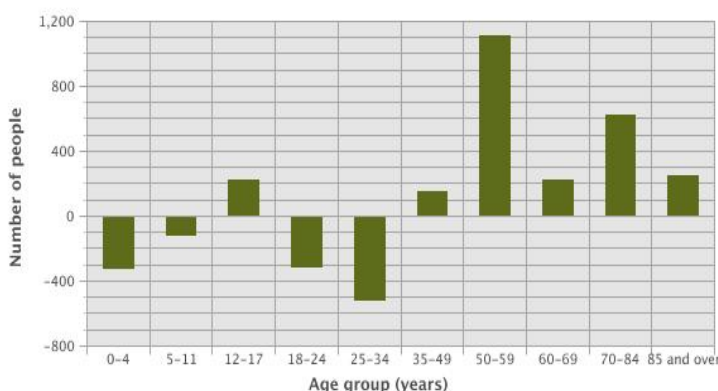
Age structure of Clarence Valley (A) – Coast and the Northern Rivers Region, 2001

Legend: Clarence Valley (A) - Coast / Northern Rivers Region
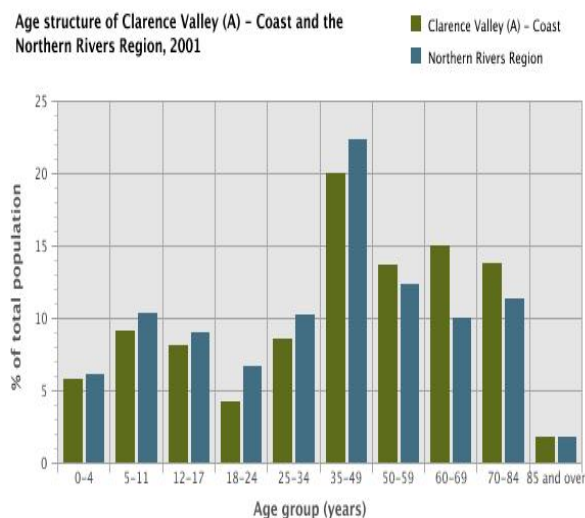
Age structure of Clarence Valley (A) – Coast and the Mid–North Coast Statistical Division, 2001

Legend: Clarence Valley (A) - Coast / Mid–North Coast Statistical Division
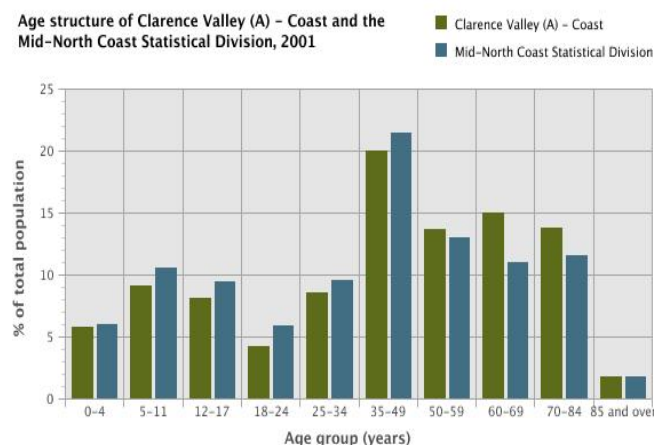
4.3.3 Income

Weekly household income, Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001
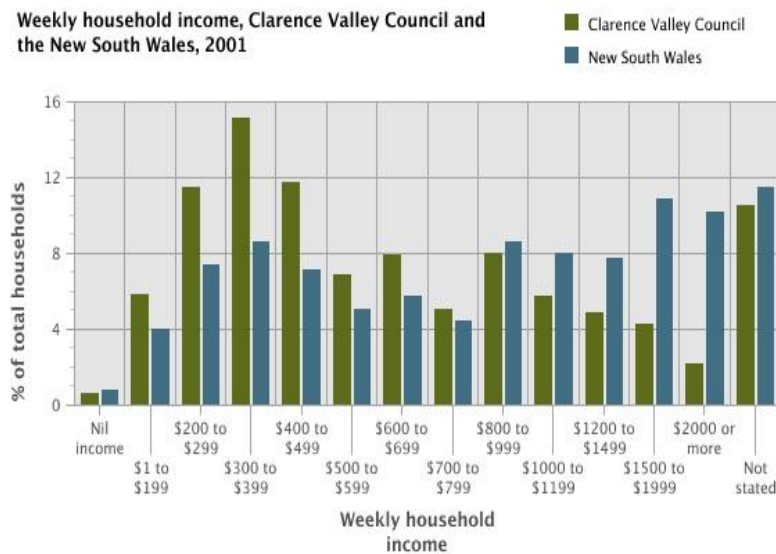
Key Data

- The Clarence Valley's income is significantly lower than for NSW. The largest household income groups for the Clarence Valley are:

  - $300 to $399 per week (15.1%);

  - $400 to $499 per week (11.7%);

  - $200 to $299 per week (11.5%); and

  - $800 to $899 per week (8%).

- In comparison the largest household income groups for NSW are:

  o $1,500 to $1,999 per week (10.9%);

  o $2,000 or more per week (10.2%);

  o $800 to $899 per week (8.6%); and

  o $300 to $399 per week (8.6%).

Weekly household income (quartiles), Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001
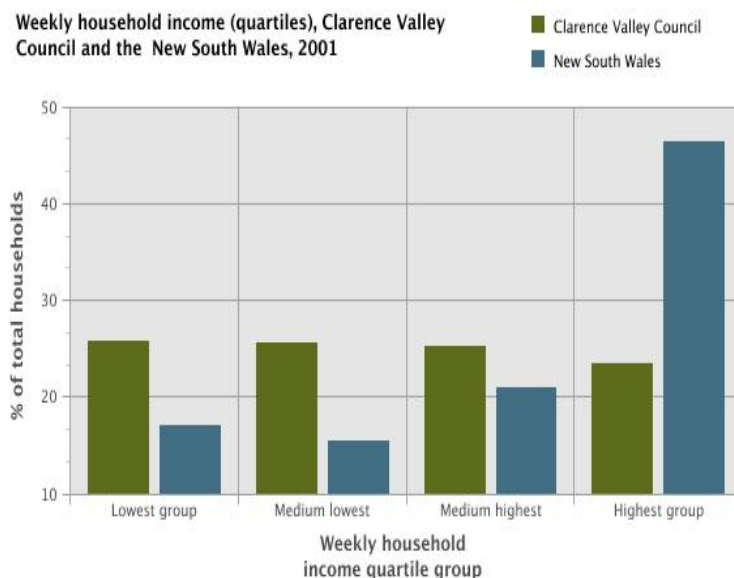
The household income data by quartile indicates the percentage distribution of households across the spread of income divided into four equal parts.

There was a significant difference in the share of households in Clarence Valley Council area in each quartile compared to NSW. The Clarence Valley had a larger percentage of households in the bottom three quartiles with a significantly smaller share in the top quartile at less than 25% compared to NSW more than 45% of households in the top quartile of income.

Income quartiles also allow us to compare relative income-earning capabilities across time. There were no especially large changes in the distribution of households by income quartile in Clarence Valley Council area between 1996 and 2001. The lack of significant changes in the household income quartiles suggests a relatively stable housing market, with maintenance of the socio-economic status of the area. However the number of households in the bottom three quartiles grew by approximately 230 with a comparable decrease of households in the top quartile. This may reflect the reduction in the number of Grafton based public service positions which have traditionally provided higher income employment.

- A comparison of household income between the Clarence Valley Council area and the Northern Rivers and the Mid-North Coast Statistical Division in 2001 indicated similar income distribution.

A report[14] on income compiled by the ABS using data from a range of sources including the Australian Tax Office indicates average weekly household disposable income including investment, government benefit, superannuation, wages and salary and business for the period 2000 - 2001.

- The weekly income for households in the Clarence Valley averages $620. This is the third lowest income when compared to the seven Northern Rivers LGAs between which there is a range of $543 to $666.

- It is the fourth lowest when compared to the seven LGAs in the MNC SD, which ranged from $541 to $648.

- In comparing the contribution of each income sector to total household income, in the Clarence Valley to the other twelve LGA that constitute the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast, the Clarence Valley has:

  - A relatively high contribution from wages and salary;

  - A low contribution of investment income; and

  - A middle range contribution by own unincorporated business, superannuation and government benefit.

4.3.4 Education

Highest qualification attained, Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001
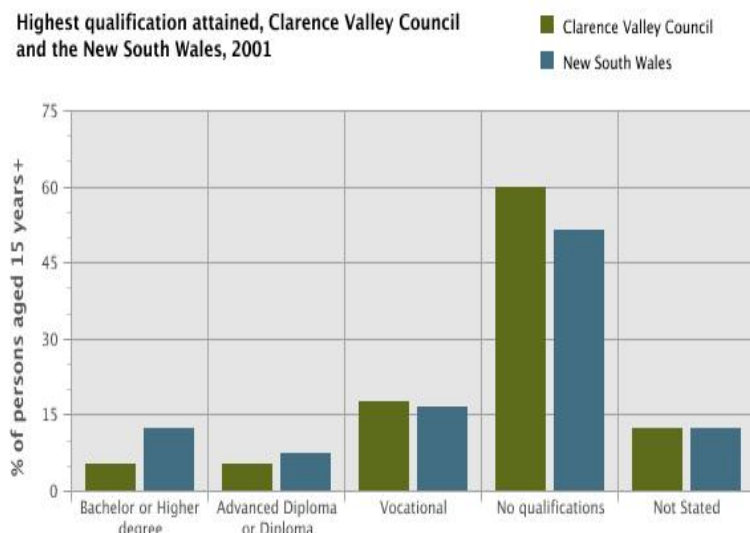
Change in highest qualification attained, Clarence Valley Council, 1996 to 2001
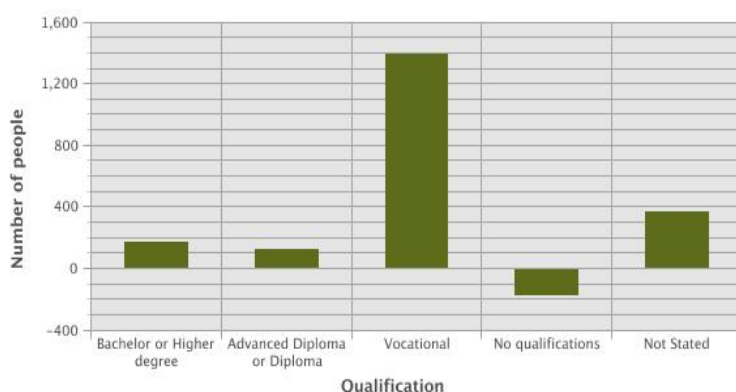
Key Data

- The educational qualifications of the population in Clarence Valley Council area in 2001 represented a lower than average skill and education base with 28.1% with a tertiary qualification compared to the Northern Rivers at 31% and the Mid-North Coast Statistical Division at 30.6%.

- Compared to NSW the Clarence Valley population is markedly under qualified. 59.7% of the Clarence Valley residents have no qualification compared to the figure for NSW of 51.5%.

- Since 1996 the Clarence Valley population has increased the level of qualification in all areas and significantly in the vocational area.

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[14] ABS Experimental Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, 1995/96 to 2000/01

4.3.5 Employment

Key Data

- The unemployment rate as at June 2006 was 8.4%[15]. This is the average of the four previous LGAs and includes the rate of 10.1% for the Ulmarra Statistical Local Area of the previous Pristine Waters LGA.

- Of the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers areas Ballina, Greater Taree, Port Macquarie – Hastings, Richmond Valley, and Tweed LGAs had a lower rate of unemployment varying from 6.1% to 8.2%.

Employment Status, Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001

- Out of a total labour force of 18,067 persons, as at 2001 census the unemployment rate for the LGA was 14.1%, compared with 13.2% for the Mid North Coast, 12.7% for the Northern Rivers and 7.2% for NSW. However, the rate had decreased for the LGA from 16.2% in 1996.

- The 2001 unemployment rate for the Ulmarra area was the 9th highest for LGAs in NSW, and the rate for the Clarence Valley was the 19th highest rate in NSW from 153 LGAs.

- The labour force participation rate is significantly lower in the Clarence Valley at 48.3% compared to 59.3% for NSW. It is also lower than for the Northern Rivers (50.5%) and MNC Statistical Division (49.2%).

Change in employment status, Clarence Valley Council, 1996 to 2001

- Consequently, the Clarence Valley has a high dependency ratio compared to NSW. The ratio can also be expressed as a smaller proportion of the population is in the workforce generating income compared to the percentage not in the workforce and receiving some form of government benefit.

- The majority of people worked in the wholesale and retail trade, followed by education, health and community services and then recreation, personal services, restaurants and cafés. The Clarence Valley differs from the rest of the Mid North Coast in that there are a greater proportion of persons employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining and a lesser proportion employed in wholesale and retail trade.

- For further details see the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategic Plan background papers.

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[15] Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Small Area Labour Markets, June Quarter 2006

4.3.6 Household and Family Structure

Key Data

Household/family types, Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001

■ Clarence Valley Council
■ New South Wales
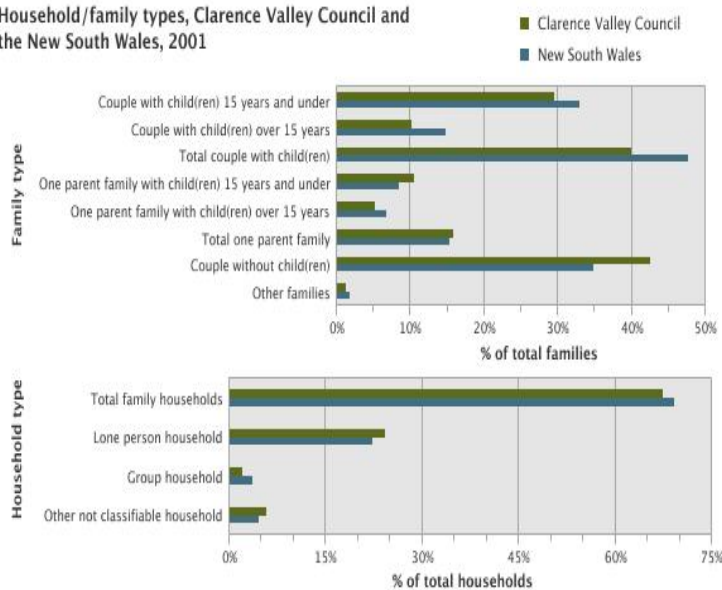
Change in household/family types, Clarence Valley Council, 1996 to 2001

- There has been a significant decrease since 1996, in the number of couples with children.

- A significant and almost comparable increase in the number of lone parent with child(ren) families.

- A significant increase in the number of couple without children families.

- A significant increase in the number of lone person households in the Clarence Valley to 4,560, which accounted for 24.3% of all households. This is higher than the NSW rate of 22.3%.

- Iluka with 31.4% and Yamba with 27.0% have much higher proportions of lone person households.

- The most significant differences between the household structure of the Clarence Valley Council and the Northern Rivers and the Mid-North Coast Statistical Division in 2001 were:

  o a greater share of total couple with child(ren).

  o a lower share of total one parent family.

- The Clarence Valley has high home ownership rates, including purchasing (69.8%) compared with NSW (64.4%).

- The previous Grafton LGA has experienced the highest annual change in weekly rent for a three bedroom dwelling, up 8.1% when compared with Lismore, Byron, Ballina and Tweed at the March 2006 quarter.

- The previous Grafton LGA has experienced the equivalent increase in median rent for a two bedroom dwelling at 6.7%, as Lismore LGA at the March 2006 quarter.

4.3.7 Computer and Internet Use

Key Data

- The percentage of the population who used computers and the internet in the week prior to the 2001 Census was 32.2% and 24.3% respectively. This is significantly less than the proportion for NSW at 41.2% and 36.4%. It is also marginally less then the use in the MNC (34.2% and 26.4%) and the Northern Rivers (34.9% and 28.4%).

4.3.8 Incidence of Crime

Crime data is collected by the NSW Bureau of Crime and Research. Analysis of the data for the Clarence Valley LGA compared to the other 142 LGAs in NSW with a population greater than 3,000 persons indicates a relatively low incidence of crime in the Clarence Valley. Because the population levels vary considerably between LGAs ranking is based on the rate per 100,000 of population rather than the number of incidents.

Key Data

- While the rate per 100,000 population of Break and Enter- non-dwelling offences in the Valley is higher (577.3) than that of NSW (407.6) it has decreased significantly from 2004 to 2005 with the number of incidents declining.

- Break and enter – dwelling incidents has increased between 2004 and 2005 but the rate per 100,000 per population (656.1) is still below that of NSW (736.5).

- Neither the Clarence Valley LGA, nor any of the previous LGAs that existed prior to the amalgamation, were in the top 50 LGAs in NSW for Assault- Not Domestic Violence Related in 2003, 2004 or 2005. Kempsey, Greater Taree and Lismore consistently fall within the top 50 LGAs over those years.

- Lismore and Greater Taree appeared consistently in the top 50 LGAs in NSW for sexual assault. The previous LGA of Copmanhurst was the only Clarence Valley LGA listed when ranked 40th in 2003. There were 4 assaults that gave a rate of 86.6 per 100,000 persons (from a population of 4,618).

The graph below compares the offence rate per 100,000 persons between the populations of select MNC LGAs.

Comparison of Mid North Coast Local Government Areas (LGAs)
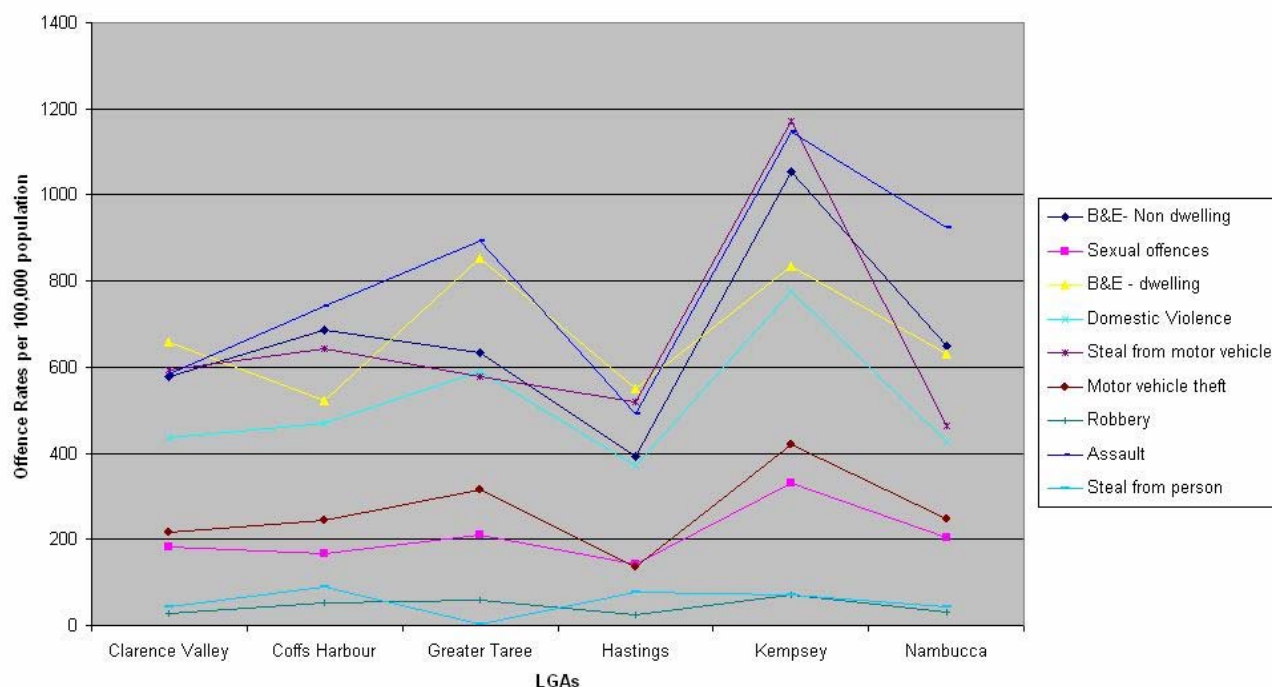
Table 1   Recorded incidents of selected offences in the Clarence Valley Local Government Area: Annual totals and 60 month trend from April 2001 to March 2006

Offence	Apr 2001 to Mar 2002	Apr 2002 to Mar 2003	Apr 2003 to Mar 2004	Apr 2004 to Mar 2005	Apr 2005 to mar 2006	60 month trend	Average annual percentage change
Harassment, threatening behaviour and private nuisance	106	134	128	117	110	Stable	**
Liquor offences	73	112	105	121	125	Up	14.4%
Malicious damage to property	634	839	964	800	908	Up	9.4%
Offensive conduct	75	116	76	93	79	Stable	**
Offensive language	106	135	108	89	85	Stable	**
Transport regulatory offences	8	14	8	3	8	Not calculated*	**

*A trend is not calculated if at least one 12 month period in the selected timeframe had less than 20 incidents.

**No annual percentage change is given if the trend is stable or if a trend has not been calculated.

Table 1 indicates the trend over 5 years for a select range of offences. Liquor offences and malicious damage are the two offences that have increased over the period.

- Recent data from the NSW Police Coffs Clarence Local Command indicate that the ration of major traffic accidents related to alcohol in Grafton have almost tripled in the last two years, and has more than doubled since 2005 in the Lower Clarence.

- The Clarence Valley has a significantly higher ratio of alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents than for the Northern Region (Tweed Heads to Newcastle); with a ratio of approximately 1 in 6 accidents related to alcohol compared to the Northern Region average of 1 in 13.

4.4 Planning Area Data (Clarence Coast, Greater Grafton and Clarence Country)

4.4.1 Clarence Coast

The Clarence Coast is predominantly coastal and rural. It is bordered to the north by Richmond Valley LGA, the Pacific Ocean to the east, Coffs Harbour City LGA to the south and the Pacific Highway to the east.

It is experiencing the largest population increase in the Clarence Valley, growing from 18,190 persons in 1996 to 19,306 in 2001, an increase of 1,116 persons. In 2001 the Clarence Coast planning area contained 40.5% of the total Clarence Valley Population.

The Clarence Coast is the area attracting the most tourism and during holiday times the population increases substantially.

Localities with the greatest growth are Yamba, Iluka and Maclean. Maclean centrally based and as the major district centre, serves the lower Clarence community with secondary levels of sub-regional services, commercial and industrial development. It contains the Maclean District Hospital, Community Health Services and a TAFE campus.

However, Maclean is no longer the second largest town in the Clarence Valley as Yamba has overtaken it in size of population.

Population Projections

The Clarence Valley Council Settlement Strategy, produced in 1999, set out a strategy for the growth of the Council area. It identifies Yamba as continuing to be an important residential and tourist centre, providing a river port that is capable of servicing marine transport.

Opportunity for residential development and growth is restricted in the coastal area of the Valley as the majority of the coastal towns and villages are surrounded by national park estate.

Small coastal villages at Wooli, Angourie, Sandon River, Wooloweyah, Diggers Headland, Minnie Water and Brooms Head have projected populations in 2016 of between 30 and 650 and will generally comprise communities closely focused around a hall or school, with a strong coastal, recreational and tourism focus. It is thought that these communities will rely on a nearby village for local services or will relate directly to Grafton, Maclean or Yamba.

Brushgrove and Harwood villages have limited development potential as they are constrained either by surrounding prime agricultural land, by flooding or by environmental protection zoning.

Closer rural settlement areas such as Gulmarrad and Woombah will build on existing rural residential cluster areas.

Future development for Yamba includes the major, new residential area of West Yamba, consisting of 173 hectares of urban land to accommodate a potential 2,500 people over the next 20 years. Wooloweyah has reached its development potential.

Table 2 **Population Projections 1996, 2001, 2016**

Locality	1996	2001	2016	locality	1996	2001	2016
Angourie and Wooloweyah	619	623	817	Gulmarrad	335	501	1224
Brooms Head	307	276	375	Wooli	573	561	580
Iluka	1863	1852	2370	Diggers Headland	30	N/A	30
Woombah and Mororo*	820	654	537	Sandon River	36	N/A	40
Yamba	4721	5623	9635	Minnie Water	183	184	190
Maclean, Townsend and Illarwill	3157	3329	4440	Lawrence	367	425	782
				Brushgrove	189	164	N/A
				Harwood	211	158	N/A

Source: ABS Census of Population and Health, Clarence Valley Council Settlement Strategy 1999

* The 1996 data included Chatsworth village and Chatsworth Island and fell to 654 persons in 2001 when Chatsworth village and Chatsworth Island were redistributed from the census collector district.

N/A = not available

Target Group Data

Table 3   Clarence Coast Target Group

target group	total persons	% of locality population	% of target group population	total LGA Target Group Persons as a Percentage of LGA Population
Children 0-11 years	2,889	14.9	36.1	16.8
Young people 12-17 years	1,570	8.1	35.8	9.2
18-24 years	817	4.2	30.8	5.6
Total	**2,387**	**12.3**	**33.9**	**14.8**
Older people 65+ years	4,448	23.0	51.1	18.3
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	537	2.8	49.4	2.3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	687	3.6	34.8	4.1
Women	Data for the Planning Area is not available			
Total Population	19,306	100		40.5

Source: id profiles, Clarence Valley website

Key Data

- The predominant population of the Clarence Coast is that of older, retired people, who are moving to the area from outside the LGA.

- In comparison to the other Planning Areas the Clarence Coast outnumbers in real terms and proportion, the number of residents in each age cohort commencing at the age group 50-59 years. This continues until the age group 85 years and over when the Greater Grafton area has higher numbers and percentage at 467 persons and 2.1% respectively. This reflects the greater availability of nursing homes and hospital facilities in the Grafton area.

- This area contains the largest number of persons aged 50 years and over at 8,582. This comprises 44.3% of the planning area's population and 48.9% of all persons of the age group residing in the Clarence Valley LGA.

- There have been significant increases between 1996 and 2001 of 50-59 (435) year olds and 70-84 (383) year olds.

- The previous LGA of Maclean, in comparison to other LGAs in the Northern Rivers, and to NSW, has a significantly greater percentage of its population aged 55-65 years and a similar situation for the 65 years plus.

- Clarence Coast has the smallest proportion of its population in the age groups of 0-11 yrs, 12-17 years, 18-24 years and 25–49 years compared to the other two planning areas.

- It has the lowest proportion of one parent families with children less than 15 years at 9.5% of families.

- It has the largest proportion of couples with no children with 50.3% of Clarence Coast families.

- It has the highest proportion of residents who own their home outright.

- The proportion of lone person households in the Clarence Coast is less than for Greater Grafton, but the urban centres of Iluka and Yamba are substantially higher at 31.4% and 27.0%.

- Of the three Planning Areas the Clarence Coast falls between the other two in terms of the distribution of high and low weekly household income, but its most frequent weekly income per household is similar to the other two areas at $300-$399.

- Contains the largest number of residents born overseas in a non-English speaking country with 537. This comprises 2.8% of the planning area population and 49.4% of the target group residing in the Clarence Valley LGA.

- 1.9% of the population is not fluent in English.

- The overseas born population includes persons born in traditional source countries of migrants to Australia, such as European nations, as well as more recent countries of origin in Asia. There is a growing Filipino population from 30 in 1996 to 51 in 2001.

- The top five languages spoken, other than English, were German, Chinese languages, Italian, Netherlandic and Tagalog.

- It has the largest proportion of its residents who did not use a computer or internet in the week prior to the 2001 Census, at 54.6%, and 72.6% respectively. This is significantly greater than the proportion for NSW (54.5% and 58.7%), the Northern Rivers (61.9% and 67.8%) and the MNC SD (63.1% and 70.2%).

4.4.2 Greater Grafton

This region is predominantly residential and industrial surrounded by rural areas. The urban areas include the main city of Grafton and the townships of Junction Hill and Ulmarra, and the village communities of Coutts Crossing and Tucabia.

Grafton contains the main services for the Clarence Valley: Grafton Base Hospital, largest TAFE campus, the Regional Airport, and commercial sector. Most of the rural land continues to be used for agricultural and pastoral uses.

The Greater Grafton planning area has maintained its population between 1996 (22,304 persons) and 2001 (22,397 persons) and contains 46.9% of the total LGA population.

Population Projections

According to Council's Settlement Strategy Grafton is defined as a sub regional centre of the North Coast. It provides a focus for services and major commercial activity to the Clarence Valley community.

There are a number of small, village-type localities within 10 km. of Grafton that are projected to increase in size. These are: Junction Hill, Clarenza, and Waterview Heights.

The intention is for these areas to have their own identity and self-reliance and not to become dormitory suburbs of Grafton. Junction Hill has been identified as having the potential to function as a major village providing services to its residents and rural residential catchment.

The Clarenza area has experienced recent development with three non-government schools re-locating a Development Application currently before Council for a rezoning to provide for residential development around a village centre.

The Application envisages the creation of 750 allotments accommodating a population of 1800 persons. The new village is expected to grow to full capacity by 2021 – 2030.

Table 4   **Population Projections 1996, 2001, 2016**

Locality	1996	2001	2016	locality	1996	2001	2016
North Grafton	10370	9977	11100	**Clarenza**	272	484	1200*
South Grafton	6460	6203	7250	**Ulmarra**	472	488	500
Waterview Heights	1132	1233	1200+	**Tucabia**	281	263	370
Seelands	318	303	500	**Coutts Crossing Village**	510	523	730
Eatonsville	399	432	450	**Coutts Crossing rural residential**	350	N/A	600
Junction Hill	1026	1024	2000				

Source: ABS Census 2001 Population and Housing, Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999

* This figure has been revised to 1200 based on the rezoning application data

Target Group Data

Table 5   **Greater Grafton Target Groups**

target group	total persons	% of locality population	% of target group population	total LGA Target Group Persons as a Percentage of LGA Population
Children 0-11 years	3,946	17.6	49.3	16.8
Young People • 12-17 • 18-24 **Total**	2,214 1,535 **3,749**	9.9 6.9 **16.8**	50.5 57.8 **53.2**	9.2 5.6 **14.8**
Older people 65+ years	3,666	16.4	42.1	18.3
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	385	1.7	35.4	2.3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	1,035	4.6	52.4	2.2
Women	Data for the Planning Area is not available			
Total population	22,349	100		46.9%

Source: ABS 2001Census of Population and Housing

Key Data

- The predominant age structure is in the family age groups, most notably children 0-11 years and 12-17 years, young adults 18-24 years and their parents in their thirties and forties.

- In comparison to the other Planning Areas Greater Grafton outnumbers in real terms and proportion, the number of residents in the children and young adult age cohorts. Greater Grafton has the largest number and proportion expressed as a percentage of the locality, the age group and of the total LGA population

- Greater Grafton also contains the largest number and proportions of the 25-34 year group. However there was a decrease in the age groups 25-34 year olds and 18-24 years between 1996 and 2001.

- There is also a sizeable share of those in the retiree age 50-69 years. The 50-59 year olds increased by 456 persons between 1996 and 2001.

- Greater Grafton contains the greater number and percentage with 467 persons and 2.1% respectively of the age group 85 years and over. This reflects the greater number of nursing homes and hospital facilities in the Grafton area.

- Greater Grafton shares with Clarence Country the highest percentage of one parent families with children less than 15 years of age at 11.5% of families.

- It also has the highest number of lone person households at 26.2% which has increased from 23.7%. However the urban centres of Iluka and Yamba have higher proportions.

- Greater Grafton has the highest proportion of households:

  o Purchasing their residence at 22.8%; and

  o Renting their dwellings at 27.5%.

- Greater Grafton has the lowest proportion of households who own their residence out right.

- There is a greater concentration of high income households in the Greater Grafton planning area. 34.5% of households earn $700 or more per week, compared to 26.5% for the Clarence Coast and 25.3% for Clarence Country. However, it shares with the other two areas the same most frequent household income bracket of $300 - $399 per week.

- Greater Grafton had the lowest unemployment rate in 2001 at 11.9%.

- At 2001 1.7% of the population were residents born overseas in a non-English speaking country.

- 1.4% of the population are not fluent in English.

- The Greater Grafton area has the highest use of computers and the internet at 34.1% and 25.4% of the population respectively. This is significantly lower than the figure for NSW, but relatively comparable to the Northern Rivers and MNC SD, although both are higher.

4.4.3 Clarence Country

The Clarence Country planning area is a sparsely settled rural area. There are over 50 different localities within this area, with many simply a place name associated with surrounding rural properties. There are a number of national parks within this part of the Clarence Valley.

There has been very little population change between 1996 (5,724) and 2001 (5,739). This area contains 12% of the Clarence Valley population.

Population Projections

According to Council's Settlement Strategy very little growth is planned for this area. It will remain as the rural hinterland to the coastal areas.

However the Halfway Creek-Lanitza area which was identified in the Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy as an area requiring investigation due to the style of sub-division has now a new Development Control Plan to manage the growth. It is a large area without a village centre and in 2001contained a population of 1,076 persons, the largest in the Clarence Country planning area.

These planning controls effectively preserve existing dwelling entitlements in the 1(h) Rural (Horticulture) zone. Future subdivisions for dwelling houses in the 1(h) zone will require a minimum lot size of 40 hectares. These changes however are not expected to significantly reduce growth in the locality. The decline in the viability of horticulture is seen to be the major driver to reduce growth rates.

Table 6   Population Projections 1996, 2001, 2016

Locality	1996	2001	2016
Copmanhurst Village (+ rural surrounds)	375	629	950
Glenreagh Village	276	270	425
Glenreagh Rural Residential	75	N/A	180
Tyringham / Dundurrabin and Hernani	N/A	365	N/A
Nymboida Village	150	N/A	190
Nymboida rural	150	N/A	Subject to council community investigation

Source: ABS Census 2001 Population and Housing, Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999

N/A = not available

Table 7   Clarence Country Target Groups

target group	total persons	% of locality population	% of target group population	total LGA Target Group Persons as a Percentage of LGA Population
Children 0-11 years	1,104	19.5	13.8	16.8
Young people:				
• 12-17	577	10.2	13.2	9.2
• 18-24	289	5.1	10.9	5.6
Total	**866**	**15.3**	**12.3**	**14.8**
Older people 65+ years	577	10.2	6.6	18.3
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	165	2.9	15.2	2.3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	241	4.2	12.2	4.1
Women	Data for the planning area is not available			
Total population	5,739	100		12%

Source: ABS Census of population an

Key Data

The age structure of Clarence Country is dissimilar to the Clarence Coast and Greater Grafton Planning Areas. The most significant differences are:

- A significantly lower percentage of persons aged 70-84 years.

- A higher percentage of persons aged 35-49 years.

- A higher percentage of persons aged 0-4 years, 5-11 years and 12–17 years.

- 69.4% of all households are family households, with 44.6% a couple family with children. This is significantly higher than the Clarence Coast and higher than Greater Grafton.

- It has the equal highest proportion of one parent families with children less than 15 years.

- It has the lowest percentage of lone person households.

- Clarence Country also has a notable share of its population in the 'empty-nester' and retiree age groups (50-69), whose children have left the family home.

- The Clarence Country area is the lowest income area with the greatest share of low income and lowest share of high income households. However, it shares with the other two areas the same most frequent household income bracket of $300 - $399 per week.

- Clarence Country has an unemployment rate of 20.8%, the highest of the three planning areas.

- At 2001 2.9% of the population were residents born overseas in a non-English speaking country, the highest proportion of the Planning Areas.

- 89 persons speak a language other than English, with the equal top three non-English languages: French, German, and Netherlandic.

- The Clarence Country area has the lowest use of computers and the internet at 31% and 21.7% of the population respectively. This is significantly lower than the figure for NSW, but relatively comparable for computer use to the Northern Rivers and MNC SD, although both are higher. The use of the internet is significantly lower compared to the Northern Rivers (28.4%) and MNC SD (26.4%).

- Clarence Country has the greatest proportion of households with vehicles, reflecting the distances in the area and the lack of transport. It has the greatest proportion of households with no vehicle, two vehicles and three vehicles.

4.5 Target Groups - Clarence Valley

The following table lists the data for the target groups in the Clarence Valley in comparison to the population proportions in the MNC SD, Northern Rivers region and NSW.

Table 8   **Clarence Valley LGA, MNC SD, Northern Rivers, NSW by Target Group 2001**

target group	total	% of lga population	mnc sd %	northern rivers %	nsw %
Children					
0-4 yrs	2,951	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.7
5-11 yrs	5,051	10.6	10.5	10.3	9.9
Total	**8,002**	**16.8**	**16.5**	**16.4**	**16.6**
Young People					
12 – 17 years	4,387	9.2	9.4	9.0	8.4
18 – 24 years	2,657	5.6	5.9	6.7	9.2
Total	**7,044**	**14.8**	**15.3**	**15.7**	**17.6**
Older people 55+ years	14,005	29.4	N/A	N/A	22.5
People with a Disability	5868	11.7	N/A	11.8	N/A
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse*	1,099	2.3	3.1	4.5	16.2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	1,975	4.1	3.8	3.1	1.9
Women 18 years +	17,889	51%	51%	51%	50%
Total	**47,673**	**100**			

Source: ABS Census of population and Housing 2001 as in id profiles, DADHC North Coast Office

* Number of people born overseas from non-English speaking backgrounds

N/A = not available

4.5.1 Children

The definition of the Children's target group is the age range birth to eleven years.

The 0-4 years is referred to as infants.

Key Data

- There are 2,951 persons in the infants 0-4 year age cohort representing 6.2% of the Clarence Valley population.

- There are 5,051 persons in the 5-11 year age cohort representing 10.6% of the Clarence Valley population.

- In total, children represent 16.8% of the population. This is comparable to MNC SD, Northern Rivers and NSW.

- It is estimated approximately 51% of the children target group are boys.

- The Clarence Country Planning Area has the highest proportion of children in both age cohorts at 6.5% and 13% of the area's total population.

- Greater Grafton has the largest number of children in both age cohorts with 1,443 and 2,503 respectively representing 6.4% and 11.2% of the area's population.

- Annual births at Grafton Base Hospital fluctuate around the 400 mark. Maclean Hospital does not provide this service.

- It is estimated that the birth rate is decreasing.

- It is estimated that 120 Clarence Valley residents in the 0-4 age cohort have a disability[16]. Another 600 residents in the age cohort 5-14 years also have a disability.

- The greatest number of infants is located in Grafton with 1,032, representing 6.5% of the population, followed by Yamba with 283 and Maclean/Townsend/Illarwill with 217 representing 5.0% and 6.5% respectively.

- Copmanhurst has the largest proportion of infants at 10.0%, but the number is relatively small at 22 infants.

- Halfway Creek/Lanitza which has no urban centre contains 77 infants at 7.2% of the population.

- The locality with the least number of infants and proportion of the population is Brooms Head with 9 infants representing 3.2% of the population.

4.5.2 Young people

The NSW State Government's definition of youth is 12-24 year olds and the Clarence Valley has 14.8% of its population in this age range compared to NSW with 17.55%.

Further examination of the data indicates that the age group 12 -17 years constitutes 9.2% of the total Clarence Valley population compared to NSW with 8.4%. This statistic is often missed due to its inclusion with the 18-24 years, a time when many young people leave the area for education, work and life experiences.

Key Data

- There are 4,387 persons in the 12-17 year age cohort representing 9.2% of the Clarence Valley population. This is comparable to the proportion for the MNC SD and the Northern Rivers and relatively higher than the rate for NSW.

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[16]ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing and 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers from DADHC Lismore office

- There are 2,657 persons in the 18-24 year age cohort representing 5.6% of the Clarence Valley population. This is marginally lower than the rate for MNC SD and Northern Rivers and significantly lower than for NSW.

- In total, young people represent 14.8% of the population. This is a marginally lower proportion than MNC SD and Northern Rivers and significantly lower than for NSW.

- It is estimated approximately 52% of the 12-17 age cohort are males and 53.4% of the 18-24 age cohort.

- The Clarence Country Planning Area has the highest proportion of young people in the 12-17 age cohort at 10.2% of the area's total population.

- The Greater Grafton Planning Area has the highest proportion of young people in the 18-24 age cohorts at 6.9% of the area's total population.

- Greater Grafton has the largest number of young people in both age cohorts with 2,214 and 1,535 respectively.

- There is a lower than average school retention rate.

- The Clarence Valley has a significantly higher rate of unemployment for persons aged 15-24 year of 24.1% compared to the state average of 13.3%.

- Retail is the major employer of young people – similar to the profile for all employees.

- Manufacturing, Construction and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing are additional major employers of young men.

- Accommodation, cafes and restaurants, and Health and Community Services are additional major employers of young women.

Mission Australia conducts an Australia wide survey of young people annually. The responses are self selected. The top four issues by three age groups are:

- 11-14 years: Suicide/self harm (42.4%); Alcohol and other drug issues (42.3%); Physical/sexual abuse (38.9%); Family conflict (35.6%)

- 15-19 years: Suicide/self harm (41.4%); Physical/sexual abuse (36.1%); Depression (35.9%); Coping with stress (34.6%)

- 20-24 years: Physical/sexual abuse (40.5%); Depression (40.2%); Coping with stress (36.6%); Alcohol and other drug issues (34.5%)

In terms of mental health, the top issues for youth in the Northern Rivers, which can be applied to the Clarence Valley, are:

For the 10-14 age group	For 15-19 age group
- Depression - Suicide - Self harm - Psychosis	- Psychosis - Depression - Suicide - Self harm

4.5.3 Older Persons

Older Persons are defined by the NSW State Government as those aged 55 years and over.

Key Data

- In the Clarence Valley LGA as at 2001 there were 11,489 persons aged 60 years and over or 24% of the population, compared to the NSW proportion of 17.3%.

- Of these the population aged 70-84 years comprised 11.0%, compared to NSW at 8.1%.

- 833 persons were aged 85 years and over or 1.7% of the population compared to 1.4% for NSW.

- The locality with the highest number of older persons aged 60+ is Grafton with 3,646 persons. Yamba/Angourie/Wooloweyah has 2,179 persons and Iluka-Woombah has 1,095 persons.

- The locality with the highest proportion of older persons aged 60+ is Yamba/Angourie/Wooloweyah with 34.8%. This is projected to increase as these areas are also the Clarence Valley's projected growth areas.

- There are more men than women aged over 55 years in the rural parts of the Valley which varies from the general trend of more women than men.

- In the Northern Rivers the Clarence Valley contained the second highest <u>number</u> of persons aged over 65 years behind Tweed and followed by Ballina.

- 22.9% of the Tweed LGA population was aged 65 years and over at 2001. The proportion for the Clarence Valley was 18.3%. However the previous Clarence Valley LGA of Maclean, contained 23.9% of the population aged over 65 years, whilst Ballina Shire had 19.3%.

- A study on Ageing in NSW undertaken by the NSW Local Government and Shires estimates as at 2004 the Clarence Valley population aged 65 years of age and over was 9,422 and was projected to grow to approximately 14,995 by 2022. The 85 years and over was expected to grow from 1,038 to around 2,007.

- The Ageing Index provided below gives each Council's rank out of the 153 Local Government Councils of NSW in terms of its current percentage aged 65+ years. The Clarence Valley's rank of 17/153 means the Clarence Valley Council is currently NSW's 17th oldest. It is estimated it will remain the 17th oldest by 2022.

Table 9   Ageing Index 2004 and Projected Ageing 2022 65 years+

LGA	2004 %	2004 Rank in NSW	2022 %	2022 Projected Rank in NSW	Annual % point increase %	Rank
Hastings/Port Macquarie	22.3	3	30.3	4	0.42	77
Tweed	21.7	4	29.9	8	0.42	82
Ballina	19.3	10	28.2	15	0.45	62
Clarence Valley	18.4	17	27.4	17	0.50	36
Richmond Valley	17.3	29	26.1	39	0.45	63
Coffs Harbour	16.2	45	25.0	38	0.51	32
Kyogle	14.8	73	22.0	34	0.60	3
Lismore	13.2	99	19.6	66	0.52	26
Byron	11.7	126	17.1	106	0.41	86

Source: Jackson, N.O. (2004) NSW Local Government Population Ageing Project

Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) Data

As at January 6th, 2006 the Clarence Valley LGA had 1,816 net total Dept. of Veteran's Affairs Pensioners and Treatment Card Holders beneficiaries, ranking it 28th out of all NSW LGAS. Within the North Coast the Clarence Valley had the fourth highest number of total net DVA beneficiaries, behind Tweed, Hastings and Coffs Harbour. Veteran pension recipients also have access to services that other older people do not such as Veteran's Home Care, transport and health services, such as Counselling.

Other Data

There were 6,640 Aged Pension recipients in the Clarence Valley LGA *June 2002* There were 81 persons in the Clarence Valley LGA who were recipients of Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) as at June 2002. There were 505 persons in the Mid-North Coast SD and 8,588 in NSW receiving a CACP[17].

There are currently 10 Aged Care facilities in the Clarence Valley providing a total of 505 beds: 292 are in Grafton, 131 in Maclean, 50 in Yamba, and 32 in Ulmarra. Of these beds, 226 are designated as High Care, 231 are Low Care and 48 are reported as High/Low. "There has been significant enhancement of aged care places in these facilities over the past five years, such that the Valley is now close to national benchmarks for aged care places and community packages."[18]

As at June 30th 2002 there were 484 persons receiving meal services, with the majority of these in the previous Maclean LGA (246).

Some areas within the Clarence Valley LGA have a low proportion of self-funded retirees when compared with other areas of NSW and particularly other adjacent LGAs – the previous Ulmarra and Nymboida have 2.1-6%., while Coffs Harbour has 7.5-8.8% and Tweed and Ballina with 8.8-15.5%.

4.5.4 People with a Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 defines disability broadly. It includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, learning disabilities, physical disfigurement and the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms. HIV/AIDS is included as a disability. As the population ages there will be a growing population of people who will have a disability that will require services to assist them. The severity of disability is based on a person's ability to perform tasks relevant to self-care, mobility and verbal communication and on the amount and type of help required.

Disability is not surveyed in the ABS Census data taken every five years. Statistics are derived from surveys undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. The key data below are estimates from these sources.

Key Data

- The Clarence Valley has 5,868 persons with a disability, consisting of 2,214 persons aged 0-65 years and 3,654 persons aged 65+.

- Of total persons with a disability, there are 3,594 persons with a severe-profound disability and 2,018 with a moderate disability.

- The most recent statistical information about people with a disability in the Clarence Valley indicates that it contributes the second largest proportion (18.6%) of the Far North Coast behind Tweed Shire (34%).

- 11.7% of the Clarence Valley population have a disability, which is the third highest proportion, behind Tweed at 14.3% and Ballina Shires (12.5%).

- There were 2,492 persons in the Clarence Valley on a Disability Support Pension in 2002. This is 5.2% of the total population.

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[17] ABS 2001 Regional Profile 2004
[18] Draft Grafton Base Hospital Clinical Services Plan, August 2006,p.37

Table 10   **Table Clarence Valley LGA Estimated Population by Age with a Disability**

LGA	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-64	65+	Total	% of LGA pop	% of NR
Copmanhurst (A)	10	56	34	100	271	371		
Grafton (C)	43	206	159	409	1,643	2,052		
Maclean (A)	39	184	110	332	2,189	2,521		
Pristine Waters (A)	28	154	84	266	658	924		
Clarence Valley	**120**	**600**	**387**	**1,107**	**4,761**	**5,868**	**11.7**	**18.6**
Ballina (A)	84	420	330	834	3,971	4,805	12.5	15.2
Byron (A)	67	343	257	668	1,996	2,664	8.8	8.4
Kyogle (A)	23	134	73	230	723	953	9.7	3.0
Lismore (C)	113	497	507	1,117	2,995	4,112	9.5	13.0
Richmond Valley (A)	56	266	173	495	1,942	2,437	11.6	7.7
Tweed (A)	166	800	573	1,539	9,138	10,677	14.3	34.0
Total Northern Rivers	**630**	**3,061**	**2,300**	**26,722**	**25,525**	**31,516**		**100.0**

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing and 1998 SDAC from DADHC Lismore Office

4.5.5 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse persons are identified as those who come from another country to Australia, or who have parents who do, but also include people from a deaf culture.

Country of Birth (top 10), Clarence Valley Council and the New South Wales, 2001
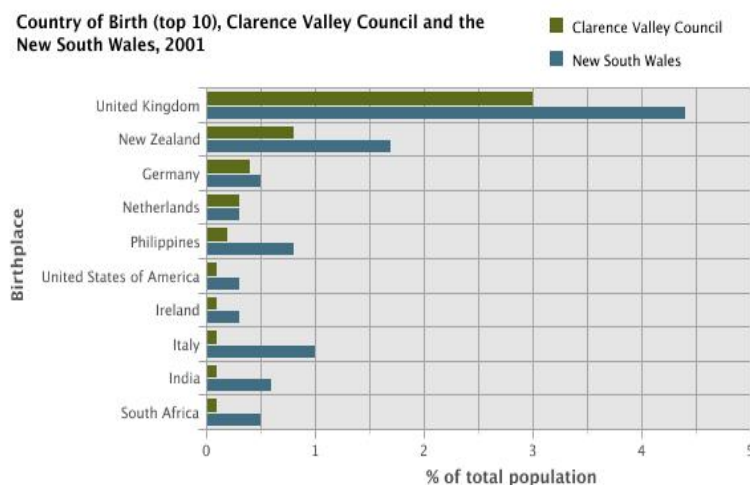
Change in Country of Birth (top 10), Clarence Valley Council, 1996 to 2001
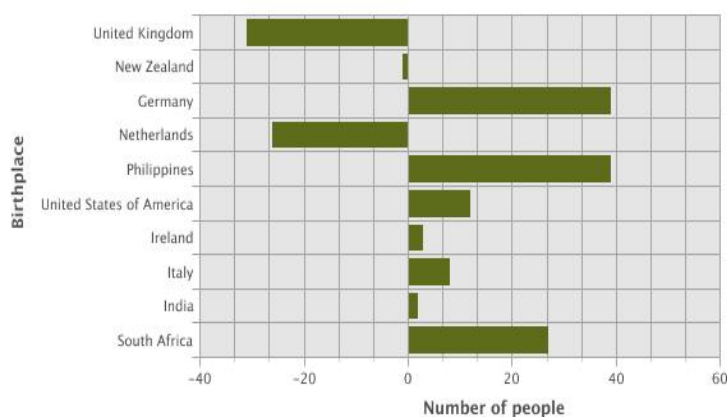
Key Data

- At 2001 6.5% (3,104 persons) of the population were born overseas. Of this 4.2% (2,005 persons) were from mainly English speaking countries and 2.3% (1,099 persons) were from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB)

- There are 45,062 persons who speak English only and 2,611 speak another language. 1.2% (36 persons) of the population is not fluent in English.

- There were 55 persons aged over 55+ years of age who did not speak English well, or at all.

- The six most common countries of birth from a NESB country were Germany, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Italy, India and South Africa.

- The six most common languages spoken were German (112), Italian (58), Chinese Languages (54),

Netherlandic (51), Tagalog (43), Spanish (42) and Greek (35).

- The number of new arrivals to the Clarence Valley is limited. There are small populations scattered throughout the Clarence. The CALD picture is mainly of an ageing European population, who have been settled for a couple of generations and have good English language skills. There are six Indian families who are well settled.

- There is less diversity in the range of countries of birth when compared with the Mid-North Coast SD and NSW. There are traditional source countries of migrants to Australia, such as from European countries, as well as from more recent countries of birth such as Asia.

- The overseas born population of the Clarence Valley overwhelmingly came to Australia before 1986 (79.5%). The mixture of European migrants is the legacy of this migration population. There are relatively smaller numbers of recently arrived migrants (those coming between 1996 and 2001).

- Migrants to the Valley are generally not refugees. The LGAs of Lismore to the north and Coffs Harbour to the south are both recent recipients of Sudanese refugees.

- Data from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMEA) shows that between January 1, 2002 and January 1, 2006 296 persons arrived in the Clarence Valley. The majority of these came from the Main English Speaking (MES) group of countries. DIMEA rates country groups on their English Proficiency. Of the 296 persons just one was from a country that had the lowest DIMEA rating for English Speaking and they came from the Non-Humanitarian-Family Stream. In total eight persons came on a Humanitarian Program with five of these in the top rating for English speaking. Seventy-five migrants came on a Non-Humanitarian-Skill Stream basis.

- The greatest numbers of migrants were from the UK (70), India (40), the Philippines (23) and the USA (20). This was followed by China (17), South Africa (15) and Germany (9).

- In 2001 the number of residents born in India was 43. The migration of 40 people in the past four years has increased the Indian born residents of the Clarence Valley by 93%.

- Similarly the number of residents born in China (excludes Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan) was 32. The migration over the previous four years has increased the residents born in China by 53%.

- The data from DIMEA indicates however that a change may be occurring in the CALD population with more people from diverse backgrounds settling directly in the Clarence Valley.

The CALD community is a small group scattered throughout the LGA with no concentration of any one group in any particular locality. This has the effect that people from a CALD background don't necessarily live near people with similar backgrounds. Perhaps the greatest concentration is that of the Filipino women, of whom there are 30-35 living in the Yamba, Maclean and Lawrence area (10 of whom are in Yamba). Employment, skilling and education are big issues. Migrants want to work, but often the skills they bring with them from their original country are not recognised here. They often have to re-train, which is difficult in terms of language, transport, and financially.

4.5.6 Women

The definition for women is all females of 18 years and over.

- Of the 35,319 persons aged 18 years and over in the Clarence Valley, 17,889 or 50.65% are women.

- The main industries in which women are employed in descending order are: Retail, Health and Community Services, and Education.

4.5.7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

The Clarence Valley Council boundary has located within it the traditional country of the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl people. There are also five Local Aboriginal Land Councils located within the Clarence Valley Council area. These are Birrigan Gargle (Yamba), Yaegl (Maclean), Ngerrie (Grafton), Baryulgil Square (Baryulgil), and Janna Ngalee (Malabugilmah).

There are approximately 1,960 people of Aboriginal descent residing within the Clarence Valley Council area which is around 4% of the total Clarence Valley Council area population (ABS Census 2001).

In 2004 the Clarence Valley Council's Social Plan Working Party engaged Durahrwa Consulting Services, to update the Indigenous Issues chapter of the 2001 Clarence Valley Social Plan. The process they followed was to consult widely with the indigenous community on issues relevant to their needs. This was done through a process of arranged meetings with the Aboriginal communities of Baryulgil, Malabugilmah, Grafton, Maclean, and Yamba.

The complete Clarence Valley Aboriginal Social Plan 2004-2009 is available on request to Clarence Valley Council by contacting Council's Customer Service on 02 6643 0200 or through the following link www.clarence.nsw.gov.au

4.5.8 Other Population Groups

The following two additional population groups within the Clarence Valley were mentioned during the consultations:

- Men; and

- Gay and Lesbian people.

Given that neither group is a legislated target group for the Social Plan nor were the needs of these groups raised frequently, related demographic data has not been researched.

5 KEY ISSUES

The following seven issues of significance impact across the target groups and the general population of the Clarence Valley:

1. Health;

2. Community Support Services, Information, and Participation and Governance;

3. Transport;

4. Housing;

5. Employment, Education and Training;

6. Crime and Legal Services; and

7. Infrastructure.

Each key issue is discussed in Section 5 with an initial table that lists the issue or need in priority as determined at the Prioritisation Workshop and the consultation processes that identified them. Following each priority table is a subset of contributing factors that include gaps in services and other contextual issues and needs.

Community survey results are presented as graphs that indicate a selection of respondent characteristics, including total responses for the question.

Table 11   Individual Survey Responses by Selected Population Group

population group	total respondents	population group	total respondents
Total respondents	555	ATSI	36
Carer of Child with Disability	21	CALD	30
Carer of adult with disability	30	18 - 24 yrs	45
Carer of frail aged	29	25-34 yrs	67
Respondent has a disability	41	75+ yrs	35
Employed F/T	181	Lived in Valley less than 2 yrs	189
Unemployed	33		

Data from the individual's survey has been used in this section (5) of the Social Plan. Results from the selected group of respondents as numerated in Table 11 have been analysed to clarify the impact of issues on different groups within the community.

The survey is not a controlled sample as all respondents self selected. However, for the purpose of a Social Plan that targets particular groups in the community, it is not feasible to survey a randomly selected group.

The Social Plan needs to hear from residents who belong to the target groups or who have opinions or experience of services and facilities that assist the target groups.

It must be acknowledged however that the survey sample is more likely to contain community members who participate in community life and have access to information. The more severely disadvantaged are less likely to access a community survey, although the distribution of this survey to clients of agencies and services will increase the inclusion of these community members.

The survey asked a series of opinion questions about a range of wellbeing and social infrastructure issues. It also provided opportunity for comment regarding a range of issues. A copy of the survey is in attachment 1.

A selection of quotes from the Survey of Individuals has been included and highlighted by italics to provide a more insightful understanding of the impact of the issue.

Quotes from the Survey of Services and Community Groups are also included where appropriate. A total of 42 surveys were received and included responses from organisations such as clubs.

5.1 Health

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
1	Capacity of health services – need for better Infrastructure and services, insufficient health workforce, redevelopment of hospitals required and demand for preventative health services	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	Use and abuse of alcohol	✓			
=3	Difficulty accessing existing services both within the Valley and outside the Valley due to lack or cost of public transport	✓		✓	✓
=3	The growing level of childhood obesity in the Clarence Valley	✓		✓	

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the health priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Capacity of Health Services

Gaps in Services:

- No community based OT for assessment for home modification for HACC clients.
- Gaps in Mental Health services.
- Sexual Assault Service under-resourced.
- Limited women's health services.
- No local Child Sexual Assault Service and Coffs Harbour has a long waiting list.
- Public dental service inadequate for area of ageing and low income population.
- Long waiting list for speech pathologist in Grafton as there has been a spike in children requiring intervention and position not filled when on leave.
- No generalist youth counsellor.
- Hospital beds used by older persons requiring aged care places – inappropriate medical service.
- Limited palliative care service.
- No rehabilitation centre available locally.
- Impact of the health service network merger of Clarence Valley area with Coffs Network.
- Lack of bulk billing impacts on low income people.

Workforce Issues:

- Lack of GP in Valley results in closed books for new residents and long waiting time to see Doctor.
- Vacancies in allied health positions not filled.
- Positions part-time and don't attract candidates.
- Difficulty in recruiting health workforce.
- Ageing health workforce.

Capital Infrastructure

- Yamba as the 2nd largest urban area, with oldest population has no health facility.
- Both hospitals require redevelopment/refurbishing to provide appropriate service to the population as the infrastructure inadequate.

1. Alcohol

- Perception by many in community that alcohol use is acceptable because it is legal. Use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs is seen by service providers as such a big issue that it's too hard to tackle.
- The impact of binge drinking on health and crime related matters.
- The high level of alcohol related driving offences.
- Anecdotal reports of significant under-age drinking.

3. Health Related Transport

- Patients without access to friends or relatives to provide the return home from hospital need to give 3-days notice to

- CCT, whilst discharge planning does not.
- Some patients catching train or bus home from Brisbane as planning & cost out of reach.
- Volunteer drivers for CCT are ageing.
- Increased costs are making it difficult for volunteers to continue their service with CCT as the reimbursement rate is perceived to have not corresponded to increases in petrol costs.

3. Childhood Obesity

- Cost of recreation and social activity impacting on obesity in children by limiting participation.
- Many parents unaware of nutrition and dietary requirements of children.

Gaps in Services

The availability of health services has been a major issue for the Clarence Valley for many years.

Consultation has indicated that child victims of sexual assault are required to wait at least 6 months to access the Coffs Harbour based Child Sexual Assault Service. By this time the benefits of early counselling are lost.

Health services for young people are generally inadequate:

- Within Community Health the general counselling targets families and children and it is difficult for young people to receive counselling until it reaches a crisis and can be served by Mental Health Adolescent counsellors. The early intervention is not available.

- Young people find it difficult to access information about sexuality and contraception in a private and youth specialist atmosphere.

- A part-time Youth Health Liaison officer is located in Maclean with the aim to provide support to young people in the Lower Clarence to access health services. Elsewhere in the North Coast Area Health Service there are youth specific services, such as Kick Start Youth Health Service in Port Macquarie that provides a range of specialist youth health services. It is a partnership between the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Division of GPs and NCAHS.

- Information about drug and alcohol issues delivered in a youth friendly and specific way is also not readily available.

- The impact of alcohol abuse by young people was not raised by the community, but the growing incidence is acknowledged by service providers as a major issue in the Clarence Valley. Binge drinking in particular is an issue that requires addressing.

The population of older persons is increasing, and is projected to continue to increase, particularly in the coastal areas of the Valley. It is the single greatest driver of need for improved/increased hospital and health services in the Valley. The most significant factor in projecting future acute healthcare requirements over the next ten to fifteen years is the ageing of the population. The "baby boomer" generation will reach an age where increasing surgical intervention rates and the onset of chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, stroke, renal failure, diabetes and cancer will take effect.[19] The Clarence Valley is no exception, and with a more elderly population profile, will be affected more than the State average.

The current average waiting time for a nursing home place in the Clarence is around two months. It is estimated that there are on average approximately 15 beds being used at the Grafton Base Hospital for maintenance care for the elderly. Many of these would be awaiting a residential care placement. [20] This report suggests that there is a need to improve access to a range of non-hospital options for the aged as over the next 10-15 years there will be a 57% increase in the over 65 year age group and 70% increase in the over 80 year age group. [21]

The Clinical Services Plan noted the lack of a hospice and the limited number of designated Palliative Care beds and recommended an increase in the availability of such beds. A Palliative Care Committee has developed a collaboration between the community, NCAHS and local non-government agencies to provide a

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[19] Draft Grafton Base Hospital Clinical Services Plan, August 2006,p.56
[20] Draft Grafton Base Hospital Clinical Services Plan, August 2006,p.64-65
[21] Draft Grafton Base Hospital Clinical Services Plan, August 2006, p.66

community based Palliative Care Service which requires additional resources to adequately care for those in need.

Grafton based Clarence Valley public Dental Service was refurbished and re-located, however the need for increased resources to serve low income people before their teeth deteriorate to the point of extraction was regularly raised in consultations.

Women's Health Services are under-resourced. The previous Northern Rivers AHS developed a Women's Health Strategy, but little of it was implemented in the Clarence Valley. The Valley has one full-time Women's Health Nurse and no community based services. Both Coffs Harbour and Lismore have a range of women's health services including community based holistic health services and family planning clinics.

The Sexual Assault Service is inadequate for the level of sexual assault that occurs in the Clarence Valley, much of which goes unreported as women are unwilling or unable to travel out of the LGA to Coffs harbour or Lismore for forensic work or counselling which means the evidence is not collected and the assault goes without redress. The current service operates as a crisis service only due to the loss of some therapeutic services. Anecdotal information indicates that the sexual assault rate in the Clarence Valley is much greater than the statistics show, due to the lack of a 24 hour service.

The Coffs Coast Health Network contains a greater share of health resources per head of population than the Clarence Network and there is concern that the combined data will disguise the need in the Clarence Valley. The existing Clinical Services Plan tends to refer to health service models where the Clarence receives services from Coffs Harbour rather than developing or adequately supporting Clarence based services – e.g. Sexual Assault Service. Locally based managers are being replaced by Coffs Harbour based managers.

Mental Health is recognised as a major issue and the Mental Health team located in the Valley must be allocated an equitable share of the new Commonwealth funding.

The Clinical Services Plan for Grafton Base Hospital and Community Health Service, June 2006 provides a comprehensive assessment of current service level and anticipated change in demand. Its findings and recommendations reflect the main issues identified through the Social Planning consultations with the exception of the need for:

- Additional speech pathology in Grafton;

- A community Occupational Therapist to assist with housing modification assessments;

- Increased sexual assault service, including child sexual assault; and

- Support for the community based palliative care service.

A Clarence Valley Clinical Services Plan is to be developed and it is anticipated that the identified gaps will be addressed.

To ensure the voice of the Clarence Valley community is heard, one of the Council's community development officers has recently added health to her portfolio of duties and has established a local Health Forum.

Workforce Issues

The allocation of resources and the maintenance and upgrade of facilities has been compounded, as for rural and regional areas generally, by the difficulty of recruitment to the rural health workforce. When the ageing of the existing health workforce is factored in, a crisis is looming.

The difficulty in recruitment in the Clarence Valley is often exacerbated by the creation of part-time positions. Professionals will not re-locate for such, and experience has shown that the positions remain unfilled, and the resources are transferred elsewhere.

In the past decade issues associated with rural recruitment have been recognised by State and Federal governments with a number of initiatives aimed towards addressing them. To assist the Clarence Valley Council has also offered Health Scholarships in the past twelve months to support existing staff with professional development costs.

Health attracted the most comments from the Community Survey of Individuals, with the main issues being the shortage of GP's and the impact on accessibility of doctors. Data from the North Coast Area Health Service indicates the flow on effect to the Grafton Base Hospital Emergency Department. It has the lowest proportion of admissions from total attendances of all NCAHS hospitals. It appears many in the community use the Hospitals' Emergency Departments instead of a GP clinic.

The Sexual Assault Service experienced difficulties in filling a part-time position, which was later transferred to the Richmond Service. The restructure of the NCAHS to a Coffs Clarence Network indicates that additional support will be from the Coffs Harbour service. There are now women in the Valley who are trained sexual assault workers who could fill the positions if made available.

Capital Infrastructure

Both the Grafton and the Maclean Hospitals have been identified as requiring redevelopment, however the resources to do so have not been made available.

A Well-being health Centre in Yamba has also been planned with land made available by the Council, but resources to build have not been provided by the NCAHS.

Health Related Transport

The NCAHS has provided resources to local community transport services in recent years as an acknowledgement and contribution towards addressing the impact of the regionalisation of public health services on access for those without private transport. However hospital intake and discharge procedures that provide very little notice can negate the provision of transport as CCT requires 3 days notice, so is unable to assist. This is compounded when the hospital is a large distance from home, including Queensland which provides higher order health services for Northern Rivers' residents.

Childhood Obesity

The concern about childhood obesity was raised during consultations. It was suggested that the increasing cost for children to be involved in sport was impacting on activity levels. The strategy to address is included in the Infrastructure Key Issue section of the Access and Equity Plan.

Community Comment

The graph below indicates the responses to the Community Survey question by population groups.
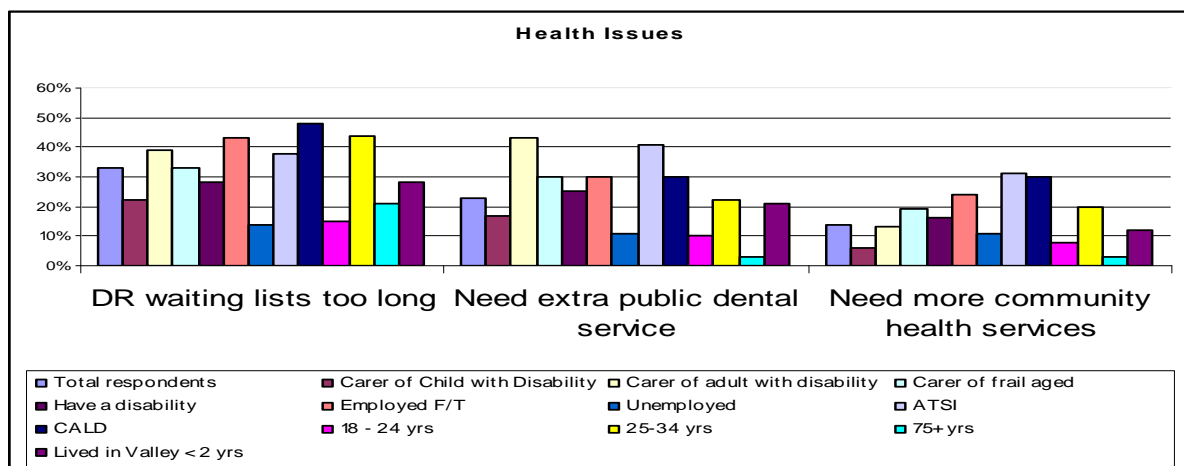
The waiting list to both access a doctor and to obtain an appointment was of greatest concern to all population groups. Many doctors have closed their books to new patients.

The need for additional public dental services was recognised by over 20% of respondents.

The graph below indicates responses to the Community Survey's option to comment on health services in the Clarence Valley and /or to indicate if an opinion.

Health Services
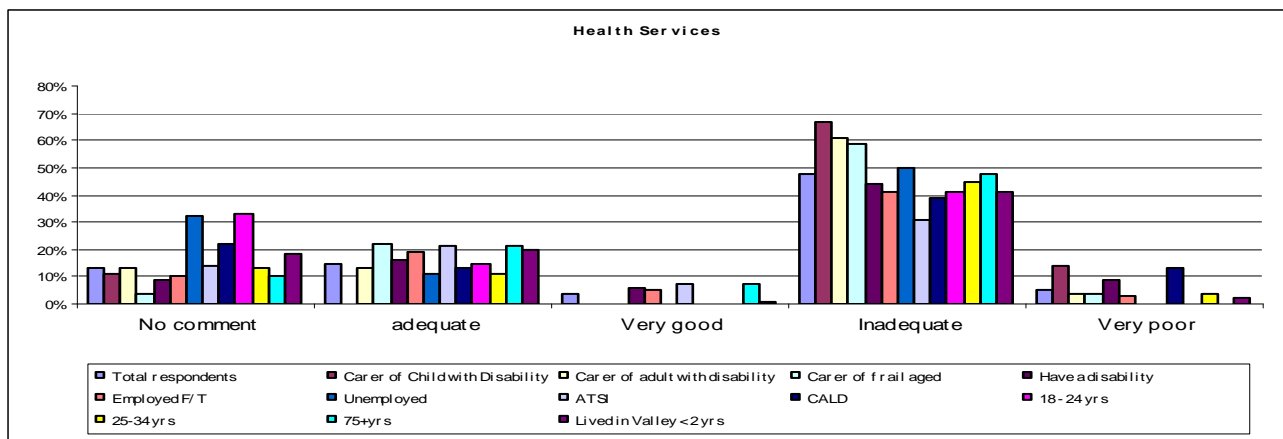
"I need to travel to obtain specialist services which add expense for travel to cost of care. More Doctors & specialist required to service patients at the hospital & in private practice, many Doctors and Dentists refuse to take new patients. Lack of bulk billing presents a problem especially in a low income area such as CV."

"There are very long waits for GPs, often unable to see a GP when sick and therefore have to attend emergency department of the Hospital, which in turn puts an extra load on Hospitals."

"Very difficult for elderly people to go to doctors in Lismore and Coffs Harbour."

"We strongly need an Advocacy service for people who identify as having a mental health problem. Also a need for a better info/referral mental health support service."

"Access to doctors appears to be rather poor. My wife has just had illness and contacted several doctors to be told they were booked out. Her doctor has just left the area. One surgery told her to go to the hospital where they told her they could not see her for 4 hours."

"I've been waiting near 5 years for new dentures and still no result, this effects ability to eat quality food leading to bad eating habits that affects general health and wellbeing."

"2 of my kids were in waiting lists for 5 yrs for wisdom teeth extractions, they both required braces. Myself on a waiting list for 5 years for denture assessment. My daughters overall health suffered greatly on a waiting list for 2.5 years. As a single parent on a low income I have had to borrow $6500 to cover medical and dental operations. It is terrible to watch your child suffer because of the lack of service is this area."

"There should be an arrangement with dental services providers in private practice whereby they can give subsidised treatment to low income earners who don't have a nagging toothache but need cost prohibitive dental health care treatment."

"No real accessible mental health or rape services for wider community."

"Need improved access to doctors and medical services for youth."

"Need for Grafton hospital to be upgraded so we don't need to travel to Lismore or Coffs Harbour to see specialist theatre and other facilities."

"Women's health clinic at Maclean is inadequate. Cannot get appointment as it is only open one day a week."

"I know people who have moved to retirement villages because of inadequate health care to keep them in their own home."

"There is a shortage of Occupational Therapist (OT) and a long waiting list to see one. To get equipment you need to have an assessment by an OT. Without it, you can't get equipment."

"I had to wait 8 months to get a wheelchair. There seems to be a problem with getting unusual disability equipment, for example, prostheses or repairs to equipment. Transport costs for the wheelchair to be fixed aren't covered. Agencies don't have chairs to lend out – it doesn't happen anymore."

5.2 Community Support Services, Information, and Participation and Governance

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
1	Limited supply of community support services for families, children, young people, CALD population & women.	✓	✓	✓	✓
=2	Lack of information about existing services and difficulty in accessing this information.	✓	✓	✓	
=2	Limited opportunities to meet people other than sport and hotels – need more cultural activities.	✓		✓	
=2	Limited participation of the community in decision-making and in the establishment and support of services.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the Community Support Services, Information and Participation priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Lack of Community Support Services

Children

- Few community based services for children and families apart from child care to assist families at an early stage before inadequate parenting skills impact on children.
- Commonwealth funding programs to support families and children have not targeted the Clarence Valley.
- Parents of children with a disability find it difficult to access overnight respite.
- Parents of children with a disability in the Lower Clarence find it difficult to access the Early Intervention Service in Grafton.
- There is currently no children's service interagency to assist in highlighting gaps in services and planning.

Young People

- No Youth Centre in the Greater Grafton or Clarence Country areas and no Youth Centre for the general population in the Lower Clarence. Youth Centres provide a point from which support services can develop, or existing services can access young people.
- No generalist Youth Support Service. Such services generally operate from a Youth Centre.
- There is a minimal number of specialist youth services that have retracted further in the last twelve months.
- The Youth Interagency operates as an information exchange, but there has been limited strategic planning to address the needs of young people in the Clarence Valley.

Women and CALD

- There is no community based Women's Health Centre which could also operate as a Resource Centre.
- Specialist support for CALD residents is provided by an outreach officer. No other generalist CALD support worker operates in the Clarence Valley and many CALD residents are isolated.
- Need greater understanding of cross cultural awareness and positive differences through cultural activities
- There are language barriers when trying to access services
- Need for services and agencies to use the telephone interpreter service
- Other gaps in community support services have been identified elsewhere – such as the health section.

2. Information

- Lack of awareness of available services or how to access.
- Services and agencies unaware of other services.
- No current directory of services in printed form as transferred to on-line at www.serviceseeker.com.au – There are problems with updating and promoting the existence of the site. The community and other services need to know how to access the information and for those without a computer which services will retrieve the information for them.
- New residents find it very hard to get information.

- Access to information in the outlying rural areas is difficult.

- There is low computer usage generally in the Clarence Valley when compared with NSW. This impacts on the ability to access information through the new trend of on-line information.

- Lack of broadband in many areas impacts on ability to download information, even when connected.

- Information about services needs to be promoted to the migrant community.

3. Participation and Governance

- Limited opportunities other than sporting groups and pubs for entertainment. Need more opportunities and places for people to meet.

- Many of the volunteers who organise, manage and maintain community facilities and groups are ageing with few younger people positioning to take over responsibilities.

- Large number of hobby and interest groups but limited funded organisations to address disadvantaged groups.

- The community is hard to engage and rarely lobbies for services or gets involved. The community generally resists participation and consultation, unless the issue directly affects the individual.

- Transport not available to participate in organizations – particularly for young people, older people, people with a disability.

- Impacted by the lack of informal community meeting places such as Neighbourhood Centres, funded community organizations and full-time workers in the community sector.

- Too few auspicing organisations in the Clarence Valley, particularly in the Lower Clarence. Without an active base of organisations to seek funds to address needs, opportunities are frequently missed.

- Many services are provided to the Valley through visits from regional workers based elsewhere. It is difficult for residents to realise a service is available without a centre based presence. Outreach services do not allow for "walk-in" clients. Clients need to know how to make an appointment for these part-time and casual services.

- 42% of the 19 community service agencies that responded to the Survey of Services and Community Groups indicated they are operating at above capacity, 32% are full, 26% have some spare capacity and 0% have plenty of spare capacity.

The Clarence Valley is geographically the largest of all the LGAs in the Northern Rivers and the Mid North Coast. There are two major service centres, Grafton and Maclean and the growing centres of Yamba and Iluka. However, people from across the Valley must in the main travel to the two major centres to access a limited range of services.

One of the key principles in social equity is access to a range of quality services essential to achieving and maintaining a reasonable quality of life. Barriers to achieving this are lack of knowledge or information about the service, under-resourced or unavailable services along with inability to afford to pay for services and lack of transport to access service.

Community Support Services

Children

It is alarming that considering children represent 16.8% of the population their needs were given limited attention across the general consultations and the surveys. This may in fact be an indicator that the needs of children are largely ignored in the Clarence Valley.

Recent research on children at risk of social exclusion[22] indicates that children in the Clarence Valley are in the top twenty LGAs in NSW at risk. Social exclusion is a multidimensional measure of disadvantage and is defined as "when people or places suffer from a series of problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, ill health and family breakdown."

It is therefore likely that there is a great need for additional support services for children and families and a structure to allow improved identification of needs and issues.

There are few community based services in the Clarence Valley that target children, apart from child care. The NSW Department of Community Services is to substantially increase the number of child protection workers in the Clarence Valley in the near future through its Early Intervention and Prevention Enhanced Service Delivery program, which will assist children and families at risk. However it is also likely that this may draw upon skilled staff from community organisations and lead to a shortage in that sector.

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[22] Children at Risk of Social Exclusion, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, University of Canberra, 2006

The Families First cross-sector program targets children 0-8 years and has increased the ability of agencies to identify and support children at risk. However the increased demand has not been met with additional resources in recent years and is causing concern about ability to provide adequate care.

The Families First supported playgroups were mentioned favourably in consultations, but the change to only operating in Aboriginal communities means other population groups are without this support.

The Commonwealth Government has a range of funding programs targeting children, but in the main projects have not been established in the Clarence Valley, even though social indicators imply a need. For example the Stronger Families and Community Strategies contains the Communities for Children Program which would help establish the broad ranging services required. However the localities within which they are located are selected by the Department and the Clarence Valley has not been included. Other aspects of the Strategy are funded through grant applications and it appears either no groups within the Clarence have applied or have met with success. This indicates a structural weakness within the Clarence Valley children's services sector.

The NSW Department of Community Services has identified the following priorities for the Clarence Valley:

- Preschool service delivery viability.

- Out of Home Care enhancements. This program area includes Foster Care for children.

- Early Intervention. This program area refers to early intervention with children and families at risk of dysfunction at a stage before it deteriorates.

Young People

The over-representation of young people aged 12 – 17 years in the Clarence Valley LGA compared to the NSW proportion is rarely recognised nor acknowledged by the allocation of resources to support the age group.

The Clarence Valley has a significant under servicing of its young people by Commonwealth Government funded community support services. Of the five major youth capacity building programs administered by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Co-ordination Centre (FACSIC):

- Reconnect;

- Mentor Market Place;

- YouthLinx;

- Stronger Families and Communities Strategy; and

- Strengthening Families.

Only Reconnect has a presence in the Clarence Valley. In some instances the locations in which the program are to operate were selected by the Department and in other instances organisations were required to apply for funds through a project application.

Feedback from the FACSIC indicates that:

1. Stronger Family and Community Strategy does not have a specific plan for the region; and

2. Other programs either target localities (not the Clarence Valley) or are grant application based.

The needs and the support of young people were consistently raised across all meetings and in the community surveys. The community wants more acknowledgement and opportunities for support, activities, employment and training for its young people.

Across the North Coast the Clarence Valley is the only council area without a Youth Centre or Space. The larger centres also tend to have a Police and Community Youth Centre (PCYC) at which juveniles who come to the attention of the Police can be referred for programs. Most PCYC have enlarged their brief in recent years to encompass all young people and many run complementary services from them.

The Clarence Valley Council has a Community Development Officer working with young people and Youth Advisory Committees are being established in the Lower Clarence and Grafton.

Older People

Older people have a broader range of services than most other target groups; however the growth of this sector in the Valley requires continual assessment and upgrading of services. There are some gaps, particularly in the housing, transport, health and rehabilitation services.

People with a Disability

Generally, people with a disability experience difficulty in accessing housing, transport, employment, recreational activities and health services where they live. Given the lack of housing options young people with a disability can end up living in nursing homes. People who suffer from the disability of mental illness experience homelessness disproportionately to the non-disabled population.

The future trend is for the number of people with a disability to increase due to the ageing of the population, improvements in medical science that increase the survival rates for people who experience accidents and disease and an increasing willingness to identify as having a disability.[23]

The Council has two longstanding Access Committees – one in Grafton and one in Maclean. Council's Aged and Disability Community Development Officer supports these committees. They both have Disability Action Plans and Disability Policies in place.

The NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care has identified the following priorities for the Clarence Valley:

- The demographic of ageing in the Clarence Valley is split between coast and country. Therefore need to maintain data by locality not just the whole LGA.
- Disability Service Providers broad priorities are:

  o   Additional therapy - children / adults;

  o   Increased respite - children / adults;

  o   Increased Family support;

  o   Expanding of post-school program;

  o   Further attendance care places; and

  o   Increased accommodation services.

- Information in more creative ways such as partnerships

Women

Whilst women represent over 50% of the population of the Clarence Valley, they hold limited leadership positions. The Clarence Valley Women Inc, an organisation established to promote the role of women consulted widely with women in 2004 to develop its strategic plan. The strategies identified by Clarence Valley Women as the highest priorities overall were:

- Women's Resource Centres;
- Women as representatives for Local, State and Federal Government;
- Networking and Mentoring; and
- Recognition of women.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) People

One of the issues identified by CALD residents of the Clarence Valley is their general invisibility. Events such as the Council's Multicultural Festival held in May 2006 are making efforts to change this. Issues within the CALD community are similar to those throughout the Clarence Valley: access to transport, employment, education/training, health services and social interaction. However, lack of English language skills compounds these and many services and residents are unaware that a free telephone interpreter service is available.

People from a non-English speaking background have extra difficulties in accessing services due to cultural and language differences as well as disability issues.[24]. Council has a Community Development Officer who

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[23] Disability NSW as in Maclean Disability Action Plan. p. 9

encompasses the CALD community in his work, but the position is not CALD specific. There is no CALD specific service located in the Clarence Valley. There are some regional services that provide programs for CALD people, but they are located in Coffs Harbour or Lismore.

"There are 150 dialects in the Philippines, so it's even difficult for the Filipino women to communicate with each other sometimes."

"If you have any legal issues, or dealings with the police, it is hard, particularly when accessing the interpreter service."

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual People

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual community of the Clarence Valley is quite invisible to the general Clarence Valley community. Attempts have been made in the past to have a point of information, but the initiatives have been short-term.

Two surveys were received that stressed the need to acknowledge the presence of Gay and Lesbian people in the Valley and for organisations such as Council to acknowledge and work with the community.

"No access to a GLOW officer to report matters relating to homophobia as well as council taking no public role in the prevention of hate crimes and the social problems for the gay and lesbian community"

"There are no council funded services which have ever allowed for the gay and lesbian community to socialize with others from their community."

"Despite a very high suicide rate within the gay community in particular those living in rural areas; it appears they are NOT being seriously supported by CVC. Possible cultural activities for the community may help all members of the community to become more educated and aware and therefore prevent isolation and discrimination which so often impacts on their life."

Community Comment

The Community Survey of Individuals asked respondents to indicate if they can get the community services they need in the Clarence Valley. The graph below indicates that only 54% of respondent agree or strongly agree with the statement.
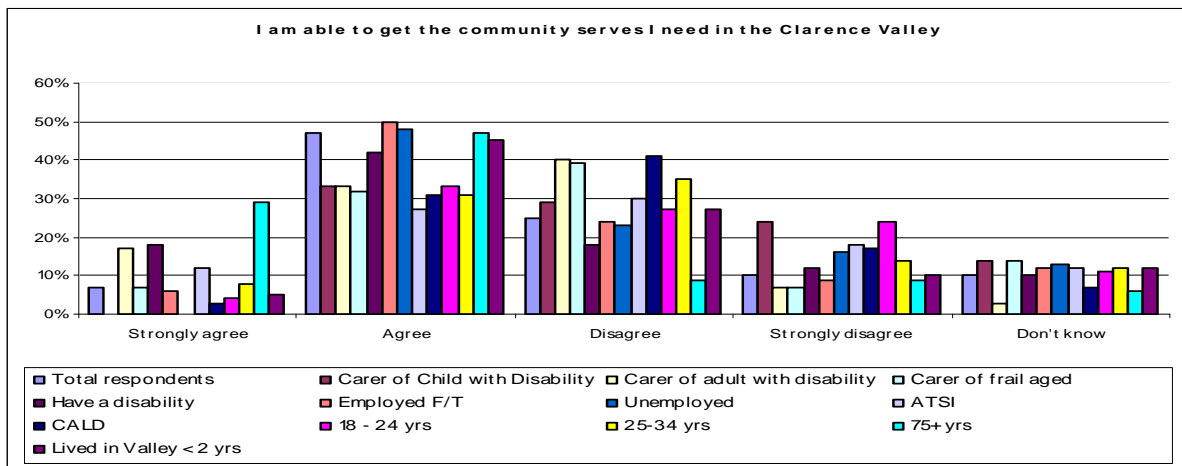
"Not enough choice of agencies providing support staff when brokering respite in the Maclean & Grafton area. It is difficult to link-in with indigenous services in the area." Quote from the Survey for Services and Community Groups.

"These are the crux of traditional ACE activities that effect mental and physical wellbeing of isolated people. We have many classes that are important to people's social and cultural lives. They are no longer funded but we run them anyway." Quote from the Survey for Services and Community Groups.

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[24] Maclean Disability Action Plan. p. 8

Information

With such a dispersed community the Council will need to explore ways in which to inform and engage their community.

The distribution of information is vitally important for a connected community. One of the pillars of community wellbeing is resident's social and cultural connectedness. Strong social relationships and supportive networks improve people's health at home, at work and in the community. Information is an integral part of this. Information is power. It allows people to make informed choices. It enables people to recognise what they need and if available.

Social networks assist people to help each other and facilitate the growth of social capital. Without access to information social exclusion can occur, which in turn leads to major impacts on material wellbeing and impacts on the society as a whole. One of the World Health Organization (WHO) determinants of health, Social Support, states that "social support and good social relations make an important contribution to health…. Belonging to a social network of communication and mutual obligation makes people feel cared for, loved, esteemed and valued. This has a powerful protective effect on health. Supportive relationships may also encourage healthier behaviour patterns." The report goes on to say that "Designing facilities to encourage meetings and social interaction in communities could improve mental health."[25]

The surveys undertaken in the preparation of the social plan overwhelmingly showed that residents were eager for information about what services and activities were available to them. People see this as a critical role for Council.

Data collected by government agencies about level of service and other population indicators has in the past been provided to local government councils to assist with social planning. However there is a growing trend to not provide such data at the local level.

Regional data gives limited understanding of the community at the Council level and it is difficult to develop strategies that are well targeted to real need.

The lack of waiting lists was also raised as this data is a strong indicator of unmet need.

Community Comment

Respondents to the survey indicated that over 71% believed they could access information about community services if needed.
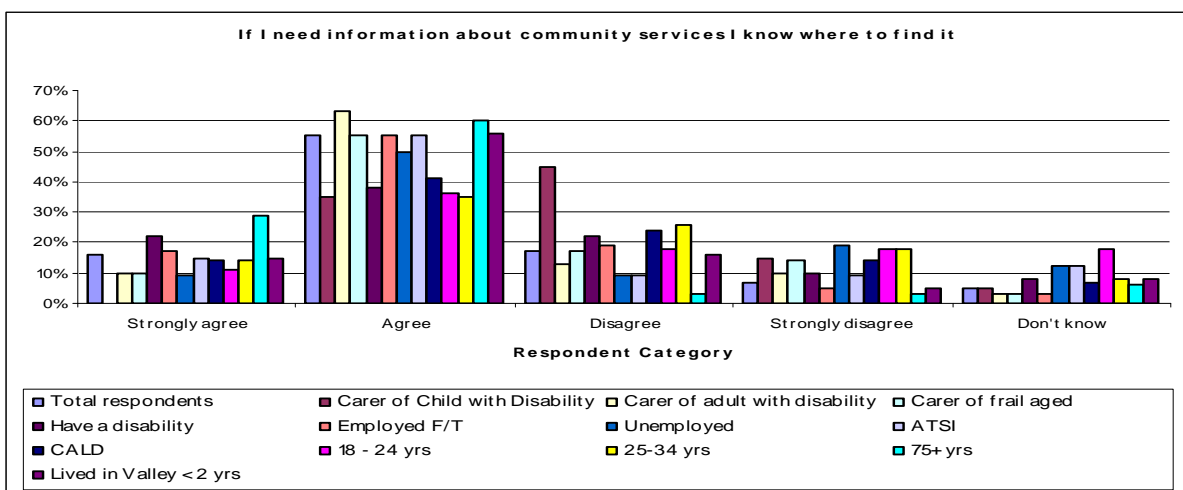
"A comprehensive map or matrix of human service agencies in the Clarence Valley that includes target groups, criteria, program description, geographic location and coverage etc would be beneficial for community knowledge and the agencies themselves in ensuring that they integrate effectively and don't duplicate services. Publication of this matrix in local media and on Clarence Council website would enable easy access for enquiring community members." Community Services Survey

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[25] WHO Social Determinants of Health

"Need to be marketed more so people know what is available – events too. There have been many times when I have heard about activities after they have happened. Not just advertising in the Examiner – not everyone buys the paper."

"There is no focal point for information on services."

"I'm not sure that people are aware of what community facilities are available. How do you find out what's available?"

Participation and Governance

Participation refers to the involvement of residents in community life. "Participation helps build networks. There is evidence to suggest that the simplest forms of participation, such as attending events and helping neighbours, are the precursors of strong networks that ultimately lead to collective action and strong governance arrangements in local areas (Perkins, Brown and Taylor 1996). Local social networks foster a sense of social purpose, social solidarity and willingness to take social action. …. Through these networks individuals learn how to assess issues, appreciate public policy debates and take action to get things done."[26]

Whilst there is a relatively high level of participation by residents of the Clarence Valley, evidenced by the many sporting, hobby and interest groups, it tends to be limited to social participation and the next level of development to social action and community based governance is minimal, as evidenced by the few community based funded organisations providing social support services.

This may reflect the skewed distribution of the population to the older age groups who may be at a stage in life where they are more interested in social participation than community action or governance roles.

The limited number of organisations and the amalgamation of four councils to one may also provide an explanation for the community survey result of less than 50% of respondents believing their concerns and opinions can be heard.

Participation also requires facilities in which activities can occur. The Key Issue dealing with Infrastructure considers this point.

Community Comment

In response to the section on Cultural Activities the Community Survey indicated that 33% believed cultural activities were adequate or very good, whilst 24% believed they were inadequate or very poor. The groups with the largest response in the negative were CALD residents at 50% and the 18-24 years age cohort (32%) and 25-34 years (30%) age cohort.

Clarence Valley Council is currently developing a Cultural Plan to examine the issues associated with the development of a strong cultural sector.

Cultural Activities

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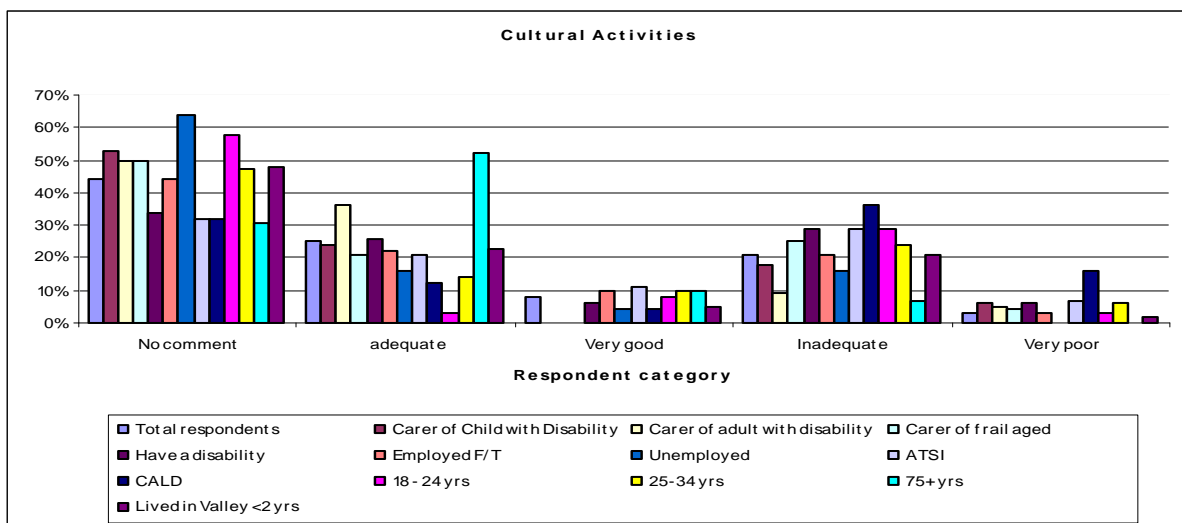
[26] Indicators of community strength at the Local Government Area level in Victoria, 2005 www.dvc.vic.gov.au/spar.htm

The response to Recreation and Leisure indicated that 49% of respondents believed it was adequate or very good and 27% believed it was inadequate or very poor.
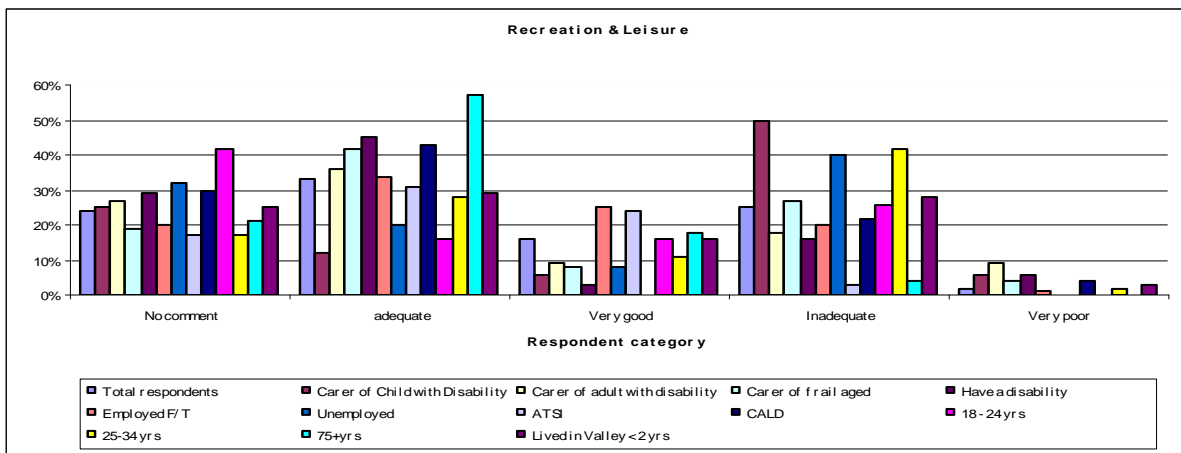
The following quotes are from the Survey of Individuals:

"My partner and I have found it disappointing that there is a limited range of social opportunities in Grafton and the Clarence Valley to meet other professional couples (in the 30-45 age group)."

"No group activities in the community for younger people that doesn't involve large expenses."

"I think there are plenty of activities available but it is just not always highlighted to people."

"We have great sporting venues and facilities available but not everyone is athletic. We have very little in the area of entertainment for my age group (due to "anti-social behaviour") which I find to be a shame that the minority can ruin it for the majority."

"There is nothing to do in Grafton, only sport. People in Grafton travel to Coffs Harbour to see movies. Funky cafes, live entertainment, concerts, festivals. This is why kids move from the Clarence Valley cause other places have these facilities."

"It would be great if the local sports for children eg, Football provided a bus for away games to encourage more children to get active. I know a lot of parents who would love for their child to do sport but do not have transport to get them to and from games. Even an after school bus to take children to training."

"Encourage more musical entertainment at venues other than pubs. AFTER HOURS COFFEE SHOP!!"

"Sporting clubs cost money to join. Even going to the beach costs petrol to get there."

"Multicultural people need a place to meet others, to develop formal networks.

"Lots of opportunity to meet people through clubs and organizations but need to know they are there."

Collaboration between service providers is a comparable example in the community service system of participation by individuals in the community. The activity of agencies and the development of strong networks between agencies that work together is an indicator of a well-functioning community service system[27].

Since the peak of government agency and non-government organisation (NGO) co-operation and trust that was identified through the Tony Vinson, Working Together Project[28], there appears to be a decline in the senior levels of Clarence Valley based management in the sectors working together. Interagencies, except in the children's services sector, still function at the service delivery level, but with the establishment of a Community and Cultural Services Division within the amalgamated Clarence Valley Council, and as NGOs grow and develop senior management levels, there has been no comparable formal networking at the organisational level.

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[27] Tony Vinson's 2000/01 "Visible Signs of a Well-functioning Community Service System", or "Working Together."
[28] Op cit

The lack of a permanent locally based DOCS manager for a number of years has contributed to this and the recent appointment to the position will assist in addressing this gap. There has also been a degree of management turmoil in two of the larger Clarence Valley community based organisations that is currently being addressed. However the development of the Clarence Coffs Network for administrative purposes within the NCAHS, with the elimination of a locally based Primary Health manager for the Clarence Valley to be replaced by a manager based in Coffs Harbour that over sees both acute and primary care for the four LGAs from Nambucca to the Clarence Valley may provide a challenge. A Clarence Valley Senior Managers Network will provide the mechanism to ensure managers based outside the Valley maintain awareness and focus upon the Valley. It will also provide the mechanism to provide collaboration and feedback to Council and NGOs.

Comments from the Survey for Services and Community Groups supported the need for greater collaboration between services. Of the nineteen community organisations and agencies responding 77% agreed that services and agencies generally work well together. When asked to indicate how it could be improved the most frequent issue indicated were "Identification of community needs" (62%), "Assessment and referral" (31%), "Establish or change interagency" (23%), and "Case Management issues" (15%).

"I receive many verbal referrals, but have not received any from Centrelink or DOCS, for example, in hard copy. The catch up of information can take a while trying to link with referring agency. And being part time impacts on response."

"No Children Services Interagency working in the area of collaborative planning/provision of service delivery. FFIG is a very narrow & insular group."

"(Interagency)…. can improve on orientation of workers about other services to refer clients and better planning process at interagency levels."

"Add an executive level that meets with key council, state government representatives quarterly? Like a round table."

5.3 Transport

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
=1	Public transport is inadequate	✓	✓	✓	✓
=1	Affordability of transport –the cost of transport, both public and private is prohibitive to use for many disadvantaged groups	✓	✓	✓	✓
=1	Lack of information on available public transport	✓			✓
=4	Accessibility of public transport for less mobile people	✓		✓	✓

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the transport priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Inadequate Public Transport

- Outside Grafton and Maclean there is little public transport available.
- Limited bus links to Maclean and Grafton provided from Iluka and Yamba.
- School buses provide the bulk of public transport in the balance of the area. These only run before and after school Monday to Friday during school terms.
- Scheduled buses cease operating in Grafton after noon on Saturdays with none on Sundays.
- Grafton bus timetables have not been reviewed or updated for many years.
- People who can't drive find it difficult to remain in non-urban homes.
- Youth have no transport after scheduled hours to access part-time work or leisure activities.
- Lack of transport compounded by low income area. Larger percent of household income going to transport or where it can't be afforded some residents choose to take the risk of driving unregistered vehicles.
- Rail service from Grafton difficult to use for local commutes due to timetabling.
- There is no taxi service in Iluka and cost is prohibitive to bring from Maclean for use around Iluka.
- CCT targets the frail aged and people with a disability. It has very limited funds to address the transport disadvantaged who are outside the before mentioned groups.

1. Affordability of Transport

- Increase in pensioner rail fare due to % of booking fee is affecting ability to use.
- Cost of bus fares, even when subsidised is affecting the ability to use and to maintain casual work.
- The cost of petrol is significantly impacting low income people who are forced into car ownership due to inadequate public transport.

1. Lack of Information

- Information is available about services but need to promote it more to both new and established community members. Needs a focus point for dissemination of information.

4. Accessibility of Transport

- People with a Disability have difficulty accessing mainstream transport, lack of accessible public transport, only one disabled taxi in Grafton, one accessible bus in Grafton, no wheelchair accessible taxis or low floor buses in Maclean,
- Low floor buses require kerb and guttering for access to work. Many areas do not have this.
- CCT is reaching capacity, increasing fuel prices impacting on CCT volunteers.
- Older People: Many no longer drive and these impacts on ability to access range of services and recreation.
- Difficulties for older people in accessing existing bus services
- Proportion of new migrants don't drive due to lack of language and driving skills leading to isolation.

Given the dispersed population and the geographic size of the Clarence Valley, lack of public transport is one of the major issues for residents. Without transport people's quality of life is severely compromised. People

of all ages, are unable to access the full range of life activities: health, education, employment, and social, all items on the checklist for healthy and sustainable communities. There is a general social disadvantage on a range of factors in the Northern Rivers, and particularly in the Clarence Valley, as evidenced by the SEIFA scores. With lower incomes, greater distances to travel, inadequate health services and cultural activities the lack of transport takes on a greater importance.

Disadvantage compounds when people are unable to access services due to lack of transport. Significantly, a number of localities in the Clarence Valley have over 10% of households with no vehicles; Brooms Head (16.9%), Grafton (13.5%), Maclean (12.1%), Ulmarra (10.6%), closely followed by Iluka with 9.4% and Yamba with 9.2%. [29] Public transport, in the wider sense including cycling, and walking, is important as it promotes health in a number of ways; not only providing exercise, but increases social contact. "In contrast to cars, which insulate people from each other, cycling, walking and public transport stimulate social interaction on the streets."[30]

The Clarence Valley Council has a Public Transport Committee with the role to bring transport providers together within the LGA to co-ordinate better transport outcomes for residents. This group meets regularly and is resourced through the Social Planning and Community Development section within Council. At the regional level there is the Public Transport Development Project (PTDP) based in Lismore that brings transport stakeholders together to look at the regional perspective.

Recently, Southern Cross University has been undertaking a research project under the auspices of the NSW Ministry of Transport Regional Transport Co-ordinator, to investigate an apparent decrease in patronage of bus services in Grafton. A number of themes have arisen from this research including the changing needs and demographics of the community and a perception of a disconnection to community needs.

The NSW Ministry of Transport has identified the following issues that require further investigation in relation to travel disadvantage in the Clarence Valley.

- Taxis:
  - Supply of taxis; and
  - The availability of the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme as an in-town taxi service that doesn't apply if taken to elsewhere.

- Buses:
  - Timetables;
  - 2008 – new contracts – could take until 2011;
  - some demonstration projects planned;
  - Bus reform key issue is affordability and new contracts; and
  - Availability of concessions in rural areas with only school buses. Will address concession in out metro areas but may only be around Grafton e.g. there is not parity between Grafton & Maclean – no inter-town – all-day pensioner fare.

  - Accessibility:
  - need to look at whole travel chain – accessible can't be used without kerbs & gutter bus stop; and
  - the need to incorporate transport accessibility into Development Control Plans so the issue is not continually being chased.

In the prioritisation process of the identified needs, transport was identified as equal second. Transport has consistently been raised as an issue in the Valley. In the 2002 Clarence Valley Interagency Forum lack of transport was raised as one of the top five issues at that time. Since that time, localities such as Yamba have grown significantly, and accordingly the need for public transport, as the population growth has mainly been in the older retired age group.

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[29] Draft Regional Transport Profile Northern Rivers November 2005, NSW Ministry of Transport. p. 6
[30] WHO Social Determinants of Health

There was also recognition in the consultation, that for the outlying areas of the Clarence Valley the maintenance and availability of bridges and roads are a fundamental component of access to all services and facilities and employment.

Community Comment

Transport was the fourth most frequently commented upon issue in the community survey, with 233 respondents making comment. 22% of people who responded said that they sometimes have difficulty getting to places, with a further 8% saying they often have difficulty and 4% saying they can't get to places they need to. From the survey 31% of respondents said that there was inadequate public transport with 22% saying that if they lost access to their private transport they would have problems getting around.

The graph below indicates the responses to the Community Survey question on transport. Over 40% of respondents have a vehicle and can easily get to places. However approximately half of these would have trouble getting around if they lost their private transport.

The groups that responded most strongly that there is inadequate or very poor public transport were carers, people with a disability, frail aged persons and unemployed people.
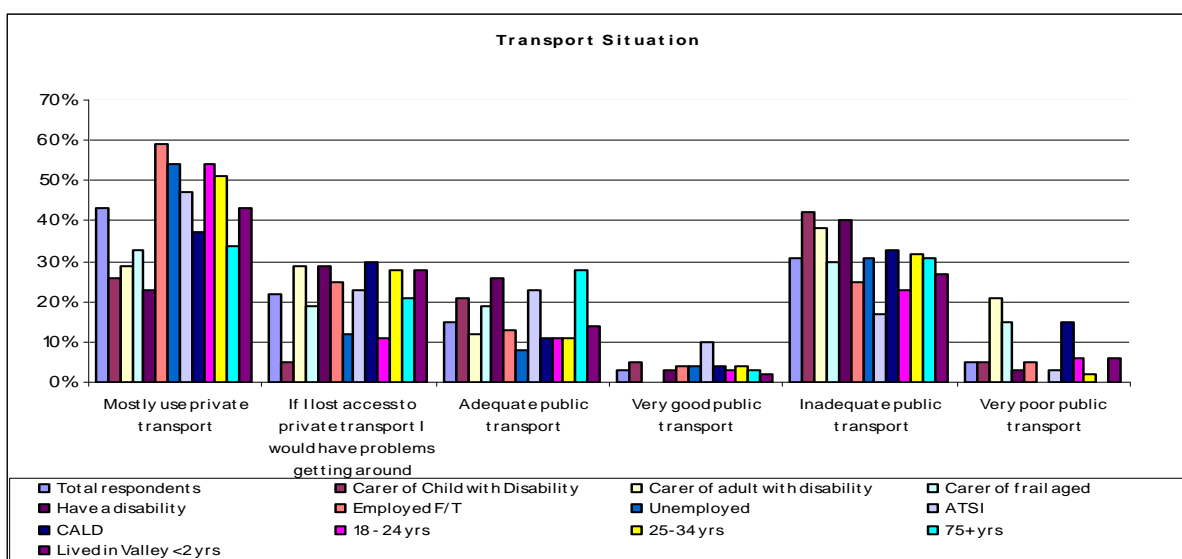
The graph below indicates that 65% of respondents can easily get to places. However the gap between full-time employed at 80% and unemployed at 30% is highly significant in the assertion that public transport is inadequate.
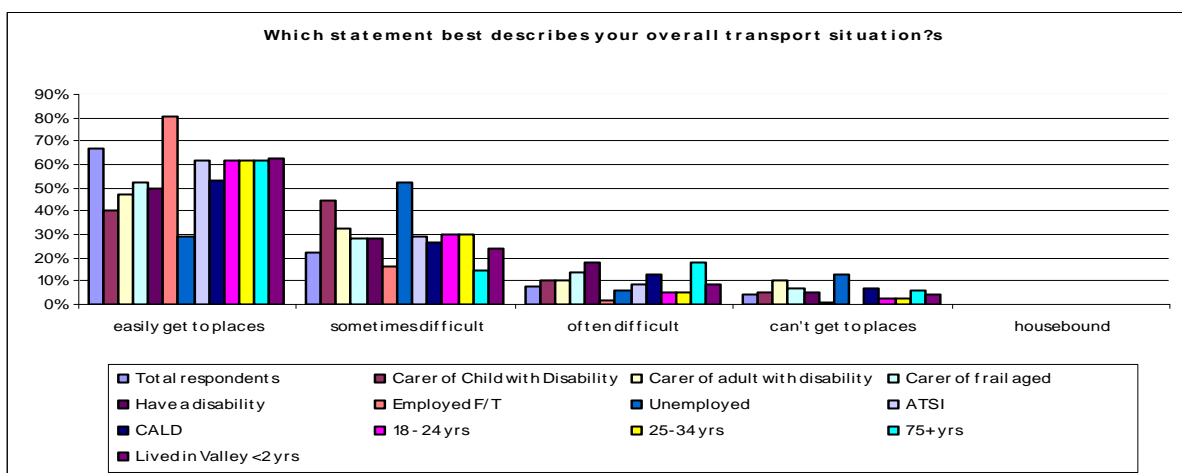
"Public transport is not an affordable option for people in outlying areas, even using a school bus."

"Better public transport between Grafton and other centres would help with retaining young people in the Clarence being able to commute for training and work."

"In the area where we live there is absolutely no transport with the exception of the school bus. If something were to happen to our car we would be in dire straits. Thirty kilometres, one way would leave us helpless."

"Basically unless you live in the CBD of Grafton, there is very little or no public transport. I applaud the Council for recently appointing someone to look into how to improve this situation. Regular bus travel is needed & more consideration of people living in rural/coastal villages. Catching the 'school' bus is not an acceptable means of transport & does not satisfy the need for adult transportation & off course only operate during school terms. Adult children find it almost impossible to travel to work or evening education if they live 'out of town' & rely heavily on their family/parents as their only means of transport."

"Limited income, price of petrol affects my ability to go places."

"No school buses run from Westlawn Infants School to after school care facilities. How does a 5 year old get from school to after school care??? And if there is a bus - I have to pay - even though he's only 5! Need to subsidise travel for infant children (at least) to get to after school care (if different from home address). At least then we get the morning with our children and only need care for the afternoon. Working single mums cannot do everything, be everywhere and pay for everything!"

"Seniors lack of public transport. Small bus goes to Maclean at 9 and returns at 12.30.Therfore can't have appointments or work after 12.30pm.Community transport cutbacks have caused huge problems. Not as available as it used to be." - Iluka

"Need much more regular bus services. Should operate at night and on Sundays."

 "I would have liked to have had the opportunity to catch public transport to work but there is none offered out where we live."

"Need a bike path between Yamba and Maclean for kids to commute."

"Lack of affordable and convenient transport has often created issues for clients in meeting interviews and appointments especially for those between Grafton and Maclean. Concession fares are commendable however these still create extra pressures on those who are seeking assistance from service agencies and opportunities for education and employment. Anglicare would enjoy the opportunity to manage an alternative transport facility." Community Service Survey

5.4 Housing

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
1	Lack of affordable and suitable housing, both for purchase and for rent leading to homelessness, and people having to leave the area – for all target groups	✓	✓	✓	✓
=2	Limited Housing for Disadvantaged groups: • There is a lack of housing options for women who are re-settling after Domestic Violence experiences • Lack of housing options for older people • Difficulty in finding housing for people with a disability- accessible, supported, trying to live singly, people with mental health problems. Includes the need for accessible and adaptable respite and, holiday accommodation • There is a lack of crisis accommodation – what is available is difficult to find • Need Affordable and appropriate housing for young people	✓	✓	✓	✓

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the Housing priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Lack of Affordable and Suitable Housing Options – Renting and Purchasing

- Cost of housing, both purchase and rental is increasing more rapidly than wages.
- Rent & purchase prices are increasing whilst the proportion of the households in low income brackets is also increasing.
- Share of public housing stock is lower than for state average,
- Very limited supply of public housing stock in the Clarence Coast area.
- Shortage of private rental stock.
- Due to rental shortages disadvantaged groups find it hard to compete in the accommodation market.
- Young people find it difficult to get into market. This is a marked change from previous decades.
- Limited supply of affordable accommodation for single people. Houses are getting bigger.
- Limited supply of retirement options usually provided by the private sector.
- Only one Refuge in the Clarence Valley that provides supported crisis accommodation for women leaving Domestic Violence. No crisis accommodation of this type for other groups, such as young people, single men, and families.
- Crisis accommodation is often in Caravan Parks, which is unsuitable for vulnerable young people.
- Very limited supply of supported accommodation for people requiring short to medium term assistance to gain living skills.
- No overnight Respite accommodation for people with disabilities to give carers a break.
- No suitable holiday accommodation for families with a disability.

Affordable Housing has become a major issue in Australia and in particular Sydney, Melbourne and major cities with a flow on effect to the North Coast of NSW. The number one social priority for the Northern Rivers area is Accommodation and Housing as identified by the Northern Rivers Social Development Council since 2001.

The National Housing Strategy (NHS) defined affordable housing as a situation that:

> "Conveys the notion of reasonable housing costs in relation to income: that is, housing costs that leave households with sufficient income to meet other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education."

The NHS suggests the most commonly used affordability measure in housing research is the ratio of housing costs to income. Highlighting that those income units in the lowest 40 per cent of gross income distribution could not be expected to pay more than 25per cent of their income in rent if they were to be left with sufficient funds to meet their other needs adequately and a more conservative benchmark would be 30%.

Housing Stress is defined as households in the lowest 40% of the income distribution paying more than 30%

of their gross income on housing costs, such as mortgage payments or rent. Affordable Housing can be provided to consumers by sale or rental through the private sector or social housing sector, (public housing, community housing or Aboriginal housing).

The housing market boom has pushed housing prices out of the reach of low to moderate income earners forcing people to rent for longer and placing stress on the private rental market. Long public housing waiting list, the recent public housing reform and change to policy for the eligibility criteria will continue to place stress on the private rental market.

2001 Census data identifies that of the total dwellings for Clarence Valley only 2% are public housing - well below the state average of 6%. The previous local government areas of Grafton and Maclean Councils contained the Clarence Valley public housing stock. Grafton contains 5.7% public housing stock and Maclean 0.7% of total dwellings for the area, this figure is still below the state average of 6%.

Data also identified that 9.7% of dwellings were rented through the private rental market and 8.2% were rented through an agent. These statistics indicate that considering the disadvantage of the Clarence Valley many low income people have to negotiate and compete for housing in the private rental market.

In response to the increase demand for housing options and the need to support more vulnerable community members, Clarence Valley Council has resolved to develop an Affordable Housing Strategy using a significant subsidy from the Department of Community Services to employ a Community Development Officer – Affordable Housing.

The initial research has identified different target groups in need of housing:

- Young people;

- Young people leaving juvenile justice centre;

- Low income single people;

- Low income families;

- People with a disability;

- Women and children leaving domestic violence;

- Adults leaving a correctional centre;

- Aboriginal people; and

- Older, single, non-home owning people.

The NSW Department of Housing identifies the following as its current priorities:

- The break up of the South Grafton estate to be replace with more appropriate stock in a variety of Clarence Valley locations. Have recently funded a 3 day/week worker to support the Tenants Cottage on the estate.

- Roll out of the eligibility changes in the 2006/07 Accord:
  - No tenancy for life.
  - Water charges.
  - Partnerships with other agencies to assist tenants.

- Work with the community through Housing Forums:
  - Products tailored to needs.
  - Improve crisis accommodation service.
  - Case management for homeless.

- Community Housing will need to increase in Lower Clarence due to growth.

- Need to increase the supply of supported accommodation for disability, ATSI & young people (homeless) – through partnerships with support agencies. There is a target of 20% of Community Housing for this group.

Community Comment

Housing attracted 215 comments, the 5th highest from the community survey. The graph below supports the Affordable Housing Strategy findings to date. The groups with the minimal amount of housing stress are the employed full-time and persons aged 75 years and over.

Those groups who believe housing is becoming unaffordable are: young people aged 18-24 years; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; unemployed people; and carers of a child with a disability. Thirty-five per cent or more of the respondents in these categories have concerns about housing affordability.
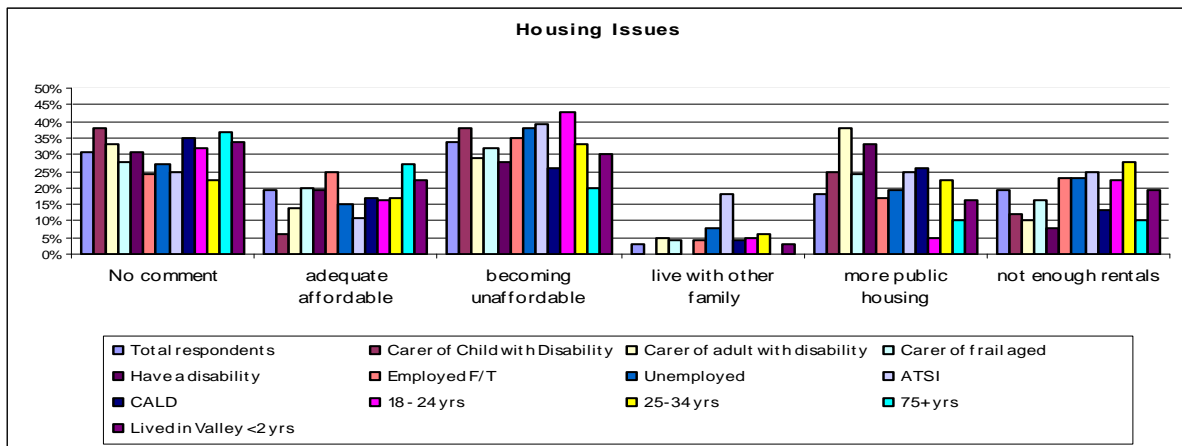
"Came to Grafton with a dog and a job to go to and couldn't find anywhere to rent. Went to Woolgoolga."

"Housing is unattainable for too many young people, especially on the coast."

"Affordable housing is a big issue through out the region especially since the first home owners grant schemes succeeded in turning middle income renters into low end owners. We could do worse than to look to models like co housing and group self build schemes to address these and other social needs."

"Low income earners find it very hard to find affordable housing. The area is only catering for higher wage earners. As we are a very high unemployment area these things need to be addressed as they are the cause of unrest within the community."

"Low income housing should not be located in one area, housing should be situated in all areas of the township. This would reduce the incidence of crime and civil disturbances."

"The mentally ill find it hard to access rental properties."

"My son who is on a disability pension lives with extended families members to make the rental accommodation more affordable. Due to having a low income my son finds it difficult to save for a deposit to enter the home ownership market, which will provide him with long term housing."

"Very difficult to find a place to rent if you're alone. There are not many flats around. Still a lot better than in some cities but still lacking."

"Rentals are unaffordable. I live with family members to make renting more affordable."

"Crisis accommodation- more funds for not only Youth but families presenting as homeless- from first hand contact with those in need, as well as anecdotal discussions with colleagues in the youth welfare sector that there is funding limits that run out before the year for provision of crisis brokerage, which would be the last option for those presenting as homeless." Community Services Survey.

"Very little wheelchair accessible accommodation options available for respite. No disability specific accommodation in Maclean." Community Services Survey.

5.5 Employment, Education and Training

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
=1	There are insufficient training courses and study options available. Fees for many of the courses are high unless subsidised for those eligible for Job Network,	✓		✓	✓
=1	Migrants experience difficulty in accessing educational and employment opportunities due to: • Training and/or qualifications from other countries not always recognised here. • Lack of affordable literacy and conversation courses.	✓	✓		✓
3	Insufficient employment opportunities for target groups – young people, people with a disability, older people, CALD and women.	✓		✓	✓
4	Employment insecurity due to casualisation of the workforce, the changes to Industrial Relations law (WorkChoices) and low wages.	✓		✓	

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the Employment, Education and Training priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Insufficient training courses and study options

- There is no university campus based in the Clarence Valley which contributes to the low level of qualifications across the population.
- Accessing university when one cannot live at home is cost prohibitive for a low income population.
- Distance education is not always a suitable option, and not all degrees are available in this mode.
- Training courses are expensive for low income people who are working as they are not eligible for subsidies, or for people who are ineligible for support as partner working etc.
- Very limited alternative schooling options for high school students. This often results in young people dropping out.
- Apprenticeship can be difficult to find and travel away to campuses offering the course can be difficult due to transport and accommodation issues.

1. Access to education and employment by migrants

- English literacy is required for migrants from a non-English speaking background to access training to upgrade or gain qualifications and in many instances employment.
- Conversation social groups provided an introductory opportunity for migrants to commence learning English, but these programs are no longer supported.

3. Employment opportunities

- There are limited employment opportunities generally so disadvantaged groups are even more restricted in obtaining employment.
- Lack of access to transport impacts participation in employment and training.

The availability of and access to employment, education and training are paramount to improving the well being of any community and in particular the seven target groups addressed by the Social Plan.

The Clarence Valley lacks employment opportunities and whilst well served by primary and secondary schools, both public and private, and a variety of training organisations including three North Coast Institute (NCI) of TAFE campuses, the lack of a University campus is frequently raised by the community.

The recent signing of the MOU between Clarence Valley Council and Southern Cross University will assist in addressing this concern.

The perception that the NCI TAFE is reducing services to the Clarence is widely held and there is a poor understanding of the change in service delivery implemented by NCI TAFE. This change identifies each major campus such as Grafton, as a specialist in certain fields and as the main training location on the North Coast

(and often further a field). Grafton specialises in Music and Media, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning and Painting and Decorating. It also provides a range of other courses. Trenayr campus specialises in Aquaculture and Equestrian Studies, and Maclean Information Technology and Office Administration.

The change in service delivery has created difficulties for students re transport and accommodation and if a carer for children or disabled or frail aged adults. The NCI TAFE is exploring how these impacts can be ameliorated for its students.

The NSW Department of Education and Training has moved responsibility for planning to the regions and identified the following priorities for the Clarence Valley:

- attendance;
- student engagement; and
- co-ordination of service and community partnerships.

The Economic Development Unit of the Clarence Valley Council has recently developed an Economic Development Strategy and a number of Community Economic Development Plans with the aim to increase employment and investment in the Clarence Valley.

The priority strategies identified by the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategic Plan are:

1. Creative Industry Development;

2. Marine Industry Cluster;

3. Image, Identity and Market Positioning;

4. Wood Fibre Strategy;

5. Aged Care Infrastructure and Services;

6. Regional Cuisine;

7. Sugar Industry Investment Brief;

8. Freight Transport Hub;

9. Skilling the Workforce;

10. Clarence River Way;

11. Land Use Planning; and

12. Mitigation of Pacific Highway Bypass.

Community Comment

Employment was the second most frequently commented upon issue in the community survey, with 298 respondents contributing a comment. It was closely followed by Education and Training with 251 written comments.

The lack of employment for young people was raised more than 2.5 times than the next closest issue dealing with the need to diversify the industry base.

Following this was the need to increase the availability of apprenticeships and training. When combined with the respondents to the Education and Training question this is a major issue.

The graph below indicates the Survey of Individuals responses to the opportunity to comment on Education and Training.

Education & Training chart showing response categories (No comment, adequate, Very good, Inadequate, Very poor) across groups: Total respondents, Carer of Child with Disability, Carer of adult with disability, Carer of frail aged, Have a disability, Employed F/T, Unemployed, ATSI, CALD, 18-24 yrs, 25-34 yrs, 75+yrs, Lived in Valley < 2 yrs.
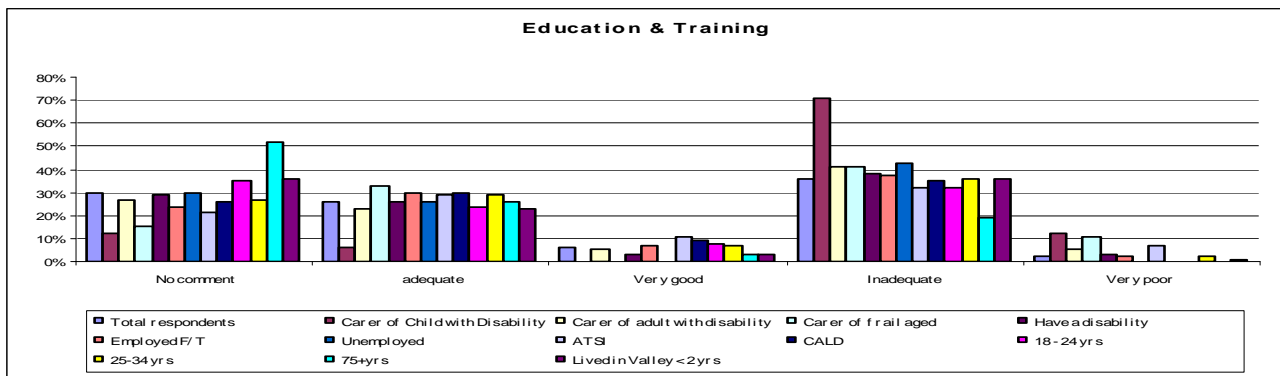
"As with anywhere else in Australia there is a great need for young people to get positions in local towns. The downgrading of TAFE colleges and courses in these areas is making it almost impossible for young people to get training. Why should they be travelling to other centres when there is a huge TAFE complex in Grafton?"

"Insufficient apprenticeships for young people therefore they have to leave the district or home (and most cannot afford this) to access or give up trying to find a job in their chosen profession."

"Not enough full-time jobs and not enough support for single parents - hard to juggle work with childcare."

"Barriers to ethnic access to employment for CALD Clients. Lack of regular work opportunities in all types - casual, part-time fulltime etc. Identified through anecdotal, primary and secondary evidence. Nepotism common in order to protect job opportunities for long term local inhabitants." Community Groups Survey

"Wages are low locally."

"My husband has been unable to find work in the local area, and because I work he is ineligible for assistance from private employment agencies."

"There seems to be a lack of employment opportunities. I am trying to find a job at the moment and there is very little available."

"I believe that it is still not so much how qualified you are, but who you know or who you are related to - 50%of jobs are not advertised externally but are filled by word of mouth."

"Lived in Grafton all my life and have always been able to find work."

5.6 Crime and Legal Services

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
=1	Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault rates are very high in the Valley – although much is unreported.	✓	✓	✓	✓
=1	Misuse and abuse of drugs and alcohol and their affect on safety in the Valley.	✓		✓	
=3	Young people and crime, and anti-social behaviour, particularly on weekends and holidays.	✓		✓	
=3	Fear of crime & perception of policing.	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	It is difficult to access free legal advice, and legal information, for individuals as well as community organizations.				

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the Crime and Legal Services priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

- Reports from services indicate that both sexual assault and domestic violence are greatly unreported as there are insufficient specialist services to both identify and assist victims through the forensic process to the point where perpetrators are convicted.
- It has been suggested that this exacerbates the frequency of the crimes as perpetrators believe they can escape attention and conviction.
- The Clarence Valley's two local Courts are the only courts on the North Coast without a funded Domestic Violence Court Support Service. Victims are relatively unsupported to follow through the court process.
- Police Officers frequently do not implement the correct policy when dealing with DV related matters.

1. Misuse and Abuse of Drugs and Alcohol and its Effect on Safety

- Reports from services and agencies indicate a culture of binge drinking in both young and older people. This causes intoxicated people to take risks they may not other-wise. This also impacts the level of sexual and domestic assault.
- The high reporting of alcohol related driving incidences impacts on road safety.

3.Anti-social Behaviour by Young People

- Anti-social behaviour by young people, particularly on weekends and holidays is related to the lack of youth centres, low cost recreational activities and transport to access out of hours.
- The abuse of alcohol by some exacerbates the street vandalism and poor behaviour.
- Insufficient patrols by Police allow vandalism to occur.
- Limited services specialising in young people, including those released from detention.
- Lack of alternative schooling for those not suited to traditional style.
- Lack of employment and training opportunities.

3. Fear of Crime and Perceptions of Policing

- Crime rates, apart from malicious damage and alcohol related offences have remained static; however media reports can create fear in the general community by indicating an unrealistic crime problem.
- Perception that police are powerless to stop anti-social behaviour and street crime.
- The number of Police in the Clarence Valley has increased in the previous 12 months; however the model of policing with only one 24 hour station (in Grafton) as opposed to previous models with Police attached to a community and living there creates the perception that Police are not available.
- The growing community of the Lower Clarence does not have a 24 hour Police Station.
- Police response times are said to be slow when attendance is from a distant station.

5. Access to Legal Advice

- There is no access to free legal advice except through Duty Solicitors that are only available immediately prior to the Court appearance, limited visits by the Legal Aid Commission and the Northern Rivers Community Legal Services.

Both sexual assault and domestic violence are of major concern; however residents of the Clarence Valley do not have access to a funded Court Support program. The current support is provided through volunteers or a Community Employment Development Program position with no access to training or professional development and support. The Police also provide a Volunteer in Policing position at Grafton Court.

There is concern that Police Officers are not applying correct procedure to victims of domestic violence who find the whole process of Apprehended Violence Orders difficult to comprehend. Consequently the perpetrator is more likely to re-offend if they are not appropriately dealt with by the Justice System.

The Sexual Assault Service is under-resourced, and forensic evidence cannot be collected locally as a General Practitioner is required to be trained and available on call. Local GPs are already extended and the additional responsibility is not attractive. Victims are transported elsewhere usually by Police Officers, and the extension of the trauma often results in non-compliance by the victim.

There is a perception that crime and anti-social behaviour is on the increase. However, statistics from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSR) don't support this, except in a couple of areas. In the five years from April 2001 to March 2006 Liquor offences have risen by 14.4% and malicious damage to property is up by 9.4% as an average annual percentage change. Other selected offences have remained stable.

Community Comment

Legal issues and personal safety issues were the 7th most commented upon issue with 194 separate comments. Of respondents 22% stated that they didn't feel safe in their community, while 28% said that there were inadequate services and facilities and a further 3% saying that there were very poor services and facilities.

The majority of the comments related to the involvement of young people in crime and many implied that Police are powerless to do anything about street vandalism and crime. Comments also indicated that the image of all young people is often tarnished by reporting of the small number of young people involved with vandalism and crime.

Consultations in Iluka and Yamba indicated a problem with groups of young people roaming the streets at night on the weekend and during holidays. Media reports suggest the same occurs in Grafton. Smaller towns also reported a similar trend emerging. Community participants indicated difficulty in achieving an adequate police response due to the time it takes to drive from where the police officer/s is stationed.

Coffs Harbour and Lismore have a mixture of the following legal support services:

- The NSW Legal Aid Commission;
- Family Law Courts;
- Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre;
- Family Relationship Centre

No similar services are located in the Valley, although there is very limited outreach provided to the Valley so it is difficult to access free legal advice.

The Indigenous Legal Service is in the process of relocating from Coffs Harbour to Grafton, and there may be opportunities to develop a partnership arrangement to provide an improved supply of affordable legal services to the community.

In May 2006 a Crime Prevention Officer was employed by Council to co-ordinate the development of a Clarence Valley Crime Prevention Plan for 2007-2010 and to work with key networks and Interagencies such as Grafton and Yamba Liquor Accords, the Community Drug Action Team and the Clarence Valley Domestic Violence Liaison Committee.

The Plan is currently in the development stage. It is anticipated that it will work in conjunction with, and be complementary to, the Social Plan. Finalisation after the completion of the Social Plan will allow it to further

explore the issues and concerns raised in the Social Plan consultations and develop strategies which complement those outlined here.

As the graph below indicates the respondents to the Community Survey amongst all groups indicated a strong sense of safety in their community.
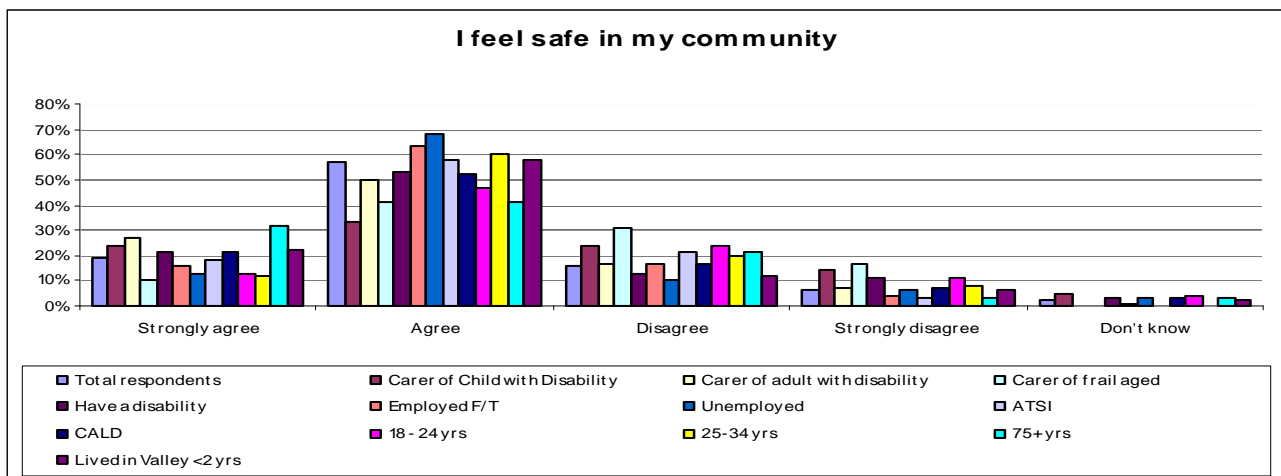
"You can't have a go at the kids if you don't give them something to look forward to."

"You can't walk the streets after dark without some school age lout trying to hassle for no reason and the police are powerless to stop it."

"Where do young people meet? What do they do? Where are the places and activities for them to engage after school? Fast food outlets? Shoppingworld? No wonder youngsters seem quite confused these days. I only see small and poor examples of services delivered to youngsters on our shire. I see no institutional understanding of how to engage young people in a successful way."

"I have heard more than one story of people being mugged in the street by out of control youth. More work needs to be done to identify youth problems and then to relay those problems to all members of the community so everyone has more of an understanding on why some of today's youth have gone off the rails. Perhaps with more understanding of youth issues people would be more prone to want to help rather than condemn."

"Media portrayal of antisocial behaviour/individuals/youth in community seems exaggerated and generates a climate of mistrust and fear. Especially with elderly people. Overall, the Clarence valley is the safest place my family and I have ever lived."

"I am becoming very concerned about the increasing unsocial behaviour, especially of the youth. The legal system needs to be given more authority, a view shared by the majority of the community, to deal with the culprits and impose deterrent penalties and sentencing. The 'soft slap on the wrist' approach and finding 'upbringing' excuses for the behaviour is not working. More police in our area. People get away with too much."

"I think that youth related problems are a little over stated or given too much attention in the media which then causes concern particularly among the vulnerable, generally older community. More responsible reporting and honest assessment would help. I hear cars roaring up Back Lane late at night... and think I did the same as a young driver. Closing parks (Corcoran Pk) is a poor response. Youth need to explore their limits, understand the dangers. e.g. promote good car use, healthy lifestyle... by example, events, excellence."

"More police in town especially Iluka and Yamba. Should not divert calls through to Grafton."

"With so few police in the district - hooligans are a strong threat to many elderly and not so elderly, each day and night. No one feels safe in the own homes, more police needed to live in area. Community policing after hours helped eradicate much of these problems in other areas."

"Consideration should be given to behaviour, alcohol, anti social behaviour and ways to tackle the undermining issues, not knee jerk or reactive measures. Give consideration of community parenting options, respect and support for all. Through alternatives for youth - issues, jobs, support. Being a small area we can make a difference to the lives of all our community members. We need to be proactive rather than reactive."

The graph of responses from the Community Survey in relation to Legal Issues and Personal Safety indicates the majority of those who responded to this question believe the issue to be inadequately or very poorly addressed.
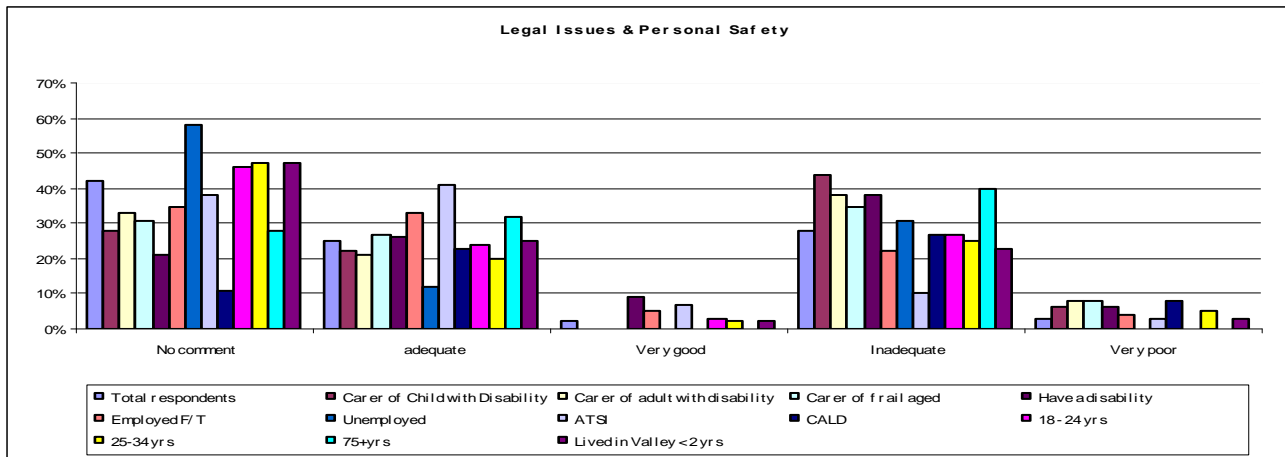
"Need more legal services like a community legal service."

"Room for improvements eg accessing family law courts and counselling."

"No legal aid, or community legal information centre in Grafton and lawyers are very expensive."

"Limited access to legal services and advice, if you don't have the money to pay for it. Only feel safe because of my dogs."

5.7 Infrastructure

Priority	Identified issue or need	Meetings	Service Survey	Individual Surveys	Other Plans
=1	Infrastructure to provide for people with a disability and older people, eg. physical access to public facilities, footpaths, add pedestrian crossings, public toilets, recreational and leisure facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓
=1	Inadequate facilities to encourage social opportunities and participation. Community, recreational and cultural infrastructure provides important components of the framework to develop a healthy, well-functioning and strong community.	✓		✓	✓

Contributing Factors

The following issues and needs listed under each of the Infrastructure priorities have contributed to its emergence as a priority.

1. Infrastructure to Promote Access

- The ageing population and the resulting increased number of people with a disability indicate the need to ensure all infrastructure is accessible. This also benefits parents with prams and young children.
- Yamba's ageing population requires a health post, such as the Community Health Well-being Centre that has been proposed for some time.
- Consultation indicates a need for strategies to improve safety in crossing roads for people with restricted mobility.
- A number of public venues in Grafton have not addressed disability access to upstairs areas.
- Numerous public toilets across the Valley do not have disability access.
- Insufficient public toilets in urban centres, particularly for an ageing population.
- Footpaths are essential for persons with mobility problems, both walking and in wheelchairs and scooters.
- Kerb and guttering is required for low floor buses to provide access. Few bus stops in the Lower Clarence have this.

1. Community, Recreational and Cultural Infrastructure

- Healthy and well-functioning communities need places in which they can meet and play. Social Plan consultations and the recently completed Review of Clarence Valley Community Centres and Lower Clarence Recreation Needs Assessment indicate that the Clarence Valley requires additional resources to support and develop the infrastructure that facilitates strong community participation and interaction. This includes activities such as office space for services, meeting rooms, age specific places such as Youth Centres and cultural and recreational activities.
- Larger urban centres require specialist facilities as a multi-function facility doesn't adequately serve many functions. As population increases the increase in demand for specialist facilities will make them viable options.
- Smaller rural communities are dependent on their halls and adjoining oval to provide a multitude of uses, including a sense of locality. Acknowledgement and recognition of the role provided by the community halls in rural localities is a basic necessity to support rural communities. The halls could share functions with Rural Fire Service such as kitchens and toilets.
- Support and assistance in maintaining halls is needed to address safety and the long term availability.
- The critical role of Public Libraries as one of the most accessed service by the community was frequently mentioned in the Community Survey. There is a need to maintain the services across the Valley and promote them as a location for community information distribution.

The Independent Inquiry into the Financial Sustainability of Local Government in NSW (Local Government Inquiry) was commissioned by the Associations in September 2005 in response to the widespread concerns about Local Government's financial capacity to meet the growing demand for infrastructure and services. The Inquiry found that Local Government has a major strategic challenge ahead sustaining the current level of infrastructure provided by this level of Government.

Community facilities such as community centres, public halls, libraries, museums and art galleries make up an important component of this infrastructure and are fundamental to a cohesive and well-functioning community. It is the facilities that allow participation in community life and encourage social networks to be established. The challenge for the Clarence Valley Council is the size of the region and the distribution and characteristics of its population.

An audit of the services and facilities available across a range of urban and rural centres in the Clarence Valley was conducted as part of the Social Plan consultations. A matrix indicating availability is provided at Attachment 2.

Clarence Valley Council recently completed a review of its four main community centres: the Grafton Community and Function Centre, Maclean Civic Hall, Yamba Community Hall and Treelands Drive Community Centre in Yamba. This review found significant ongoing maintenance and upgrading requirements such as air conditioning, electrical wiring, floor covering, etc associated with these centres.

Council staff have also reported that most of the 38 public halls and associated grounds, 29 of which are owned or controlled by Council, require ongoing maintenance. These halls are distributed widely across the Valley.

Rural areas require a community hall, accessible public toilets and a general purpose sports/recreation ground. This facility can be co-located with a Rural Fire Service for efficiencies.

Recreational facilities are relatively well catered for in Grafton but not as well supplied in the Lower Clarence, given the recent and continuing population growth. The Lower Clarence Recreation Needs Assessment Report details the current supply and expected demand for recreation to 2016 in the Lower Clarence. It is a comprehensive document that acknowledges the lack of facilities for young people and provides general strategies to improve and update the supply of facilities for all age groups. Clarence Valley Council adopted the Report in September 2006, with the highest priority being the creation of a multi function youth and indoor sports court at the Yamba Sports Complex.
Clarence Valley Council 2007 :: lower clarence recreation needs assessment

Other capital infrastructure items identified through the Social Plan consultation included:

- A Performing Arts Centre;

- Bicycle and walking tracks;

- Footpaths;

- Youth spaces/centres;

- Children's playgrounds, including older children; and

- An increase in the supply of accessible public toilets.

In recognition of the need for Council to be more involved and to co-ordinate cultural activities the Council appointed a full-time Cultural Development Officer in 2005. A Cultural Plan for the Clarence Valley is under development.

The general concern appears to be insufficient cultural activities within the Valley. Residents then travel away from the LGA to access cultural activities elsewhere. This is not only a social loss, but also an economic loss for the Council area.

There is a need for a purpose built Performing Arts Centre to host a range of activities including performances that can not currently be accommodated in the Clarence Valley.

Even the most basic of needs, a cinema, was identified as not being to the standard required by a population the size of the Clarence, and particularly in Grafton and Yamba.

As there is a predominantly older population in localities such as Yamba and Iluka their needs are for more footpaths, safe crossings and places to meet.

Generally, the cost of recreation/sporting activities on young families was prohibiting some children being able to participate. This is combined with the lack of transport to get people to sporting activities begins to lead to social isolation for those people who are on lower incomes.

Community Comment

From the survey, 25% of respondents said that there were adequate cultural activities, 44% said they don't use them so had no comment to make and 24% said services were inadequate or poor. Of survey respondents, 49% reported that recreation services and facilities were very good or adequate, while 25%

said they were inadequate. A total of 202 separate responses were given for recreation facilities and services.

The graphs for the questions discussed above are within the section on Community Services, Information and Participation.

The graph below indicates the Community Survey responses to Community Facilities. 40% believe they are adequate or very good, whilst 28% believe they are inadequate or very poor.

Of interest is that the unemployed respondents had a markedly high 72% non-response rate to this question. This may indicate that few unemployed residents use community facilities to form an opinion.
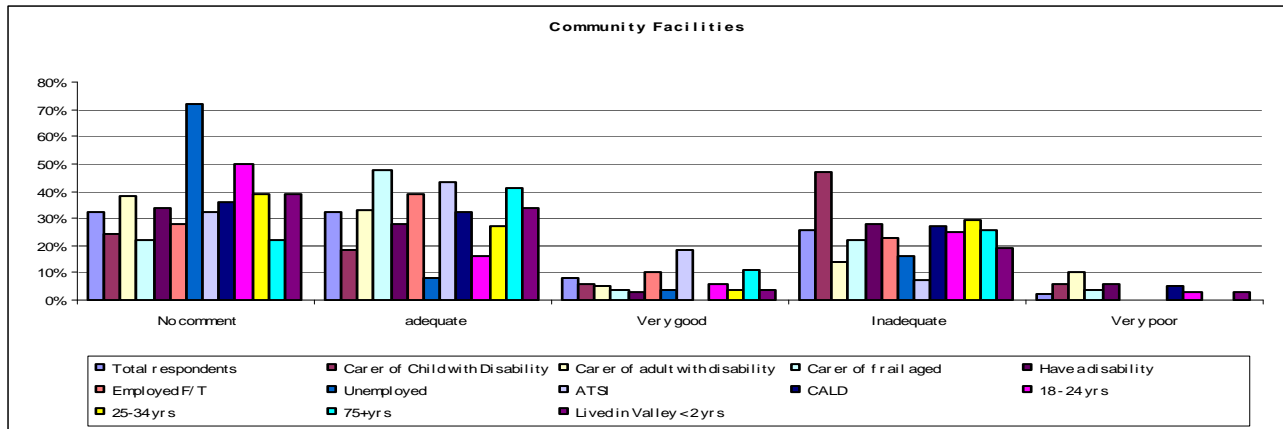
"No real free venue other than South Grafton Community Cottage where people can connect with their community. The Cottage is only open in the morning & is reliant totally on volunteers from the Community to be in attendance to do so." Quote from the Survey for Services and Community Groups.

"Very poor library, the Grafton Library is out of date, too small, too noisy, not enough space for study & lacks books & resource material. It is basically a book borrowing facility only. The Community & Function Centre is fantastic but if only it had been able to cater for larger groups & if it had a much better air conditioning unit it would be something to be really proud of & help to encourage conferences to the City. The basketball stadium & function centre desperately requires a full kitchen so that it could cater for large groups, such a facility should not be limited to a few users or a few specific purposes, and it could be a fantastic multifunction centre."

"A large venue (needed) for top range entertainment and bands."

"Hall at Copmanhurst has no disability access and in flood and fire its the evacuation centre.."

"Maintain facilities at Hawthorne Park. Great facility for equestrian groups."

"Non-existent facilities in Gulmarrad."

"What the council doesn't understand is that the volunteers that look after the community facilities are doing so to keep the council at arms length. The locals need your support not your sympathy."

"Local hall and sportsground needs council help with maintenance."

"Community halls with basic infrastructure in rural areas are very important as the meeting place for the community. They need to be maintained."

"Seal Pringles Way - Lawrence's only access road to Grafton/Casino when the river floods. Only remains smooth for 1 week after grading."

"More public toilets and mothers rooms located near Prince or King streets."

"Grafton Regional Gallery; something to be proud of."

"Many people in wheelchairs would love to access events at the showgrounds but they……..have ensured that they can't by not providing facilities to events to get through the ticket booth". – Grafton

"We need lots of road repairs and footpath repairs" – Iluka

"Local hall and sportsground, council help with maintenance would be appreciated. After sighting councils proposed community hall guidelines, council needs to give more credit and acknowledgement to the volunteers who have maintained these facilities for the many years prior to council's amalgamation." – Nymboida

"We live in one of (if not the best) natural environment/s in Australia. We should be able to have top class facilities such as movie cinemas, entertainment venues for concerts & conferences & sporting grounds so we could host major events. Some of the hotel/motel accommodation could do with a "make-over"".

"Maclean needs a unisex disable toilet in the parking area behind River Street, if you are female and need to take your relative to the toilet you have to use the male toilets."

"Community halls with basic infrastructure in rural areas are very important as the meeting place for the community. They need to be maintained."

"A general lack of adequate cultural facilities in the Clarence Valley. Most halls are OK for community use, but the Valley lacks a performing arts space with reasonable facilities (i.e. Raked seating, air-conditioned, reasonable acoustics, good back stage and technical facilities). This impacts not only on local groups/activities but limits opportunities for touring and professional performances and concerts, which would in turn contribute to audience development and demand for such activities."

"The social scene seems to be dominated by pubs, few of which have a nightclub or other kind of late night dancing, entertainment or bands that are not in the 'pub-style'. The variety of night-time entertainment is extremely limited but there seems to be many examples of the same kind of pub scene across the Valley. Pubs certainly dominate the after 6pm options."

"Very few touring acts (bands, performances, etc.) that we would be interested in have come to Grafton in the 4 and half years we have been here. We travel to Lismore, Byron Bay, Brisbane or Sydney to see the kind of music and performance that interests us and maintain contact with our friends in those places."

"We have great sporting venues and facilities available but not everyone is athletic."

"I would like to see many more picnic tables (particularly with shade) in areas such as the foreshore at Wooli, the riverbank between Maclean and Yamba and on rural drives such as the Armidale Road, the Old Glen Innes Road, etc. There are adequate facilities around the CBD of Grafton, Maclean, Yamba and Ulmarra where parks are shady and clean and well maintained."

"Good services and facilities if you have adequate income to participate."

"It would be great if the local sports for children, eg. Football provided a bus for away games to encourage more children to get active. I know a lot of parents who would love for their child to do sport but do not have transport to get them to and from games. Even an after school bus to take children to training."

5.8 Summary of Key Issues by Target Groups

This section summarises for each of the target groups the key issues discussed earlier.

5.8.1 Children

- Limited community support services for children and families apart from child care to assist families at an early stage before inadequate parenting skills impact on children.
- Parents of children with a disability find it difficult to access overnight respite.
- Long waiting list for speech pathologist in Grafton as there has been a spike in children requiring intervention and position not filled when on leave.
- No regular children's interagency.

- Parents of children with a disability in the Lower Clarence find it difficult to access the service in Early Intervention Service Grafton.
- Young mothers need support services.
- Childhood obesity increasing in the Valley.
- Coffs Child Sexual Assault Service covers the Clarence Valley but has a long waiting list.
- Lack of suitable affordable housing impacting on families and children.

5.8.2 Young People

- Higher proportion of the 12-17 age cohorts than for NSW, but significant lack of services and facilities to support.
- Significantly high youth unemployment.
- Poorly behaved few tarnish the public image of the rest.

- High rate of birth to mothers 20 years and less.
- Limited adolescent health services.
- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.

5.8.3 Older People

- Limited aged health services for the size of the population.
- Need an increase in funding to CCT to keep up with the large and growing demand.

- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.
- There is a gap in up market retirement housing provided by the private market that does not require government subsidy. Provides more choice in housing arrangements.

5.8.4 People with a Disability

- There is little rentable accessible housing.
- Lack of a community Occupational Therapist for modification assessments.
- There is a lack of physical access to commercial, retail premises and public toilets.
- There is only 1 disabled taxi in Grafton and none in Lower Clarence.
- Long waiting time for PDAP equipment.

- Lack of pedestrian crossings generally, but particularly in Grafton and Yamba.
- Footpaths are a major issue. There are obstacles that make access difficult.
- Impacted by lack of public accessible transport and cost to be involved in activities.

5.8.5 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People

- There are language barriers when trying to access services. Services not accessing telephone interpreters.
- Need a greater understanding of cultural differences within the community through cultural activities.

- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.
- Information about services needs to be promoted to the migrant community.
- Need more opportunities/places for people to meet.

5.8.6 Women

- Limited women's health services.
- Limited access to information and support.
- Limited housing options.

- High level of domestic violence.
- High level of (unreported) sexual assault.
- Impacted by lack of public transport and cost to be involved in activities.

• Limited employment opportunities – mostly in low paid, casual jobs.	• Limited representation of women in leadership roles.

5.8.7 Other Population Groups

The Plan did not focus on these two additional groups and further consultations should be carried out.

Men

- Few, if any men's health and support services available in the Clarence Valley

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual People

• Existence relatively unacknowledged in the Clarence Valley.	• Local needs and issues unknown.

6   MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Social Plan will be monitored and evaluated through the following mechanisms.

1.   Reports to the Quarterly Management Review of Council.

2.   Reports by Community Development Officers (CDO) to the relevant Interagencies and Section 355 Advisory Committees.

3.   The Annual review on progress prepared for the Council's Annual report.

4.   Annual Report of Council.

5.   Monitoring will occur through assessment of the CDOs work plans.

6.   Monitoring and evaluation will be part of the Service Agreements developed with Agencies.

7   IMPLEMENTATION AND THE ACCESS AND EQUITY PLAN

The Access and Equity Plan provides draft strategies and/or possible actions to minimise or resolve the needs and issues prioritised in the Social Plan.

Following the final adoption of the Social Plan by Council, the Social Planning and Community Development Department will organise a series of workshops with key agencies and interested community members to identify:

• the lead agency/ies or existing forums to address the findings in each category;
• refine the analysis of factors contributing to the problems and needs identified; and
• develop practical and sustainable action plans to address the contributing factors.

Access and Equity Plan

Issue	Draft Strategies	Outcomes	Estimated Cost	Target Groups	Locality	Key Groups
Health						
A significant shortfall in health services, workforce and infrastructure	1. Strengthening of the Clarence Valley Health Forum (CVHF) to establish a series of health priorities and plans 2. Clarence Valley Council through the CVHF to negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement with the NCAHS to • Support the implementation of the Grafton and Community Health Clinical Services Plan (GCHCSP) and the development of the CV wide Plan • Prioritise the gaps in service provision identified in the Social Plan that are omitted from the GCHCSP • Collaborate on attracting an equitable allocation of the new Mental Health resources • Progress the implementation of the redevelopment of the Grafton and Maclean hospitals and establishment of the Community Well-being Health Centre in Yamba • Ensure the merger with Coffs Network does not disguise the under-servicing of the Clarence Valley • Develop strategies to attract and retain medical, nursing and allied health workforce to the CV	Improved access to health services Improved health indicators Medical, nursing and allied health workforce better supported Less turnover or shortage of workforce members Impact of ageing workforce avoided Improved outcomes for victims of Domestic Violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) Increased conviction of perpetrators due to improved forensic evidence and support to victims of DV and SA		All	All	CVC NCAHS
Shortfall in Health Related Transport (HRT)	1. Increase the allocation of resources to the Health Related Transport budget in the Clarence Valley 2. Investigate strategies to coordinate intake and discharge planning with availability of HRT	Improved access to health services		Patients without access to private transport	All	CVC NCAHS Clarence Valley Community Transport Organisation (CVCTO)
Impact of alcohol	Clarence Valley Community Drug Action Team to work with the Liquor Accord Committees to investigate and develop an action plan to address related issues	Increased community awareness of issues and how to address		All	All	CVC - CDAT Liquor Accord Committees
Community Support Services, Information, and Participation and Governance						
Community Support Services						
Limited supply of community support services	**Children and Families** 1. CVC and relevant agencies to negotiate with Federal and State Government Departments to address the shortfall in the range of support services for children and families.	Improved and increased service delivery and range of services Increased access to		All	All	CVC Government Agencies

Issue	Draft Strategies	Outcomes	Estimated Cost	Target Groups	Locality	Key Groups
	2. Council in partnership with key children services agencies to facilitate the development of a children's services interagency **Young People** Recognition and support for young people by CVC and community. 1. Establish effective mechanisms for engagement with young people across all areas to identify specific needs and to develop strategies to address the needs through the development of a CVC Youth Strategic Plan. 2. CVC and relevant agencies to negotiate with Federal and State Government Departments to address the shortfall in the range of support services for young people, including early intervention health services and youth transport 3. Develop agreement with DADHC to address the long-term care of severely disabled young adults who are inappropriately housed in Nursing Homes and to provide overnight centre based respite for children and young adults **Women** 1. Support and assist the Clarence Valley Women's Refuge to further develop Women's Resource Centres in the Clarence Valley 2. Develop agreement with the Clarence Valley Women Inc to assist with the implementation of its Strategic Plan **CALD People** Investigate the feasibility of enhancing the current CALD support services in the Clarence Valley	specialist support services Increased community cohesiveness Improved community well-being				Non-Government agencies
Meeting the needs of an ageing population	Council to develop an implementation plan arising from its Older Persons Policy	Better serviced community of older people		Older People		
Adequate resourcing of services for people with a disability	Council to continue to support the Access Committees and associated Disability Action Plans	Improved and increased service delivery and range of services		People with a Disability	All	CVC DADHC NCAHS FACSIA
Growing population of CALD residents including new trend of recent arrivals	1. CVC to develop an Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement 2. Provide opportunities to increase understanding of cultural differences through cultural activities such as the Festival of the Five Senses 3. Promote to services and businesses the availability and use of interpreters	Improves social cohesion and community harmony Improves economic and cultural opportunities Reduce social isolation of CALD residents		CALD	All	CVC DIMA Woolgoolga NC
Information						
Limited access to information	Develop a Community Information Dissemination Strategy: A) For CVC information 1. Develop the libraries as a recognised community information distributor and point of access 2. Council to develop a partnership with rural stores, clubs etc to distribute information throughout the LGA – eg. Notice board at village stores, rural stores, and to promote its use to the public 3. Promote use of CVC website B) For General Information 4. Support for either the use of written community directories or updating of on-line directories – with promotion of how to access the information	Increased participation by residents Increased provision of information Greater access to information Better informed communities		All	All	CVC CVC NSOA

Issue	Draft Strategies	Outcomes	Estimated Cost	Target Groups	Locality	Key Groups
	5. Council to assist in determining a coordinated approach to collect relevant statistics by services to use for lobbying for additional resources 6. Noticeboard at town entrances to promote events and functions					
Participation and Governance						
Participation by the community	1. Clarence Valley Community Development Officers (CDO) to be responsible for a geographic area of the Valley in addition to their area of interest/target group to provide a contact for residents of the area 2. Community Information Strategy will assist in raising awareness of issues, facilities and activities to provide for greater participation by residents 3. Development of the CV Cultural Plan and the Community and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan will increase the range of activities available to residents	General community groups have a contact in CVC to access information Increased participation by residents Better servicing of the community		All	All	CVC
Ageing of volunteers	Develop and implement campaign to assist community groups and Valley Volunteers to promote volunteering to newly retired and to younger people	Maintain community groups High level of community engagement		All	All	CVC NSOA – Valley Volunteers
Limited number of NGOs in Lower Clarence	Treelands Drive Community Centre Development Officer to investigate the establishment of a new entity and to support existing CV non-government organisations to diversify services in the Lower Clarence	Increased social capital Increase grant applications for services based in the area		All	Lower Clarence	CVC CPI NSOA
Strategic collaboration and partnership between NGOs, CVC and Gov't agencies	Develop a Clarence Valley Human Services Strategic Alliance at a senior level to build trust, share information and work collaboratively to enhance the human services sector in the Clarence Valley	Increase trust and info sharing Increase capacity of community to develop and implement support services Increased opportunities for innovative service delivery		All	All	CVC Gov't Human Service Agencies Key NGO groups.
Transport						
Inadequate public transport Insufficient affordability or accessible transport and information about services	1. CV Public Transport Working Group (PTWG) to negotiate with the Ministry of Transport (MOT) to develop a set of priority service improvements for public transport, 2. Campaign to attract additional CCT funding including Health Related	Improved access to transport. Increased community engagement. Increased safety.		All	All	CVPTWG MOT CCT Transport Providers
Housing						
Shortfall in affordable and accessible housing in suitable Clarence Valley locations	Completion of the Clarence Valley Affordable Housing Strategy and implement identified strategies including Investigation into the potential for the provision of a range of retirement housing options, including private developments	Increase supply of affordable and accessible housing Reduction in poverty as less income spent on housing Reduction of homelessness Appropriately housed older people with option choices		All	All	CVC – Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Department of Housing

Issue	Draft Strategies	Outcomes	Estimated Cost	Target Groups	Locality	Key Groups
Employment, Education and Training						
Skilling of the workforce	The strategies below are from the CV Economic Development Plan Strengthen the linkages between industry and training providers to ensure the required training needs of industry are met and facilitated by providers 1. Establish training industry reference group 2. Prepare training demand and needs assessments 3. Develop responsive training products and services 4. Develop a set of best practice examples 5. Raise awareness of training products and services	Increase quantity of training available Improve qualification level of the population		Youth Women People with Disabilities (PWD) Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)	all	CVC DET VET Sectors Chambers of Commerce
Migrants from a non-English speaking background experience difficulty in accessing educational and employment opportunities	1. Increase understanding of cultural diversity by local service providers through cross-cultural awareness training particularly in essential areas such as health, education, community welfare, housing, police and justice 2. More, and affordable English language literacy and conversation courses	Better educated community Increased opportunities for involvement Reduces social isolation		CALD	Grafton Maclean	NCI TAFE Adult Education
Unemployment	Implementation of the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategy	Increased employment opportunities Improved community well being		All	All	CVC - EDU
Crime and Legal Services						
Crime and anti-social behaviour	1. Develop and implement Crime Prevention Plan e.g. (conduct audit on community safety and crime prevention at known "hot spots" to reduce risks to women and young people at night) 2. Link the Plan to the Cultural Development Plan, Youth Strategic Plan, Community Drug Action Team and negotiations with NCAHS to increase Sexual Assault Service 3. Police to visit communities – use the Police Accountability Community Team	Safer community Better informed community Improved health outcomes		All	All	CVC – Crime Prevention Advisory Committee DV Interagency NSW Police
Limited advice and assistance at both Courts re applications for Apprehended Violence Orders (AVO) and other Domestic Violence matters.	Develop an agreement with NSW Attorney Generals for an appropriately resourced DV Court support program to operate at both Grafton and Maclean Courts	Reduction in occurrence of DV Increased understanding of how to deal with DV		Women	Grafton Maclean	CVC NSW A-G CVWR
Access to affordable legal advice and information for individuals, and community organizations	1. Develop service agreement with Legal Aid Commission and NR Community Legal Centre to provide access to legal information 2. Promote the legal aid service 3. Investigate the opportunity to co-locate with the Aboriginal Legal Service commencing in Grafton 4. Council to assist community groups in accessing affordable Public Liability insurance	People have access to legal services Improved justice for low income people Resourced community groups Better functioning community organizations		All	All	CVC LAC NRCLC Gurehlgam Corp. Ltd

Issue	Draft Strategies	Outcomes	Estimated Cost	Target Groups	Locality	Key Groups
		Increase in number of events				
Infrastructure						
Shortfall of appropriate footpaths, road crossings, cycleways, gopher/scooter paths, access to buildings etc	1. Develop a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2. Develop a Council Bike Plan 3. Implement the Grafton Open Space Plan 4. Council to implement its Disability Policy- and apply it to the whole Clarence Valley. 5. Council to review and implement the Maclean and Grafton City Disability Action Plans, and apply to whole of the Clarence Valley Council 6. Appropriate Transport Infrastructure to be placed strategically throughout the CV 7. Develop internal service agreements with Council Divisions to implement access priorities	Healthier communities Improved community connections Needs addressed or represented in planning for an increasing disabled and aged population		All	All	CVC RTA
Use of sporting facilities by children and young people	Council to investigate the cost of sporting/recreational activities and ways to reduce these costs that can prohibit children participating in activities	Healthier children and adults		Children Young People	all	CVC NCAHS DSR
Shortfall in Community and Cultural facilities	Preparation of a Community and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan	Key community facilities are identified and maintained Improved community well-being		All	All	CVC Arts organizations
Lack of recreational activities in the Lower Clarence	Implement Council's priorities from the Lower Clarence Recreation Needs Assessment: 1. Detailed feasibility assessment into a multi function youth and indoor sports facility at the Yamba Sports Complex. 2. Further investigation into possible partnership for indoor sport and recreation at Maclean; 3. Further report be provided on recreational spaces and activities for young people	Improved facilities Better resourced community Healthier community Improved community well-being		All	Lower Clarence	CVC DSR

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ATTACHMENT I   METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the development of the Social Plan is based on a Project Management Team (PMT) approach between the consultants engaged to develop the Plan, the Council's Community Development Team, a representative from Council's Environmental Planning team and two representatives from the Social Planning Advisory Group (SPAG). The SPAG included representatives from the community and key human services agencies to facilitate the involvement of the agencies throughout, provision of data and the two-way reporting of needs and issues between the agencies and Council.

The Project Management Team (PMT) met regularly to provide input, assistance and guidance to the consultants.

Community Participation

Promotion

The following initiatives were undertaken to promote the development of the Social Plan and to encourage participation:

- Daily attendance at the Maclean and Grafton Agricultural Shows, including the launch of the Social Plan at the Grafton Show. This was reported on local Prime TV and the Daily Examiner.

- Attendance at the Multicultural Festival held in Grafton in May to promote the survey and the consultation meetings.

- Meetings, and the availability of surveys, were publicised each week, during the consultation stage, in the Clarence Valley Council Noticeboard, in the Clarence Valley Review and the Daily Examiner newspapers.

- Surveys, promotional posters and collection boxes for completed surveys were placed in 43 shops and other outlets throughout the Clarence Valley, plus libraries, community centres and Council offices.

- All schools throughout the Clarence Valley received information regarding the Social Plan through email to be included in newsletters.

- Two Social Plan Newsletters were distributed throughout the Clarence Valley.

- ABC Radio conducted a specific interview with the Manager Social Planning and Community Development and the Mayor was interviewed about the Social Plan in a subsequent interview.

- The Consultant's email database of approximately 200 Clarence Valley women was used to distribute the survey, newsletter and meeting timetable, with a request to further distribute.

- The Clarence Valley Council Community Development Officers distributed the survey, newsletter and meeting timetable to their extensive networks, including interagency meetings.

- A number of services, including Family Day Care, pre-schools, youth services, Centrelink and Caringa distributed and assisted clients to complete and return surveys.

- The home page of Council's website promoted the Social Plan and provided interactive versions of both surveys.

Meetings

Approximately thirty consultation meetings were held with 248 people in attendance. Originally, eighteen were planned, with an additional twelve conducted, following identification of opportunities to collect information from specific groups.

A total of eighty-five organisations and services attended the meetings. This includes a degree of duplication in attendance as representatives from some services took the opportunity to contribute to a number of target group or locality consultations.

Services provided by a large organisation, such as the North Coast Area Health Service, have been counted individually.

Individual meetings were also held with the Clarence Valley Community Development Officers.

Surveys of Individuals

Completed surveys were returned through the collection boxes located across the Valley, on-line through the Council's web site, and posted through reply paid envelopes. An example of the response rate from the boxes was 31 surveys returned from the box placed on the Centrelink counter in Grafton.

A total of 555 surveys from individuals were received - 402 by hard copy and 153 on-line.

- 361 or 65% of the surveys were completed by females.

- Surveys were received from 61 localities throughout the Clarence Valley, including:

  o 28 in the Clarence Coast planning area;

  o 14 in the Greater Grafton planning area; and

  o 19 in the Clarence Country planning area.

The charts below indicate the geographic distribution of the responses compared to the population distribution. For the 18 years and over, the response reflects distribution of the population across the three Planning Areas. It also equates to a sample of 1.5% of the 18 years and older population.

Another three surveys were received from the Clarence Country Area well after the extended closing date of 19 June, and could not be included in the qualitative data analysis
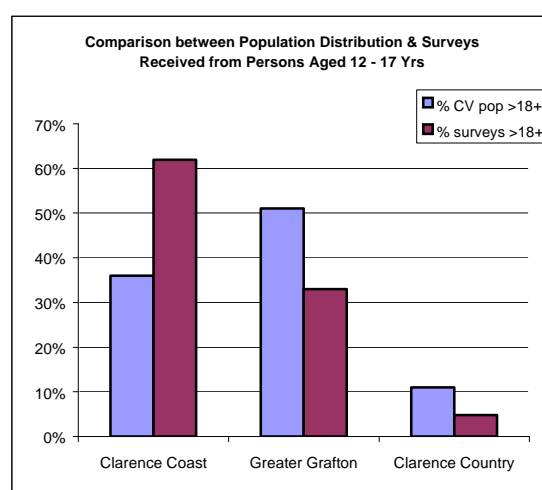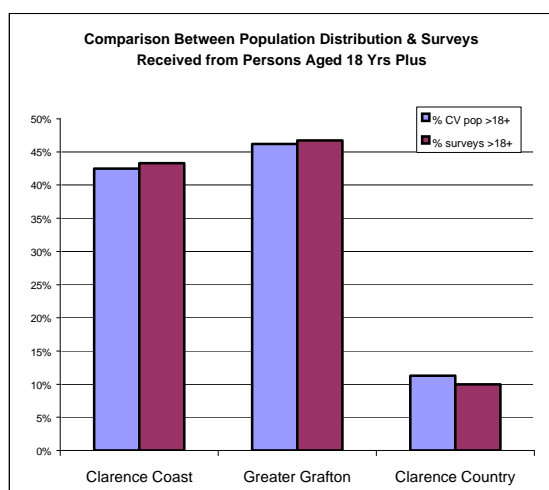
Survey of Organisations

The survey of organisations and government agencies resulted in twenty-seven responses. A number of key organisations attended consultation meetings and were interviewed rather than submit a survey.

Of the respondents:

- 8% were local government services;

- 19% were a government agency;

- 19% were church services;

- 54% were non-government or community based services;

Of the 24 organisations that responded to the question relating to the target group/s they serve and taking into account that more than one target group could be indicated:

- 54% served young people;

- 54% served children and their families;

- 50% served people with a disability;

- 46% served culturally and linguistically diverse people;

- 38% served women;

- 42% served older people;

- 58% served Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and

- 33% served other groups including geographically disadvantaged communities, men, people eligible for public housing and business.

A copy of the survey is attached below.

Prioritisation of Needs and Issues

A meeting with representatives from a range of community organisations was held on August 1st to consider the issues and needs identified through consultation. The issues and needs were finalised through a prioritisation process to identify the top priorities to be pursued.

Survey of Individuals

A survey for community groups & services is also available   Both surveys can be completed on line at www.clarence.nsw.gov.au

WHY?   Clarence Valley Council is developing a new Social Plan for the period 2006 – 2009. It will consider the quality of life for the residents of the Clarence Valley and gaps in community services & facilities to be addressed by Council, community groups & services, & government agencies. Community organisations & service providers are also being surveyed & community meetings are being held during May & June throughout the Clarence Valley. Please phone 02 6642 9742 for details.

WHO?   Council must plan for the general community including seven target groups as legislated by the NSW State Government: children; young people; older people; people with a disability; people with a culturally & linguistically diverse background; Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people; and women.

All information will be treated confidentially. We do not need to know your name. Please answer or indicate the following.

Section A.   This information assists in ensuring a cross section of the community has responded to the survey. Disability includes physical, intellectual and learning disability, issues with mental health and HIV/AIDS. Please write or indicate the most appropriate response

About you: ☐ male   ☐ female   **Do you identify as:**   ☐ ATSI   ☐ Culturally & Linguistically Diverse

Age: ☐ 12-14 yrs ☐ 15-17 yrs ☐ 18-24 yrs ☐ 25-34 yrs ☐ 35-44 yrs

☐ 45-54 yrs ☐ 55-64 yrs ☐ 65 74 yrs ☐ 75yrs plus

How many years have you resided in the Clarence Valley? _____   **In which locality do you currently live?** _____

My dwelling is: ☐ city/town/village   ☐ rural   **Is your household?**   ☐ single person   ☐ couple   ☐ adult family

☐ a sole parent with dependent children   ☐ couple with dependent children   ☐ group

Do you or your household   ☐ own or are purchasing your place of residence   ☐ rent your place of residence

Do you have carer responsibilities for children?   ☐ less than 5 yrs?   ☐ 6-17 yrs **Does any child have a disability?**   ☐ yes ☐ no

Do you have carer responsibilities for: disabled adults?   ☐ yes   ☐ no   **&/or frail aged adults?**   ☐ yes   ☐ no

Do you have a disability?   ☐ yes ☐ no **If yes, what type? (optional)** _____

Are you employed, including self employed?   ☐ full-time ☐ part-time ☐ casual

Are you: ☐ unemployed & looking for work   ☐ student ☐ retired   ☐ not part of the workforce

Would you like more paid work?   ☐ yes   ☐ no

Section B

1.   Approximately what proportion of your household's after tax weekly income is spent on housing (include rates)? _____ **%**

2.   When you consider all the places you need to go, which statement best describes your overall transport situation?   ☐ can easily get to places

☐ sometimes have difficulty getting to places   ☐ often have difficulty   ☐ can't get to places needed   ☐ never go out/housebound

For each of the following statements, please circle your response using the following key:

1 Strongly agree	2. Agree	3. Disagree	4. Strongly disagree	5. Don't know					
3.	I feel I am part of my community or neighbourhood				1	2	3	4	5
4.	People around here are willing to help their neighbours and community				1	2	3	4	5
5.	I am or my household is coping on present level of income				1	2	3	4	5
6.	I feel my concerns and opinions about local issues can be heard				1	2	3	4	5
7.	In the last 12 months I have been involved in a local community group, project or event.				1	2	3	4	5
8.	Businesses in the Clarence Valley support their local community				1	2	3	4	5
9.	I feel safe in my community				1	2	3	4	5
10.	If I need information about community services I know where to find it				1	2	3	4	5
11.	I am able to get the community services I need in the Clarence Valley				1	2	3	4	5

12. In relation to services & facilities what changes or improvements would you like to see in the Clarence Valley (or your local community) in the next five years as per the following issues? Your comments can relate to the general community or to the population groups mention at the beginning of the survey. If you don't think any changes or improvements are required or if you are not aware of any please indicate.

Issue	Your comment
Health	
Employment	
Education & Training	
Housing	
Transport	
Community support services & Information	
Legal issues & personal safety	
Opportunities to meet others in the community	
Cultural activities	
Recreation & leisure	
Community facilities	

Thank you for your time and opinions! Please return the survey by 12 June 2006 to

Reply Paid 29, St Lawrence & Associates Consulting Services PO Box 29 Grafton 2460 (no stamp required) OR FAX to 02 6642 9799

OR drop off at Clarence Valley Council libraries or participating village stores

If you would like to discuss the survey please call Clarence Valley Council on 02 6641 7211

Please add pages if you require more room.

Survey for Services & Community Groups

A survey for individuals is also available   **Both surveys can be completed on line at www.clarence.nsw.gov.au**

1 Name of auspice: _____

2. Name of Service if different to auspice (please complete a survey for each separate service): _____

3 Description of Service: _____

_____

4.1 Name of person completing this survey: _____ 4.2 Position: _____

4.3 Phone No: _____   4.4 E-mail: _____

5 What type of organisation is the service? ☐ Local Government ☐ Government Agency   ☐ Church

☐ Non-government or community based   ☐ Private

6 Is the funding for the service: ☐ Recurrent   ☐ Time limited & due to cease on _____   ☐   Other
_____

7 To what capacity is the service working? ☐ Over 100%   ☐ Full   ☐ Some spare capacity   ☐ Plenty of spare capacity
☐ not applicable

8.1 Which of the following population groups does your service or group target (can be more than one):   ☐ Young People

☐ Children & their families   ☐ People with a Disability   ☐ Culturally & Linguistically Diverse people   ☐ Women

☐ Older People   ☐ Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people   ☐ Other: 8.2 _____

Working with Other Services

9.1 Does someone from your service or group regularly attend an interagency or service planning/networking group?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

9.2 If yes, which one/s? _____

_____

9.3 If no, can you indicate why? ☐ There isn't one ☐ Inconvenient time or location   ☐ Too busy   ☐ No benefit
from attending   9.4   Comment:

_____

_____

10.1 Do the services & agencies in the Clarence Valley generally work well together?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

10.2 Please indicate how it can be improved: ☐ Establish or change interagency   ☐ Case management issues   ☐ Assessment
& referral   ☐ Identification of community needs   ☐ Other: _____

10.3 Comment: _____

_____

_____

Identification of issues, needs & gaps in services – general community

11 The next page asks you to identify issues, needs & gaps in services by topic for the population groups served by your organisation. In this section please indicate issues & needs that your service or group has identified that relate to the general community as per the topics listed:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In relation to the population groups your organisation serves please list in order of priority the top 3 issues, needs or gaps in service as per the topics in the left hand column

Topic	Identified Issue, Need or Gap in Service & how it was identified. Please Indicate in which Locality the Issue or Need has been Identified & for which target group
Health	
Employment	
Education & Training	
Housing	
Transport	
Community support services & Information	
Legal issues & personal safety	
Opportunities to meet others in the community	
Cultural activities	
Recreation & leisure	
Community facilities	

Please return survey by June 12 2006 to:

St Lawrence & Associates Consulting Services PO Box 29 Grafton 2460 OR FAX to 02 6642 9799 or drop off at Clarence Valley libraries.

If you would like to discuss the survey please call Clarence Valley Council 02 6641 7211 – or add additional pages

ATTACHMENT 2: LIST OF BASIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Clarence Coast Existing Facilities and Services as at May/June 2006

Facilities and Services	Brooms Head	Townsend /Gulmarrad	Iluka/ Wombah	Maclean	Minnie Water /Wooli	Brushgrove / Harwood	Yamba
Community Centre – with services and facilities, eg. Health services, library, meeting rooms, storage for groups, community recreation,			Iluka Community health centre and library		Doctor at Wooli Hall +community nurse visits		TDCC

Community Hall
  CWA Rooms
  Scout Hall
  Guides Hall
  Playgroup Hall
	YES		Iluka Community and Iluka Memorial Halls
			Iluka Scout Hall
				YES
				YES
				YES
				At Showground ?
				At Showground ?
					Halls at Wooli and Minnie Water	Brushgrove and Harwood Halls	Yamba community hall
							Yamba RSL hall
							Wooloweyah

Youth Centre							
Youth Group							Wooloweyah
Senior Citizens Centre			Iluka Community Hall and seniors centre	Seniors meet at Bowling club	Seniors meet at Wooli hall		Seniors meet at Bowling club
Playgroup			YES	YES	✓ at Wooli		YES
Pre-school		YES	YES	YES – Townsend	✓ at Wooli		YES
Child Care Centre							YES
Primary Schools		YES	YES – Iluka	Maclean Primary, St Josephs	✓ at Wooli	Harwood, Cowper and Chatsworth	Yamba Public St James Palmers Island
High School				YES			
Out of School Hours Care				YES			YES

Public transport – to Grafton
  School bus
  Scheduled bus service
	✓-not to Grafton no service out of Brooms on holidays/weekends Community Transport	YES
		NO
			YES
			YES
				YES
				YES
					School bus only + CCT bus weekly
					No service on holidays/ weekends
						YES	YES
							YES

CCT Access Bus	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Taxi based in centre				YES			YES
Cycleways		NO	Iluka to Woody Head	YES – some	YES	NO	YES
Public Toilets	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Children's Playground	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Park	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES?	YES
Picnic facilities	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Sporting/recreational Facilities
  Oval
  Pool
  Tennis Courts
  Skate Park
	YES
	
	YES
			Iluka
			
			Iluka
				YES
				YES
				YES
				YES
					✓ at Wooli
					
					✓ at Wooli
						B/grove, Harwood and Chatsworth Ovals
						
						YES – Brushgrove
							Palmers Isl and Yamba
							YES
							YES
							YES
							YES

Facilities and Services	Brooms Head	Townsend /Gulmarrad	Iluka/ Wombah	Maclean	Minnie Water /Wooli	Brushgrove / Harwood	Yamba
Patrolled beach	✓ Summer holiday season only		YES		✓ Summer holiday season		✓ Summer holiday season only
Medical Practitioner			Iluka	yes	✓ at Wooli		YES
Dentist				Yes			YES
Chemist	Chemist who lives in BH, works in Maclean takes scripts		Iluka	yes			YES
Police Station	NO	NO	Iluka	yes	✓ at Wooli	NO	YES
SES Centre				YES	✓ at Wooli		YES
RFS Centre / BRIGADE	YES	YES	YES		✓	YES	Yes – Wooloweyah
Aged/Disabled Day Care	At hall		Yes at Iluka community health	Yes at church hall		yes	yes
Hostel Accommodation/Respite				yes			yes
Nursing Home Accommodation				yes			
Regional Public Hospital				YES			
Private Hospital							
Shopping Centre			Yes – Iluka	YES			YES
Village General Store	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES?	YES
Petrol available	YES	YES	YES – Iluka	YES	YES	YES	YES
Post Office	General Store/PO	NO	Iluka	YES	YES – Wooli	Harwood	YES
Mail delivery	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Yes	YES
Broad band available**		YES		YES			yes
Library/Branch/Mobile	NO	NO	Iluka	YES	Mobile Library	NO	YES
Licensed Club/Hotel	YES	NO	Iluka	YES	✓ at Wooli	YES	YES
Reticulated water	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Mains sewerage	NO	Townsend	Iluka	YES	NO	NO	YES
Waste collection	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Other: Youth Group Over 50's group Museum Lawrence Rodeo Meals on wheels	Sunshine Group for older people Bowling Club		Iluka MOW kitchen	Maclean Museum Lawrence Historical Society MOW	CWA Lions Bowling Club activities at Wooli		Port of Yamba Historical Society MOW

** Broadband is only available to households within a 4.2km radius from the local Exchange. A second factor involves the technology which exists within the Exchange. Essentially all technological equipment must be ADSL compatible, and this is not available at all Exchanges. This means that whilst Broadband is available in most regions, not all households within that region will have access.

Greater Grafton Existing Facilities and Services as at May/June 2006

Facilities and Services	Grafton	South Grafton	Waterview Seelands Eatonsville	Ulmarra	Coutts Crossing	Tucabia
Community Centre – with services and facilities, eg. Health services, library, meeting rooms, storage for groups, community recreation,	YES	YES				

Community Hall
  CWA Rooms
  Scout Hall
  Guides Hall
  Playgroup Hall
	YES
	YES
	YES
	YES
	YES
		YES
		YES
		
		YES
			Eatsonville + Seelands	Masonic Hall	YES	YES

Youth Centre	Not yet but CVCP has funding for youth space					
Youth Group	Nothing formal					
Senior Citizens Centre	YES			Yes meet at hall		
Playgroup	YES	YES				YES
Pre-school	YES	YES			YES	YES
Child Care Centre	YES	YES				
Primary Schools	Grafton Infants, Grafton Primary, Westlawn, St Mary's, CV Anglican School	Gilwinga, St Josephs, South Grafton Infants School, South Grafton Primary, McCauley Catholic College, St Andrews Christian School	no	Yes	yes	YES
High School	Grafton SHS, Clarence Valley Anglican School, McCauley Catholic College	South Grafton High School, St Andrew's Christian School	no	No	no	No
Out of School Hours Care	YES	YES				

Public transport – to Grafton
  School bus
  Scheduled bus service
	
	YES
	YES
		
		YES
		YES
			
			YES
			Waterview/Seelands
				
				YES
				YES
					
					YES
						
						School bus only

CCT Access Bus	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
Taxi based in centre	YES					
Cycleways	YES	YES	Waterview	NO		NO
Public Toilets	Yes	YES		YES	YES	YES
Children's Playground	Yes	Yes		YES	YES	YES
Park	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
Picnic facilities	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Sporting/recreational Facilities
  Oval
  Pool
  Tennis Courts
  Skate Park
	
	YES
	YES
	YES
	YES
		
		YES
		YES
		YES
			Caramana, Waterview
			
			YES – Squash Court
				Small Park
				YES
				YES
				YES
					McIntosh and Wajard Pks
					YES
					NO
						
						YES
						NO
						YES
						NO

Patrolled beach						
Medical Practitioner	YES	YES				
Dentist	YES					

Facilities and Services	Grafton	South Grafton	Waterview Seelands Eatonsville	Ulmarra	Coutts Crossing	Tucabia
Chemist	YES	YES				
Police Station	YES			YES		
SES Centre	YES	YES		YES	YES	
RFS Centre	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
Aged/Disabled Day Care	YES	YES		YES		
Hostel Accommodation/Respite	YES	YES		YES		
Nursing Home Accommodation	YES	YES				
Regional Public Hospital	YES					
Private Hospital						
Shopping Centre	YES	YES				
Village General Store				YES	YES	YES
Petrol available	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
Post Office	YES	YES		General Store / PO	General Store / PO	General Store / PO
Mail delivery	YES	YES		YES		
Broad band available**	YES	YES		YES		Some **
Library/Branch/Mobile	YES		Mobile	Mobile	Mobile	Mobile library
Licensed Club/Hotel	YES	YES		YES	YES	
Reticulated water	YES	YES	YES (mostly)	YES	YES	YES
Mains sewerage	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Waste collection	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Other: Youth Group Over 50's group Museum Lawrence Rodeo Meals on wheels	Army/Naval Cadets u3a Schaeffer House YES	 MOW Delivered from Grafton	Caramana Squash Cts MOW Delivered from Grafton	 MOW Delivered from Grafton	Golf course McIntosh Park Squash Cts MOW Delivered from Grafton	

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Clarence Coast Existing Facilities and Services as at May/June 2006

Facilities and Services	Copmanhurst	Glenreagh	Halfway Creek Lanitza	Hernani	Dundurrabin/ Tyringham	Jackadgery	Nymboida
Community Centre – with services and facilities, eg. Health services, library, meeting rooms, storage for groups, community recreation,							

Community Hall
  CWA Rooms
  Scout Hall
  Guides Hall
  Playgroup Hall
	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Youth Centre							
Youth Group							
Senior Citizens Centre		Meet at Hall					
Playgroup							YES
Pre-school	YES	YES					
Child Care Centre							
Primary Schools	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	Closed 2004	YES
High School	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Out of School Hours Care							

Public transport – to Grafton
  School bus
  Scheduled bus service
	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES

CCT Access Bus	YES		YES				YES
Taxi based in centre							
Cycleways			NO	NO	School to hall	NO	NO
Public Toilets	YES	YES				RTA Mann River bridge	
Children's Playground	YES	YES					
Park	YES	YES					YES – Cartmill Pk
Picnic facilities	YES					YES - RTA	YES – Cartmill Pk

Sporting/recreational Facilities
  Oval
  Pool
  Tennis Courts
  Skate Park
	YES
	NO
	YES
	NO
		YES
		YES
				YES	YES		Cartmill Park
							
							YES

Patrolled beach	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Medical Practitioner							
Dentist							
Chemist							
Police Station	YES						
SES Centre	YES						
RFS Centre	YES	YES	YES		YES	Ramornie	YES
Aged/Disabled Day Care	YES at Hall						
Hostel Accommodation/Respite							
Nursing Home Accommodation							
Regional Public Hospital							
Private Hospital							

Facilities and Services	Copmanhurst	Glenreagh	Halfway Creek Lanitza	Hernani	Dundurrabin/ Tyringham	Jackadgery	Nymboida
Shopping Centre							
Village General Store	YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	
Petrol available	YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
Post Office	General Store PO	General Store PO			General Store PO		
Mail delivery							
Broad band available**							
Library/Branch/Mobile		Mobile Library	Mobile Library			Mobile Library	Mobile Library
Licensed Club/Hotel	YES	YES					YES
Reticulated water	YES	YES					YES (Community)- village only
Mains sewerage							
Waste collection	YES						
Other: Youth Group Over 50's group Museum Lawrence Rodeo Meals on wheels	Rodeo ground Meals delivered from Grafton	School of Arts Railway Museum					Canoe Centre

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