Local Social Strategy

2030

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City of Newcastle

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Welcome

Acknowledgment

City of Newcastle (CN) acknowledges that we operate on the grounds of the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land and waters, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

CN reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

Smoking ceremony held at the new City Administration Centre building at 12 Stewart Avenue. The ceremony also included; Wakakulang Dance Troupe, Aboriginal catering and a special guest talk by artist Saretta Fielding.

A message from our Lord Mayor

City of Newcastle (CN)'s *Local Social Strategy 2030* places people at the centre of our vision for a socially just and inclusive place for all. We recognise that human health and the health of our planet are deeply interwoven. Together we must balance our social foundations – things like care for health and wellbeing, education and access to food – with ecological concerns such as a healthy climate, biodiversity and clean water. From this basis, our strategy champions evidence-based decision-making and innovative practice to inform our approach, while ensuring strong, respectful and transparent relationships with our community partners.

Newcastle is a liveable city with a remarkable natural environment, local economic opportunities, and an increasingly diverse social, cultural and creative foundation that contributes to quality of life. However, as Newcastle undergoes significant growth and change,

an increasing number of community members risk being left behind, unable to realise their full potential as part of a thriving society.

Our *Local Social Strategy* seeks to respond to these challenges by removing barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encouraging community connection and participation, celebrating our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthening community health and wellbeing.

Thank you to those who contributed through the consultation stage to form this plan and the community sector organisations who we work with to make Newcastle a socially just and inclusive place for all. I look forward to championing the implementation of this plan into the future.

Councillor Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor of Newcastle

Our Newcastle

Community Strategic Plan – Newcastle 2040

Community Strategic Plan
NEWCASTLE 2040
it's our *future*

Newcastle is a liveable, sustainable, inclusive global city

Newcastle 2040 is CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and is the highest level of planning we undertake at the local government level. Newcastle 2040 is a shared community vision, developed as a guide to inform policies and actions throughout the city for the next 10+ years.

For those who live, work, play and study in Newcastle, this vision sets the direction for how we want our city to grow. With direct input from a wide cross-section of the community, it represents what we value in our city and what we want to prioritise.

In 2040, Newcastle will be a liveable, sustainable and inclusive global city. We will celebrate our unique city and protect our natural assets. We will optimise opportunities and build resilience in the face of future challenges. We will champion inclusion so that everyone is valued, and we will encourage innovation and creativity. As we make our way towards 2040, we will work together to achieve our vision by building trust and collaborative relationships.

To guide us forward, we will focus on four themes that emerged from our shared planning process. These themes work together in harmony to deliver our vision for Newcastle as a place for everyone.

Our city, our people

Newcastle is a proud community that has been shaped by our heritage. It is increasingly made up of people from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, as well as people with diverse social identities and lived experiences.

We have survived earthquakes, superstorms and the closure of major industries and we continue to grow and change.

The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are descendants of the traditional custodians of the land situated within the Newcastle local government area (LGA), including wetlands, rivers, creeks and coastal environments. Their heritage and cultural ties to Newcastle date back tens of thousands of years, and they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession. The tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples continues to enrich and inform the contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities of Newcastle and the Hunter Region.

European settlement introduced a range of activities, from farming to coal mining and industry. While the industrial sector continues to play a role in employment, a substantial and growing portion of our economy is now based around the service sector.

We are home to artists, galleries, museums, theatres, creative enterprises, education institutions, community groups, volunteer networks, social and health agencies and a community that embraces cultural expression, community connection and health and wellbeing of people. We have a diverse natural environment, from coastal headlands and beaches to wetlands, mangrove forests, steep ridges and rainforest gullies. Our suburbs are also diverse – from the heritage-lined streets of Newcastle East to the leafy homes of our middle suburbs such as Lambton and Kotara, and more recent communities at Fletcher and Minmi.

Our place in the region

Newcastle is located about 160 km north of Sydney. It is Australia's seventh-largest city and is the centre of the Greater Newcastle Region, the largest regional centre in NSW.

Newcastle is the economic hub of the Hunter Region and accounts for approximately 30% of the Hunter's developed industrial space and 80% of its office space.

Newcastle is home to the University of Newcastle; the John Hunter Hospital, which is the tertiary referral hospital for Northern NSW; and several world-class research organisations, including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and Hunter Medical Research Institute. Newcastle is the cultural heart of the Hunter Region, supporting Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum, and the Civic Theatre and Playhouse, and hosting a diverse calendar of cultural events.

City of Newcastle

The *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* and the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* are the key regional development planning documents that support Newcastle. The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan states that:

'Metropolitan cities succeed and perform best when all tiers of government collaborate and work together with business, industry and community to deliver a shared vision for their city.'[1]

Our population

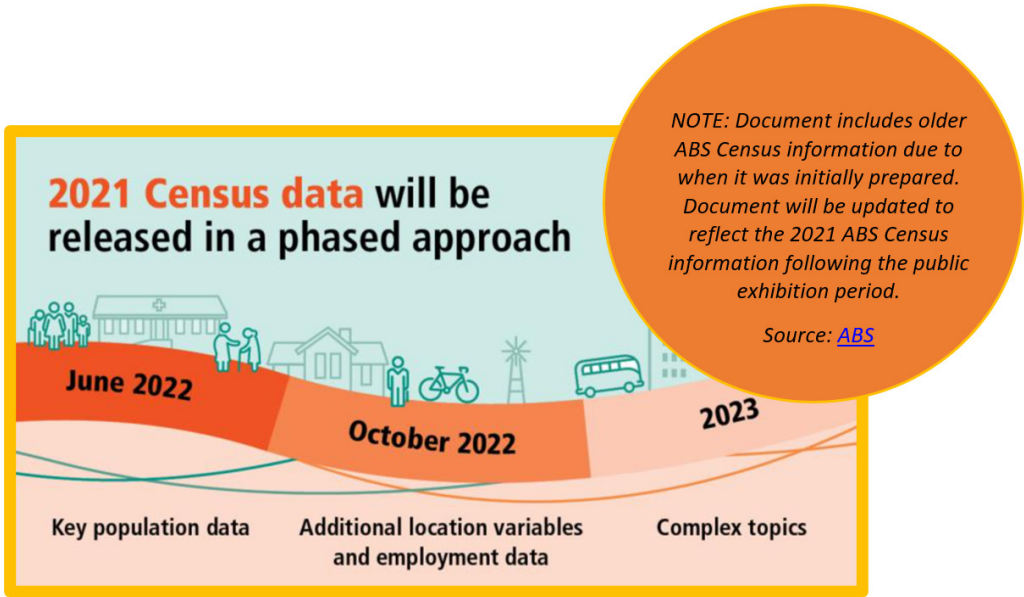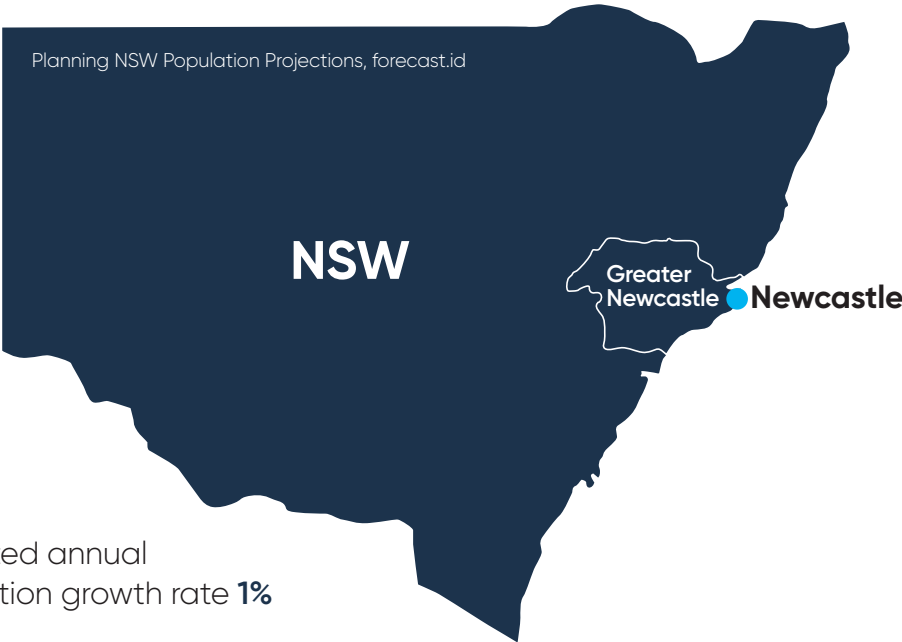**Newcastle population 2021**
171,307

Population by 2041
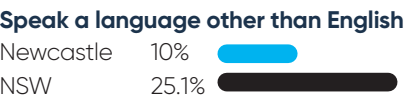## 199,700
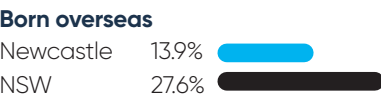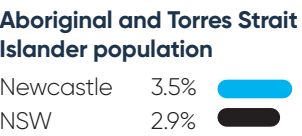
Greater Newcastle population 2021
608,700

Population by 2041
699,200

Estimated annual population growth rate **1%**

NSW

Greater Newcastle • Newcastle

People

Age	%
0–4yrs	5.90%
5–11yrs	7.90%
12–17yrs	6.20%
18–24yrs	11.50%
25–34yrs	15.40%
35–49yrs	19.30%
50–59yrs	12.60%
60–69yrs	10.10%
70–84yrs	8.60%
85yrs & over	2.50%

807 Homeless

Persons living in 'severely' crowded dwellings
- 'severely' crowded dwellings
- improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out
- supported accommodation for the homeless
- temporarily with other households
- boarding houses
- other temporary lodgings

Overall, 13% of households are experiencing 'housing stress' – 31% of renters and 7.3% of mortgage holders (2016).

20,000 people

Up to 11% of Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity. In Newcastle this equates to approximately 20,000 people.

Source: Australian Human Rights Commission, (2014) Face the Facts

Median age
Newcastle 37
NSW 37.9

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population
Newcastle 3.5%
NSW 2.9%

Born overseas
Newcastle 13.9%
NSW 27.6%

Speak a language other than English
Newcastle 10%
NSW 25.1%
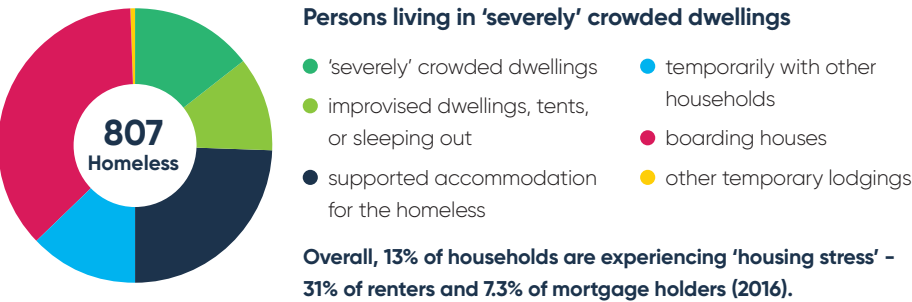
134 different languages spoken at home – most widely spoken included Mandarin, Macedonian, Italian, Greek, Arabic AND languages spoken with greatest need for translation included Arabic, Mandarin, Swahili, Persian/Dari and Tibetan.

Number of people living with disability
Newcastle 5.9%
NSW 5.4%
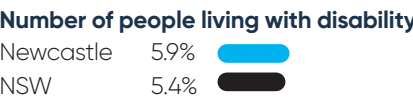
Needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition.

2021 Census data will be released in a phased approach

June 2022 — Key population data
October 2022 — Additional location variables and employment data
2023 — Complex topics

How Newcastle lives and works

Live

House make up
- lone person households
- couples with children
- couples without children
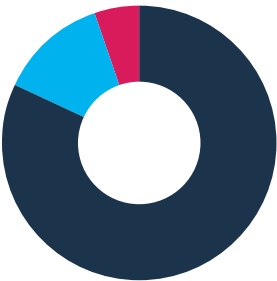- one parent families
- group households

52 Suburbs

Average household size **2.36** people

Internet access at home **80.85%**

30% of dwellings are medium or high density

29% of residents fully own their home; **30.3%** have a mortgage; **34.5%** are renting

How we travel
- car
- walk/ride
- bus

1 ferry crossing – Queens Wharf to Stockton

2.7km light rail, with **6** stations

127 transport shelters

850km of roads

Work

Income by households
- low income < $650
- lower to middle income $650 to $1,449
- middle to upper income $1,450 to $2,499
- high income earners $2500+
- haven't stated their income

Top 3 industry sector by employment

Health care & social assistance – creating **20,293** jobs

Education and training – creating **9,789** jobs

Retail trade – creating **8,803** jobs

102,800 jobs in Newcastle

49% live within LGA

21% live outside LGA

Average household income **$1,398**

Unemployment rate **5.3%**

73.3% journey to work by car

36,331 businesses

30% of the Hunters developed industrial space

38% office space

Our global commitment

In September 2015, 193 countries committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals provide a global roadmap for all countries to work towards a better world for current and future generations.

CN immediately declared our support and intention to deliver the SDGs and began proactively implementing action and engagement. We are committed to contributing to the achievement of the SDGs and have been working towards increasing and improving our contribution to this shared global vision.

The SDGs are significant and will take time to achieve. However, it is important to recognise the steps we are taking to progress these goals. While CN recognises the importance of all 17 SDGs, we have focused our efforts on the areas where we can have the most impact in our local communities regarding the *Local Social Strategy*. Our strategy most closely aligns with 10 of the 17 SDG's depicted in the image and outlined in detail in the table on the next page.

These SDGs underpin our work

SDG indicator	SDG and targets	How it is addressed in the *Local Social Strategy*
1 NO POVERTY	1 No Poverty – End poverty in all its forms everywhere.	Every human has the right to not live in poverty. The strategy will address this priority through its research and advocacy agenda, working to understand local challenges in detail and propose possible solutions in partnership with key stakeholders.
2 ZERO HUNGER	2 Zero Hunger – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.	This strategy will collaborate with local business, government agencies and not-for-profit organisations to address local food insecurity challenges.
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	3 Good Health and Wellbeing – Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all, at all ages.	This strategic priority will be supported by working in partnership with the health and community sector on identified local priorities, such as mental health and overall wellbeing, while promoting healthy lifestyles.
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	4 Quality Education – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.	Several delivery programs will provide community members and organisations with opportunities for capacity-building, skills development and education.
5 GENDER EQUALITY	5 Gender Equality – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	The strategy's delivery programs will include targeted support of the domestic and family violence sector and projects that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination experienced by people in Newcastle.
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	The strategy will respond to this priority by promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in collaboration with business and social enterprise sectors, as well as internal CN partners.
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	10 Reduced Inequalities – Reduce inequality within and among countries.	At the heart of the strategy, and embedded across all its delivery programs, is the aim of reducing inequalities to give all community members the opportunity to thrive.
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	11 Sustainable Cities and Communities – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	Through research, advocacy, and delivery of collaborative projects and initiatives, the strategy aims to ensure that everyone has access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing and can enjoy public spaces and accessible transport.
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.	The strategy addresses this priority by enabling active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life, as well as access to CN and Newcastle LGA-specific information and data.
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.	The structural changes needed to create a more socially just and inclusive city cannot be tackled by one organisation alone. To realise the priorities of the strategy, continued partnerships across governmental, non-governmental and private sectors are required.

Our role

Many of the social issues and concerns facing Newcastle are complex and beyond the direct control and influence of CN. This means we need to work with our community and a range of stakeholders to ensure our collective wellbeing.

State and federal governments are responsible for ensuring people have access to services such as health, education, police, housing, communications, emergency management and other social services to support and improve quality of life.

However, CN works closely with the state and federal governments, as well as community-based organisations, to ensure our community development resources add value to each organisation's programs and projects at a local level.

To deliver our vision of a socially just and inclusive Newcastle, CN also works with other stakeholders, including community groups, local businesses and industry, educational institutions, and other service providers.

Depending on the activity, CN's role can include the following:

Leadership
Identifying key community issues and stakeholders to respond where appropriate

Research and strategy
Developing an evidence base to better understand, plan and advocate for the community, and developing policies and plans that respond to community needs

Connections
Identifying and connecting different contributors to encourage innovation, maximise social outcomes and support social cohesion

Advocacy
Drawing on our research and partnerships to advocate for our community to other levels of government and amplify the work of our local partners

Partnerships and grants
Partnering with organisations and the community to achieve shared goals

Capacity-building
Unlocking capacity within the community by equipping people with the skills they need to achieve social outcomes

Delivery
Designing and delivering programs and initiatives that align with key strategies, plans and community needs, ensuring community engagement and involvement

Infrastructure
Planning and delivering places and spaces that promote social connectivity, inclusion and a sense of belonging

Our strategy

Purpose

As Newcastle undergoes significant growth and change, an increasing number of community members are being left behind, unable to realise their full potential as part of a thriving society.

A social strategy provides a framework for CN and the community to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity; encourage community connection and participation; celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity; and strengthen community health and wellbeing. In working towards this mission, we aim to achieve the vision of a socially just and inclusive place for all.

The strategy falls under and supports CN's *Newcastle 2040* CSP, aligns with state and regional plans, and defines CN's social priorities until 2030, including its four-yearly action plans of which there will be two during the lifespan of the strategy. The *Action Plan 2022- 2026* is included in the appendix.

Who is this strategy for?

The *Local Social Strategy* is for the whole community. However, CN acknowledges that some groups in Newcastle are more likely to be excluded from social, economic and political opportunities due to discrimination and other access barriers. Therefore, this strategy focuses on enabling priority communities and groups to be involved in all aspects of life in Newcastle.

We also recognise that people's social identities, social positions and lived experiences are complex. Our priority groups often experience multiple forms of discrimination and oppression. This means we need to take an intersectional approach to promoting social justice and inclusion in Newcastle.

Through research, consultation and understanding of local needs, the following priority community groups have been identified, with details included in the *Local Social Discussion Paper* (which can be accessed via our website here).

Priority community groups include:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Socio-economically disadvantaged and newly vulnerable communities

People with disability

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities

People of diverse genders and sexualities

Older people

Young people

Women and men (areas of identified risk due to vulnerabilities they experience, such as domestic and family violence for women and mental ill-health for men)

Guiding principles that shape our strategy

Several principles shape our approach to supporting social justice, inclusion and positive social change in our city.

Social justice

Social justice is about fair and just relations between individuals and society. It means making sure that all community members are empowered to make decisions about their lives. We promote social justice in Newcastle by ensuring fair distribution of resources, equal access to services, participation in decision-making, and equal rights in all areas, as outlined in these four principles:

Equity: Resources are allocated according to need with the aim of achieving more equal outcomes, particularly for those with greater needs or barriers to access.

Access: People have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation: People can fully participate in community life and genuinely influence decisions that affect their lives.

Rights: Human rights are universal – everyone has the right to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that people are entitled to, including economic, social, cultural and political rights.

Relationships

Relationships are key to inclusive, socially just communities. A relational approach embodies values such as respect, inclusiveness, honesty, compassion, cooperation, and humility. However, it is also about the connections between people and the planet.

The Relationist Ethos is a concept within Aboriginal law, philosophy and culture. It explains that we are all in relationship with other people, but also places great importance on the relationship between the land (Country) and all living and non-living beings. It is these relationships and obligations to each other that form a template for our society[2]. For CN, forming strong, respectful and transparent relationships is essential to achieving the desired social outcomes for our communities.
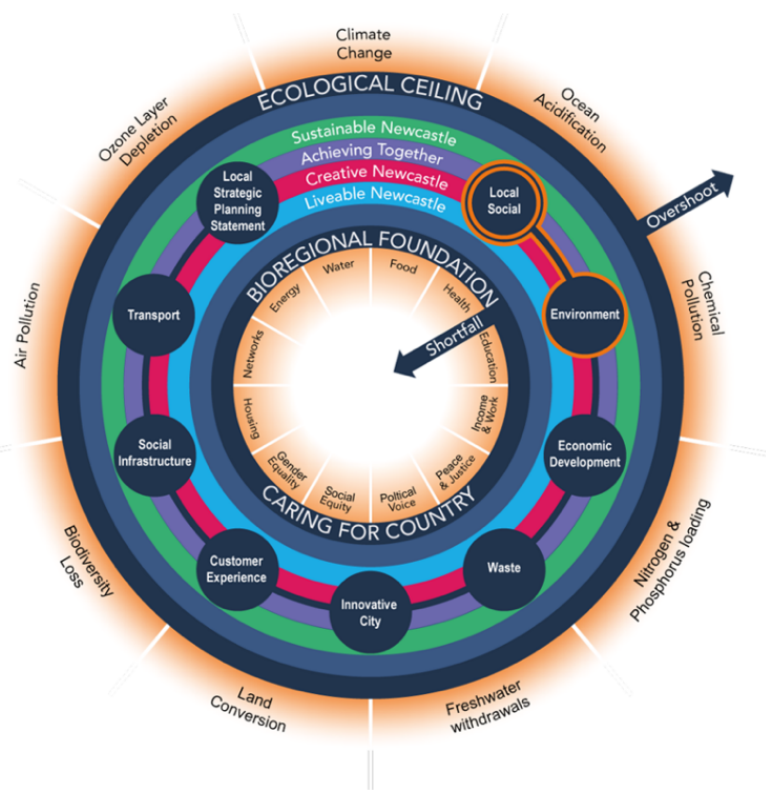

Reference: Australian EarthLaws Alliance; Michelle Maloney and James Lee 2022

Regenerative society

To strengthen the regenerative capacity of our communities, to regrow or be renewed or restored, we have drawn inspiration from two models: 'Doughnut Economics'[4] and the Greenprints approach[5].

These models link social needs with planetary boundaries. The objective of the 'Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries' shown below is to balance our social foundations (ensuring no one falls short on essentials like healthcare, education and food) and our ecological boundaries (ensuring a healthy climate, biodiversity, clean water and sustainable use of natural resources).

Together, our strategies will help our community to thrive while using our resources wisely and not exceeding the capacity of our ecological systems.
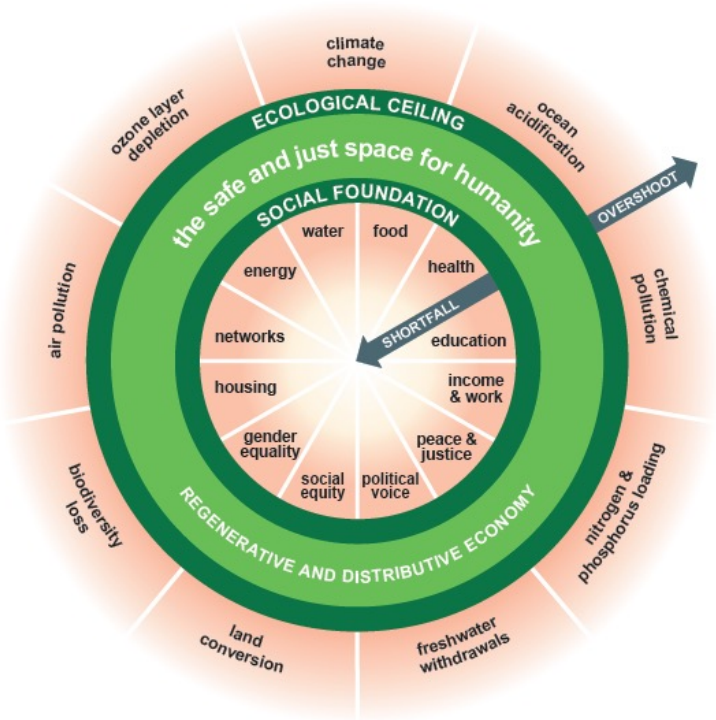
Reference: Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries Source: Kate Raworth (2017)

Evidence and innovation

Many community issues require integrated approaches that combine social, economic, demographic, cultural and environmental considerations. When developing local responses to these issues, innovation and evidence-based decision-making are essential. Evidence-based needs assessment and prioritisation, as well as meaningful monitoring and evaluation, can help us achieve the desired outcomes for our communities. Innovation in the public sector seeks to create value and impact by responding to public interest, addressing citizens' basic needs, and enhancing efficiency of public services. Continued innovation in our public sector and communities will assist us in adapting and responding to our ever-changing community context and needs[3] .

Our engagement

How we engaged

To inform development of the *Local Social Strategy*, CN carried out a range of engagement activities from June to September 2021 to better understand community sentiment around social justice and inclusion. Over 2,400 people participated in the community engagement process to help us shape this strategy.

The engagement activities targeted various key groups in our community who are often less represented, vulnerable or experiencing disadvantage. These groups included people of diverse sexualities and genders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from CALD communities, people living with disability, young people (16–29 years) and older people (70+ years).

Engagement activities

286
people attended:

12 workshops and forums

5 community events

2,120
people completed surveys:

1,720 online survey exploring community participation, access to services, wellbeing, safety and social justice issues and matters.

400 short survey exploring social matters and participation in the community.

Social media campaign

To encourage broad participation, CN delivered an innovative digital campaign, titled, Your Place.

A key component of the campaign, with the message, 'This is your place, too.' was the use of digital profiling to speak directly and personally to our target groups. Target groups saw creative content specifically about them, and when linked to the microsite, saw a microsite with curated content related to them.

The campaign achieved high levels of engagement with the social media posts, and more than 20,000 visits to the Your Place website.

Total video views:
183,397

Positive reactions:
2,872

Positive comments:
467

Website total visits:
20,465

Shares:
625

Unique visitors:
8,013

Delivered through

Background

Demographic overviews and trends

Population projections and housing

With the Newcastle LGA population projected to grow to 199,700 by 2041, an estimated 19,450 new dwellings are needed to meet demand. The western corridor of the Newcastle LGA (west from Wallsend to the M1 freeway and LGA boundary at Minmi) will have significant development, largely on greenfield sites (undeveloped bush land), with up to 4,500 new dwellings accommodating up to 10,000 people built over the next 15–20 years. Urban renewal corridors in Adamstown, Hamilton and Islington will also see increased dwelling densities. In all these locations, services and facilities will be required to respond to increased population size and densities.

Socio-economic disadvantage

As part of the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas Census (SEIFA), the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage examines community disadvantage through 17 indicators generally associated with social wellbeing. The SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation brings together indicators associated with a community's educational and occupational wellbeing.

Overall, Newcastle has a relatively positive profile on each of these indicators. In 2016, it was in the least disadvantaged 33% of LGAs in Australia, and in the upper 18% of LGAs for educational and occupational status. However, there are some very disadvantaged areas in each of these measures of community wellbeing – particularly Beresfield–Hexham SA2 (Statistical Area Level 2), which is in the most disadvantaged 8% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 2% of areas for education and occupational status; and Shortland–Jesmond SA2, which is in the most disadvantaged 9% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 38% of areas for education and occupational status.

Other relatively disadvantaged areas are the SA2s of the Stockton area, Mayfield–Warabrook, Wallsend–Elermore Vale and Waratah–North Lambton, which are all in the most disadvantaged one-third of areas in Australia. These areas of more severe disadvantage are generally associated with high concentrations of social housing; older and generally higher-density private rental housing; concentrations of older people, including those previously employed in lower-income employment; and/or younger age profiles, high rates of unemployment and low educational achievement[6].

Social challenges in Newcastle

Equity challenges

Equity concerns refer to housing unaffordability and insecurity; rising living costs; and inadequate access to transport, social infrastructure and services. Housing affordability and insecure housing is by far the most significant. It is estimated that there are currently 10,700 housing-stressed households[7] in Newcastle[8] and 7,000–7,500 affordable houses required by 2041, with 139 delivered to date[9] . There is also evidence of increasing homelessness locally, which includes people sleeping in vehicles and couch surfing. Equity Economics research on the impact of the COVID-19 recession estimated that 'experiences in homelessness' across Newcastle (and Lake Macquarie SA4) would increase by 40.5%, or around 470 people, based on the report's June 2021 homelessness estimates of 1,624 people in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie[10] .

Concerns regarding rising living costs in Newcastle were also reported. This includes the cost of housing and rentals, but also other living costs such as transport, food and health services, and disparity between living costs and wages. While Newcastle has relatively low levels of socio-economic disadvantage, there are significant differences within the LGA, with high levels of disadvantage experienced in some geographic areas and demographic groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted those disadvantaged groups, with an increase in vulnerable community members experiencing housing, financial and food insecurity for the first time.

Inclusion challenges

Inclusion concerns refer to inequality of opportunity, particularly within employment and training; discrimination against diverse groups; and limited opportunity to express and connect to culture. Access to meaningful employment with fair pay was a key concern for survey respondents, with the main barriers being a lack of job opportunities, job insecurity and an insecure future job market. The rapid pace of digital technology has created digital exclusion, or an environment where some people are being left behind, particularly older people, people with limited secondary education, people with low incomes, and linguistically diverse communities.

In Newcastle, a broad range of community members and stakeholders expressed concern about race-based and place-of-origin discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities, which has impacted their economic, cultural and social lives. Similar concerns were expressed around discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, which can exclude people from equal access to services, facilities and workplaces. Exclusion from economic and social life was also felt by older people and people with disability; the accessibility of the built environment was of particular concern.

Discrimination based on race, origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and ability continues to be an issue in Newcastle. While values of respect and fairness are at the heart of Australia's culture, one in 4 Australians experiences major discrimination through unfair policy, law, treatment or practices[11] . If diverse cultures, identities and experiences are not welcomed, people feel excluded, and worse, discrimination is perpetuated.

Strategic context

Connection challenges

Participating in and feeling connected to community life is an essential aspect of the health and wellbeing of individuals and the community. It contributes to social capital – that is, social relations that have productive benefits for the community, which is an outcome of community engagement and capacity-building processes. Elevated levels of social capital reduce inequalities in communities and contribute to social cohesion, which refers to the willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper.

A lack of social connection within communities can lead to social isolation and loneliness, which can be harmful for both mental and physical health. Close to 30% of people in Newcastle live alone[12], which is one of the primary risk factors for social isolation and loneliness[13]. In Newcastle, visiting an art gallery, museum or library and attending a community event, festival or celebration were the top activities reported by respondents to our online survey. Survey results indicate that barriers to participation in community activities include lack of time, health and wellbeing, feeling unsafe or uncomfortable (for LGBTQIA+ communities), and difficulty accessing venues or transport (for people with disability).

Access to information and news has also been identified as a barrier to connection, particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Vulnerable groups in particular have been excluded due to the reliance on digital information and channels, as limited face to face engagement.

Health challenges

Health concerns include health and wellbeing issues, mental ill-health, risk of violence, and safety in the community. In Newcastle, and across Australia, mental ill-health and declining trends in physical health are a major public health issue. Increased demand for mental health services and concerning rates of suicide among younger populations have been observed. Overweight and obesity is a major public health issue and a leading risk factor for ill health in Australia. Across the country, 67% of adults over the age of 18 years are overweight or obese, with the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network reporting 69% of the adult population as overweight or obese[14].
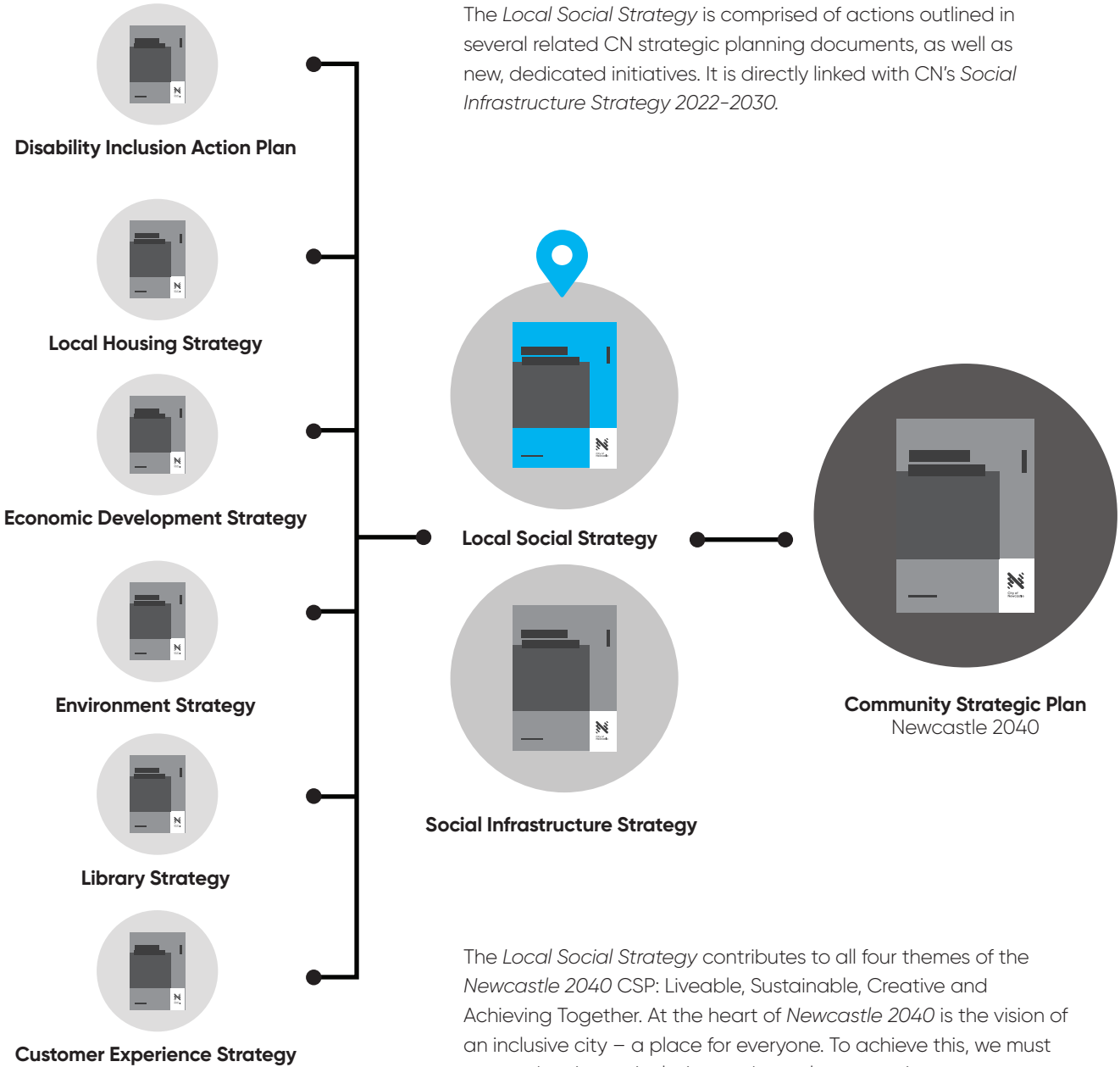
Global issues, such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic challenge the health and wellbeing of Australians, as well as the capacity of health and social support systems to respond. We know our climate is changing, with impacts in the form of rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, higher frequency of bushfires, rising sea levels and temperatures, and ocean acidification. There are strong relationships between the quality of the environment (air, water and food systems) and our physical and mental health and wellbeing. These relationships require attention as we continue to adapt to climate change and crisis events, and consideration of social impacts are essential. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the world in unprecedented and unpredictable ways, with significant social and economic impacts. Adapting to new ways of living and recovering from the impacts of the pandemic is a global social challenge.

Community safety is a complex issue, requiring collaborative efforts across agencies. Survey respondents generally feel safe at home, in their neighbourhood, and in the city during the day but feel less safe at night, both in their neighbourhood and in the city centre. Analysis by key groups revealed that people who identify as non-binary felt the least safe overall, followed by older respondents and people with disability. Domestic and family violence (D&FV) and drug- and alcohol-related crime were raised as two key areas of concern by community members and stakeholders.

City of Newcastle

The *Local Social Strategy* is comprised of actions outlined in several related CN strategic planning documents, as well as new, dedicated initiatives. It is directly linked with CN's *Social Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2030*.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Local Housing Strategy

Economic Development Strategy

Environment Strategy

Library Strategy

Customer Experience Strategy

Local Social Strategy

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Community Strategic Plan
Newcastle 2040

The *Local Social Strategy* contributes to all four themes of the *Newcastle 2040* CSP: Liveable, Sustainable, Creative and Achieving Together. At the heart of *Newcastle 2040* is the vision of an inclusive city – a place for everyone. To achieve this, we must remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encourage community participation, celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthen community health and wellbeing. These ambitions form the core mission of the *Local Social Strategy*.

While the *Local Social Strategy* contributes to all these themes, it will focus on the following priorities:

1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places

1.2 Connected and fair communities

1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city

1.4 Innovative and connected city

2.1 Action on climate change

3.1 Vibrant and creative city

3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation

3.3 Celebrating culture

3.4 City-sharing partnerships

4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning

4.2 Trust and transparency

4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach

Policy drivers at state and regional levels

Key NSW legislative requirements and policies actively support CN's social planning responsibilities. The *Local Government Act 1993* outlines the social justice requirements placed on councils: *'Council's long-term community strategic plans must be based on social justice principles and address social issues along with civic leadership, environmental and economic issues.'* The NSW Government's Premier's Priorities represent the government's commitment to making a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of all people of NSW; the policy priority of breaking the cycle of disadvantage is particularly relevant to the *Local Social Strategy.* The *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* also prescribes a specific legislative framework that has guided the development of CN's *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* (DIAP).

CN also acknowledges key integrations with other NSW government strategies, including the *Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy, NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan* and *Multicultural NSW Strategy Plan 2021 –2025: Stronger together.* Federal government policies of significance to the *Local Social Strategy* include the *Social Inclusion Agenda, National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities,* and the social lens of the *National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy.*

Our work is also informed by policy and planning at the regional level. The *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* and *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* are key regional planning documents that outline the vision, goals and actions needed to achieve greater prosperity for all people who live, work and study in the Hunter Region. Across these two plans, priority goals of relevance to the *Local Social Strategy* include supporting thriving communities and providing greater housing choice and jobs.

These plans recognise that celebrating and encouraging the diversification of communities provides a significant competitive advantage for the region on economic, cultural and social levels. Furthermore, as the region's population grows, providing diverse housing that is close to jobs and services, while ensuring enhanced environmental conditions and amenity choice, is essential for community resilience and quality of life.

Overview of strategy priorities and objectives

The *Local Social Strategy* envisions Newcastle as a socially just and inclusive place for all. Its mission is to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encourage community participation, celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthen community health and wellbeing.

This vision and mission have been developed in response to the social challenges and opportunities currently facing our communities.

The 'Our priorities' section below outlines each of these priorities in detail, along with their proposed objectives and links to existing or new delivery programs. The image below presents an overview of the four priorities, 16 objectives and four principles of the *Local Social Strategy*. At the centre of all we do are our people and our planet; we recognise the importance of learning about, and connecting with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, philosophies and practices about caring for Country.

To respond to these needs, **four strategic priorities** have been identified:

1. Equitable communities
2. Inclusive communities
3. Connected communities
4. Healthy communities

The four key principles informing our strategic approach are:

Social justice
Relationships
Regenerative practice
Evidence-based decision-making and innovation

Our priorities

Priority 1: Equitable communities

Priority		To support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, as well as services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community.	
Objective	**What do you want to achieve?**	1.1	Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members.
		1.2	Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services.
		1.3	Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses.
		1.4	Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure.
Outcome	**What does success look like?**	Our residents have access to affordable housing, and homelessness has greatly decreased. Everyone can access inclusive transport, health and social services. Residents, workers and visitors are able to equitably benefit from CN community programs, grants, services and facilities. Our social research program informs policy, programs and practice for CN and local partners.	
Community Indicator	**How will you measure success?**	• Number of housing-stressed households in Newcastle LGA trending downwards.	
		• Number of people sleeping rough in Newcastle LGA trending downwards.	
		• SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage trending downwards, particularly in priority Statistical Areas Level 2.	
		• Perceptions of affordable and diverse housing trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.	
		• Perceptions of adequate and accessible public transport trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.	
		• Perceptions of adequate and accessible medical, mental health and social services trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.	
		• % of people living within 800m of social infrastructure trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN GIS mapped data.	
Links to CSP		1.1	Connected and fair communities
		1.3	Safe, active and linked movement across the city
		3.4	City-shaping partnerships
		4.1.	Inclusive and integrated planning
		4.3	Collaborative and innovative approach
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Economic Development Strategy	
		Social Infrastructure Strategy	
		Disability Inclusion Action Plan	
		Newcastle Transport Strategy	

Case study

COVID-19 Community Resilience Package

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic. Within three months, CN responded to the crisis with its Community and Economic Resilience Package (CERP). The community resilience component of this package particularly focused on the most vulnerable and emerging at-risk members of our communities.

A Community Grants Program was established in 2020 to provide financial and in-kind support to mobilise assistance for community groups and organisations to scale and respond to community need during the pandemic. The first phase of the Program was the Rapid Response Grant program that was designed to free up early urgent funds for those in need. The second stage of funding, Boost Our City, assisted with ongoing COVID-19 related challenges and sought to directly support the health and wellbeing of the community.

$863,309

in community response grants were provided in 2020 and 2021 as part of the COVID-19 Community Resilience Packages

CN responded to the 2021 outbreak of COVID-19 with an expanded and comprehensive CERP 2.0. In terms of community resilience, CN provided rapid response and recovery grants for projects that responded to community need and targeted gaps in support not covered by State and Federal Governments.

59

community groups and organisations were provided grants in 2020 and 2021 to support the health and wellbeing of our communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Activities that were funded across these two community resilience packages included mental health and wellbeing support, provision of food and essential supplies, addressing social isolation, crisis support, technology assistance to connect to support or education services and more.

Delivery programs

Housing First

Objective 1.1

Local government's role in housing and planning has traditionally been to comply with policies and targets set by the state governments. However, with increasing unmet housing need and homelessness being experienced across many parts of Australia, councils are extending their involvement to respond to the needs of their communities.

The Housing First delivery program seeks to support an increase in supply of social, affordable, adaptable and alternative housing by investing in targeted projects and developing partnerships, research, advocacy and brokerage which have a focus on homelessness and housing stress. These efforts will be underpinned by the development of an evidence framework of information, research and data surrounding homelessness and housing stress, which will inform initiatives and be available for use by community partners.

Community-Focused Services

Objective 1.2

Available and accessible community-focused services, such as transport, health and social services, are an essential component of equitable communities. It is crucial to ensure there is a fair distribution of services based on diverse needs in terms of cost, location and appropriateness. These services are predominantly delivered by state governments and non-governmental organisations. However, as the arm of government that is closest to communities, local government has a role in advocating and planning for locally based services that meet the changing needs of the community. Without appropriate services to meet the needs of Newcastle's changing demographics, it will be increasingly challenging to promote and ensure ongoing participation of all community members, particularly those experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability.

As local government does not directly deliver transport, health and social services, collaboration with stakeholders across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors is essential. The Community-Focused Services delivery program will advocate for improved availability, affordability and access to transport, health and social services. This advocacy work will be based on an understanding of local needs, achieved through applied research on complex community service delivery issues and requirements. A key component of this delivery program will involve supporting local community sector networks to deliver joint initiatives in an equitable way. This will include facilitation of the Newcastle Interagency Network, community sector networking opportunities, and priority projects to support the delivery of effective, coordinated and innovative community services.

Understanding Equity

Objective 1.3

Inequities are at the forefront of many of the key social challenges facing Newcastle. We want to understand the causes of local inequities and the effect they have on people's chances in life, and to identify viable interventions for more equitable communities. These factors can affect people's vulnerability to different types of risks, and it is important to identify ways that such risk can be mitigated. It is equally important to understand what interventions. To better understand equity and inequity, we need to explore factors such as socio-economic status, gender and sexuality, cultural and linguistic diversity, disability, education, age, health, family, community, environment and geography. All of these factors can affect people's vulnerability to different types of risks, and it is important to identify ways that such risk can be mitigated. It is equally important to understand what interventions might promote opportunity and reduce adversity through different life stages, and how we can promote social inclusion and cohesion between and across generations.

The Understanding Equity delivery program will research, monitor and report on inequity and social justice concerns in the Newcastle LGA through the Equity Pulse platform. It will be particularly important to understand local inequity to better inform local responses and decision-making. Interventions will include direct actions such as research projects, knowledge-sharing events and advocacy, as well as collaboration with government and non-government organisations.

City Access

Objective 1.4

Social infrastructure refers to the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support a community's quality of life and wellbeing. CN offers a variety of services and programs through its social infrastructure network, including community facilities, libraries, cultural institutions and open spaces. CN's *Social Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2030* will provide an integrated framework for the planning, funding and delivery of social infrastructure for the next 20 years. The *Local Social Strategy 2022 -2030* focuses on the activation of this social infrastructure through community programs and interventions, while ensuring the broad range of services provided to communities are applying equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in their design and approach.

All CN strategies and plans are underpinned by the *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026* (DIAP) outlining how CN will enhance access and inclusion for people with disabilities, including strategies for providing access to CN buildings, facilities, services, events and activities.

Priority 2: Inclusive communities

Priority		Our vision is for Newcastle to be a place where the strength, resilience and living culture of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and our diverse, communities are respected, recognised and celebrated. Discrimination is combatted through education and commitment to change. Equality of opportunity in employment, skills development and digital inclusion is prioritised for all people. Inclusion is championed so that everyone across our communities is supported, valued and respected.
Objective	What do you want to achieve?	2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle.
		2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion.
		2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities.
		2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change.
Outcome	What does success look like?	All Newcastle residents value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared local identity and the broader diversity of our communities is celebrated and embraced. Inclusive education and training opportunities are available for all which assists in reducing the digital divide and improves access to meaningful employment and fair pay. Newcastle is a place where people do not experience discrimination, and everyone is included in the social, economic and cultural life of the city.
Community Indicator	How will you measure success?	• Annual results of the CN Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Impact Measurement report show CN is progressing against its RAP commitments.
		• Newcastle LGA digital inclusion index trending upwards from 69.0 score in 2021.
		• Perceptions of meaningful employment opportunities trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• Perceptions of feeling part of local community and that Newcastle is welcoming of diversity trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
Links to CSP		1.2 Connected and fair communities
		1.4 Innovative and connected city
		3.1 Vibrant and creative city
		3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation
		3.3 Celebrating culture
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Economic Development Strategy
		Social Infrastructure Strategy
		Disability Inclusion Action Plan
		Smart City Strategy

Case study

Tiddas in Muloobinba (Translation: Sisters of Newcastle)

Having a strong cultural identity and connection to Country is vital to the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. *Tiddas in Muloobinba* was developed and resourced by CN in close collaboration with locally based Yolngu artists and industry professionals, the Illume Girls.

The program was launched during CN's 2021 Youth Week Program and was the first of its kind for the city. The Illume Girls provided mentorship and collaboration to young women from out-of-home care and other vulnerable settings over a three-day program, culminating in a public performance.

Over **80 people** attended the public performance at the Civic Theatre Playhouse.

The *Tiddas* program was filled to capacity with eight young women attending a three-day intensive workshop.

The success of the program has laid a foundation for supporting aspiring young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in Newcastle.

Activities that were funded across these two community resilience packages included mental health and wellbeing support, provision of food and essential supplies, addressing social isolation, crisis support, technology assistance to connect to support or education services and more.

Delivery programs

Strength in Diversity

Objective 2.1

Local governments are involved in activities that foster multiculturalism, promote social cohesion and work towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our LGA is made up of people from different cultures, countries and backgrounds, and this diversity adds to the vibrancy of our community. CN respects and acknowledges the unique culture, societies, history and traditional lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Newcastle. Through our *Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–2024* (RAP), we actively work towards closing the gap in employment, economic participation, health and education outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. These efforts extend to all people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to ensure everyone is given the same opportunities and resources to thrive.

Through the Strength in Diversity delivery program, in partnership with the community, we will explore and guide how CN supports connection to Country and cultural expression for the Awabakal and Worimi peoples and their communities, as well as enrichment of the broader community. We will respond to the RAP's pillars of Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance by facilitating community partnerships that advance reconciliation and availability of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Another priority will be to foster awareness, tolerance and understanding of cross-cultural and lived experience through increased connections among diverse community members and the wider community. This will take the form of events, targeted initiatives and biannual programs. Through continuous improvement and learning, CN will ensure the delivery of its services, programs and information is appropriate, sensitive and inclusive of people's needs according to culture, language and lived experience.

Equal Opportunity

Objective 2.2

Local government plays a key role in the promotion of local and regional economic development, employment growth and income equality. As outlined in CN's *Economic Development Strategy*, the local economy will organically deliver for most people, but government has a role to play in intervening where the market fails and some people are left behind. Supporting equal opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion for all our residents will drive labour force growth, economic opportunities and community wellbeing. There are many government and non-government organisations involved in the delivery of employment, training and digital inclusion. As such, collaborative stakeholder efforts are essential, with local government able to support in facilitating and coordinating local opportunities.

Our Equal Opportunity delivery program will provide access to education, training and capacity-building opportunities and materials for community members, groups and organisations that contribute to positive economic and social outcomes for our communities. Improved digital literacy and inclusion will be fostered by initiatives that counter digital exclusion and facilitate community access to digital technology and equipment, education, training and lifelong learning opportunities. CN will collaborate on workplace equity, diversity and inclusion policies and practices that are informed by community perspectives for continuous improvement. Partnerships and collaboration with the local business sector through corporate social responsibility and social enterprise initiatives will be a key component in delivering improved opportunities for our communities. The Local Social Strategy will also help inform and support CN's internal Equal Opportunity goals.

Welcoming City

Objective 2.3

Local government, in partnership with local community agencies and businesses, is well placed to understand the complexity and nuances within and between its communities. In understanding these complex realities, we can create communities where everyone can belong, access opportunities, and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life. By being a welcoming and inclusive city for all people, including newcomers, we can leverage the social and economic ideas and innovation that are fostered by diverse community members who feel supported, resourced and encouraged.

The Welcome City delivery program seeks to celebrate diversity and create a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities. Projects, events and initiatives will aim to strengthen a sense of belonging among residents and workers. These will focus particularly on new arrivals, international students and people from CALD backgrounds, but will recognise all diverse communities in Newcastle.

This delivery program supports CN development of external and internal communications that celebrates and reflects our diverse communities, so that people see themselves represented and included.

Respectful Communities

Objective 2.4

People who experience discrimination can suffer from significant stress-related mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, which in turn impact relationships, employment and overall health[15] . It is in everyone's interest to combat discrimination and support social inclusion. Through the Australian Human Rights Commission and NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the Federal and State Governments manage Commonwealth and NSW anti-discrimination laws and compliance. However, local government also has a role to play in taking all reasonable steps to prevent unlawful harassment, discrimination, vilification and/or associated victimisation of staff, councillors and members of the public.

Under the Respectful Communities delivery program, projects and initiatives that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination experienced by people in Newcastle will seek to combat these issues and promote inclusive communities. The program will support CN and the community to address and challenge root causes of discrimination and systems of oppression through campaigns and policy related to diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and bystander action training.

Priority 3: Connected communities

Priority		To support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through active, engaged and informed participation. Facilitating access to community activities, events and gatherings can lead to better integration of isolated community members. Participation in community life can also have positive social, cultural, economic and political impacts. Community engagement and involvement leads to informed decision making, and enables citizens to contribute meaningfully to local social issues and support their communities.
Objective	What do you want to achieve?	3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making.
		3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks.
		3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life.
		3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship.
Outcome	What does success look like?	The people of Newcastle are actively engaged in the civic, social and cultural life of our community. They have access to relevant, timely and trusted information which supports their involvement in informed local decision-making, while supportive social networks that address social isolation and enhance trust are strengthened.
Community Indicator	How will you measure success?	• Participation in organised and personal social activities trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• Participation in political or civic actions trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• % of Newcastle residents doing volunteer work trending upwards. ABS Census.
Links to CSP		1.2 Connected and fair communities
		3.1 Vibrant and creative city
		4.2 Trust and transparency
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Economic Development Strategy
		Social Infrastructure Strategy
		Disability Inclusion Action Plan
		Smart City Strategy

Case study

Inclusive Conversations Series

Due to COVID-19 lockdowns over the past two years, new ways of engaging with community groups and organisations were needed to ensure continued collaboration on local social issues. As such, a series of quality, inclusive and accessible virtual conferencing experiences for community stakeholders was delivered in the form of the Inclusive Conversations Series.

The first Inclusive Conversations session was delivered in July 2021. Titled 'Unpacking Vulnerability', the session attracted approximately 70 participants and over 40 community sector organisations. The second conference, 'Housing and Homelessness in Newcastle', was delivered in November 2021 and attracted over 100 participants and 70 organisations. Throughout both days, staff gathered valuable, evidence-based stakeholder feedback to assist in forming the response of CN and its partners to the homelessness and affordable housing crisis.

Presenters across the two virtual forums included:
• CN Urban and Social Planning Teams – Affordable Housing Snapshot Data
• Newcastle Assertive Outreach and Access and Demand Teams – Department of Communities and Justice
• Policy Director, Shelter NSW
• Policy Manager, Homelessness NSW
• Research Manager, Y Foundations Finland
• Manager Strategic Partnerships, Compass Housing
• Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Link Housing
• Chairperson, Hunter Homeless Connect
• Hunter Community Alliance Listening Campaign
• Local Government NSW
• NSW Council of Social Services.

70
organisations actively participated in the Inclusive Conversations Series

Key outcomes were:
• Presentation of international and local Housing First outcomes
• Identification of key gaps and data-driven approaches to responding to homelessness locally
• Creation of a platform for local community groups and providers to share stories, experiences and learnings and collectively design actions
• Sharing CN data and information on various policy positions in the housing affordability space.

200
participants logged in to the forum over the two days

Delivery programs

Engaged Communities

Objective 3.1

Genuine community engagement provides opportunities to further align our service delivery and operations with the needs and expectations of our community, including vulnerable groups. It also empowers citizens and builds their capacity to participate in community life.

CN's community engagement program has significantly expanded in recent years and has strategic objectives around engagement with hard to reach groups and ensuring engagement activities are accessible and inclusive.

The Engaged Communities delivery program seeks to further improve our levels of engagement with underrepresented sectors of the community to best inform decision making. Further, there are opportunities for CN to increase the level of public participation, especially in partnership projects and programs.

Social Connect

Objective 3.2

A vibrant and inclusive city is one where diverse community members feel socially connected through supportive networks and activation opportunities, while enjoying a sense of belonging and harmony. CN plays an active role in nurturing a vibrant and inclusive city at a strategic and local scale through operating cultural and civic institutions, delivering cultural programming and events, delivering a major events program, and facilitating external stakeholders to deliver events and activations. To ensure everyone can enjoy a vibrant city, an inclusive city must also be guaranteed. Some people may face barriers to participation such as cost, distance, accessibility or safety concerns.

The Social Connect delivery program aims to strengthen social connection and trust both within and between our diverse communities, while also addressing social isolation. We will deliver community-based social, cultural and creative events and activities that appeal to diverse people, and increase active participation among sectors of the community who may face barriers. Another key component of this delivery program will involve connecting people with volunteering opportunities and delivering place-based services, projects and initiatives in and around social housing precincts and urban renewal areas.

Active Citizenship

Objective 3.3

Active citizenship is about citizens actively engaging in political society. Without this participation, democracy can suffer. Citizenship is not just a legal status; it is the way you participate in your community and the duties you carry out. Traditionally, this includes things like paying taxes and voting (duties) or going to school and voicing your opinions (rights)[16]. However, active citizenship implies exercising your rights and duties in a balanced way through civic engagement in your community, and can also include volunteering, activism, and participation in social movements to improve conditions for others or help shape the community's future [17]. As the level of government closest to the people, local government has a duty to support its communities in engaging with the civic life of the city.

The Active Citizenship delivery program will enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life. Key components of this work will include strengthening people's civic awareness and increasing civic participation through CN processes among diverse sectors of the community who do not usually engage.

CN has Strategic Advisory Committees to support civic participation. In 2020, Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee marked 20 years. CN's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee was established in 2017, following the adoption of Newcastle's first DIAP. In 2019, CN established the following Strategic Advisory Committees: Liveable Cities, Strategy and Innovation, Community & Culture, and Infrastructure.

Another key component of the Active Citizenship program will be embedding equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in CN's advisory committees to ensure improved community representation.

Local Data

Objective 3.4

Access to information plays a pivotal role in sustainable communities, as it improves people's social, economic and political integration within their communities[18] . Access to information about community activities, programs and events helps community members become engaged, leading to better social and economic integration. Information relating to local issues, priorities and planning assists communities' political integration through involvement in local decisions.

The public's right to access council information is regulated under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the GIPA Act). Councils are also required to comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information and Protection Act 1998* (PPIP Act) and the *Health Records Information Privacy Act 2002* (HRIP Act) in collecting, using and disclosing personal and health information. Local governments also proactively release information and are increasingly providing greater access to data and information. Open data, as well as the sharing of information and research, enable citizens and businesses to engage more effectively with local government, inviting cross-sector collaboration and partnerships.

Under the Local Data delivery program, we will increase open access to CN and Newcastle LGA-specific data, to help empower communities to identify, analyse and respond to local social issues. For example, digital resource centres offering local demographic and economic data, population forecasts and interactive maps. Another key component will be the management and delivery of key information resources targeted at the community sector, specific community groups and the wider community. These resources will be provided in a range of languages and formats that are widely accessible and appealing to diverse audiences.

Priority 4: Healthy communities

|		
Priority		To promote and support active and healthy communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city. This priority also aims to address the social dimensions of climate change and crisis events. In developing programs and initiatives that support these outcomes, we work towards one of the fundamental rights of every human: the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without distinction of race, religion, political belief or economic and social condition[19] .
Objective	**What do you want to achieve?**	4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health.
		4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces.
		4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety.
		4.4 4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).
Outcome	**What does success look like?**	The people of Newcastle enjoy improved health and wellbeing, with an active and social lifestyle that contributes to physical and mental health. Newcastle is a safe city, both in the public domain and within households. Communities are resilient and adaptable to climate change and crises and are supported equitably to ensure no one is left behind.
Community Indicator	**How will you measure success?**	• Rate of physical activity trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• Satisfaction with physical and mental health trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• Perception of sporting facilities and active lifestyle opportunities meeting needs of community trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
		• Local crime offences, particularly domestic and non-domestic violence related assault, theft and fraud, trending downwards. NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research annual crime trends data.
		• Perception of safety in city centre and local neighbourhood trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.
Links to CSP		1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places
		1.2 Connected and fair communities
		1.3 Action on climate change
Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans		Social Infrastructure Strategy
		Disability Inclusion Action Plan
		Environment Strategy
		After Dark Strategy

Case study

Five years supporting the health and wellbeing of older people in Newcastle

CN has played a role in supporting older people to lead active, healthy and engaged lives by connecting them to information about services and activities in the community. The Newcastle Seniors Directory (2015–2020) promoted a range of activities, including active pursuits such as sport, dancing, education and lifelong learning, music and performance, and other civic and social clubs. The directory also promoted health and wellbeing services, including access to My Aged Care, legal support and support for carers. Sometimes, just knowing where to go is the biggest hurdle.

Newcastle Seniors Directory
produced annually since 2017

The Seniors Directory also provided content to inspire people to live active, healthy and engaged lives. In 2020, the directory promoted cycling in the city and featured Novacare's Cycling Without Age and Newcastle Cycleways Movement, which demonstrate that there is no age limit to staying mobile and healthy. Information from the Newcastle Seniors Directory is now included on My Community Directory, an online information platform that has been localised for the Newcastle community.
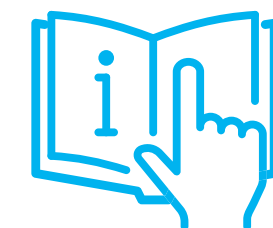
Over
5000 **print copies**
distributed and available on CN's website

Delivery programs

Community Health and Wellbeing

Objective 4.1

Numerous and diverse organisations, both public and private, are involved in the delivery of healthcare services with the state government responsible for delivery of clinical health services.

Through a collaborative approach with government and non-government organisations, the Community Health and Wellbeing program will deliver projects and initiatives aimed at improving health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health and identified local priority issues. The program will be further strengthened by advocacy initiatives that address entrenched social and economic disadvantage; increase the affordability and accessibility of healthy and nutritious food; and support public health education at a hyperlocal level on topics such as nutrition, obesity and mental health.

Active People

Objective 4.2

Local government is responsible for creating built environments and public places where people can live healthy, active lives and participate in their communities. When we enhance the social impact of urban development and renewal through best-practice design for all ages and abilities, we further enhance our community's enjoyment of the public domain and infrastructure. Innovative activation of public and private spaces, land and buildings can contribute to positive economic, social and cultural outcomes.

The Active People program will seek to increase access to community-based sport and recreation opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage, social isolation or exclusion. Collaboration with the planning, urban design and development sectors will increase the positive social impact of public domain enhancements, urban development and renewal, while enhancing personal amenity for people of all ages and abilities.

Safe City

Objective 4.3

NSW Police has a lead role in crime prevention and detection as well as perceptions of safety within the community. Local government works closely with NSW Police, as well as other government agencies and non-government organisations, to assist in the delivery of safer outcomes for the community. Governments at all levels, communities and businesses need to be collaborative and actively engaged to create safe communities. Key roles for local government include managing public space and building design, engaging in social planning, and developing policies that assist in achieving safer outcomes.

To support community safety and crime prevention, the Safe City program will prioritise several actions. Improvements in community safety will be directed by best practice in public domain design and collaborative initiatives with government and non-government organisations to address identified community needs. Delivery of projects that improve public safety and perceptions of safety will be facilitated by initiatives such as inclusive education campaigns and space activations, using current safety evidence and crime data to understand the Newcastle-specific situation. The program will also support local D&FV organisations to respond to need in the community and build capacity within the sector.

Community Resilience and Adaptation

Objective 4.4

As our climate changes and we face crisis events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, our health and wellbeing are challenged – as is the ability of our health and social systems to support us. The relationships between our environment, our physical and mental health, and our social domain must be examined as we continue to adapt to climate change and crises.

Particular attention needs to be given to vulnerable communities. Adaptation must be inclusive and account for the underlying factors that contribute to vulnerability, such as issues related to geography, culture, age, gender, diversity, disability and socio-economic status. (For example, heatwaves can disproportionately impact the elderly, children, outdoor workers and those suffering from chronic disease).

Along with state and federal governments, local government has a responsibility to adopt policies and practices that prepare for the unavoidable impacts of crisis events and climate change through community resilience-building and adaptation. Supporting the community's capacity to respond to crises is another key component of this delivery program. Community resilience-building will be supported by neighbourhood-based social network and emergency-preparedness initiatives.

Appendix
Action Plan

City of Newcastle

Priorities	1. Equitable communities	2. Inclusive communities	3. Connected communities	4. Healthy communities
	VISION: Support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community	**VISION:** Recognise, acknowledge, value and celebrate the Awabakal and Worimi peoples' strength, resilience and living culture and that of our diverse community members. Champion inclusion across our community so that everyone is supported, valued and respected	**VISION:** Support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through acceptance, participation and inclusion, so that everyone feels welcome in Newcastle and enjoys a sense of belonging and place	**VISION:** Promote and support active, healthy and resilient communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city
Objectives	1.1 Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members	2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle	3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making and address local social issues	4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health
	1.2 Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services	2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion	3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks	4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces
	1.3 Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses	2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities	3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life	4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety
	1.4 Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure	2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change	3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship	4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic)

Priority 1

Equitable communities

VISION: Support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
1.1 Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members	Housing First	1.1.1. Work in partnership to facilitate increased supply and access to social, affordable, adaptable and alternative housing and address issues of homelessness and rough sleeping	*Implementation of the Homelessness, Housing Insecurity and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2022-2030 which addresses CN's approach to influencing housing stress and homelessness	Year one	Strategy & Engagement (lead)	NSW government agencies – Department of Communities and Justice (DJC), Department of Planning and Environment (DPIE) Specialist housing services Community housing providers Housing industry Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Homelessness, Housing Insecurity and Affordable Housing Action Plan endorsed and yearly workplans completed
	Housing First	1.1.2. Support community partners by providing data and research on homelessness and housing stress	*Deliver two evidence-based information initiatives annually (i.e., discussion forum, information guide, research paper etc)	Year two	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	Specialist housing services Community housing providers Housing industry	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two information sharing initiatives completed
1.2 Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services	Community Focused Services	1.2.1. Collaborate and advocate for improved transport availability and access with a focus on people with disability, low-income earners and people who experience other forms of disadvantage	*Develop transport access and advocacy plan which focuses on people who experience transport disadvantage	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	NSW government agencies - Transport for NSW Community services sector	1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city	Transport advocacy plan developed, and projects implemented yearly
	Community Focused Services	1.2.2. Identify and deliver initiatives that provide support to the Newcastle Community Sector Networks through research and programs	*Deliver annually a community services applied research project based on identified need *Deliver annually up to four Newcastle Interagency Network meetings and up to two community sector networking and information events. *Develop and implement a Community Sector Network Support framework, which provides clarity on CNs support and participation in sector networks. *Undertake a comprehensive review of Newcastle Interagency Model in consultation with the community services sector. (Year three)	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community services sector	4.1. Inclusive and integrated planning	One community services applied research project completed Four network meetings completed and two community sector events delivered Community sector support charter developed Review of Newcastle Interagency Model completed
	Community Focused Services	1.2.3. Work in partnership to deliver improved community services in the Western Corridor of Newcastle	*Develop a Four-year roadmap for community services in the Western Corridor	Year one	Strategy & Engagement	NSW government agencies - DCJ Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Western corridor roadmap developed and shared with relevant agencies

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
1.3 Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses	**Understanding Equity**	1.3.1. Research, monitor and report on inequity and social justice concerns in the Newcastle LGA to inform effective responses, both through direct action and collaboration	*Develop CN Equity Pulse framework, with bi-annual monitoring and reporting targets embedded in the form of research and data outputs	Year one and annually	Strategy & Engagement	University sector NSW government agencies Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	CN Equity framework developed
	Understanding Equity	1.3.2. Deliver knowledge sharing events on localised inequity and social justice issues	*Identify priority social justice topics and partners to deliver two knowledge sharing events annually e.g., forum, panel discussion, master class, expert presentation, think tank	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community services sector NSW government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Two knowledge sharing events delivered. and participant satisfaction survey at end of every event administered to track progress
1.4 Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure	**City Access**	1.4.1 Increase localised Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) awareness within the organisation to achieve greater community impact in the social justice space in Newcastle	*Support delivery of CN's internal ED&I program by providing two education sessions outlining recent localised evidence on need and propose local response options	Year two and annually	People and Culture Strategy and Engagement	NSW government agencies – Transport for NSW Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	Two CN internal social justice planning sessions held
	City Access	1.4.2. Incorporate ED&I principles in CN Customer Experience (CX)	*Include ED&I in CX principles framework and considerations where relevant *Staff considers equity and diversity for their areas of business in the planning and design phase of new processes *People from diverse backgrounds have confidence in dealing with CN	Annually	Strategy & Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Number of CX process designs completed
	City Access	1.4.3. Continue to deliver grants aimed at social inclusion as part of the Community Grant Funding Program	*Grant funding to support social inclusion including Rapid Response Grants where appropriate distributed annually	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups and organisations	1.1. Enriched neighbourhoods and places 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Social Inclusion Grants administered and distributed annually
	City Access	1.4.4. Undertake an Intergenerational Places and Spaces Plan which analyses and documents actions for better access, inclusion and programming across identified social infrastructure within the LGA	*Places and Spaces Action Plan developed	Year three	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups and organisations	1.1. Enriched neighbourhoods and places 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Places and Spaces Action Plan developed and adopted

Priority 2

Inclusive communities

VISION: Recognise, acknowledge, value and celebrate the Awabakal and Worimi peoples' strength, resilience and living culture and that of our diverse community members. Champion inclusion across our community so that everyone is supported, valued and respected

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle.	Strength in Diversity	2.1.1. Commence a program in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to explore and guide how CN supports authentic, self-determined connection to country and cultural expression for the Awabakal and Worimi people, their communities and enrichment of the broader community. Guraki Committee to be a key stakeholder.	*Coordinate development of Connection to Country and Culture program and framework with yearly workplans while maintaining and building connections and relationships with the Guraki Committee. *Support the Aboriginal Employment Strategy from a community development perspective.	Ongoing	Strategy & Engagement (lead) People and Culture (support)	Awabakal and Worimi elders and community Broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Guraki Committee University of Newcastle State government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Connection to Country and Culture program and framework developed and yearly workplans delivered.
	Strength in Diversity	2.1.2. Respond to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021 – 2024 pillars by facilitating community partnerships which advance reconciliation and opportunities available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	*Participate in RAP Working Group processes and deliver two projects, initiatives and/or events annually that contribute to reconciliation efforts.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) People & Culture (support)	Awabakal and Worimi elders and community Broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Guraki Committee University of Newcastle State government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Two RAP related initiatives delivered annually
	Strength in Diversity	2.1.3. Understand and share the stories, voices and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse community members by fostering trust and empowering community leaders and representatives.	*Deliver two dedicated storytelling projects annually.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement City Wide Services	Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four storytelling projects delivered.
2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion	Equal Opportunity	2.2.1. Provide access to education, training and capacity-building opportunities and materials for community members, groups and organisations that exist for social connection, community wellbeing and voluntary purposes.	*Continue to deliver the NewConnects learning modules program in 2022/23 *Develop annually two digital information packs that provide trusted, factual and useful information on identified priority local social issues.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Education sector Community organisations Community services sector	3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	New Connects learning modules program delivered. Digital information packs distributed
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.2. Develop a digital inclusion road map for Newcastle with a focus on older people, people with limited education and income and English as a second language.	*Coordinate development of a digital inclusion road map with projects identified annually in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Education sector Community organisations Community services sector	1.4 Innovative and connected city 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Digital Inclusion Roadmap developed and projects delivered annually.

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.3. Collaborate on workplace equity, diversity and inclusion policies and practices that are informed by community perspectives for continuous improvement.	*Support CN's internal Diversity & Inclusion program by conducting annual 'ED&I Community Perspectives' briefings *Participate in annual workforce planning processes to provide ED&I considerations.	Annually	People & Culture Strategy & Engagement		3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Community Perspectives briefing delivered.
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.4 Increase localised ED&I awareness CN to achieve greater community impact in the social justice space in Newcastle.	*Support CN's internal Diversity and Inclusion Program with localised data to support training.	Year two and annually	Strategy & Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	Localised data in CN diversity and inclusion materials.
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.5. Support business sector for equity, diversity and inclusion outcomes and progress, including through corporate responsibility agendas and social enterprise initiatives.	*Annual collaborative workplans which contribute to the ED&I outcomes of the Economic Development Strategy. *Provide ED&I localised information to business sector to inform their corporate social responsibility agendas. *Form a working relationship with Business Improvement Association's on ED&I matters	Year one and annually	Strategy & Engagement	Local business sector	3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four projects completed annually.
2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities	Welcoming City	2.3.1. Support initiatives that strengthen sense of belonging and welcome among residents and workers.	*Investigate accreditation process to attain Excelling or Mentoring level within the Welcoming Cities Standard	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups Community services sector NSW government agencies – DCJ Multicultural NSW	3.1 Vibrant and creative city 1.2 Connected and fair communities	CN achieved Welcoming Cities Standard level of Excelling.
	Welcoming City	2.3.2. Embed ED&I principles in CN's external and internal communications	*Update CN's corporate style guide to include ED&I principles outlined in this Strategy *Link processes such as photography and videography briefs to Corporate Style Guide and ED&I principles.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support) People & Culture (support)		1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture	CN materials reflecting the diversity of our communities so that people see themselves represented and included.
2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change	Respectful Communities	2.4.1. Deliver or support projects and initiatives that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination and foster cross-cultural and lived experience awareness, acceptance and understanding.	*Deliver or support two projects or campaigns annually that combat discrimination or foster awareness, tolerance and understanding.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Community service sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two projects or initiatives delivered.

VISION: Support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through acceptance, participation and inclusion, so that everyone feels welcome in Newcastle and enjoys a sense of belonging and place

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making and address local social issues	Engaged Communities	3.1.1. Undertake genuine engagement with communities' groups and community sector in the development and delivery of social, cultural and creative projects and initiatives that address identified local social issues	*Effective engagement and increased participation	Year three	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups

Community services sector | 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach

1.2 Connected and fair communities | Increased participation in decision making reported in Annual Report |
| | Engaged Communities | 3.1.2. Support community engagement and consultation models by breaking down barriers for under-represented sectors of the community | * Increased participation by underrepresented groups on projects which relate to planning and design of public places and spaces. | Year one | Strategy & Engagement | | 4.2. Trust and transparency

1.2 Connected and fair communities | Increased engagement by underrepresented groups reported in annual report and engagement reports |
| 3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks. | Social Connect | 3.2.1. Support community programs which increase trust, connection and reduce social isolation. | *Develop a two-year Social Connect program with two projects or initiatives that increase trust, connection and reduce social isolation within and between all communities in Newcastle.

*Evaluate CN's NewConnects program to support community access to spaces for meetings, recreation and activations. | Year two | Strategy & Engagement | | 1.2 Connected and fair communities | Social Connect program designed and two community programs delivered.

NewConnects review completed |
| | Social Connect | 3.2.2. Continue to support social, cultural and creative events and activities in the public domain that appeal to diverse community members. | *Provide annual reporting to CN venues and cultural institutions of localised priorities and needs. | Annually | Strategy & Engagement | | 3.1 Vibrant and creative city | Annual information session completed. |
| | Social Connect | 3.2.3. Review the tools and resources available to support volunteer opportunities in the local community. | *Support community groups to attract volunteers by building capacity through training, educational resources and collaboration with the Hunter Volunteer Foundation, while leveraging the My Community Directory platform and NewConnects program. | Year three | Strategy & Engagement (lead)

City Wide Services (support) | Community groups | 1.2 Connected and fair communities | Resources reviewed. |
| | Social Connect | 3.2.4. Investigate and support place-based services, projects and initiatives in and around community centres. | *Develop two joint projects, initiatives and events which partner with community organisations to identify priority needs and projects in particular locations; or support activation of managed neighbourhood centres with yearly activity plan in partnership with community organisations e.g., Hamilton South, Maryland and Jesmond. | Year two | Strategy and Engagement | Community groups

Community services sector | 1.1. Enriched neighbourhood and places | Two projects annually. |

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life.	**Active Citizenship**	3.3.1. Provide increased opportunity for diverse community members to participate in CN community advisory committees to strengthen people's civic awareness and increase civic participation	*Create targeted awareness material to contextualise equity, diversity and inclusion for each CN Strategic Advisory Committee and co-present with a nominated community representative (year one)

*Develop a Civic Engagement awareness program which identifies community barriers to participation in civic life and initiatives to increase active citizenship on an annual basis. Program to extend reach of information on CN website (get involved) and target young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disability and people of CALD LGBTIQA + backgrounds. (Year two)

*Pilot an initiative that supports grass roots community leaders to inspire and advocate for their community (e.g., two-day leadership development opportunity) (Year two) | Year one and Year two | Strategy & Engagement

Governance | | 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning

1.2 Connected and fair communities | Awareness material made accessible and deployed.

Pilot leadership program facilitated. |
| **3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship.** | **Local Data** | 3.4.1. Increase open access to CN and Newcastle LGA specific data. | *Provide free access to community demographic digital platform on annual basis and provide Census 2021 learning workshops to community and community sector.

*Review CN Open Data policies and procedures to identify opportunities for increased sharing of relevant data with communities to enable localised responses to social issues. | Annually and Year two | Strategy & Engagement

Information Technology | | 4.2 Trust and transparency

4.2 Collaborative and innovative approach | CN Open Data policies and procedures reviewed to support deeper understanding of local social issues and demographic digital platform made available to community year on year. |
| | **Local Data** | 3.4.2. Manage and deliver key community information resources targeted at community sector and community groups and in a range of languages and formats widely accessible and appealing to diverse audiences. | *Distribution of regular newsletters, accurate and timely website content, management and promotion of My Community directory

*Development and distribution of tools through awareness of NewConnects learning modules.

*Development up to two needs-based information toolkits annually, that support an identified diverse community group in Newcastle in accessing a trusted, factual and relevant resource (i.e., develop a database of LGBTIQA+ friendly businesses and spaces). | Annually | Strategy & Engagement | Community organisations

Community services sector | 1.2 Connected and fair communities

4.2 Trust and transparency

4.2 Collaborative and innovative approach | Six community newsletters distributed

Up to eight community information toolkits developed. |

Priority 4

Healthy communities

VISION: Promote and support active, healthy and resilient communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Annual measure
4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health.	Community Health and Wellbeing	4.1.1. Collaborate with partners in the health and community sector to deliver projects and initiatives aimed at improving community health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health and identified local priority issues.	*Deliver one Community Health & Wellbeing identified project annually	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies Health sector Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four Community Health & Wellbeing projects delivered.
	Community Health and Wellbeing	4.1.2. Collaborate with local businesses, government agencies and not-for-profit organisations to address food insecurity.	*Food security projects delivered in partnership with CN internal and external stakeholders.	Year two and Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	State government agencies Community groups Community services sector Local business sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two projects that respond to food insecurity challenges delivered.
4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces.	Active People	4.2.1. Increase access to community-based sport and recreation opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage, social isolation or exclusion.	*Inform CN strategies and plans, by providing a needs-based assessment on barriers and opportunities for diverse community groups to engage in community-based sport and recreation.	Year two and Year four	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Development of two needs-based assessments of community sports and recreation assets
	Active People	4.2.2. Enable public participation, belonging and safety in the community through consultative processes with the community to influence public domain design.	*Consideration and incorporation of community design ideas where possible in public domain design processes. *Follow process for community group feedback and involvement on public domain projects. *Undertake community consultation on identified Local Centre public domain projects.	Ongoing	Strategy & Engagement Infrastructure & Property City Wide Services	State government agencies – NSW Police, DCJ Community groups Community services sector Local business sector	1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places	Community engagement on Local Centre Projects.
4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety	Safe City	4.3.1. Deliver Safe City projects that improve public safety and perceptions of safety with the Newcastle LGA.	*One Safe City project identified and delivered, in partnership, annually.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies – NSW Police, DCJ Community groups Community services sector	1.1. Enriched neighbourhood and places 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Safe City project delivered.
4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic).	Community Resilience and Adaptation	4.4.1. Deliver targeted initiatives to support communities' adaptation to climate change impacts, including support for residents identified as vulnerable to heat stress or other climate impacts.	*Deliver two Climate Adaptation projects, with a focus on vulnerable communities, based on risks and priorities identified in draft Environment Strategy and Climate Risk and Resilience Action Plan.	Year two and Year four	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies Environmental agencies Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Action on climate-change	Two Climate Adaptation projects with ED&I focus delivered as part of CN's Environment Strategy.
	Community Resilience and Adaptation	4.4.2. Deliver targeted initiatives to enhance communities' capacity to recover and thrive in the face of shocks and emergencies (i.e., COVID-19 pandemic) through supporting community capacity building, neighbourhood based social networks and emergency preparedness.	*Deliver one Community Resilience project based on emergency preparedness and community strengthening best practices.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	State government agencies Emergency response services Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	One Community Resilience project delivered.

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