

POLICY DOCUMENT

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This Policy commences on the following page.

Recreational and Cultural Strategy



People's Lifestyle, Aspirations and Needs Study

Adopted by Penrith City Council 15th March 2004



Executive Summary

This report is the final report in the PLANS study conducted by Urbis JHD in association with Stratcorp Consulting on behalf of Penrith Council. The study was conducted in stages commencing in 2002. The study as a whole aimed to evaluate previous planning of recreational, cultural and other urban services and facilities and establish new plans and strategies underpinned by detailed assessment of community needs and aspirations to conserve and enhance Penrith residents' quality of life.

The study stages were:

1. Strategic Research
2. Audit of infrastructure and services
3. Community consultation and development of preliminary strategies
4. Analysis of information and documentation of draft strategies
5. Preparation of draft strategies and consultation
6. Finalisation of strategies and plans

Each of these stages contributed to the information base from which the PLANS Study has developed a set of Infrastructure Facilities and Services Strategies, and a set of recreation and Cultural Strategies. While it is acknowledged that there is significant overlap between these two areas this document attempts to report the findings of each under the substantive headings of Recreation and Culture Strategy which was completed by Stratcorp Consulting and Infrastructure Facilities and Services completed by Urbis JHD.

A series of stand alone reports were completed in 2002 including:

- Audit Report (2002) IKY & Stratcorp)
- Demographic Profile (2002) (UKY)
- Literature Review summary (2002) (UKY)
- Focus Group Summary (2002) (UKY)
- Workshop Summary (2002) (UKY)
- Community Attitudes and Aspirations Survey Report (2002) (UKY & Stratcorp)

These reports were subsequently used by Council in its planning during 2002 and 2003.

The final stage of the study involved production of three reports.

- The Recreational and Cultural Facilities Strategy completed as a stand alone report by Stratcorp Consulting;
- The Section 94 Framework completed as a stand alone report by Urbis JHD; and
- This report which combines the recreation and Cultural Strategy and the Infrastructure Facilities and Services Strategy.

One of the key features of the study process has been the focus on gaining a current understanding of the needs and aspirations of the community through a comprehensive range of social research and community consultation processes. The project team used social research techniques designed to gather accurate information which would allow it to identify a representative view of community needs and issues. The extensive information provided by the project survey and consultative activities undertaken ensures the issues identified and described are well informed by the views and aspirations of the Penrith Community as a whole.

Similarly the Recreation and Cultural Strategies and the Infrastructure Facilities and Services strategies were developed by the study team collaboratively with key stakeholder groups including a wide range of sporting, recreation and cultural groups as well as Council. In doing so the project team endeavoured to ensure that the strategies proposed were practicable, that they maximized the strengths of organizations working within the local area and most importantly were responsive to the needs identified.

Recreational and Cultural Resources

The Penrith LGA has a large range of open space, recreation and cultural facilities for use by residents and visitors. The total open space managed by Council in 2002 was 1,241 hectares representing 7.20 hectares / 1,000 people. This is well above the benchmark standard of 2.83 hectares / 1,000 people. The 1,241 hectares was made up of 412 hectares of parks, 340 hectares of sporting fields, 228 hectares for community use and 261 hectares as natural area.

The provision of 304 hectares for sporting fields is the equivalent of 1.97 hectares / 1,000 people across the Penrith LGA, which is in excess of the open space benchmarks of 1.21 hectares and 1.8 hectares / 1,000 people.

There is currently however a shortage of open space provision for sporting fields in each of the three New Release Areas of Glenmore Park, Erskine Park and Claremont meadows. Given that these areas have a higher proportion of young families relative to the rest of the Penrith LGA, the need for local access to outdoor sports facilities is an immediate need in these areas.

A 'high level' benchmarking comparison, indicates that the Penrith LGA currently has a significant shortage of tennis courts and a moderate shortage of rugby fields, whilst the number of netball courts is in excess. Other popular sports of soccer, cricket, hockey, law bowls and AFL are adequately provided for presently.

A comparison between industry benchmarks and the existing provision of community and cultural facilities in the Penrith LGA, shows that:

- Penrith LGA has a sufficient quantity of community centers, community halls and youth centers.
- Penrith LGA could support an additional 2 - 3 art galleries.
- Penrith LGA has a sufficient provision of regional performing arts centers.
- Penrith LGA could support an additional 3 - 4 smaller performing arts centers.

Key Issues for the Penrith LGA

The key issues identified by the study with regard to provision of recreation and cultural facilities were therefore:

- The need for access to quality and useable open space.
- Provision of high quality passive and informal active recreation opportunities through improvements to the open space network.
- Equitable and affordable access to community facilities and activities for all sectors and target groups within the community.
- Improved promotion of existing community facilities and available activities and services.
- Changing population profile of the Penrith LGA.
- Changing recreational and cultural participation patterns and aspirations of Penrith residents.
- Impact on facility provision from new or emerging activities and/or increased levels of participation in existing activities.
- Sustainable sport and club development.
- Under use of some community facilities.
- Under use of smaller passive parks and open space areas.
- The possible need for new regional community facilities to cater for an expanding population base, and increased recreational and cultural needs.
- Lower than average demand for selected cultural facilities and services balanced against ageing population (high users).
- Improved provision and access to community facilities for young people.
- Improving community access to school facilities.
- Schools use of Council managed community facilities and outdoor areas.

Key Sites

In addition to the broad strategies the project made an assessment of the capacity of 7 designated key sites to meet the future recreation and cultural needs of residents. This assessment included review of each site in context, canvassing community views and recommendation of a proposed direction in each case based on the overall findings of the study findings. The directions proposed in relation to each of these sites were:

Castlereagh Waste Management Centre

- Re-vegetate the site and assess the potential fall, with limited passive recreational facility provision in selected areas of the site (ie, walking and cycling paths) in the long term.
- Establish vegetation/habitat corridors and connections to adjoining areas, especially the Castlereagh Nature Reserve and National Park.

- Investigate the feasibility (with Waste Service) of establishing an environmental ‘business’ on part of the site as a means of funding rehabilitation costs. The concept has a working title of ‘earth park’ and would provide for multiple uses including conservation, ecological research (consistent with revegetation), education/field studies, and related environmental business.
- The footprint for the ‘earth park’ would be small when compared to the total area of the site, and the development would be linked to rehabilitation works. Regional economic benefits could be anticipated by way of employment generation.

Gipps Street Site, Claremont Meadows

- Re-vegetate the site to establish a new municipal-wide open space area comprising a mixture of passive open space opportunities (ie, walking and cycling paths, picnic and playground areas) and sports fields to meet emerging needs of a ‘district’ catchment.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a regional sports facility.
- Establish off-road connections and ‘green’ corridors to Kingsway Playing Fields and the South Creek linear bushland corridor.

Penrith Lakes Scheme

- Regional water-based park for use by all sections of the community, both Penrith residents and visitors.
- Provision of a range of ‘soft’ activities and services, such as cycleways, picnic areas, non-powered aquatic activities, and fishing.
- Provision of a network of off-road cycleways connecting the various sub-precincts within the Lakes Scheme, and connecting the Lakes Scheme to the Penrith CBD, adjoining bushland areas and to other recreational precincts along the Nepean River.
- Provision of commercial / community adventure type activities, such as an interactive water park and/or water adventure center, subject to a detailed investigation into their feasibility.
- Provision of water bodies appropriate for sailing and recreational small craft (such as kayaks and canoes), and wetlands for nature-based experiences.
- Continued development of international standard aquatic facilities to complement existing rowing course and white-water rafting facility.
- Provision of a range of cultural experiences through public art and embellishments.

The University of Western Sydney

- Council to advocate for increased community use of existing recreational, sporting and cultural facilities.
- Partnership approach between Council, the University and relevant community groups for the continued development of community-based theatre on campus.

- Partnership approach between Council, the University and relevant sporting peak bodies for the investigation into the viability of the development of a ‘high performance sports centre’ at the University.

Nepean River

- Establishment of a continuous water-based park precinct, inclusive of visitor facilities, aquatic recreational and sporting activities, cycleways, commercial cafes/restaurants, and habitat reserves.
- Formalise link with the Great River Walk.
- Investigate the feasibility of staging one-off events for powered water craft.

ADI Site, St Marys

- Establish a new regional park to ensure appropriate flora and fauna habitat areas are preserved.
- Establish a large park which provides for a range of passive and active recreational and sporting facilities to accommodate the needs of future residents at the site (14,400 in total).
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a municipal-wide standard sports facility to service a catchment beyond the immediate residential base.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing an ‘environmentally sustainable’ center for research and educational purposes (pending the outcome of any proposals planned for the Castlereagh site).

Penrith Park / Showground Precinct

There exist several constraints on Council and other stakeholders in relation to any possible redevelopment of this site. These constraints include:

- The fact that Council does not own a large proportion of the land.
- The historical and traditional uses of several areas across the site, eg, the Paceway for harness racing, the Penrith Stadium for Panthers rugby league matches, and the Howell Oval for cricket.

Given these constraints, the key direction is for all stakeholders to work co-operatively to prepare a new master plan for the precinct and articulate a new ‘vision’ for it. The following proposals are suggestions for improved community access to this important central site in Penrith, which could be considered as part of any master planning process:

- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a new indoor stadium on the site
- Investigate the feasibility of upgrading the Penrith Swimming Pool to provide indoor water areas and associated fitness spaces
- Upgrade the Panthers Stadium to allow a greater use of the venue for alternate sports compatible with a rectangular field (eg, soccer, union, touch)

- Provide improved outdoor areas suitable for staging large outdoor performances and/or events.

Corridor Lands

- Retain / re-vegetate specific sites as natural bushland areas and habitat reserves (Regional Park).
- Develop specific sites for nature-based recreation (off road paths, camping, equestrian paths, low-level visitor facilities).
- Develop interpretative and heritage experiences (paths, signage, place markers).
- Establish a new active sporting precinct in the Werrington and Kingsway area.
- Establish linear paths throughout the Corridor Lands (cycle/pedestrian paths and equestrian paths) to facilitate access and improved connection with adjoining suburbs.

Infrastructure and Service Provision in Established Areas

The guiding principles of the study which directly relate to infrastructure and services were:

- Provision of public infrastructure, facilities and services to the Cities Established and New Release area should be equitable.
- Infrastructure, facilities and services should be accessible throughout the Established areas of the city and to all areas of the community.

This report has considered not only those infrastructure issues which are the direct responsibility of Council but also those which may be the responsibility of other government authorities and where Council's responsibility is as an advocate on behalf of the community to ensure equitable access and accessibility.

The research conducted identified the need for co-ordinated planning and provision of infrastructure in Established areas in order to meet the needs of these communities. This need underpins the proposed framework of suburb clusters within which benchmarking levels for open space, community facilities and services can be set, which consider not only the basic population levels but also locality and quality criteria wherever possible. Assessment of infrastructure needs in this context ensures that provision of infrastructure will be accessible as well as equitable in line with the overall project goals.

The framework proposed focuses on establishing pedestrian and cycleway links between major facilities and services which would enable and encourage greater use of these links both as a means of travel and as a significant recreation facility. Further this framework once identified will guide decisions about priorities for provision of infrastructure such as public landscaping, placement of bus stops and public lighting requirements as well as rationalization of infrastructure to better meet the needs of communities in Established areas.

Many of the key issues identified by the PLANS study relate to infrastructure design issues such as the need for facilities to be physically accessible, for public spaces to feel safe and

for neighbourhood shopping facilities to promote social interaction. These design issues are typically dealt with across a range of disciplines from master planning, social planning, accessibility and equity, as well as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design auditing. Similarly each of these specialist areas is underpinned by the principle that they maximize access to facilities and services by people who use them. The concept of Universal Design while having a focus on the physical encapsulates many of the design issues dealt with in these specialist areas. In particular Universal Design approaches would address those issues identified by older people and people with a disability in terms of the overall accessibility of the Penrith environment.

The wide range of expectations and needs identified in the course of this study shows clearly the need for adoption of more inclusive infrastructure design. In particular issues raised under the headings of shopping centres and meeting and gathering places reinforced the need to adopt broader design principles to meet community expectations. Adoption of the principles of Universal Design in planning and provision of infrastructure services and facilities within Penrith would facilitate achievement of this.

The importance of well designed infrastructure which supports informal community interaction and activity has been a recurrent theme which is highlighted specifically in the following areas:

Meeting and gathering places

The community highlighted as one of its most valued characteristics its friendly environment. People knowing their neighbours, meeting friends at shopping centres and feeling comfortable and safe were important characteristics of the local environment for residents. In terms of infrastructure needs this means ensuring that there are places where all groups within the community can meet and interact.

The provision of social infrastructure in the Penrith CBD and in district shopping/commercial centres is an important consideration in maintaining community cohesiveness in the longer term. This is perhaps one of the more difficult community needs to manage since the character of desired meeting and gathering places varies significantly between age and cultural groups and includes public and private infrastructure. In general however meeting and gathering spaces tend to be associated with neighbourhood, district or regional commercial centres; the veranda of the neighbourhood centre; the café at the district shops or the foyer of the cinema complex. It is important therefore that consideration of meeting and gathering places which cater to all groups within the community is part of the design stage in planning district centres and as part of further work in Penrith's CBD.

Shopping centres

In focus groups and workshops where participants were asked to list the infrastructure which was important in defining their community, local shops appeared consistently in almost all groups. Shopping centres play a major practical and social role for the residents of the LGA. The importance of access to local shops for all groups has been clearly highlighted.

Access to a major shopping centre while rated as less important than the local shopping centre was still an important consideration. The research indicated clearly a community

expectation that the Penrith CBD should continue to develop as a major focal point for social, community and commercial services.

Community safety

Community safety is not wholly an infrastructure issue however the quality, design and usage of certain types of infrastructure have a significant influence on the overall safety and perception of safety within the community. The issue of safety was of central importance for a number of groups. Planning of new infrastructure and to a lesser extent upgrading existing infrastructure presents opportunities to address safety concerns by incorporation of safer by design principles at the design stage of most projects.

Infrastructure Issues in Established Areas

The resident population in Established Areas makes up 75% of the total LGA population and therefore LGA wide research to a large extent reflects the views of residents of Established areas. The project Audit Report produced in 2002 also clearly showed that the majority of community infrastructure, including community centres and halls, recreation facilities and services as well as health and education facilities are located in Established areas. Infrastructure located in Established areas is therefore meeting the demands for some services for the whole population of the LGA, rather than residents of Established areas alone. Demand and adequacy of particular services and facilities therefore needs to be considered in this light in relation to infrastructure located within Established Areas.

The report specifically addresses the following issues for which Council has direct responsibility for provision:

Parks and open space

Parks and open space are one of the key infrastructure components that determine the character of Penrith LGAs urban areas. They are highly valued as contributors to the 'semi rural' character of the LGA as well as their importance as facilities for active and passive recreation. In Established areas there has been little increase in provision of open space in the past 10 years and the project survey results indicate the view that there has been a decline in the quality of the open space available in Established areas. The need for improvement of parks and recreation areas was highlighted in the project survey as one of the highest priorities for improvement in Established areas. This finding was reinforced in focus groups and workshops where participants emphasised the need for these areas to be well maintained and safe. Residents in Established areas in particular, reported having least access to recreation and open space. They also reported that parks in their areas lacked adequate facilities, equipment and landscaping which made them less attractive to use. Clearly residents in Established areas are least satisfied with the adequacy of provision of parks and open space.

Sporting venues

Much of the research reinforced the need for improvement of infrastructure related to sporting venues located within Established areas in particular footpaths and cycle ways which would improve access to sporting facilities. The main user groups of sporting

facilities were the under 25-age cohort. These are also the groups most likely to use public transport, cycleways or footpaths to reach these facilities. The lack of safe and accessible cycleways and footpaths was highlighted as one of the key reasons for:

- Families reliance on private vehicles to transport children and young people to sporting activities;
- Lack of access to sporting facilities by people with a disability.

Residents in Established areas reported the lowest level of satisfaction with access to sporting venues generally suggesting again that while sporting venues existed the quality of those located in Established areas was lower than that of facilities in newer areas. Upgrade and maintenance of sporting venues and improvement of travel linkages are therefore high priorities in Established areas.

Cultural and arts facilities

Access to Cultural and Entertainment facilities and services was viewed as important by 72% of residents in Established areas. The importance of cultural and arts facilities increased by age group reflecting participation rates reported in the project survey which also showed increasing levels of participation in art and craft activities as well as attendance at exhibitions and the like. Access to cultural and arts facilities is likely to become increasingly important for residents in Established communities in future as the profile ages. This group in particular are also more likely than other age groups to be reliant on public transport which means that provision of public transport linkages to and within Established areas as well as pedestrian networks is also likely to become increasingly important.

Footpaths and cycleway

Footpaths and cycleways were identified as one of the most important infrastructure needs within Established areas. The existing system of footpaths and cycleways are seen as being indirect and unpleasant to use by a large proportion of the population but particularly in Established areas.

The ageing of the Penrith population as well as the need to provide what are described as universal design facilities and services also must be considered in future provision of footpaths and pedestrian access ways. Upgrading and construction of new pathways needs to ensure these are adequate to deal with an increasing level of use by the general population as a significant passive recreation activity. Also the increasing mobility of people using a range of individual motorised transport options presents the need to revise current standard footpath design. With these factors in mind, width and surfacing of paths and cycleways will need to be revised to meet these emerging needs.

Public landscaping

In Established areas public landscaping was a significant factor in people's assessment of the amenity of their neighbourhood. The likelihood of their using particular facilities such as parks, open space and playgrounds was strongly influenced by the quality and character of the associated public landscaping. Council currently does not maintain information specifically relating to public landscaping and with the exception of the Great River Walk

has not initiated any formal mapping or planning of landscaped areas. Comprehensive mapping of landscaped areas alone will not necessarily advance the provision of high quality open spaces. Since landscaped space plays such an important role in people's perception of the amenity and quality of neighbourhoods and in particular facilities such as parks, open space, pedestrian and cycleways, public landscape further planning and provision of public landscaping areas needs to be conducted in parallel to planning for open space, pedestrian and cycleways within established areas.

Lighting in public places

The research conducted for this project does indicate that the community in Established areas views the need for public lighting primarily in terms of improving road safety and personal safety in public spaces. Provision of adequate lighting was viewed as a key component in ensuring that public areas were safe and were perceived as being safe. The majority of these facilities and services are located within Established areas making the provision of lighting in these locations primarily a concern for Established areas but one which will impact on how these areas are used by the wider LGA community.

Roads and traffic management

Residents in Established areas in particular highlighted the need for roads which were better able to cope with the increased volume of traffic generated by continued development. Emphasis was placed on the need for:

- Adequate feeder roads in and out of residential areas
- Upgrade of existing neighbourhood roads to cope with continued increased demand resulting from increased density in residential development
- Safety of roads given the accelerated deterioration as a result of increased use
- Management of the impact of through traffic generated by new release areas.

Community centres and halls

This study focused on the role community centres and halls play in provision of recreation, cultural and sporting services. It should however be noted that these were not the primary purposes for development of these centres and halls. Community centres and halls have traditionally been planned to provide a base for a range of services to residents within their catchment areas. The project survey results showed that residents in Established areas rated their access to community centres lowest of all facilities canvassed. While needs in particular areas differed there were several consistent themes in regard infrastructure needs for these facilities:

- Community facilities should be well located. Ideally facilities should be adjacent to other neighbourhood and district services such as shops, sports and recreation facilities or schools.
- Facilities should be easily accessible by public transport, pedestrian pathways and private vehicle ensuring maximum access.
- Facilities must have adequate storage space for individual community groups.

- Facilities should be physically accessible.
- Management of facilities should be inclusive of the local community.
- The cost of use to individuals and groups should not be prohibitive.

Bus stops

The pedestrian networks proposed in this report aim to promote access and link recreation facilities and services throughout the LGA. Placement of bus stops at strategic points within this network would therefore promote this overall aim. The study recommends two tiers of bus stop. Permanent bus stops which are placed strategically within the broad pedestrian network and which ensure consistent links with bus services and semi permanent bus stops which can be relocated within urban areas in response to changing demand.

Libraries

Provision of Library services has been a traditional role of local government in NSW and in Penrith which have been classified as part of the overall Recreation and Cultural infrastructure of the area. The results of consultation and survey research indicate that residents in Established areas are satisfied with the current levels of library services provision within the LGA.

Trunk Drainage

The updated version of the Penrith Plans for our Future – People’s Lifestyle, Aspiration and Needs Study produced in mid 2003 noted that Council was in the process of mapping existing drainage and infrastructure for the LGA. Details of drainage infrastructure were therefore unavailable to this study.

Conclusion

The key infrastructure issue in Established areas is therefore not infrastructure and service provision levels but the standard and capacity of existing facilities and services. The strategies proposed in this report aim to promote progressive auditing of infrastructure and improve co-ordinated provision of facilities and services in order to meet identified community priorities.

Recreation and Cultural Facilities Strategy

Objective 1

Maximise Use of Existing Cultural and Recreation Facilities

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
1.1 Quality, usable open space			
<p>70% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey participated in informal passive recreation in the 12 months previous to the study.</p> <p>Improvements to nature reserves and parks were rated as important or very important by over 70% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey, and 65% rated improvements to walking and cycle paths as important or very important.</p> <p>74% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey rated improvements to natural areas and waterways as important or very important.</p>	<p>Consultation highlighted that the quantity of open space in the Penrith region was satisfactory but the quality was unsatisfactory.</p>	<p><i>Provide high quality recreational open space for all members of the Penrith community.</i></p> <p>GENERAL</p>	<p>Prepare an Open Space Action Plan that will review all open space, parks and natural reserves to determine their value to the community and future residents.</p> <p>This strategy should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of a network of open space. • The identification of land for acquisition. • Develop a network of recreational open space, including sporting facilities, parks and natural reserves. • The identification of open space that does not have the potential to provide valuable recreational opportunities to the community and consider disposal or conversion of the land to another purpose. There should be set criteria to be used when considering open space sites for disposal or alternative uses and guidelines for reinvesting funds in other recreation and cultural facilities. • The embellishment required on each park or reserve, to provide a range of quality, safe and relevant parks and reserves, with a schedule of capital works. <p>The criteria to assess the value of the open space should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the land, with priority given to land that can provide the community with a large multi-use park. • The experience provided by the land, ensuring a mix of passive and active recreation spaces. • Proximity of the land to transport, community services, residential areas, shops, schools and recreational facilities. • Demographics surrounding the land, with the type of embellishment determined based on the ages and cultural groups residing near the site.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
<p>Council has limited resources to maintain a number of sporting venues and fields to quality standards (local, district and regional).</p>	<p>All sporting and recreational groups requested a high level of provision for all recreational open space, including local, district and regional sports fields.</p>	<p><i>SPORT</i></p>	<p>Dependant on confirmation of need, development of an annual program of works to address the shortcomings identified once each sporting field has been allocated a level in the proposed hierarchy of facilities. This will identify which fields require additional ancillary facilities and amenities to provide the minimum standard for its level.</p> <p>Assess sports fields on a site-by-site basis to determine training and playing allocation levels, then set load levels for each field per season.</p> <p>Establish agreements with sporting associations/groups outlining the dual responsibility of maintenance of sporting fields.</p> <p>Develop partnerships with Penrith Rugby League Club regarding the use of Panthers stadium for high-grade soccer and rugby competitions. This partnership will actively seek funding for upgrades to the stadium, particularly the playing surface, which should increase the usage level of the facility.</p>
	<p>Consultation highlighted the desire to use the creeks for passive recreation activities once they are clean and available for use.</p> <p>The Nepean River is highly valued by the Penrith community, who wish to have greater access to it for passive recreation pursuits.</p>	<p><i>PASSIVE</i></p>	<p>Develop a management plan to rehabilitate South Creek and Ropes Creek for passive recreation, including opportunities for improved linkages (shared paths) to adjoining urban areas.</p> <p>Enhance the foreshore of the Nepean River with additional passive recreational facilities, including opportunities for improved linkages (shared paths) to adjoining urban areas.</p>
	<p>Workshops and focus groups highlighted that the community would like to see the Castlereagh Waste Management Centre rehabilitated before it is considered for any recreational use.</p>		<p>Support the rehabilitation of the Castlereagh Waste Management Centre with vegetation and assess the potential use of selected areas of the site for passive recreation opportunities in the long term.</p>

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
1.2 Access to existing facilities			
The users of existing facilities do not reflect all sectors of the Penrith community.	Consultation revealed that people from non-English speaking background felt that facilities and services were not accessible to them.	Improve access to existing recreation and cultural facilities.	Establish links with multi-cultural groups and ensure facilities are accessible to the range of cultural and linguistically diverse communities residing in Penrith. Consider interpreters, brochures and information in a variety of languages and promotion through established community groups.
1.3 Access to water based activities and facilities			
The 1992 Tourism Study highlighted water-based activities as an area to capitalize and expand, for use by residents and visitors to the area.	The surveys identified a number of groups, such as canoeing, who were restricted from using these facilities due to high fees and other restrictions.	Encourage water-based recreation activities within the Penrith Local Government Area.	Continue partnerships with the International Regatta Centre and White Water rafting center to encourage promotion of these facilities to community groups.
1.4 Affordability			
There is a perception that fees are too high for community groups as this was identified as a high priority in the surveys of recreation, sporting and community groups.	The majority of sporting and recreational groups identified high rental fees as a barrier to increased participation in recreation and sport. The focus of the consultation was peoples and groups use of Council-owned / managed community facilities.	Establish equitable, affordable fees and charges for recreational and cultural and community facilities.	Undertake a detailed review of all fees and charges for indoor and outdoor recreational and cultural facilities to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups that are disadvantaged by the fees. • Inequitable fees for different sports or activities. Undertake benchmarking with similar facilities across Sydney and establish and promote a new fee structure, with the rationale for this structure clearly explained to all user groups.
1.5 Lack of awareness of facilities and activities available			
A number of facilities are under-utilised, as researched in the Community Facilities Issues Paper by Penrith City Council.	Consultation revealed that the community were unaware of a number of recreational and cultural opportunities available to them.	Promote available recreation and cultural facilities and activities to all segments of the community.	Develop a marketing strategy for Council's parks, open space, halls and community centres. Assist community groups and committees of management in marketing their activity and facility to the greater community. Develop an integrated and consistent signs system for parks, recreation and cultural facilities. Enhance public awareness and appreciation of environmentally significant areas of open space.

Objective 2**Rationalise recreation and cultural resources in the Penrith Local Government Area**

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
2.1 A number of facilities and resources are not currently well utilized			
<p>The literature review indicated a number of community facilities are used well below capacity. Council research has consistently shown that community halls are generally less well utilized than neighbourhood centers, but their annual subsidy is substantially higher. The schools survey identified that the community is currently accessing some school halls for both active recreation and cultural (social) uses. In addition, some schools have facilities that could potentially be used more, outside of school hours, particularly to cater for new/emerging sports (AFL) and those sports currently increasing in popularity (soccer, cricket).</p>	<p>Workshops, information sessions, surveys and submissions indicated dissatisfaction with some of the characteristics of community facilities available, such as the physical accessibility of some facilities for people with poor mobility, quality and condition of internal areas, lack of storage areas, lack of or relevancy of some programming.</p> <p>The strategy of increasing the use of school facilities may be beneficial to Council by reducing the need to provide additional sports fields.</p>	<p><i>Develop an integrated community facility network.</i></p>	<p>Undertake a study to develop an integrated community facility network, identifying the location and type of community facilities to be provided throughout the Penrith Local Government Area. This should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of existing community facilities to identify the potential to refurbish or renovate the facilities to meet community needs. • The identification of the optimum location of facilities using criteria including access, affordability, demographics and demand. • The disposal of facilities that do not meet the set criteria. • Planning and construction of new facilities. <p>Pursue State Government commitment to current policy directions in relation to the community's access to school recreation facilities, including specific procedures that promote community access to school facilities out of school hours.</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility of establishing local agreements with school Principals, to facilitate and formalize such external use.</p>

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
2.2 Many small parks and reserves are under-utilised by the community			
<p>The audit identified a large number of small parks and reserves that are not embellished and attract low, if any visits by the community. The current provision of open space exceeds benchmarks. Trends indicate the desire for open space that is family friendly and meets the needs of all age groups. This normally requires a larger land area and the provision of a variety of park facilities such as playgrounds, shade, seats, youth facilities, cycleways and picnic facilities. Notwithstanding the above comments, smaller parks can provide a conveniently located place for personal solitude and contemplation away from home, as well as visual relief from an urban landscape dominated by houses and other infrastructure (aesthetic benefit).</p>	<p>Consultation highlighted that the quantity of open space in the Penrith region was satisfactory but the quality was unsatisfactory.</p>	<p><i>Provide quality open space areas</i></p>	<p>Undertake an Open Space Action Plan (as detailed in Objective 1). This will include the identification of open space that does not have the potential to provide valuable recreational opportunities to the community and consider disposal or conversion of the land to another purpose.</p>

Objective 3**Provide new recreation and cultural facilities that are undersupplied in the Penrith Local Government Area**

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.1 Provision of regional facilities			
<p>National trends and research support the provision of co-located recreation and sport facilities due to the improvements to access, economies of scale and increased usage levels.</p> <p>Penrith and St Marys are ideal locations due to their proximity to the majority of the population and major transport nodes.</p> <p>They also have existing community and recreation/sporting facilities that can form the backbone of the recreation precincts.</p> <p>Research suggests the major active recreation facility shortages are tennis courts, rugby grounds and indoor sports centers but that there are more netball courts with the City of Penrith in comparison with other areas with a similar demographic profile.</p>	<p>Consultation indicated that the community would like to see recreation and sporting facilities in close proximity to each other, and easily accessible from the rest of the area.</p>	<p><i>Establish and consolidate an appropriate number of regional recreation precincts in the Penrith Local Government Area.</i></p>	<p>Identify recreation precincts in the Penrith Local Government Area. Investigate Ripples and the Kingsway Sporting Fields as the ‘hub’ for St Marys and Jamison Park and the sporting fields in close proximity for the Penrith ‘hub’.</p> <p>Criteria to assess the areas should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport links. • Existing recreation / sporting facilities and their ability to be linked physically or by cross programming. • Existing passive recreation areas, to provide a ‘day out’ experience for families participating in a number of sports and recreational pursuits. • Proximity to large population numbers, in particular active age groups (under 45 years). • Availability of land to cater for future expansion. <p>These precincts to be developed with appropriate facilities and amenities, including passive and active recreation facilities.</p>

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.2 Access to facilities and services			
<p>Walking is the most participated recreational activity in NSW and Australia.</p> <p>65% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey rated 'improvements to walkways and cycle paths' as important or very important, covering all ages and suburbs. This was due to 70% of respondents in Established Areas rating this as important or very important. More respondents disagreed (34%) than agreed (38%) that the bike paths in their area were direct and pleasant to use.</p> <p>In the Aspirational Survey only 31% found it easy to get access to parks and open spaces, with 57% desiring easier access to these resources.</p>	<p>Workshops, information sessions and submissions indicated a desire for more bike paths and walking tracks in all suburbs.</p>	<p><i>Progressively build upon the existing network of local and regional walking and cycling paths.</i></p>	<p>Develop an integrated paths strategy for walking, cycling and equestrian paths across the City.</p> <p>Paths (cycle and pedestrian) should be planned for use as 'recreational' and/or 'destinational'. This provides longer, scenic paths for recreational use (eg, along river corridors and through bushland areas). 'Destinational' paths will link key sites, transport nodes and business areas for accessibility.</p> <p>This strategy should consider providing paths in established areas as high priority, in locations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ from the Penrith CBD to the Lakes. ▪ from St Marys to the recreational precinct that includes Ripples, sporting fields, schools and shops. <p>The current design standards for off-road pedestrian/cycleway paths and equestrian paths are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedestrian only: 1200mm x 75mm Cement Stabilised FCR x 75mm, under 25mm Bituminous Concrete or Decomposed Granitic Gravel Surface at 1:100 minimum cross fall. ▪ Pedestrian/Cycleway: 2000mm x 75mm Cement Stabilised FCR x 75mm, under 25mm Bituminous Concrete or Decomposed Granitic Gravel Surface at 1:100 minimum cross fall. ▪ Equestrian (and shared): 3000-3500mm x 75mm Cement Stabilised FCR x 100mm, under 50mm Decomposed Granitic Gravel Surface. Trail surface to allow for corwning and for runoff.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
	Consultation revealed unanimous support for a regional park in the Penrith region, with Penrith Lakes the most supported site.	<i>Provide regional open space</i>	Continue to work with key stakeholders to develop a Regional Park within the Penrith Lakes site, with a mix of passive and active recreation opportunities for use by all segments of the community. Consideration be given to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Picnic and BBQ areas; ▪ Cycleways, walkways and recreational paths; ▪ Boating and fishing; ▪ Adventure sports, such as rock climbing, bungee jumping, simulated sky diving; ▪ Innovative adventure water activities; ▪ Outdoor amphitheatre for community events and concerts; ▪ Public art, such as a sculpture park; ▪ Access to the Nepean River from the park; ▪ Innovative and interactive water features (eg, water theme playgrounds)
3.3 Access to cultural activities			
The Penrith Valley Arts & Cultural Precinct Masterplan included research including the needs of cultural groups, a site and building analysis and resulted in the development of a sustainable framework to pursue.	Workshops and submissions supported the development of the Penrith Valley Arts & Cultural Precinct proposed for St Marys.	<i>Continue to support the development of the Penrith Valley Community Arts Precinct</i>	Progress the establishment of the Penrith Valley Arts & Cultural Precinct in St Marys.
A large percentage of respondents in the Aspirational Survey (27%) attended an art gallery or museum, which is above the National average (23%) and indicates an interested in these facilities. Benchmark research supports the provision of a regional museum, however, there is currently good provision of municipal facilities.	Workshops and meetings with groups showed interest in a regional museum. Interviews also indicated interest in a family-friendly museum that provides innovation and interactive experiences.	<i>Investigate the establishment of a Regional Museum in the Penrith Local Government Area.</i>	Undertake a feasibility study regarding the establishment of a Regional Museum in Penrith, with consideration given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing single purpose museums already in operation in Penrith; ▪ The target markets for a Regional Museum and identification of the 'niche' market it would promote to; ▪ The location of the museum; ▪ A museum trail, with links between existing museums and places of interest.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.4 Need for aquatic facilities			
<p>Council's two aquatic facilities are not meeting the needs of the Penrith community, with no provision of a competition standard 50-metre pool and indoor facilities, and strong demand for 'dry' fitness activities at Ripples. The Penrith Local Government Area does not have the population to support more than 2 indoor 50-metre pools, but can improve profitability by providing a mix of leisure wet and dry space.</p> <p>These plans could address many needs within Penrith, at little or no capital cost to Council, if developed on private land.</p>	<p>Workshops, information sessions and submissions revealed a desire for improvement to the existing aquatic facilities.</p>	<p><i>Undertake a detailed feasibility study of options for the enhancement of Council's aquatic facilities.</i></p>	<p>Investigate the feasibility of additions / improvements to Penrith Swimming Centre and improvements to Ripples, St Marys.</p> <p>Support appropriate private business proposals for aquatic and recreation centers.</p>
3.5 Demand for community events and festivals			
<p>Over 40% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey participated in a community event or festival over the past 12 months, with 77% of this participation occurring in the Penrith region.</p>	<p>The cultural groups survey, submissions and workshops indicated a lack of performance space, including outdoor space for community events and festivals.</p>	<p><i>Provide outdoor entertainment spaces for community events, festivals and performances.</i></p>	<p>Investigate the establishment of outdoor entertainment areas. Locations for consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Penrith Central Business District; ▪ The proposed recreation precincts; ▪ Proposed regional parks such as Penrith Lakes and ADI ▪ The University of Western Sydney

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.6 Perceived lack of indoor recreation facilities			
<p>48% of respondents of the Aspirational Survey rated indoor sports centre as important or very important for improvements.</p> <p>The Community Facilities Issues Paper identified a number of facilities that were not used to capacity.</p> <p>The Nepean Gymnastics Association has funding available for the construction of an indoor facility.</p>	<p>Through the surveys of sporting groups, many indoor sports identified a gap in the provision of indoor facilities where they can train, compete and hold district and regional events.</p> <p>Cultural groups identified a gap in the provision of affordable performance space, as the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre is unaffordable except for annual concerts.</p> <p>Surveys, workshops and meetings revealed that many community facilities are not 'fit for purpose' in that their design does not meet the existing needs of cultural and recreation groups. They are lacking in storage and appropriate sized rooms and equipment.</p> <p>Consultation revealed that many private centers were only available for certain activities and could also provide additional activities.</p>	<p><i>Provide adequate indoor recreation, cultural and sporting facilities within the Penrith Local Government Area.</i></p>	<p>Investigate the feasibility of a multi-purpose indoor recreation, sporting and cultural center, large enough to cater for district and regional activities such as concerts, community events, netball, gymnastics, table tennis, fencing, trampolining and futsal.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to local and regional demand, site availability, co-location, multi-use options, design requirements and management arrangements.</p> <p>The location of the facility should be considered within an identified recreation precinct, to enable cross-fertilisation of users and access to the largest number of people.</p> <p>Assess the ability of existing community and recreation facilities to be modified to meet existing community needs (see Action in Objective 2).</p> <p>Establish partnerships and assist private recreation centers to provide activities that meet community needs.</p> <p>Establish an information system of existing indoor facilities, private and public.</p> <p>Negotiate with interest groups to part fund a multi-purpose indoor recreation and sports center. Groups to approach include Nepean Gymnastics Association, Futsal and netball groups.</p>

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.7 Facilities for water based sports			
Surveys indicated that water-based activities are in demand but participated outside the Penrith area.		<i>Encourage water-based sports to operate within the Penrith Local Government Area</i>	Facilitate discussions between water-based recreation clubs and the Penrith Lakes regarding the provision of appropriate facilities in Penrith Lakes. Investigate and pursue opportunities for new adventure water based facilities, including opportunities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A simulated surfing facility; ▪ A water adventure park.
3.8 Lack of facilities for growing sports			
<p>Membership numbers of AFL, rugby league and soccer indicate a substantial growth in these sports over the past three years. National and NSW trends indicate this growth will continue over the next 5 years.</p> <p>The athletics facilities in Penrith are below standard, pose a safety risk and are not able to be used for district level competition or training. Due to the proximity of regional and international standard facilities a district level facility will meet current needs.</p>	<p>Meetings revealed that the sports fields used by AFL, soccer and rugby are overused and inadequate for the growing membership base.</p> <p>Surveys indicated a need for a district athletics facility in Penrith.</p> <p>Surveys and meetings revealed that there are no suitable playing fields for the higher soccer grades of Penrith.</p>	<i>Provide quality sporting fields for growing sports, based on demonstrated need and growing membership numbers</i>	<p>Investigate the provision of additional sporting fields for growing sports at key sites, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University of Western Sydney ▪ The ADI site <p>Develop the Gipps Street landfill site into a regional sporting facility, with walking and cycle links to the proposed St Marys recreation precinct. Consideration should be given to the provision of an AFL field, rugby field and soccer fields. The design should incorporate passive recreation facilities, such as a skate park, playground and family picnic facilities, to provide a 'day out' experience for the whole family.</p> <p>Investigate the upgrading of one athletics facility to a district level, taking into consideration the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access; ▪ Parking; ▪ Availability of space; ▪ Potential conflict with other user groups; ▪ Location in close proximity to other recreation and community services; ▪ Current condition of each athletics facility and the cost to upgrade each to a district level. <p>Develop partnerships with Penrith Rugby League Club regarding the use of Panthers stadium for high-grade soccer and rugby competitions.</p>

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
3.9 Recreation opportunities for families and young children			
<p>Improvements to playgrounds were seen as important or very important by 70% of respondents to the Aspirational Survey.</p> <p>There is inadequate provision of playgrounds in the Local Government Area, with these playgrounds mainly the same style and components, offering little variety or interest to young children. many playgrounds are also in poor condition.</p>	<p>Workshops, information sessions and submissions indicated a demand for improved playgrounds and family friendly open space.</p>	<p><i>Provide appropriate recreation and cultural facilities for children and families</i></p>	<p>Prepare a Playground Action Plan, with a prioritized plan for the installation and upgrade of playgrounds. this to be conducted in tandem with the Open Space Action Plan.</p> <p>High priority should be given to the installation of playgrounds in established areas, such as St Marys, Werrington, St Clair, Cranebrook, Cambridge Park, Kingswood and South Penrith, and rural areas such as Londonderry and Mulgoa.</p>
3.10 Recreation and cultural opportunities for young people			
<p>Research into the needs of young people indicates a deficit in the provision of recreation and cultural facilities for young people.</p> <p>The high use of the Jamison Park skate park supports the demand for this type of facility in the area.</p>	<p>Previous studies, focus groups and workshops revealed a high demand for youth recreation facilities in Penrith.</p>	<p><i>Provide appropriate recreation and cultural facilities for young people</i></p>	<p>Undertake a youth recreation facility strategy to identify a range of local and district facilities throughout the Local Government Area. Facilities could include a skate park, blading and BMX facilities, basketball hoops, youth play equipment, hang out spaces or indoor activities. The strategy should identify sites with consideration of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Population of young people; ▪ Availability of land and facilities; ▪ Proximity to public transport and other services, such as toilets, shops, schools, recreation and community facilities; ▪ Site with a minimal impact on nearby residents and businesses.

Objective 4**Encourage Community Involvement in Facility and Service Provision**

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
4.1 Community ownership and commitment			
Shared responsibility for facilities increases community ownership and commitment to protect the facilities. It also reduces the financial resources required by Council.		<i>Establish clear guidelines for sporting and recreation groups regarding their responsibilities in relation to facility development and management.</i>	Establish agreements with sporting associations / groups outlining the dual responsibility of maintenance of sporting fields. Develop a Recreational and Cultural Clubs Information kit to assist club / group administrators.
4.2 Community input into planning			
Council has a commitment to improve consultation with the community of the Penrith Local Government Area.	Many groups expressed concerns about the lack of consultation and communication with Council.	<i>Ensure all stakeholders have regular opportunities to assist Council to plan, manage and develop cultural and recreation facilities / services</i>	Seek broad community input and feedback into major new / upgraded sports and recreation facility developments. Appoint a Recreation and Cultural Reference Group (or similar body) to formalize a link between Council and service providers / users, and to assist with the annual review of the Recreation and Cultural Facilities Strategy. Conduct annual interagency (network) meetings on a precinct-by-precinct basis with representatives from sports clubs, community groups, cultural groups and other service providers (eg, schools and indoor recreation facility managers) which are designed for networking, sharing ideas, project development and peer support.
4.3 Viability of community, sport, recreation and cultural groups			
A major issue for all clubs, Australia wide, is the ability to remain viable in an environment of increasing costs, such as insurance and maintenance.	Consultation revealed that many clubs and groups requested assistance from Council in the form of financial assistance and support from Council staff.	<i>To ensure sports and recreation clubs remain viable and responsibly manage respective facilities.</i>	Provide clubs with information relating to community and industry market research outcomes. Assist clubs without business plans to prepare plans. Review the current Council grants and funding program available to community groups for recreation and cultural development.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
A major issue for all clubs, Australia wide, is the ability to attract and retain volunteers.	The surveys revealed that a lack of voluntary involvement and assistance from Council was a key issue for sport, recreation and cultural groups.	<i>Support and encourage volunteer club administrators and officials</i>	Establish an annual Recreation and Cultural Administrator Awards Program. Facilitate training opportunities for club administrators.

Objective 5

Facilitate Diverse Recreational and Cultural Program Development

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
5.1 Inter-relationship between community facilities and the activities conducted within them			
Some community facilities are under-utilised, which may be partially due to the activities and services being offered not being relevant to the needs of a local community being serviced by respective centers.	Some attendees at workshops felt disconnected from some community facilities, and felt that they were not relevant to them largely due to available activities not catering to their needs.	<i>Provide resources to co-ordinate and facilitate recreation and cultural activities to meet community needs</i>	Introduce Recreation and Cultural Development staff, linked to community facilities, with the purpose of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing use of community facilities; ▪ Facilitating the use of community facilities by community groups with the purpose of providing recreational / cultural activities; ▪ Increasing participation in activities by the community; ▪ Developing of community and social networks and connectivity within suburbs; ▪ Undertaken regular research into the recreational and cultural needs of local communities.
5.2 Relevant programming of cultural and recreation activities			
The Community Facilities Issues Paper raised the issue that a number of community facilities are under-utilised.	Workshops and meetings indicated that there are a number of community facilities that are not used to capacity due to the lack of programming appropriate to the population and community needs.	<i>Ensure that Council managed community, sport and recreation facilities offer a variety of relevant recreational and cultural activities and services.</i>	Review the effectiveness of programs and monitor user satisfaction. Introduction of an 'Innovation Grants Scheme.' Provide staff and resources to undertake initiatives in recreation and cultural activities programming.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
5.3 Access to relevant and appropriate programs for the diverse community			
	Focus groups revealed that the people from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds currently have limited access to recreation and cultural programs.	<i>Provide appropriate recreation and cultural facilities for the wide range of cultures within Penrith</i>	Establish links with cultural groups and isolated communities, through the development of the City's Cultural Plan. Encourage the establishment of new recreation and cultural programs targeting different cultures, through the development of the City's Cultural Plan.
5.4 Support of cultural activities			
	Focus Groups identified the need for participation in public art by local artists and young people.	<i>Facilitate participation in arts and cultural activities by community artists</i>	Develop a public art strategy to encourage participation in public art by local community artists, through the development of the City's Cultural Plan.
5.5 Support of tourism objectives			
A number of recreation and cultural activities could enhance tourism and economic development in Penrith.		<i>Encourage the programming of recreation and cultural activities that support and assist the tourism objectives of Council</i>	Identify recreation and cultural activities that assist Council's tourism objectives, and assist in the promotion and facilitation of these activities.
5.6 Sports development			
	Through the surveys of sporting clubs, nearly all groups stated a lack of co-ordination as a major issue, with sports development a major improvement requested.	<i>Encourage sports development activities.</i>	Develop a Sports facilities Development Strategy to investigate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New and emerging sports that could become linked to the Sports Foundation. ▪ Partnerships with private and public land and facility owners. ▪ Partnerships between sporting groups, to encourage multi use of facilities. ▪ Phased and co-ordinated improvements to sports facilities.

Objective 6**Provide Effective and Sustainable Management, Support and Resources**

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
6.1 Co-ordination and co-operation			
Many sporting clubs stated lack of communication with Council as an issue, especially in relation to maintenance.		<i>Strengthen the relationship between Council and sporting clubs in the area</i>	Continue to support the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation, and encourage a wider range of sports to become members.
6.2 Funding and resources			
The support and identification of funding opportunities will improve the provision of appropriate facilities.	A key issue for all sporting, recreation, cultural and community groups is the lack of funding and diminishing resources available to manage activities and provide appropriate facilities.	<i>Maximise external funding opportunities to assist in the future provision of sport, recreation and cultural resources</i>	Identify all external funding bodies. Maintain a database of these funding programs. Assist clubs and groups to prepare funding submissions to external agencies.
6.3 Many schools use Council community and sporting facilities without payment			
Previous research undertaken by Council has identified that many schools are using Council sports reserves and other recreation facilities without payment. This practice is not equitable for sports clubs and other casual users who are paying a fee towards the maintenance and development of community infrastructure.		<i>Investigate opportunities to equitably share access to Council and school sporting fields and recreation facilities.</i>	Audit the profile of use of Council community sports facilities by school groups. Pursue State government commitment to current policy directions in relation to the community's access to school recreation facilities, including specific procedures that promote community access to school facilities out of school hours. Investigate the feasibility of establishing local agreements with school principals to facilitate and formalize such external use. Identify the level of wear and tear on grounds and other surfaces from their use by schools, ie, quantify the additional cost to Council or user groups for maintenance.

Research	Consultation	Proposed Strategy	Proposed Actions
6.4 Information and research			
<p>Recreation and cultural information is gathered by a variety of different departments in Council and by facilities.</p> <p>A central information system will assist Council and facilities to plan more effectively and provide appropriate services and facilities.</p>		<p><i>Enhance the information gathered by Council regarding recreation and cultural usage, satisfaction and demand</i></p>	<p>Maintain a database of all recreation and cultural groups and the activities and facilities they provide. Identify groups with like interests or issues who could benefit from working together to provide activities, apply for funding or promotion.</p> <p>Assist recreation and cultural groups and facilities to set up regular usage monitoring systems, to be fed back into the central information system, using indicators that include membership levels, financial performance, utilization of facilities, club programs and community involvement.</p> <p>Introduce regular surveying of community groups to determine usage of, and satisfaction of, and demand for facilities.</p>
6.5 Community recreation and cultural development			
<p>There is limited promotional material for existing recreation and cultural groups.</p>	<p>The cultural groups survey identified a number of cultural groups in Penrith Local Government Area that have a low profile and are not associated with Council and supporting networks.</p>	<p><i>Encourage the development of recreation and cultural groups in the Penrith Local Government Area</i></p>	<p>Maintain a database of all recreation and cultural groups and the activities and facilities they provide.</p> <p>Conduct annual interagency (network) meetings on a precinct-by-precinct basis with representatives from sports clubs, community groups, cultural groups and other service providers (eg, schools and indoor recreation facility managers) which are designed for networking, sharing ideas, project development and peer support.</p>
6.6 Promotion and awareness			
	<p>Consultation revealed that the community were unaware of a number of recreational and cultural opportunities available to them.</p> <p>Community groups survey included a request for support and improved communication with Council.</p>	<p><i>Promote the wide range of recreation and cultural activities to the community, including community groups</i></p>	<p>Conduct annual interagency (network) meetings on a precinct-by-precinct basis with representatives from sports clubs, community groups, cultural groups and other service providers (eg, schools and indoor recreation facility managers) which are designed for networking, sharing ideas, project development and peer support.</p> <p>Review the Recreation Guide to ensure it includes all groups in the region. Promote the guide widely.</p>