



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2033





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## Legislative Basis

The Derwent Valley Council is governed by the Local Government Act 1993. The Act requires a council to prepare a 10-year strategic plan for its municipal area and review it every 4 years.

This Strategic Plan has been developed after extensive community consultation and covers the period from 2023 to 2033. This plan supersedes Derwent Valley Council's previous Strategic Plan ('Our Valley 2030 Community Strategic Plan') which was developed in 2018.

## Contact Us

If you would like further information about a service or Council facility, please contact us via one of the following methods:

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Council Chambers  
1 Circle Street, New Norfolk, TAS 7140

# Mayor's Message

I am very proud to present the *Derwent Valley Council Strategic Plan 2023–2033*.

This updated Strategic Plan outlines how Council will continue to work with residents, ratepayers, and businesses across the Derwent Valley to ensure we plan for our sustainability into the future.

Council is required to regularly review its strategic plan. This process commenced following Tasmanian Local Government elections in late 2022.

This Strategic Plan has been developed through a collaborative process involving extensive community engagement, and input from subject matter experts and key stakeholders. We sought community opinion about the challenges and priorities for our region.

The updated Strategic Plan re-affirms our community's vision for the future that was set in 2018, with a refined set of strategies designed to achieve that vision, and a focus on emerging priorities within our community.

Our Strategic Plan reflects the aspirations, priorities, and values of the Derwent Valley community, encapsulating their vision for the future and the desired outcomes for the next decade.



*Michelle Dracoulis – Mayor – Derwent Valley Council*

Council has also considered recent trends that are shaping our community and region since our last Strategic Plan was developed in 2018, including:

- Changes to our economy and daily lives because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Impacts of climate change and extreme weather including recent floods within our catchments and the ongoing threat of bushfire.
- The current housing crisis and cost of living pressures.
- Increases in materials, building and labour costs.
- Increased population growth and demand for essential services in the Valley including healthcare.

This Strategic Plan will help guide Council decision-making and resource allocation to address the key challenges and opportunities that we face into the future.





It serves as a compass for Council, providing clear direction and priorities for the years ahead, and provides the framework under which our annual plans, budget preparations, and other specific strategies, action plans and policies are developed.

The Derwent Valley Council Strategic Plan 2023–2033 is built upon the following four strategic objectives:

1. A vibrant, healthy, and inclusive community
2. A thriving and diverse local economy
3. A sustainable natural and built environment
4. Good governance and community leadership

As we commence implementation of this plan, Council acknowledges the importance of ongoing collaboration and engagement with our community, businesses, and other stakeholders. By working together, we can create a more prosperous and sustainable future for the region, where residents can thrive, and the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the area are cherished for generations to come.

With this strategic plan as a guiding document, I am confident in our ability to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and build a bright and inclusive future for the Derwent Valley.

I encourage you to partner with us on this journey.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop followed by a horizontal line.

**Michelle Dracoulis**  
**Mayor – Derwent Valley Council**



# Derwent Valley Snapshot

The Derwent Valley is in Southern Tasmania approximately 30km northwest of Hobart, and covers an area of 4101 square km.

The Derwent Valley is home to an estimated residential population of 11,251 (ABS ERP 2022). Over half the population resides in and around New Norfolk, with the remaining population spread across smaller residential and rural living areas such as Granton, Molesworth, Lachlan, Bushy Park, Westerway and Maydena.

The region was settled by Europeans in 1807 and boasts a variety of colonial architecture, from oast-houses and humble cottages to grand mansions.

The Derwent River and surrounding landscape, including Mount Field National Park and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, is popular among adventure seekers – including mountain bikers, kayakers, campers, hikers, and anglers – due to its spectacular waterfalls, bike trails, rivers and forests.

The Derwent River catchment provides drinking water to the broader population of Southern Tasmania and the river is used widely for a variety of recreation, boating, fishing, and industry needs.

The region is home to an internationally competitive hop industry and emerging niche agricultural specialties such as essential oils, cherries, seed production and rare breed small scale beef and sheep production. Water resources support hydroelectricity generation, as well as freshwater fishing, adventure tourism and other related activities.

Tourism growth is significant, with the new community brand seeking to enhance the values that make the Derwent Valley such a fascinating, attractive, and diverse place – to allow the area to become more cosmopolitan without losing its rural charm.

Located within New Norfolk, the Willow Court Asylum Complex is of historic significance as the site of Australia's longest operating mental health institution. Through its buildings, the site provides a unique social and historic narrative of the Derwent Valley, reflecting the changes to Tasmania's health system and evolving attitudes towards mental illness.



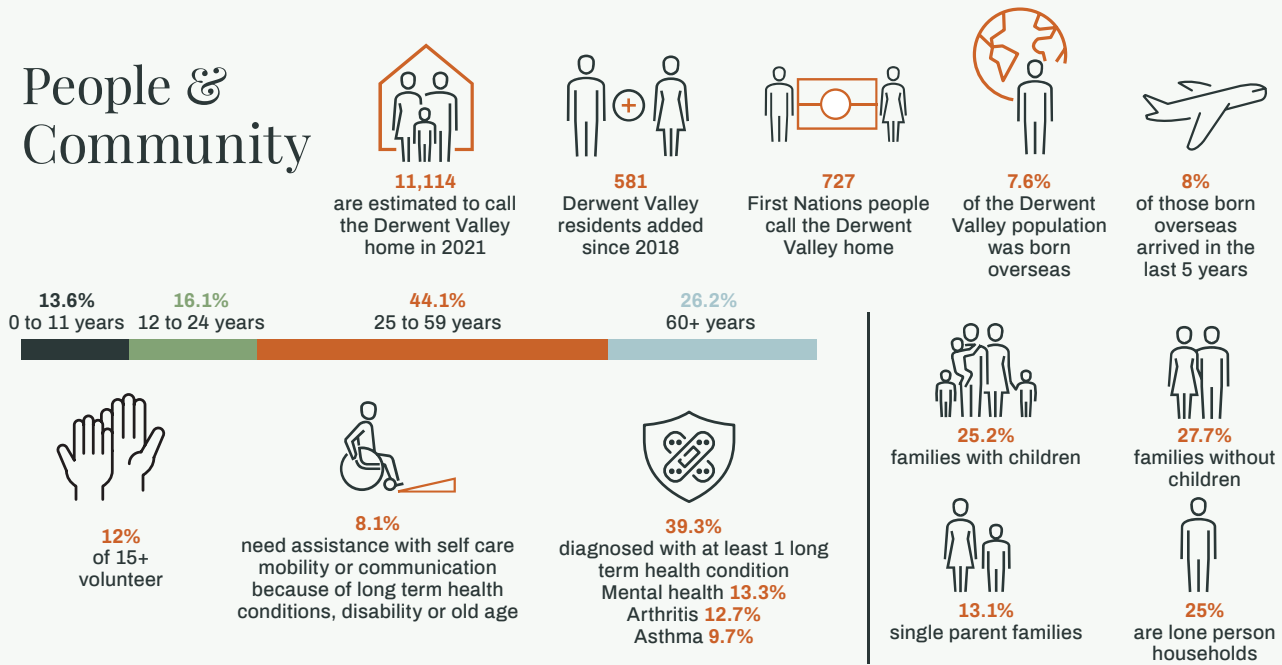




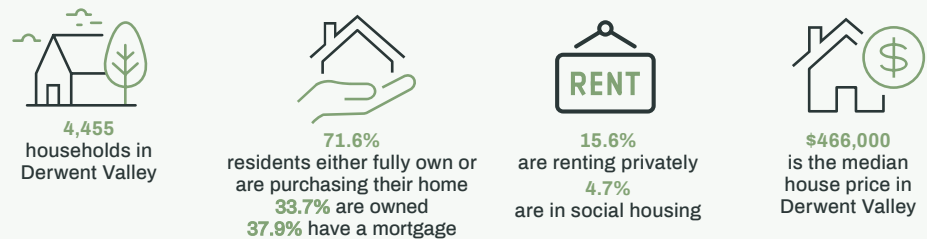


# Strategic Framework

## People & Community



## Places & Spaces



## Earning & Learning



Data Source: ABS 2021

# Climate Emergency

In 2022, Derwent Valley Council declared we are in a state of Climate Emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of Government, including local councils, to mitigate the worst of impacts from occurring. Our Council resolved to urgently act on the Climate Emergency within our capacity to do so.

In declaring a Climate Emergency, Derwent Valley Council recognises the significant risk that climate change poses to our community and environment. We join 110 other councils across Australia that have declared a climate emergency and are taking proactive steps to implement a climate emergency response across their operations.

In Tasmania, Hobart City Council, Launceston City Council, Kingborough Council, and Northern Midlands Council have also passed climate emergency declarations.

Around the world over 2100 governments in 39 countries have declared a climate emergency including 23 national governments such as New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Singapore, and the UK.

## How we are responding

The Derwent Valley Council Strategic Plan 2023 – 2033 ('the Strategic Plan') represents the first time that climate change has been specifically mentioned in Council's Strategic Plan. Responding to the Climate Emergency has been listed as a specific strategy.

### Strategy 3.1:

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We respond to the Climate Emergency and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

Climate change has also been a primary consideration when developing all other related strategies in the plan. This includes strategies such as:

- Embedding sustainable practices into Council's operations.
- Supporting community action and environmental awareness.
- Fostering community health and wellbeing.
- Fostering community resilience and building capacity to respond to change and uncertainty.
- Providing planning services to ensure appropriate development that protects and enhances the natural and built environment.

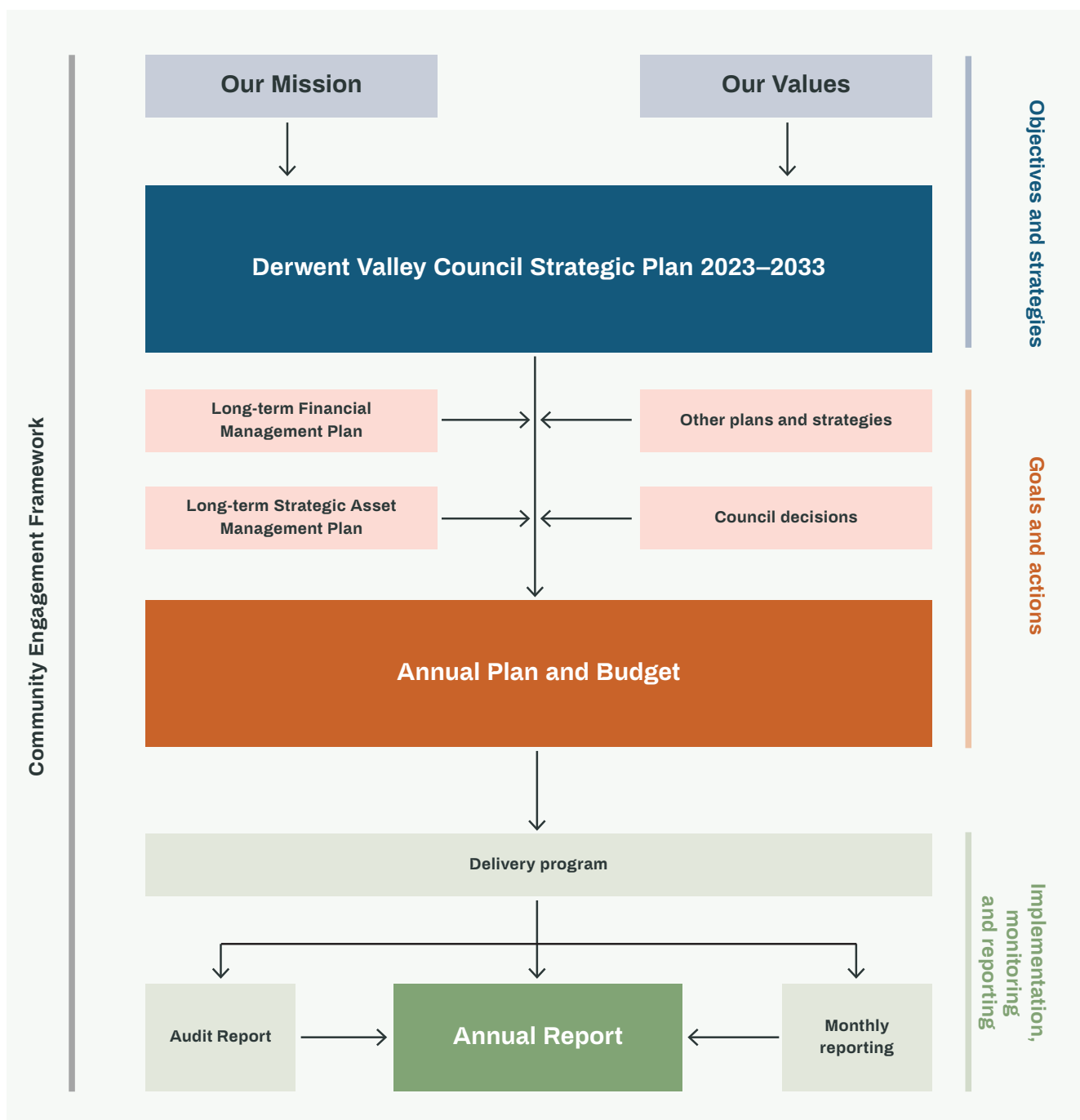
Council's commitment to address the Climate Emergency continues throughout this Strategic Plan 2023–2033 and will continue to evolve through our annual planning and budget processes. This will ensure we continue our commitment to advocate for stronger policies and action on climate change, and to urgently act within our capacity to do so.





# Our Strategic Planning Process

Derwent Valley Council has an integrated approach to strategic and operational planning, including resourcing, community engagement, monitoring, and reporting. This approach provides guidance to Council on annual planning and reporting, and fosters continuous improvement, transparency, accountability, and good decision-making.



# Our Vision, Mission, and Values

A community vision was developed in 2018 after deep consultation during the Our Valley 2030 Strategic Plan project.

This vision statement was devised from what community members told us they valued about the Derwent Valley, and their aspirational hopes for the future of our region.

In early 2023 as part of our Strategic Plan 2023–2033 engagement, we asked the community to again tell us what they value about the Derwent Valley, what they want to hold on to, what they are happy to see change, and their hopes for the future.

What people told us had not changed since the last strategic plan consultation over four years ago.

They shared with us their belief that there is something special and unique about the Derwent Valley. The sense of community. The appealing lifestyle. The connection to place. The Derwent Valley landscapes. The heritage that has shaped us. The creative and proud community that we are developing into.

From this we believe the community's vision set in 2018 remains true. That is why it remains the basis from which this strategic plan has been developed.

Council's mission defines our role in contributing to achieving the vision. Our mission focuses on sustainable and efficient delivery of services to the community that contribute to a healthy, vibrant and prosperous Derwent Valley.

Our vision and mission are supported by several values that underpin the way we work together to deliver on the Strategic Plan. They were developed through intensive engagement with Councillors and Council employees. These values pre-date our vision and mission. These values reflect the positive culture of how we work and interact with our colleagues and the community.





# Our Vision

We celebrate our history and our successes as we unite to deliver a sustainable future for the next generation.

Working together the Derwent Valley will become known for the beauty of its preserved natural environment, and the produce and lifestyle it provides for a prosperous and proud community.

The Valley will be inviting for visitors, investors, and families alike, while remaining very much local as growth is balanced against preserving what is special about what we have already.

Natural. Inviting. Local.

# Our Mission

To deliver sustainable and efficient services and facilities that promote a healthy, vibrant, and prosperous Derwent Valley.

# Our Values

## Quality Service

- We work to serve our community, to make a difference in what we do every day.
- With a helpful attitude, and care we contribute positively to our community.
- We are customer focused and committed to delivering quality service.
- We build relationships with our customers and positively impact our community through a commitment to quality in our work.

## Collaboration

- We listen to and respect each other; we are supportive and work co-operatively and inclusively to achieve great results.
- We work together, treating each other fairly and with respect, valuing and actively involving others in team discussions and actions.
- We inform others on the team by sharing relevant information pro-actively.
- We participate as a friendly, helpful, and caring member of the team to deliver results to our community.
- We enjoy our work and the recognition we give each other for a job well done.

## Integrity

- We strive to be valued and trusted by our community by being accountable and objective in our role as a local government.
- We value integrity as an important part of Council's culture and seek to achieve this through a focus on accountability, consistency, and ethical action.
- We ensure that we are fair and consistent in all our dealings.
- We are honest and transparent about our processes and decision making and accountable for our actions.

## Growth

- We grow and succeed through learning.
- We foster an environment that values the individual contribution of our people by providing them with opportunities to develop and grow their skills and knowledge to reach their potential.
- We value learning and development and recognise the importance of growth in the workplace as a way to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.
- We learn through experience as well as formal development opportunities.
- We support and encourage personal and professional growth for ourselves and others in our team and approach everything as an opportunity to learn.

## Wellbeing

- We demonstrate duty of care for ourselves, our teammates, and our community in all that we do.
- We value the health and wellbeing of our staff and community.
- We approach our work with care and consideration ensuring we are responsible for demonstrating safe work practices.
- We strive to maintain a healthy work-life balance which gives our staff the opportunity to contribute positively to the culture of the Derwent Valley community.



# Four Strategic Objectives

To achieve the community vision, four strategic objectives have been developed that reflect the four principals of sustainable development – social, economic, environmental, and governance.

Under each strategic objective, strategies have been developed which define the way that Council will work towards meeting each objective. The strategies provide guidance to the areas of focus for Council's work.

Through Council's annual planning and budget estimates process, specific actions are defined under each strategy. This then forms the delivery plan for the year. Outcomes from each action are measured and reported on each year in Council's Annual report.

1. A vibrant, healthy and inclusive community
2. A thriving and diverse local economy
3. A sustainable natural and built environment
4. Good governance and community leadership



# A Vibrant, Healthy, and Inclusive Community



## Intent

We will continue to partner with the community and key service providers to create opportunities, improve outcomes, support the vulnerable, and build connection and resilience for our residents.

## Strategies

- 1.1 We foster community wellbeing, health, safety and quality of life by planning for, and providing community infrastructure, services, and programs that respond to contemporary and future needs.
- 1.2 We address social inequality and promote social inclusion, including supporting vulnerable or marginalised groups.
- 1.3 We support our young people to thrive by partnering to provide local children's and youth services, programs, and opportunities that promote civic engagement, learning and leadership.
- 1.4 We foster community resilience by supporting hazard, natural disaster, and emergency management preparedness, and building community capacity to respond to change and uncertainty.
- 1.5 We continue our journey to increase understanding, respect, and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Derwent Valley.

# A Thriving and Diverse Local Economy



## Intent

We will be a place that is vibrant, attractive, and welcoming to residents and visitors, and a place that celebrates our shared history, environment, local economy, and lifestyle.

## Strategies

- 2.1 We collaborate with partners to promote the Derwent Valley as the place to visit, work and invest.
- 2.2 We support the continued revitalisation of the New Norfolk area as a regional service centre and visitor destination.
- 2.3 We encourage local events, festivals and celebrations that showcase the Derwent Valley.
- 2.4 We recognise, protect and celebrate Derwent Valley's unique heritage, culture, creativity, diversity, and competitive advantages.
- 2.5 We plan and implement infrastructure projects that encourage development and economic investment in the Derwent Valley.



# A Sustainable Natural and Built Environment



## Intent

We will ensure our natural and built environments are protected and enhanced for the current community and for future generations.

## Strategies

- 3.1 We respond to the Climate Emergency and prepare for the impacts of climate change.
- 3.2 We value, protect, and enhance the Derwent Valley's natural environment and biodiversity.
- 3.3 We prioritise maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure to ensure it remains safe, functional, and fit for purpose.
- 3.4 We reduce Council's environmental impact by embedding sustainable practices into our operations.
- 3.5 We support community action by promoting environmental awareness and encouraging sustainable practices at individual and community levels.
- 3.6 We provide planning services to ensure appropriate development that protects and enhances the natural and built environment.

# Good Governance and Community Leadership



## Intent

We will be a respected, efficient, and caring council by demonstrating consistent, transparent, and engaged decision making that is understood by the community.

## Strategies

- 4.1 We provide representative, responsive, and accountable governance that meets our legislative requirements and community needs.
- 4.2 We maintain strong financial sustainability for now and future generations.
- 4.3 We build capability and capacity within Council to deliver quality service and interactions with the community.
- 4.4 We provide leadership and advocacy on local and regional issues relevant to our community.
- 4.5 We encourage and facilitate community participation and engagement in decision-making processes.
- 4.6 We foster collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders, including community groups, business, neighbouring councils, and government agencies.

# Reporting our Progress

This Strategic Plan outlines the strategies that will guide Council's work over the coming years.

Council publishes an Annual Plan and Budget in June of each year that documents the projects and initiatives that are planned for the next 12 months.

The Annual Plan provides detail around specific actions to be delivered under each of the Strategic Plan objectives and strategies.

Council will track progress, and delivery of actions throughout the year as it progresses toward delivering on our strategic objectives.

Council will report on its progress each year through the Annual Report. These annual results are taken into consideration when preparing the Annual Plan and Budget for subsequent years. This allows Council to adapt to changing circumstances and opportunities as they arise.

Progress on specific projects and initiatives are also reported through senior management reports at monthly council meetings which are open to the public. Agendas and minutes of these meetings are made available via Council's website.





# Strategic Plan on a Page

<b>Our Vision:</b>	<p><i>Working together the Derwent Valley will become known for the beauty of its preserved natural environment and the produce and lifestyle it provides for a prosperous and proud community.</i></p> <p><i>The Valley will be inviting for visitors, investors, and families alike, while remaining very much local as growth is balanced against preserving what is special about what we have already.</i></p> <p><i>We celebrate our history and our successes as we unite to deliver a sustainable future for the next generation.</i></p>			
<b>Our Mission:</b>	To deliver sustainable and efficient services and facilities that promote a healthy, vibrant, and prosperous Derwent Valley.			
<b>Our Values:</b>	Quality Service   Collaboration   Growth   Integrity   Wellbeing			
<b>Strategic Objective:</b>	1. A vibrant, healthy, and inclusive community	2. A thriving and diverse local economy	3. A sustainable natural and built environment	4. Good governance and community leadership
<b>Intent:</b>	We will continue to partner with the community and key service providers to create opportunities, improve outcomes, support the vulnerable, and build connection and resilience for our residents.	We will be a place that is vibrant, attractive, and welcoming to residents and visitors, and a place that celebrates our shared history, environment, local economy, and lifestyle.	We will ensure our natural and built environments are protected and enhanced for the current community and for future generations.	We will be a respected, efficient, and caring council by demonstrating consistent, transparent, and engaged decision making that is understood by the community.
<b>Our Strategies</b>	<p>1.1 We foster community wellbeing, health, safety, and quality of life by planning for, and providing community infrastructure, services, and programs that respond to contemporary and future needs.</p> <p>1.2 We address social inequality and promote social inclusion, including supporting vulnerable or marginalised groups.</p> <p>1.3 We support our young people to thrive by partnering to provide local children's and youth services, programs, and opportunities that promote civic engagement, learning and leadership.</p> <p>1.4 We foster community resilience by supporting hazard, natural disaster, and emergency management preparedness, and building community capacity to respond to change and uncertainty.</p> <p>1.5 We continue our journey to increase understanding, respect, and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Derwent Valley.</p>	<p>2.1 We collaborate with partners to promote the Derwent Valley as the place to visit, work and invest.</p> <p>2.2 We support the continued revitalisation of the New Norfolk area as a regional service centre and visitor destination.</p> <p>2.3 We encourage local events, festivals and celebrations that showcase the Derwent Valley.</p> <p>2.4 We recognise, protect, and celebrate Derwent Valley's unique heritage, culture, creativity, diversity, and competitive advantages.</p> <p>2.5 We plan and implement infrastructure projects that encourage development and economic investment in the Derwent Valley.</p>	<p>3.1 We respond to the Climate Emergency and prepare for the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>3.2 We value, protect, and enhance the Derwent Valley's natural environment and biodiversity.</p> <p>3.3 We prioritise maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure to ensure it remains safe, functional, and fit for purpose.</p> <p>3.4 We reduce Council's environmental impact by embedding sustainable practices into our operations.</p> <p>3.5 We support community action by promoting environmental awareness and encouraging sustainable practices at individual and community levels.</p> <p>3.6 We provide planning services to ensure appropriate development that protects and enhances the natural and built environment.</p>	<p>4.1 We provide representative, responsive, and accountable governance that meets our legislative requirements and community needs.</p> <p>4.2 We maintain strong financial sustainability for now and future generations.</p> <p>4.3 We build capability and capacity within Council to deliver quality service and interactions with the community</p> <p>4.4 We provide leadership and advocacy on local and regional issues relevant to our community.</p> <p>4.5 We encourage and facilitate community participation and engagement in decision-making processes.</p> <p>4.6 We foster collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders, including community groups, business, neighbouring councils, and government agencies.</p>

