

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a community panel?

A community panel brings people together to discuss important issues and is a process used all over the world to help direct the work of governments and other organisations. It brings together a randomly selected group of people who broadly represent each township's individual community profile.

Participants learn about issues, discuss them with one another, and then make recommendations about what should happen and how things could change or be managed. Community panel members don't need to be specialists in a particular area, just passionate about their community.

What are the township community panels about?

During the first phase of the Future Hepburn project, we gathered information about the preferences, priorities and values of each of the townships including Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford and Hepburn Springs, Glenlyon and Trentham. While there are some things that are valued across the Shire, each township has its own unique priorities.

Participants will work together to develop a vision for their township, and work through the points of tension, issues and challenges that may prevent us getting there. Panel members will identify ways in which the structure plans can help us to realise that vision from a land use planning perspective.

What is involved?

If you are selected to take part you will have the opportunity to meet with individuals from all walks of life who live in, or own property in your township. You will hear from technical and lived-experience expert speakers, and you will discuss the issues involved in planning for the future of your town as a group. Facilitators and Council staff will support panel members to make sure everyone has their voice heard. You do not need to have any prior knowledge of the topics – all the information you need will be provided to you.

What will happen with the community panel's recommendations?

Each community panel will have the opportunity to present their report to Hepburn Shire Councillors. Councillors will also be briefed on the Panel process and a final report will be shared with panel members, Councillors and the broader community. The consultants drafting the township structure plans will use these reports as a foundation document for drafting the structure plans.

When, where and how will the community panel meetings take place?

The township community panels will meet in person starting in October and ending in November. There will be three sessions in total facilitated by Wayfarer Consulting and supported by the various industry experts who are undertaking technical studies on behalf of Council. The final reports developed by community panel members will be presented to Councillors as part of the final session. The reports will then be shared with the consultants drafting the Structure Plans for inclusion in the final draft.

Who can apply?

Anyone aged 16 and over who is either a permanent or non-permanent resident of the townships of Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford and Hepburn Springs, Glenlyon and Trentham can apply. Applications are made through registration for the Future Hepburn Engagement Pool on Participate Hepburn, Council's engagement platform. Those without access to the internet can register their interest at any of Council's library or customer service centres across the Shire.

After I register my interest, what happens next?

Once registration has closed on Sunday 3 September, 21 people will be randomly selected for each township (105 people in total) from those who registered their interest. In accordance with our Community Engagement Policy, panel members will be representative of each town's population to the maximum extent possible and selected through a dual process of selection - random invitation and an expression of interest. We encourage residents from across the Shire to register.

If you are selected, we will contact you by phone and email on or around the 6 September to let you know. We will then arrange a call with you to confirm that you can attend, discuss any requirements you may have to make attendance possible, and explain what will happen next.

What happens if I am not chosen?

If you are not randomly selected to participate in one of the township community panels there are plenty of other ways to be involved. Engagement Pool members may be invited to participate in various other engagement activities, including interviews, webinars, forums and workshops. We encourage residents, whether you live in a township or not, to register.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like to talk to someone about the panel before registering, please contact the Strategic Planning team via email at strategicplanning@hepburn.vic.gov.au and we will be in contact with you.

To register your interest visit:

FUTURE HEPBURN | Participate Hepburn

or visit one of Council's libraries or customer service centres.