

### Direction 3: Connect for strength

Connected communities are stronger together. We look after each other in good times and bad, and care for those of who may need extra support.



We know from the research from our Better Together 2040 - Social Sustainability Strategy (2021a) that social cohesion and connectedness is critical for a community's vitality and wellbeing. COVID-19 has emphasised the absolute importance of social connections in dealing with crisis events and provides a platform for individual and collective adaptive resilience.

At global, national and community levels, the pandemic also highlighted the existing and deepening inequalities in our societies and placed the need to look after those groups who may be particularly vulnerable to effects of shocks and stresses front and centre of resilience planning.

Our research shows that while the community generally feel they have a high quality of life, there are a range of chronic stresses and pressures that impact on our community.

Housing affordability, mental health, and looking after people who may need extra support are some of the key concerns coming out of the community. Similarly, our ability to support each other through acute crisis and recover from traumatic events rests on our capacity to pull together as a community.

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**Building capacity in others  
and not living in silos...  
Having lots of interconnected  
community groups offering their  
ideas and solutions to other  
community groups**

(SRG Workshop participant)

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| Key Priorities   | Key Actions   |
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| 1. Strengthen social cohesion, community and cultural connection in alignment with Council's Better Together 2040 - Social Sustainability Strategy (2021a)     | <p>1a. Continue to undertake the actions identified in Council's Better Together 2040 - Social Sustainability Strategy (2021a) (S,M,L &amp; O)</p> <p>1b. Celebrate the diversity of our community and increase inclusivity through activities, events and programs that promote connection, engagement and participation (O)</p> |
| 2. Increase recognition of our First Nations Australians and their connection to country   | 2a. Develop actions (such as a Reconciliation Action Plan or treaty) that improves recognition, relationships, respect and opportunities with First Nations Australians (S)   |
| 3. Support programs that maximise the community's motivation to participate in volunteering activities   | <p>3a. Support agencies and programs to maximise the community's motivation to participate in volunteering activities (O)</p> <p>3b. Continue to celebrate and acknowledge the commitment of our volunteers and their contribution to our community (O)</p>   |
| 4. Increase the resilience of our priority populations to shocks and stresses  | 4a. Engage with our priority populations and initiate capacity building and support programs to increase their resilience to shocks and stresses (S)  |
| 5. Build the capacity of the community services sector to support priority populations to strengthen relationships, personal resilience and increase wellbeing | 5a. Engage and partner with the social service sector to build capacity to support priority populations when needed (O)   |

#### Links to Existing Plans and Strategies

