

Sport & Recreation Strategy 2025-30



Adoption by Council

Council adopted the 2025 - 2030 Sport and Recreation Strategy on 25 June 2025.

Revision Schedule

Date	Details	Decision Number

Copies of the Sport and Recreation Strategy

Copies of the Sport and Recreation Strategy, along with other corporate documents, are available on Council's website. Please visit www.burke.qld.gov.au to view/download a copy.

Feedback on the Sport and Recreation Strategy

Council welcomes queries and feedback on the Sport and Recreation Strategy at any time. Please direct enquiries and comments on the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025 - 30 to:

Chief Executive Officer PO Box 90 Burketown QLD 4830

E: office@burke.qld.gov.au

P: (07) 4745 5100 F: (07) 4745 5181

Burke Shire Council – Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025-2030

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Message from the Mayor

Council is proud to present the Burke Shire Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025 - 30.

Developed by the community, this 5-year plan identifies strategies and priorities to address the various sport and recreational needs and aspirations of Council, community, clubs, associations and other stakeholders.

Council takes its responsibility to provide for the wellbeing of the people of Burke seriously and understands that the provision of sport and active recreation opportunities is an essential contributor to community health, wellbeing and sustainability. Only after the devastating monsoonal floods of 2023 did the true importance of this become heartbreakingly clear to the entire Shire. Council is also committed to ensuring that facilities meet the future needs of the Burke community while being affordable and fit-for-purpose.

This strategy was developed through extensive consultation with community members, sporting and recreation clubs, associations and community groups. The result is a series of realistic recommendations and achievable strategies, which Council believes can be implemented successfully despite competing social and economic pressures.

This strategy will ensure that Council's actions to support local clubs, associations and community groups in the delivery of sustainable and inclusive sport and recreation opportunities are strategic, prioritised, data driven, and supported by policy and framework.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for their valuable contributions to this strategy. Council welcomes feedback on the strategy and will continue to engage with the community on progress against the deliverables herein.

Mayor Ernie Camp Burke Shire Council

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide Council and community with direction on Council's approach to supporting and promoting sport and recreation in the Burke Shire.

Objectives

Sport and active recreation have the power to confer a wide range of benefits on individuals and on communities. The recommendations in this Sport and Recreation Strategy are designed to realise the following interrelated outcomes:

- Maintain and/or improve physical and mental health:
 - Regular physical activity, combined with a healthy diet, helps us to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and prevent chronic diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
 - Regular physical activity provides a multitude of benefits for children including helping them to develop healthy bones, muscles, joints, heart and lungs while building their coordination and movement control and maintaining a healthy weight.
- Maintain and/or improve psychological well-being:
 - Regular physical activity in children and young people improves their mental health, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-awareness and social skills while enhancing their capacity for learning to improve their performance at school.
- Encourage leadership:
 - Participation in clubs and associations, particularly at the committee level, provides an opportunity to learn a range of important leadership, planning and administrative skills.
- Encourage participation and volunteering:
 - Participation in sport and recreation, as a player, coach, volunteer or administrator helps to bring people and communities together.

Strategic alignment

The Burke Shire Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025 - 30 will be delivered pursuant to Council's Corporate Plan 2025 - 30. Key alignments with the Corporate Plan include the following:

Vision: to be the best model remote Australia community.

Burke Shire Corporate Plan 2025 -2030 Goals:

- **Community**: Council acts, directly or through facilitation or advocacy, to promote healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities in the Burke Shire.
- Governance: Council is committed to financial, asset, environmental and community sustainability and secures these ends through efficient and effective decision-making processes. This, in turn, promotes community confidence, employee pride and stakeholder satisfaction with the organisation.
- Assets: Council makes appropriate infrastructure investments (operations, maintenance, renewals, upgrades, acquisitions, disposals) to ensure the delivery of appropriate levels of service to the community. These decisions are made with reference to financial, asset and community sustainability.

- **Environment**: Council acts, directly or through facilitation or advocacy, to promote positive environmental outcomes for the benefit of current and future generations.
- **Economy**: a diverse, strong and sustainable economy that provides employment and business opportunities for current and future generations.

The State Government's "Activate Queensland 2019 - 2029" was developed in consultation with the Sport Minister's Advisory Council for Queensland. The document stipulates four priority areas:

- 1. Activate Queenslanders empower more Queenslanders to enjoy physical activity to improve their health and wellbeing in active communities.
- 2. Activate environments inspire activity with places and spaces that invite an active lifestyle.
- 3. Activate success drive elite success and deliver and promote world-class knowledge and facilities.
- 4. Create partnerships that maximise the impact of government and industry actions to benefit an active Queensland.

Activate Queensland 2019 – 2029 will provide strategic direction for the Burke Shire Council Sport and Recreation Strategy.

Outcomes from the 2019 – 2024 Sport and Recreation Strategy

Some of the highlights of the last strategy are listed below:

- Completion of the Health and Wellbeing Precinct Design Splash Park, Swimming Pool and Burketown Gym
- Extension of the undercover area for the Gregory Showgrounds spectator facility
- Completion of the Gregory showgrounds facility kitchen and bar area
- Installation of playing surface and new goal post at the Phillip Yanner Memorial Oval
- Repairs and upgrades to change rooms at the Phillip Yanner Memorial Oval
- Completion of detailed design of Burketown Mineral Baths
- Completion of facilities audit
- Completion of Burketown Wharf Entertainment Area detail design
- Ongoing annual review of events and grants to community organisations

In addition to the works completed based on the recommendations over the 2019 – 2024 period, additional grant funding saw the progression of the following projects:

- Completion of the Burketown Wharf and Recreational Precinct Stage One construction \$1.5 million (predominantly grant funded Local roads and community infrastructure funding, Works for Queensland Funding, Building Bush Tourism Funding)
- The start of construction the Burketown Health and Wellbeing Stage one splash park and amenities block made possible through Growing Regions Program round 2 funding (~\$4 million in funding and \$500,000 cash contribution).

The 2025 – 2030 Sport and Recreation Strategy will carry on the legacy of the previous work completed by our past sport and recreation strategies.

SWOT

Council conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis as a means of grounding this strategy and the consultation associated with it. This analysis can be reviewed annually to determine the effectiveness of the Strategy in promoting strengths and opportunities as well as mitigating weaknesses and threats.

Strengths

- Volunteer and participation rates are relatively high;
- Regional links between organisations for sporting fixtures and events;
- Marine infrastructure facilities;
- Gregory Showgrounds Spectator Facility;
- Operational self-sufficiency of most clubs and associations;
- Events are stable, well managed by experienced committees; and
- Our facilities such as the Phillip Yanner Memorial Oval, Burketown Rodeo and Sports Ground, Burketown Splash Park, Burketown Gym and Burketown Wharf Precinct, Gregory Sports Ground

Weaknesses

- Distance to travel to compete;
- Population size and funding make regular organised sport difficult as compared with metro/regional centres;
- Asset sustainability (new assets easy to build but hard to maintain long term);
- Telecommunications
- Limited corporate sponsorship

Opportunities

- Increased training and education in relation to leadership and administration of clubs and associations for our young people;
- Facility improvement at Gregory and Burketown Showgrounds;
- New revenue streams coming on-line for community clubs;
- Improved partnerships and consultation;
- Event attendance records;
- Facility improvements that are designed for multipurpose uses.
- Significant DFRA funding and some betterment funding as a result of the 2023 monsoonal flood.

Threats

- Financial sustainability of Council (increased expectations coupled with reduced capability to deliver);
- Possible revenue impact with the future closure of Century Mines zinc tailings.
- Uncertain funding environments;
- Volunteer fatigue
- Limited new volunteers stepping up to replace current volunteers;
- Population demographics ageing population;
- Telecommunications;
- Increased compliance;
- Larger regional events taking resources from our local events;
- Ageing infrastructure;
- Future significant weather impacts.
- Cyber risks

Recommendations

The Burke Shire Council Sport and Recreation Strategy 2025 - 30 recommendations are based on consultation, collated information and research conducted during the development of this Strategy. The recommendations aim to guide the successful delivery of sport and recreation services by Council to achieve the purpose of this strategy – to increase liveability.

The recommendations are practical. However, for the balance of the recommendations to be delivered, considerable external investment will be required from the State and/or Commonwealth Government. Most of the projects below are currently not funded and will require collaboration between clubs and council to source external funding.

The table below includes time frames for the recommendations indicating short (1 to 2 years) and medium-term (3-5 years) prioritisation.

Item	Category	Description	Action	Outcome	Timeframe
1.	Facilities	Burketown Swimming Pool	 Secure funding for the Burketown Swimming Pool 	 Funding received to construct project. 	2025 - 2030 Construction timeframe uncertain
2.	Facilities	Burketown Artesian Spa	 Modify current concept design for staged construction Secure funding for construction 	 Completed design Project "application ready" for submission to appropriate funding round 	2025 – 2028 Construction timeframe uncertain
3.	Facilities	Burketown Gym	 Secure funding for the development of the Health and Wellbeing Precinct Stage 2 	 Project "application ready" for submission to appropriate funding round 	2025 - 2030 Construction timeframe uncertain
4.	Facilities	Gregory Racecourse and Sports Facilities (GRSF)	 Complete construction of GRSF Toilets; Complete construction of GRSF solar project; Complete purchase of GRSF storage container Telecommunications upgrade 	 Fit for purposes facility for a range of Gregory-based community events. 	2025 - 2028
5.	Governance	Land tenure	 Secure Recreation Reserve Status over the Gregory River (non-tidal watercourse area); 	 Improved regulation over camping in the Gregory River 	2026 - 30

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Item	Category	Description	Action	Outcome	Timeframe
6.	Facilities	Burketown Rodeo and Sporting Facilities	 Completion of the concept design and build of multipurpose facility (funding dependent) New toilet block Electrical and septic upgrades Telecommunications upgrades 	 Fit for purpose facility for a range of Burketown-based events. 	2026 - 2028
7.	Facilities	Greener Towns	 Design drainage and water plans within the Gregory master planning project. 	 Higher levels of service, improved venue aesthetics. 	2025 - 2028
8.	Governance	Education/Training (clubs)	 Facilitate development of training/education program for interested clubs and associations 	 Improved capabilities in a range of areas: governance, data collation, promotions etc. 	2025 - 2030
9.	Facilities	Burketown Wharf	 Progress with construction of stage 2 of the Burketown Wharf Recreational Project. 	 Construction of stage 2 improving community facilities 	2026 - 2028 Construction timeframe uncertain
10.	Governance	Partnerships	 Develop and implement Community Engagement Plan 	 Structured communication with community 	2026 - 2028
11.	Facilities	Burketown and Gregory Tennis Courts	 New tennis courts design and construction 	 Improved functionality and aesthetic of multi-purpose courts 	2025 – 2028
12.	Facilities	Burketown Cricket Pitch	 Design and construction of Burketown Cricket Pitch 	 Facilities that meet the needs of the community 	2025 – 2028
13.	Facilities	Albert River Bridge Bike Track	 Design of the Burketown to Albert River Bridge Cycleway 	 Facilities that meet the needs of the community 	2026 - 2027

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Item	Category	Description	Action	Outcome	Timeframe
14.	Facilities	Burketown Pump Track	■ Design of pump track	 Project ready application for funding submission 	2028 – 2029
15.	Facilities	Burke Birdwatching Project	 Design and construction of a Burke Shire Bird Trail 	Project ready design for funding.Construction of bird trail	2026 – 2030
16.	Facilities	Burketown Gliders	 Design and install glider parking and tie down solutions at Burketown Airport. Investigate and install new signage 	 Facilities that are fit for purpose 	2025 – 2027
17.	Facilities	Albert River Drive and Golf Course	 Design and construct the Albert River Drive walking trail and Golf Course 	Project ready design for funding.Construction of walking trail and golf course	2026 - 2029

Demographic Snapshot

Key factors worth noting from the demographic snapshot include:

- Burke's population has fluctuated since 2006, with population declining after the closure of Century Mine in 2016. In 2021, Burke's population was recorded as 419, with most of the population residing in Burketown or Gregory, and the remaining on stations.
- There are some demographic challenges that can make it difficult for Council to effectively implement the sport and recreation strategy including but not limited to:
 - Small populations make it more difficult to run sustained sport and recreation clubs and activities (e.g. weekly activities, including training and games). Not surprisingly, many of Burke's sport and recreation activities are either event-based or not organised through a formal club (e.g. walking groups, fishing, camping, social sports etc.);
 - The loss of a major rates provider reduces Council's own-source revenue and makes it considerably more difficult to sustain existing assets and justify the acquisition of new assets without significant external financial assistance (through grants or partnerships). The potential loss of Century Mine operations or the introduction of a new mine has the potential to drastically change rates revenue.
- Burke has a slightly higher median income than other parts of Queensland and Australia. In 2021, it was recorded that 2% of Burke's population was unemployed which is lower than the Queensland and Australia percentage.
 - This suggests that many in the community may have a higher capacity to pay for sport and recreation activities than counterparts elsewhere.
 - Fortunately, in Burke as in many other remote communities, the costs of participation in sport and recreation activities are minimal (e.g. there are no court hire costs or venue hire costs, minimal club membership fees etc.).

Population ¹	2011	2016	2021	2026 ²	2041 ³
Burke Shire	514	328	419	444	508
North West Queensland (Outback - north)	33,132	29,651	30,377	31,302	30,999
Outback	86,207	82,923	79,827	82,062	80,605
Queensland	4,332,7394	4,703,193	5,156,138	5,663,247	6,899,969

Gender⁴	Male	Female
Burke Shire	58.8	41.2
North West Queensland	52.1	47.9
Outback	51.8	48.2
Queensland	49.3	50.7

¹ ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25

² Queensland Government Statistician's Office – Population Projections – 2023 Edition

³ Queensland Government population projections, 2023 edition; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional population by age and sex, 2021 (Cat no. 3235.0)

⁴ ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25

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Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander population ⁵		
Burke Shire	136 persons (or 32.5%) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	
NW QLD	8,210 persons (or 27%) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	
Outback Qld	26,770 persons (or 33.5%) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	
Queensland	237,303 persons (or 4.6%) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	

Age Group Comparison ⁶ 2021	0 - 14 Years	15 – 64 Years	65+ Years
Burke (S) LGA	15.1%	70.8%	14.0%
North West Queensland region	22.5%	68.1%	9.4%
Queensland - Outback SA4	22.1%	65.7%	11.9%
Queensland	18.7%	65.3%	17.0%

Median Age ⁷	2011	2016	2021
Burke Shire	37	38	35
North West Queensland	31	32	32
Outback	32	33	34
Queensland	36	37	38

Median total personal income ⁸		
Burke Shire	\$884	
North West Queensland	\$1,005	
Queensland	\$660	

ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25
 ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25

⁷ ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25

⁸ ABS (2021) Quick Stats. Accessed 28.05.25

Community Consultation

Burke Shire Council completed Sport and Recreation engagement sessions with community members in April and May 2025. In person consultation sessions were held at Hell's Gate, Burketown, Gregory, Burketown Childcare and Family Hub After School Care, and with the Burke Shire Seniors group (Grey Legends Group). Sessions were also offered to any business or community group that wanted to be engaged directly.

Burke Shire Council also released two sets of online Sport and Recreation Surveys in 2025. The first of these was targeted at Committee members of Clubs and Associations. The second sought community feedback on Sport and Recreation in the Burke Shire. The outcomes of Council's Sport and Recreation Surveys are contained in Appendices 1-2.

From the individual community survey and in person consultation, it was found there was generally high support for the Burketown Swimming Pool and Burketown Gym from most participants, noting some concerns about the rates impacts of such projects. For both the Gregory Racecourse and Sports facilities, and the Burketown Rodeo and Sporting Facilities various facility upgrades were identified due to ageing infrastructure and capacity of current amenities. Upgrades of the Burketown and Gregory tennis courts were also very high on the priority list. The consultation noted that the general condition of facilities across the shire were in poor or satisfactory condition. Exercise at home or walking for exercise were the most common daily individual activities reported. There was a strong consensus that 'more organised sport' and 'gym (indoor recreational)' were two activities that people wanted to see more of.

From the community groups surveys, there was a strong consensus that facility upgrades were of highest importance with ageing facilities or facilities that are unable to cater for growing groups recognised as key issues. There was also priority placed on grant funding to upgrade facilities and a strong desire for training related to grant writing. Declining numbers of volunteers, compliance with 3rd party requirements and the increase in operational costs, such as insurance, were also areas of concerns for groups.

Consultation with the young Burke Shire cohort was conducted at an afternoon with the Burketown

Childcare and Community Hub. Children discussed their favourite activities or sports. Each were given three stickers to place next to the activity or sport they thought was most important in 'their Burketown'. From the activity the top kids' priorities were:

- 1. Pool and fishing (tied)
- 2. Football (rugby) & Pony Club
- 3. Camping



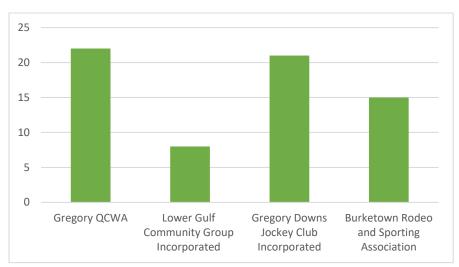
Appendix 1 – Survey Responses – Clubs and Associations

Question 1: What club does this survey relate to?

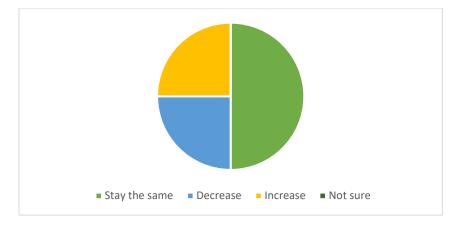
Only four groups responded.

- Gregory CWA
- Lower Gulf Community Group Incorporated
- Gregory Downs Jockey Club Incorporated
- Burketown Rodeo and Sporting Association

Question 2: How many club members does your group have?



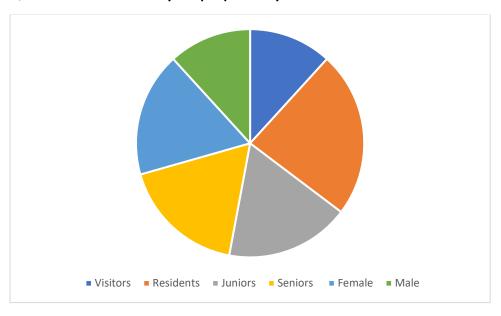
Question 3: In the next 3 years, do you expect membership to increase, decrease, stay the same, not sure?



Question 4: What services are offered by your club?

Gregory QCWA	Community support and friendship, local events and
	fundraising, & management of the local health clinic
Lower Gulf Community Group	Sell the book "Gulf Women". We hope to improve the park at
Incorporated	Gregory with the proceeds.
Gregory Downs Jockey Club	We conduct a race meeting affiliated with Racing Queensland
	once a year. We clean and repair the grounds and infrastructure
	prior to the event. Our Saddles and Paddles Race Meeting brings
	people into the community who then support local businesses
Burketown Rodeo and Sporting	Rodeo, campdraft and other sporting events.
Association	

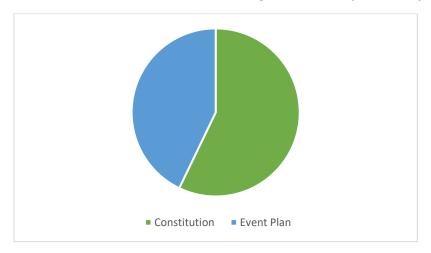
Question 5: Please identify the people that your club caters to



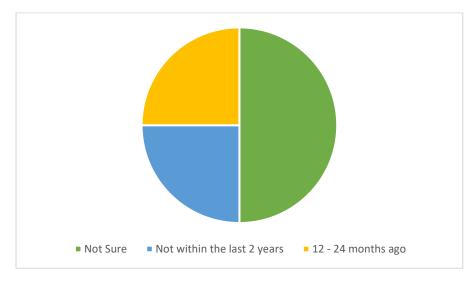
Question 6. How often does your committee meet?

Gregory QCWA	Quarterly
Lower Gulf Community Group Incorporated	Yearly
Gregory Downs Jockey Club Incorporated	Every six months
Burketown Rodeo and Sporting Association	Before and after events every few weeks, during
	wet season we don't meet

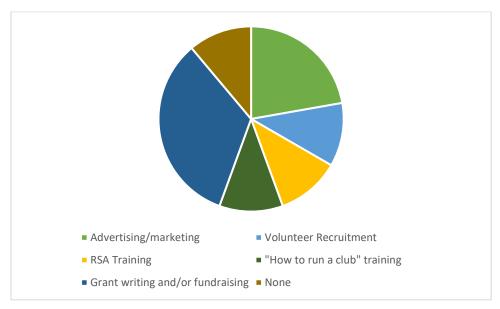
Question 7: Does your club, organisation or event have a strategic or operational processes and/or documents to assist with the delivery of clubs services/events? (Other response options: process to attract/retain volunteers, annual budget, business/operational plan, strategic plan, other)



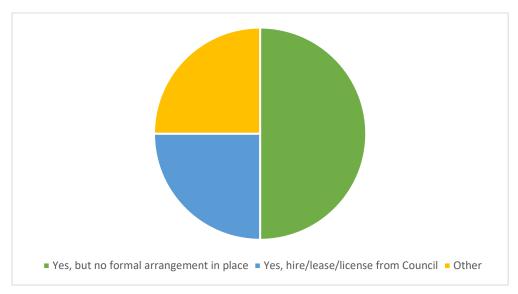
Question 8: When was the last time the organisation's constitution was reviewed?



Question 9: Which areas would your club benefit from in regards to education and training opportunities for your members/volunteers? (Other response options: Legal Documentation (e.g. constitution, lease, MOU), strategic planning, financial management/budget training).



10. Does your organisation use Council facilities and/or land?



Question 11: Please rank the following issues your organisation experiences from, top choice being of most concern and bottom choice being of least concern.

Overall results:

- 1. Access to grant funding
- 2. Declining number of volunteers
- 3. Compliance with 3rd party requirements

Gregory QCWA	Access to grant funding
	2. Operational Costs (e.g. insurance)
	3. Compliance with 3 rd party requirements
Lower Gulf Community Group	Access to grant funding
Incorporated	2. Compliance with 3 rd party requirements
	3. Declining number of volunteers
Gregory Downs Jockey Club	1. Lack of facilities to accommodate the needs for the
	club
	2. Access to grant funding
	3. Compliance with 3 rd party requirements
Burketown Rodeo and Sporting	Declining number of volunteers
Association	2. Member/committee member fatigue
	3. Operational costs (e.g. insurance)

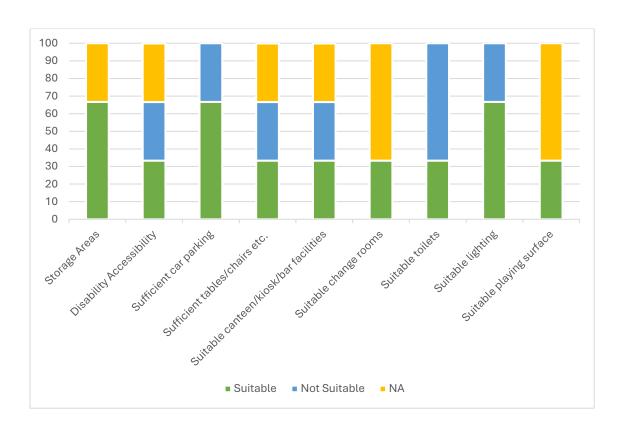
Question 12: How would you rate Council's grants/donations process? (very poor, poor, satisfactory, good, very good).



Question 13. What improvements could be made to Council's grants/donation process?

- "Generally we are happy with the process"
- "Council's donation process is simple and easy for us to access. Council's help with donation and in kind over the years has been much appreciated"

Question 14. Please Indicate whether the facilities used by your club or organisation are fit for purpose. (totals are a percentage of the responses collated)



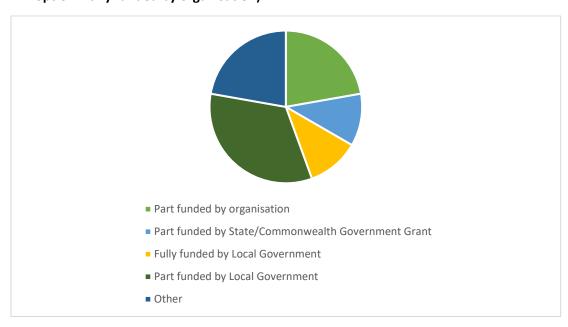


Question 15: Do your facilities cater for people that may have accessibility issues?

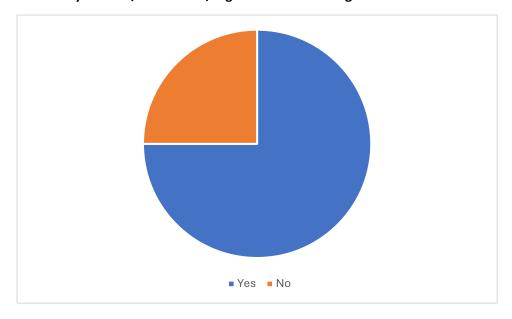
16. Please name your top three priorities for facility improvements (replace, upgrade, new) to best provide for your sport/recreation/event.

- "Extra toilets, disabled restroom upgrades, new window coverings"
- "New toilet block, power"
- "New toilets, new kitchen, more shaded seating/grand stands, lighting/power"

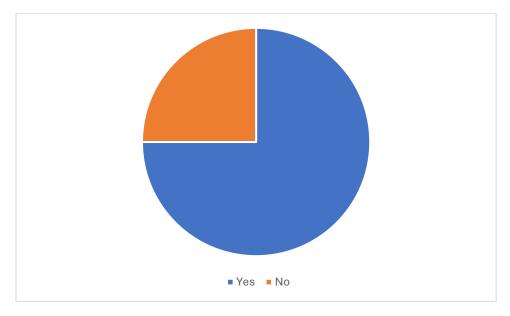
17. How would you anticipate funding the suggested facility improvements? (additional response option: Fully funded by organisation)



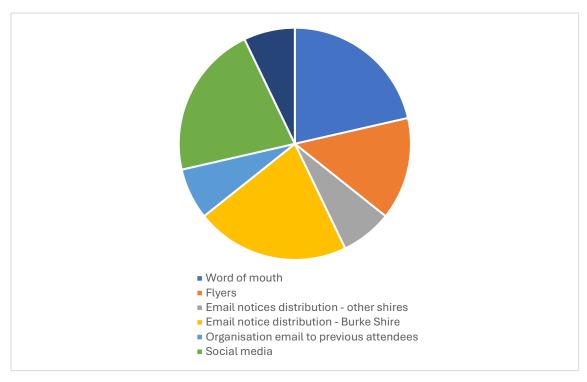
18. Does your club/association/organisation host a regular event?



- 19. Name the event/s your club hosts and the average attendance for each event.
 - Gregory Horse Sports and Family Fun Day 60 Adults/children on average
 - Saddles and Paddles Race Meeting 350 attended
 - Burketown Rodeo, Burketown Camp draft
- 20. Would you like to learn more about systems that can help manage ticket sales, links to social media, manage RSVP, send reminders, generate a database of attendees etc.



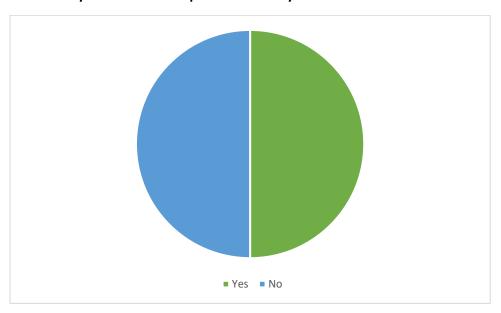
21. How do you advertise your event/s?



22. Would you like to have face to face consultation with Council?

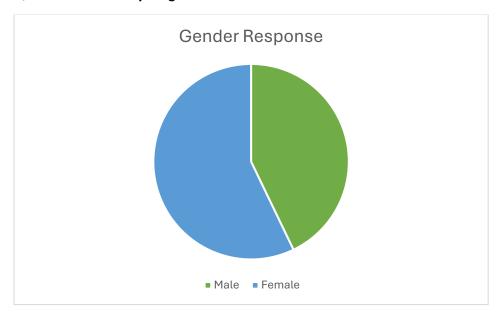
100% responded – "No"

23. Would you like Council representation at your AGM?

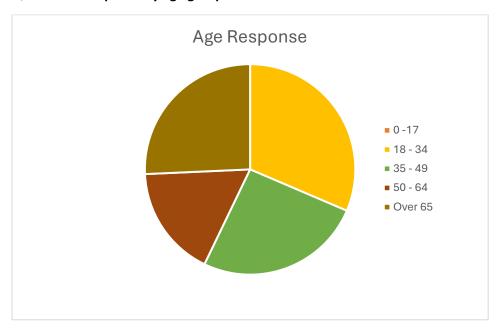


Appendix 2 – Survey Responses – Community

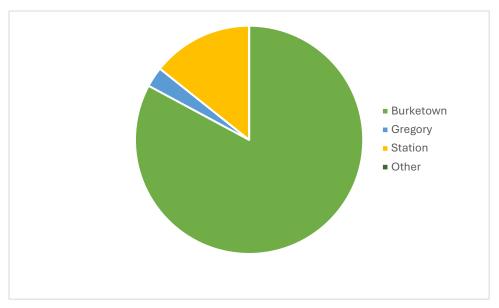
Question 1: What is your gender?



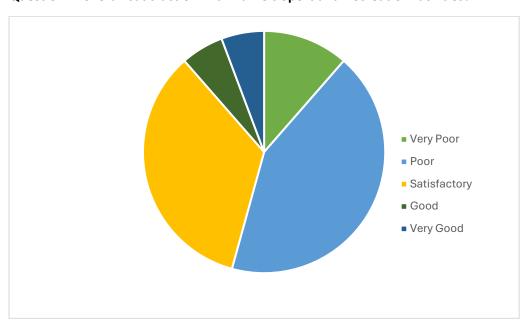
Question 2: response by age group



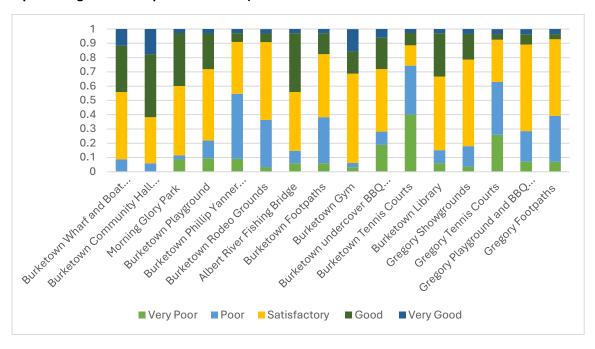
Question 3: which part of the Shire are you from?



Question 4: overall satisfaction with Burke's Sport and Recreation facilities?

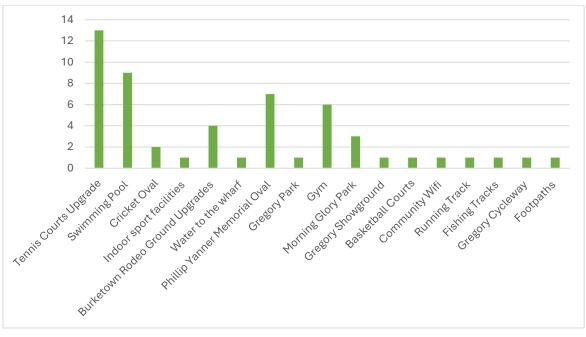


Question 5: satisfaction with individual sport and recreation facilities in the Burke Shire (totals are a percentage of the responses collated)

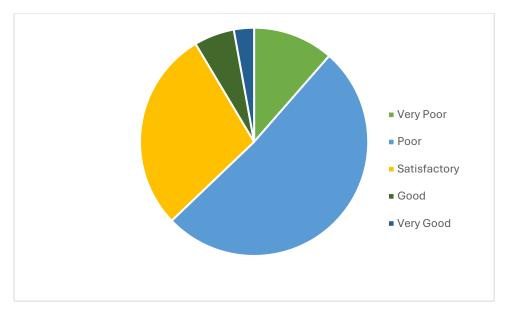


Question 6: top 3 priorities for improving sport and recreation facilities in Burke Shire?

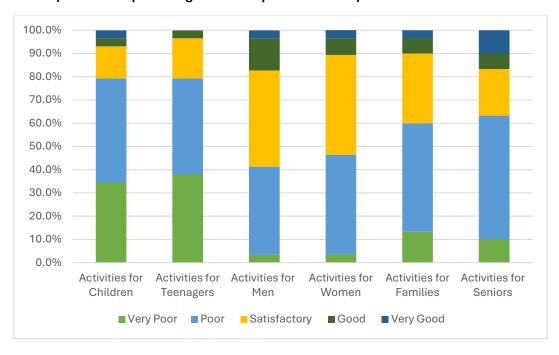




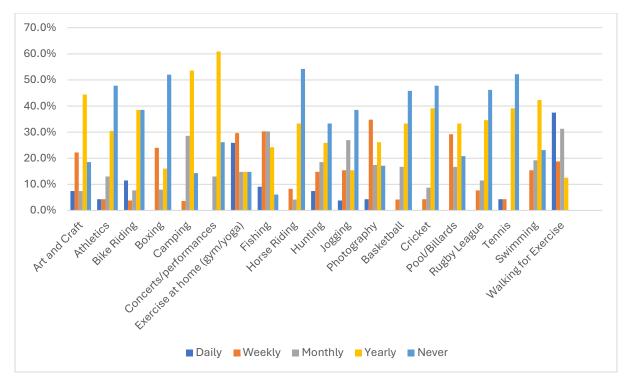
Question 7: overall satisfaction with Sport and Recreation options / activities in the Shire?



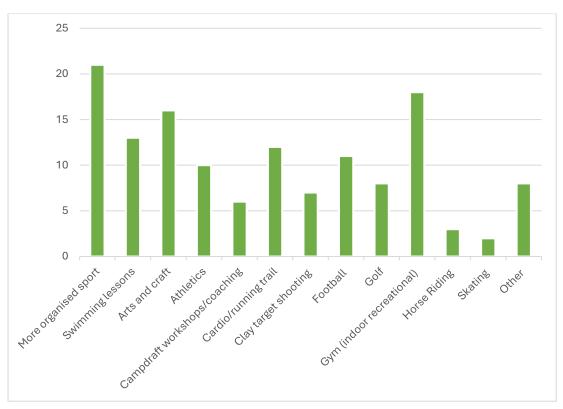
Question 8: How satisfied are you with the range of Sport and Recreation options/activities in the Shire? (totals are a percentage of the responses collated)



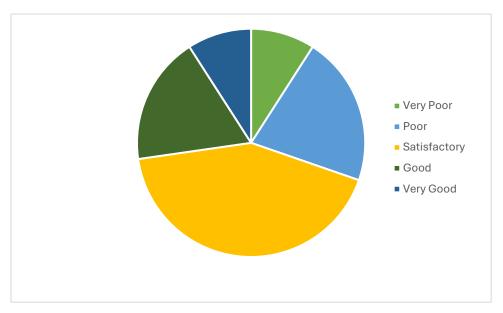
Question 9: how often do you do / play / participate in the following?



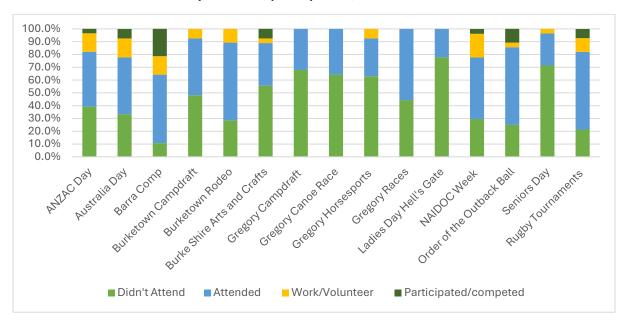
Question 10: what Sport and Recreation activities/opportunities would you like to see more of in Burke?



Question 11: overall satisfaction with Events in the Burke Shire



Question 12: which events do you attend, participate in, volunteer at?



Question 13: favourite event?

The majority of respondents skipped this question, although there were a number of favourites identified:

- The Barramundi Fishing Competition
- The Order of the Outback Ball
- Rodeo and campdraft events

Question 14: are you a member/committee member of any of the following?

