Community
Safety and Crime
Prevention Plan

2023 - 2028

Committed to preserving a safe and resilient community
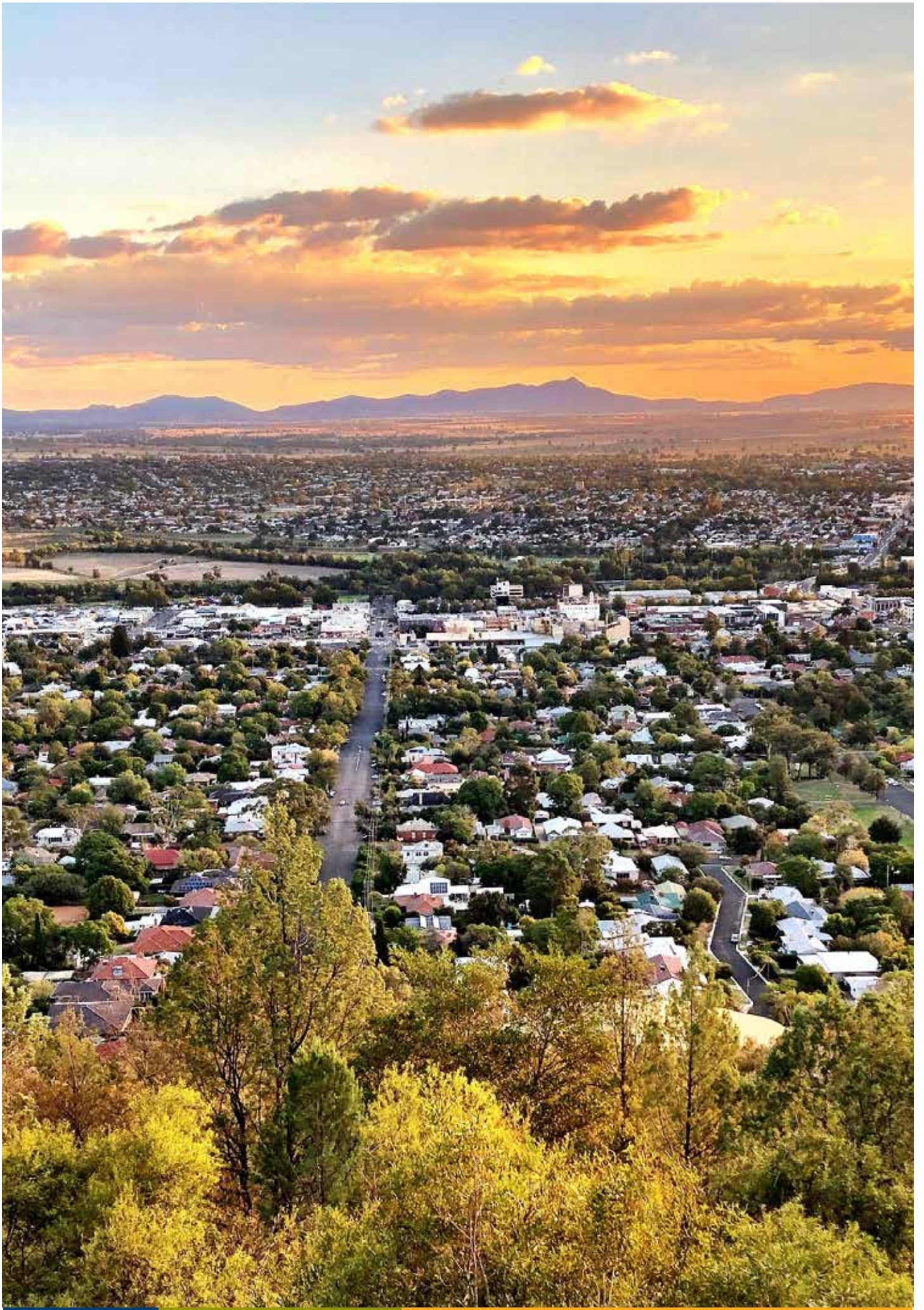
Tamworth
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in and visiting our Region.

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Mayor's Message

Welcome to Tamworth Regional Council's Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2023 – 2028.

It is my belief that crime prevention is the shared responsibility of each and every one of us – as we work together to improve the safety of our community. The vision is for our residents to be empowered to live safe, active lives while feeling connected to the broader community.

The Plan starts with a focus on educating the community across all age groups. Once they have been provided with the correct information, community members are able to make informed decisions regarding their safety.

To enable the Region to implement successful and relevant community safety projects, the community has a role to play as "eyes on the street" in reporting crime and in collecting information identifying common problems and the location of these problems. With this information, Police can better identify 'hot spots' and put in place preventative measures and programs.

The successful implementation of this Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan also requires collaboration and action between a wide range of groups and organisations. We are therefore fortunate to have a committed Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group to bring together key stakeholders committed to making a positive impact on the drivers of crime and public safety issues. This has enabled us to foster close ties with our residents, police, local services and the business community.

This document represents our vision and commitment to safety and crime prevention while outlining the roles and responsibilities of all those involved. It is directly linked to the Blueprint 100 Our Community Plan 2023-2033 with our priority being a safer and more resilient community and to deliver a prosperous region that remains a great place to live, work and visit.

It is my pleasure to endorse this Plan and acknowledge the hard work that has gone into its formulation.

Tamworth Region Mayor
Russell Webb

Our vision

"

*Our region will be thriving, modern and prosperous,
with compassion for our people, reverence for our culture,
and respect for nature*

Council's vision is for our residents to be empowered to live safe, active lives while feeling connected to the broader community. We see a community that has the tools and ability to confront difficult issues, while knowing their rights and values are respected.

Tamworth Regional Blueprint 100 - A future vision

Tamworth Regional Blueprint 100 is a vision for the long term future of our region.
Focus Area 4 – Resilient and diverse communities

FOCUS AREA 4
RESILIENT AND DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
"Build resilient communities"

WHAT YOU TOLD US YOU WANT:

- Improve community services for all
- Help our towns and villages thrive
- Support the community to get better health services
- Be a safe place to live
- Be a healthy community

89%
of residents believe building resilient communities is important/very important for the future of the region

Community safety

What is community safety?

Community safety is most commonly thought of as an individual's right to feel safe in all aspects of their life whether that be at home, at work or in the street.

Community safety is complex and encompasses issues that go beyond crime or the perception of crime. Wider social issues may also impact on the ability of a community to feel safe.

While the policing of criminal activity is a significant factor, we also understand there are a series of structural factors which influence community safety. Access to the essentials such as housing, public transport, employment, health services and well maintained amenities are equally as vital.

Members of the community should feel supported and protected from a wide variety of potential risks. When people feel safe, they are more prepared to connect with others and participate in community activities.

A safe community is a liveable community!

How is community safety achieved?

Community safety is a shared responsibility, one that must be delivered collaboratively in order to provide meaningful solutions so as to create a safe environment for people to live, work and travel. When all sections of the community play their part and work together, our residents and visitors are able to live their lives without actual or perceived hampering from crime and disorder.

Typically, the public look to certain agencies to preserve community safety. The NSW Police Force is the lead agency, playing a central role in the prevention, detection and investigation of crime. However, crime by its nature is unpredictable. Strategies aimed at reducing or preventing the incidence of crime are sometimes unsuccessful as they fail to account for the offender's own history or their mental state. Often these strategies only deal with the effect and not the cause.

Other agencies or departments such as NSW Communities and Justice, NSW Health, NSW Education and Social Housing providers all deliver vital services that play a role in addressing issues which impact the community and enhance community safety.

Local bodies such as Council, businesses, sporting and service groups are integral in engaging with residents and creating a sense of community. Equally as important are the actions of each individual which are crucial in creating the community we all desire.

The role of Council in community safety

While the NSW Government is principally responsible for law and order, local government authorities have increasingly been considered a key player in the development and implementation of community safety programs.

Part 4 of the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997*, identifies councils as a lead organisation in the development of local Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plans. Tamworth Regional Council has embraced this challenge and is committed to ensuring our region remains a safe and resilient place to live, work and visit.

Local government's involvement in community safety and crime prevention is primarily achieved in partnership with police, government and non-government organisations. This multi-agency governance model allows all partners to fully utilise their strengths while filling spaces left due to individual deficiencies. This approach greatly enhances our ability to manage risk and reduce the fear of harm in the community.

Council considers that it is in a valuable position to proactively implement strategies that fall within its traditional functions, as well as taking a significant role in other areas that impact on broader issues integral to creating a safe, liveable and resilient community. These strategies improve the physical, social and environmental well-being of people within the Tamworth Region.

In order to achieve this, Council formed the Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group which has enabled us to work with partners and become involved in alternative, broader functions and/or strategies. These robust partnerships maximise impact through collaboration as well as the sharing of knowledge and resources across the region. This cooperative approach to community safety is the central objective of the Group.

Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group

The Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group (TRCSWG) was established to bring together key stakeholders committed to making a positive impact on the drivers of crime and public safety issues. This has enabled us to foster close ties with our residents, police, local services and the business community.

The purpose of the Group is to:

• Provide advice to Council on key strategic priorities and issues in relation to community safety;

• Share information to increase the understanding of the issues and drivers across the Tamworth Region that influence community safety and the perception of community safety;

• Share knowledge and experience of successful programs and initiatives that may positively influence community safety and the perception of community safety;

• Assist in the assessment and review of community safety plans;

• Promote shared community ownership of community safety issues;

• Investigate programs and partnerships that will positively influence community safety across the region, reduce the social and financial cost of crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour; and

• Provide advice on community engagement in relation to community safety strategies.

Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group members

In addition to Tamworth Regional Council elected Councillors, the TRCSWG membership consists of representatives from a variety of organisations with unique skill sets.
Collectively, the members contribute vast experience and provide valuable knowledge.

Members include representatives from the following areas:

- Oxley District Police
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- Tamworth and District Liquor Accord
- Tamworth Business Chamber
- Tamworth Taxi Industry
- Domestic Violence Services Sector
- Aboriginal Criminal Justice Services Sector
- NSW Department of Education
- Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- Justice Advocacy Services
- Homes North
- Local Community Representative Members.

Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group

Front row left to right: Peter Kachel *(Tamworth Taxi Industry)*, Trevor Watt *(Community Representative)*, Inspector Mick Moy *(Oxley Police District)*, Luke Massey *(Electoral Officer for the Hon Kevin Anderson, MP)*, Jane Boulton *(NSW Department of Education)*, Cr Judy Coates *(Tamworth Regional Council)*.

Back row left to right: Cr Marc Sutherland *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Cr Mark Rodda *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Jenny Peberdy *(Community Representative)*, Kay Delahunt *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Haley Fenn *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Richard Innis *(Homes North)*, Fiona Snape *(Tamworth Local Aboriginal Lands Council)*.

Absent: Cr Steve Mears *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Gina Vereker *(Tamworth Regional Council)*, Senior Constable Jen Ridley, Crime Prevention Officer *(Oxley Police District)*, Mal MacPherson *(Community Representative)*, Bill Campbell *(Community Representative)*, Bryan O'Connor *(Tamworth Business Chamber)*, Andrew Pieper *(Tamworth and District Liquor Accord)*.

Snapshot — Council's role
Safe spaces and people

Safe streets and spaces are clean, inviting, carefully designed and cared for. Well maintained and serviced spaces can contribute to reducing crime, increasing feelings of safety as well as connecting people. Council can enhance actual and perceived safety through the effective management of those spaces by:

- Applying situational crime prevention strategies when developing and managing public spaces;
- Ensuring compliance with legislation is adhered to in areas such as planning, the responsible ownership of animals and traffic management;
- Delivering an effective CCTV network, well maintained parks, roads and footpaths, with appropriate lighting, waste management and graffiti control;
- Targeting health concerns by creating alcohol and smoke free zones;
- In association with local police, creating and disseminating important crime prevention and community safety awareness strategies throughout the region.
- Advocating for and assisting with the implementation of strategies that provide safe spaces beyond the public domain.

Youth support

Council is committed to enabling our youth to grow up safe, healthy and resilient. Ensuring appropriate support networks are available is a priority.

The Tamworth Regional Youth Centre was established with the aim of delivering a positive youth development model by providing a platform for coordinated and integrated service delivery for young people within our region.

The overall vision for the Centre is to build, through collaborative efforts, the capacity of young people, the community and youth-orientated services to achieve improved outcomes, opportunities and lasting positive change for young people.

This commitment by Tamworth Regional Council to young people in the region is likely to enhance their skills and capacity to contribute meaningfully and positively to the community.

Connected communities

The perception of safety often impacts how well residents engage, feel connected to one another and how active they are in the community.

We work to increase awareness of the information and services available to the community and aim to provide better support, connections and outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances.

Giving a voice to our residents and community groups is just one of many strategies Council has implemented to connect with and understand the needs of our community.
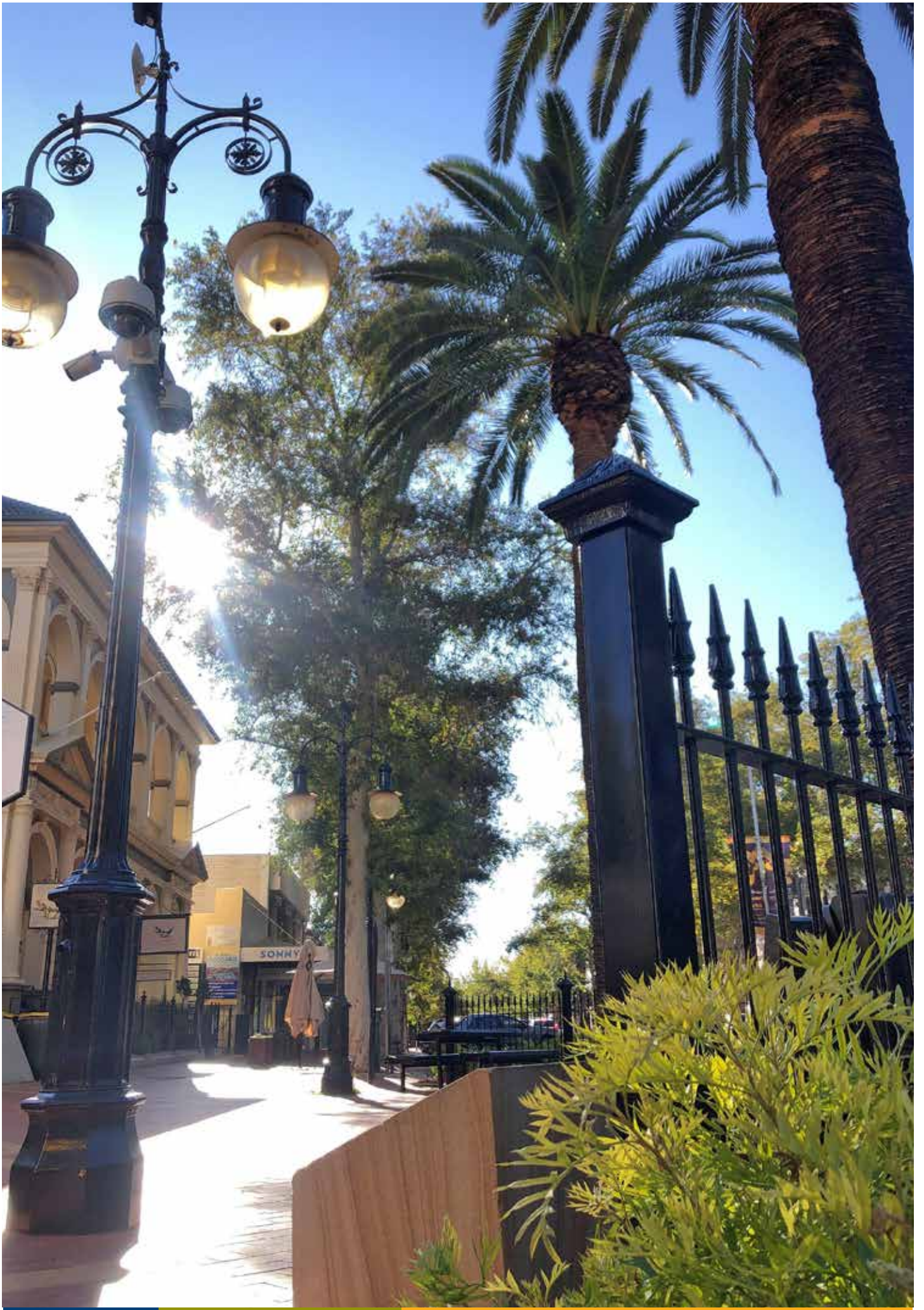
Beyond the Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group and special purpose committees such as the Local Traffic Committee, Council continues to network with a range of community groups including the:

- Disability Access Working Group;
- Tamworth Regional Youth Council;
- City Centre Working Group;
- Tamworth District Liquor Accord;
- Section 355 community committees;
- Tamworth Region Inclusive Community Advisory Committee; and the
- Sports Working Group.

How was the plan developed?

Tamworth Regional Council's 2023 - 2028 Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan was built on previous plans and provides a roadmap outlining Council's goals in regard to safety issues across the region for the next five years. The Plan also describes what community safety and crime prevention is, and how it can be used to address issues across the region.

To identify immediate and longer-term priorities, an extensive consultation process was undertaken with residents and other key stakeholders. We were able to draw on our experience working with our partner agencies and various networks while also exploring the approaches being taken by other Councils.

Data and statistics

The Plan is intentionally evidence-based, involving the practical application of research and evaluation findings in not only its development but also in its ongoing implementation.

Data obtained from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) along with consultation with the Oxley Police District was able to provide an understanding of crime issues across the Tamworth Region and to identify key areas for engagement. Council then integrated research on population demographics and forecasts to ensure the actions taken would contribute effectively to our evolving and growing community.

The actions contained within the Plan are intended to be targeted to the areas of greatest need, while being flexible and adapting to suit the region's conditions.

The Plan will also ensure proposed actions and outcomes are able to be evaluated and their success measured.

Community engagement

In addition to researching the available data provided by government agencies and consulting with local stakeholders, Council considered it crucial to give our residents a voice. Personal experiences shape the way both the individual and the broader community perceive crime and safety.

To obtain actionable information, Council conducted an online Community Safety Survey. The survey was created as a Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group initiative and was developed using advice from focus groups and our partner networks.

The survey which ran for three weeks, was promoted across all media platforms and attracted 118 local contributions. In addition to the online survey, community workshops were undertaken and local community groups addressed. The responses allowed us to assess the community's sense of safety and level of satisfaction with current measures addressing crime, while identifying issues of concern.

Targeted face-to-face interviews with contributors and stakeholders allowed us to explore those issues more deeply and discuss potential strategies to address identified issues.

Snapshot of the plan's development

Members of the Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group provided valuable insight and knowledge throughout the development of this plan.

The views of the broader community were considered via:

- Online survey
- Recorded complaints
- Community groups
- Media campaign.

Analysis of crime statistics, community demographics and other available data was undertaken and informed the actions.

The Department of Communities and Justice guidelines for developing a crime prevention strategy was a source document.

The Plan is incorporated into Tamworth Regional Blueprint 100 as a key factor in the priority theme 'Building Resilient Communities'.

Approaches taken by other Councils were reviewed with the view to build upon their successes.

We ensured the plan was developed in accordance with all relevant legislation.

We engaged with police and other stakeholders to identify and address any potential deficiencies.

Community profile

Our community

The Tamworth Regional Local Government Area (LGA) is home to a safe, vibrant and welcoming community. The Region is located midway between Sydney and Brisbane within the New England North West Region. Adjacent to the Great Dividing Range, it forms part of the North West Slopes and Plains in northern NSW.

DEMOGRAPHICS (2021)

POPULATION[1]
63,070
Tamworth region

2,834,051
NSW

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER[1]
12.7%
Tamworth region

3.4%
NSW

MEDIAN AGE[1]
39
Tamworth region

39
NSW

POPULATION DENSITY[2]
6.4
people/km²
Tamworth region

10.1
people/km²
NSW

1. ABS 2021
2. Profile.id (2021, 2022)

EMPLOYMENT (2021)

LARGEST EMPLOYER BY INDUSTRY[2]
Health Care and Social Assistance (15.1%)
Manufacturing (10.7%)
Retail Trade (9.9%)

LARGEST NUMBER OF REGISTERED BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY[2]
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (25.8%) — Tamworth region
Construction (16.9%) — NSW

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (JUNE 2022)[2]
5.6%
Tamworth region

4.2%
NSW

ECONOMY (2021)

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT[2]
$3.56 billion
Tamworth region

$632.88 billion
NSW

MEDIAN WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME[1]
$1,416
Tamworth region

$1,829
NSW

Crime profile

While the Tamworth Region is a safe place, like all Council areas we do experience some level of criminal activity.

The purpose of developing a crime profile is to evaluate the types and level of crime occurring. The analysis of available and verifiable data, allows Council to differentiate between perceived and actual crime.

While crime statistics provide a true and factual assessment of what has occurred, it is only part of the picture. To fully grasp what crime looks like in our Region, we also must understand what causes or triggers crime.

The Tamworth Region crime profile seeks to establish factors which may have contributed to the crime being committed, as well the local areas which are most affected by crime.

Factors which can lead to or predict criminality include:

- access to education;
- levels of employment and income;
- Family background;
- Peer relations;
- Alcohol and other drug use;
- Criminal history;
- Moral beliefs;
- Risk and punishment; and
- Other environmental factors.

When analysing data, consideration must also be given to the fact that crime rates can vary from year to year for a variety of reasons. It may be as basic as a particular crime category experiencing a temporary spike in incidence or the introduction of another variable influencer contributing to the end result.

Variations in crime rates may be caused by increased reporting of crime, police undertaking operations targeting a particular crime or other exceptional circumstances.

Recent data results may have been impacted due to the pandemic, COVID-19 restrictions and the challenges this created for individuals and the collective community.

To obtain a complete data set, relevant information was sought from a variety of sources including local police, the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) as well as through community consultation.

BOCSAR is a statistical agency within the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. The information available from BOCSAR provides a detailed view of assessment of crime and justice in NSW. The data contains statistics relating to crimes reported to police and includes details such as the type of offence, the number of incidents as well as when and where the crime was committed.

In addition to crime rate statistics, information profiling in relation to both the offender and victim is also available. Specific data such as age, gender and ancestry is available as is information about locations of crime.

The community consultation process was conducted online through a community safety survey and through face-to-face engagement. This process allowed community members to share their views, experiences and perceptions, which are rarely captured in available data sets.

Based on this assessment, suitable strategies have been developed aimed at reducing the identified priority offences. It is important that the strategies are tangible so their effectiveness can be evaluated.

BOCSAR data

Although there have been increases in certain types of crime, overall data obtained from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) indicates that crime levels in the Tamworth Regional Council LGA have reduced or remained stable since 2017.

Analysis of a five-year trend revealed reductions were recorded across a wide variety of crime categories, with very few increasing.

Reduced incidence can be seen across a variety of crime categories such as property theft and anti-social behaviour.

Property theft categories included:

- Break and enter non-dwelling (down 17.3%);
- Steal from retail store (down 12.8%);
- Steal from dwelling (down 7.9%);

Reduction in key indicators of anti-social behaviour included:

- Offensive Language (down 18%); and
- Offensive Conduct (down 14.8%).

In contrast two primary offences were identified. Although a five-year analysis indicated this has remained stable, over the past 24 months the offences of motor vehicle theft and steal from motor vehicles increased significantly.

- Motor vehicle theft rose by 46.5%; and
- Steal from motor vehicles rose by 63.5%.

Increases can largely be attributed to short term spikes, and offender recidivism rather than the misconception that offences are increasing at a constant rate.

While remaining stable, the incidence of break and enter dwelling, malicious damage to property and domestic related violence are also of concern.

Improve categories

A line chart titled "Improve categories" showing data from 2017 to 2020 with the following categories:

- **Break and Enter - Non Dwelling** (dark blue): 2017 ≈ 160, 2018 ≈ 128, 2019 ≈ 120, 2020 ≈ 63
- **Steal from Retail Store** (orange): 2017 ≈ 260, 2018 ≈ 263, 2019 ≈ 205, 2020 ≈ 162
- **Steal from Dwelling** (grey): 2017 ≈ 262, 2018 ≈ 255, 2019 ≈ 175, 2020 ≈ 232
- **Offensive Conduct** (yellow): 2017 ≈ 95, 2018 ≈ 70, 2019 ≈ 63, 2020 ≈ 78
- **Offensive Language** (light blue): 2017 ≈ 48, 2018 ≈ 25, 2019 ≈ 27, 2020 ≈ 20

Categories of concern

A line chart titled "Categories of concern" showing data from 2017 to 2021 with the following categories:

- **Motor Vehicle Theft** (dark blue): 2017 ≈ 120, 2018 ≈ 95, 2019 ≈ 140, 2020 ≈ 120, 2021 ≈ 180
- **Steal from Motor Vehicle** (orange): 2017 ≈ 565, 2018 ≈ 545, 2019 ≈ 400, 2020 ≈ 355, 2021 ≈ 600
- **Break and Enter - Dwelling** (grey): 2017 ≈ 535, 2018 ≈ 580, 2019 ≈ 480, 2020 ≈ 500, 2021 ≈ 580
- **Malicious Damage** (yellow): 2017 ≈ 900, 2018 ≈ 810, 2019 ≈ 735, 2020 ≈ 720, 2021 ≈ 775
- **Domestic Related Violence** (light blue): 2017 ≈ 335, 2018 ≈ 370, 2019 ≈ 400, 2020 ≈ 405, 2021 ≈ 405

Snapshot Crime

Overall, the Tamworth Regional Local Government area is a safe place to live and visit.

Definitions and explanations
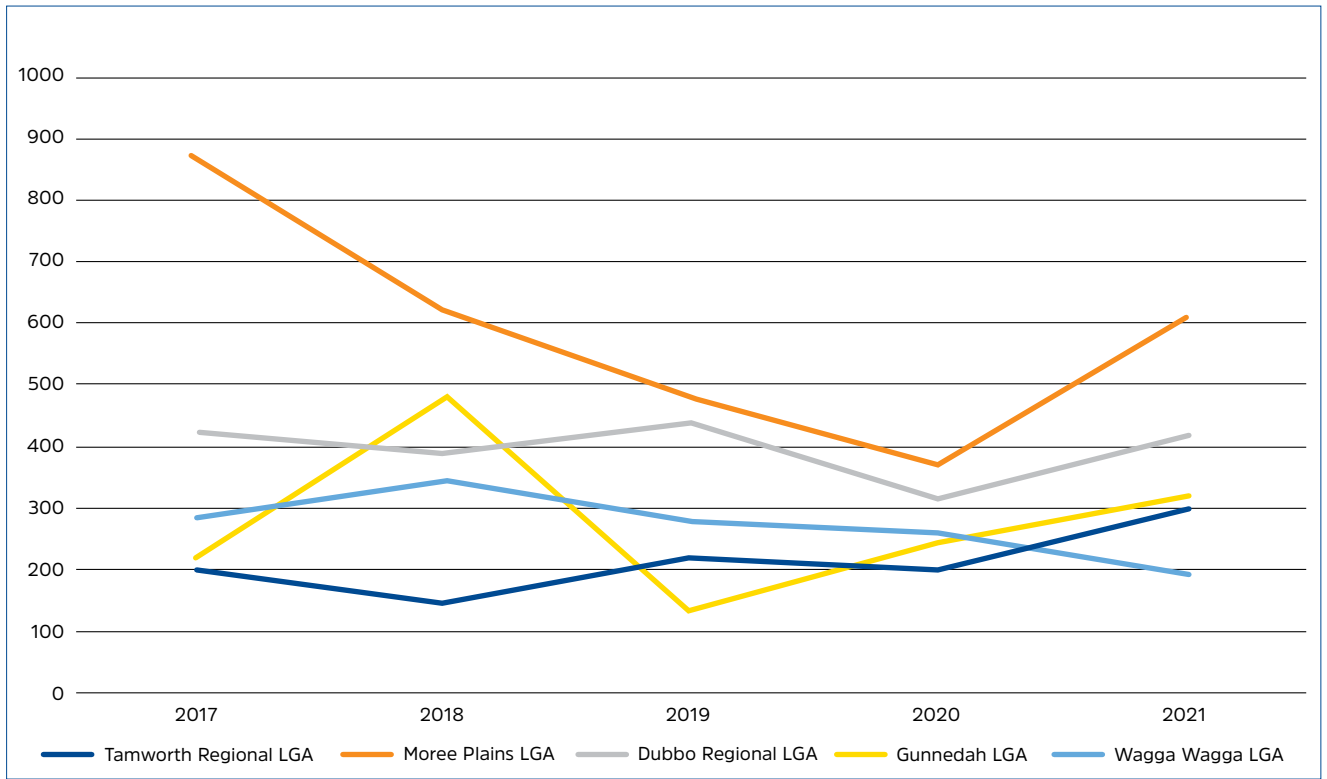
NSW Recorded Crime Statistics 2017 - 2021

Number of recorded incidents and rate per 100,000 population, 24-month and 60-month trend and Local Government Areas rankings (for 2021)
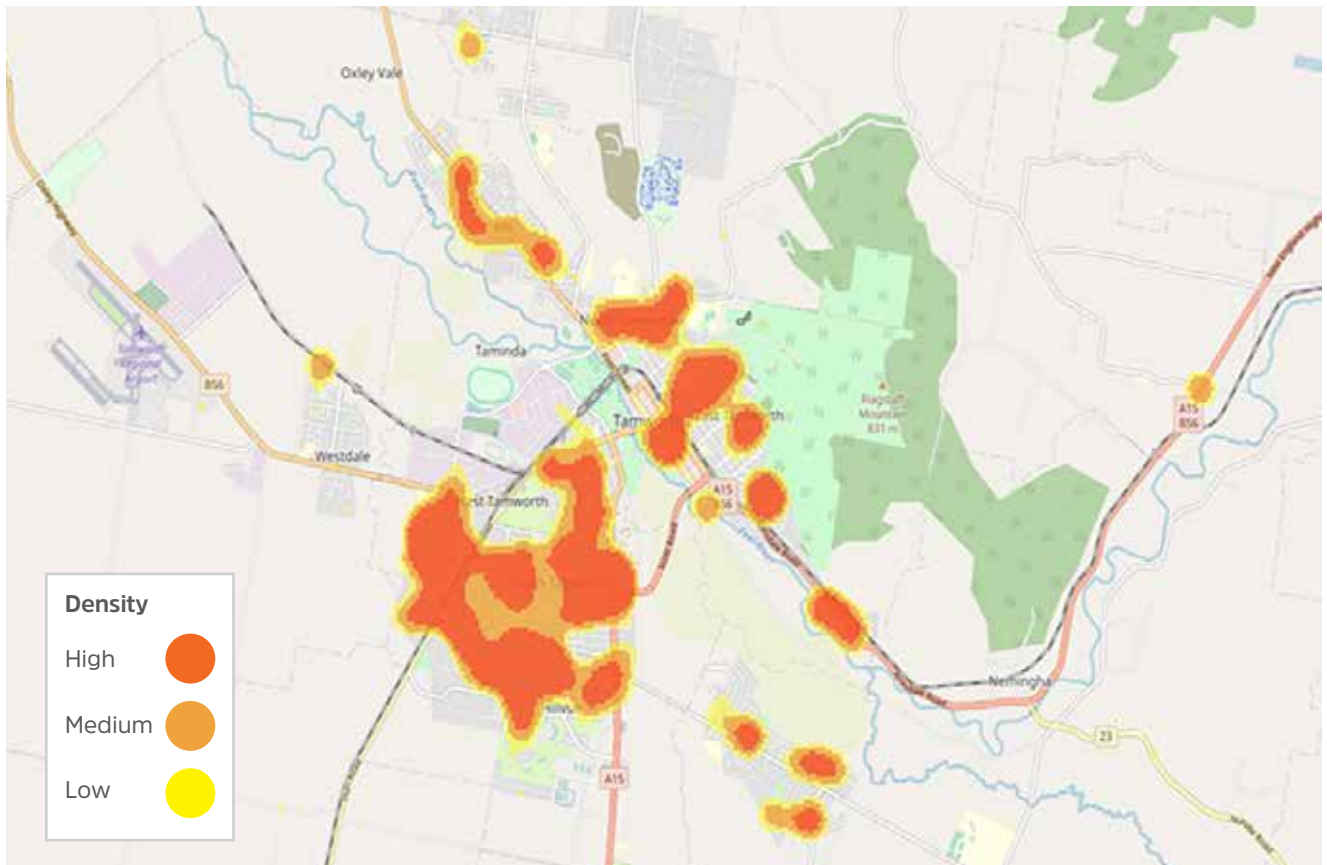**Tamworth Regional Local Government Area**

Offence group	Offence type	Jan-Dec 2017		Jan-Dec 2018	
		Number of incidents	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of incidents	Rate per 100,000 population
The major offences	Murder^	0	0.0	1	1.6
	Domestic violence related assault	345	559.9	376	605.6
	Non-domestic violence related assault	426	691.4	363	584.7
	Sexual assault	71	115.2	83	133.7
	Sexual touching, sexual act and other sexual offences	85	138.0	90	145.0
	Robbery	17	27.6	21	33.8
	Break and enter dwelling	545	884.5	586	943.9
	Break and enter non-dwelling	158	256.4	126	202.9
	Motor vehicle theft	122	198.0	95	153.0
	Steal from motor vehicle	560	908.9	544	876.2
	Steal from retail store	261	423.6	265	426.8
	Other stealing offences	526	853.7	546	879.4
	Malicious damage to property	908	1,473.7	808	1,301.4
Other Homicide	Attempted murder	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Murder accessory, conspiracy	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Manslaughter^	1	1.6	0	0.0
Prohibited and regulated weapons offences		164	266.2	206	331.8
Disorderly conduct	Trespass	227	368.4	232	373.7
	Offensive conduct	95	154.2	76	122.4
	Offensive language	53	86.0	33	53.2
	Criminal intent	44	71.4	38	61.2

Jan-Dec 2019		Jan-Dec 2020		Jan-Dec 2021				
Number of incidents	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of incidents	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of incidents	Rate per 100,000 population	24-month trend^^	60-month trend^^	2021 LGA Rank*
2	3.2	1	1.6	0	0.0	nc**	nc**	
411	657.3	415	663.5	406	649.1	Stable	Stable	31
385	615.7	315	503.6	379	606.0	Stable	Stable	21
107	171.1	84	134.3	91	145.5	Stable	Stable	36
107	171.1	81	129.5	95	151.9	Stable	Stable	
21	33.6	15	24.0	18	28.8	nc**	nc**	24
482	770.8	497	794.6	593	948.1	Stable	Stable	7
124	198.3	64	102.3	74	118.3	Stable	-17.3%	56
142	227.1	127	203.1	186	297.4	46.5%	11.1%	12
407	650.9	356	569.2	582	930.5	63.5%	Stable	4
204	326.2	164	262.2	151	241.4	Stable	-12.8%	32
407	650.9	392	626.7	351	561.2	Stable	-9.6%	46
748	1,196.2	731	1,168.8	781	1,248.7	Stable	Stable	23
0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	nc**	nc**	
0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	nc**	nc**	
0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	nc**	nc**	
207	331.0	227	362.9	217	347.0	Stable	Stable	
217	347.0	255	407.7	248	396.5	Stable	Stable	
67	107.1	76	121.5	50	79.9	Stable	-14.8%	
34	54.4	26	41.6	24	38.4	Stable	-18.0%	
61	97.6	41	65.6	66	105.5	Stable	Stable	

Breakdown of motor vehicle theft over a five-year period as contrasted to other comparable LGA's

Legend: Tamworth Regional LGA, Moree Plains LGA, Dubbo Regional LGA, Gunnedah LGA, Wagga Wagga LGA

'Hotspot' map for incidents of motor vehicle theft in the City of Tamworth
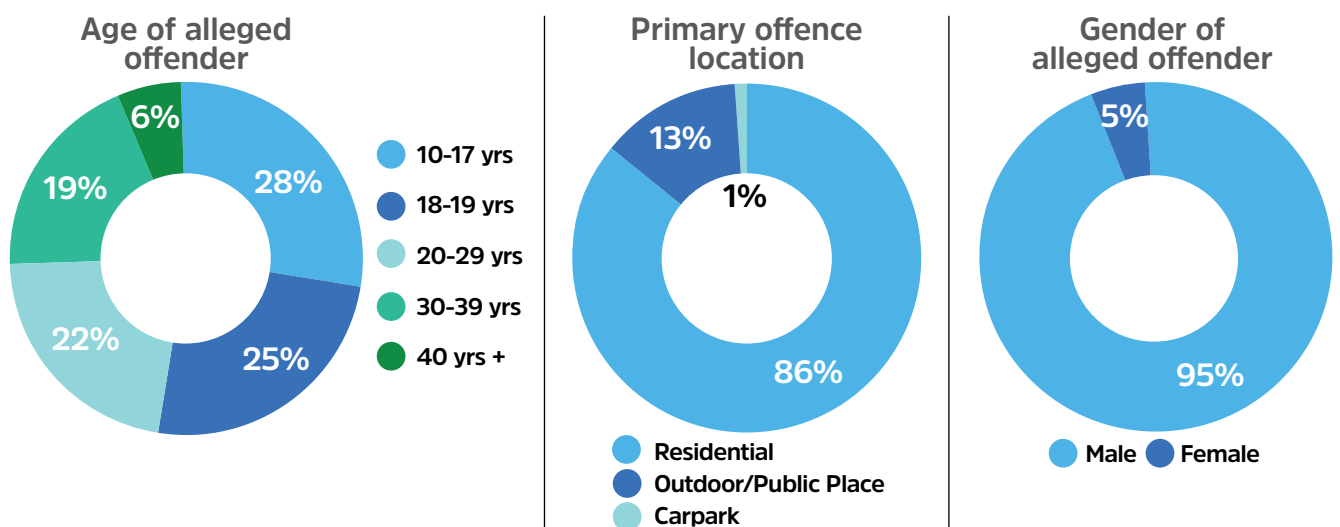

Density
High
Medium
Low

Key elements of motor vehicle theft offences

The information contained within this synopsis has been obtained from the most recent data set available and is for the year 2021. Key takeaways from the data include:
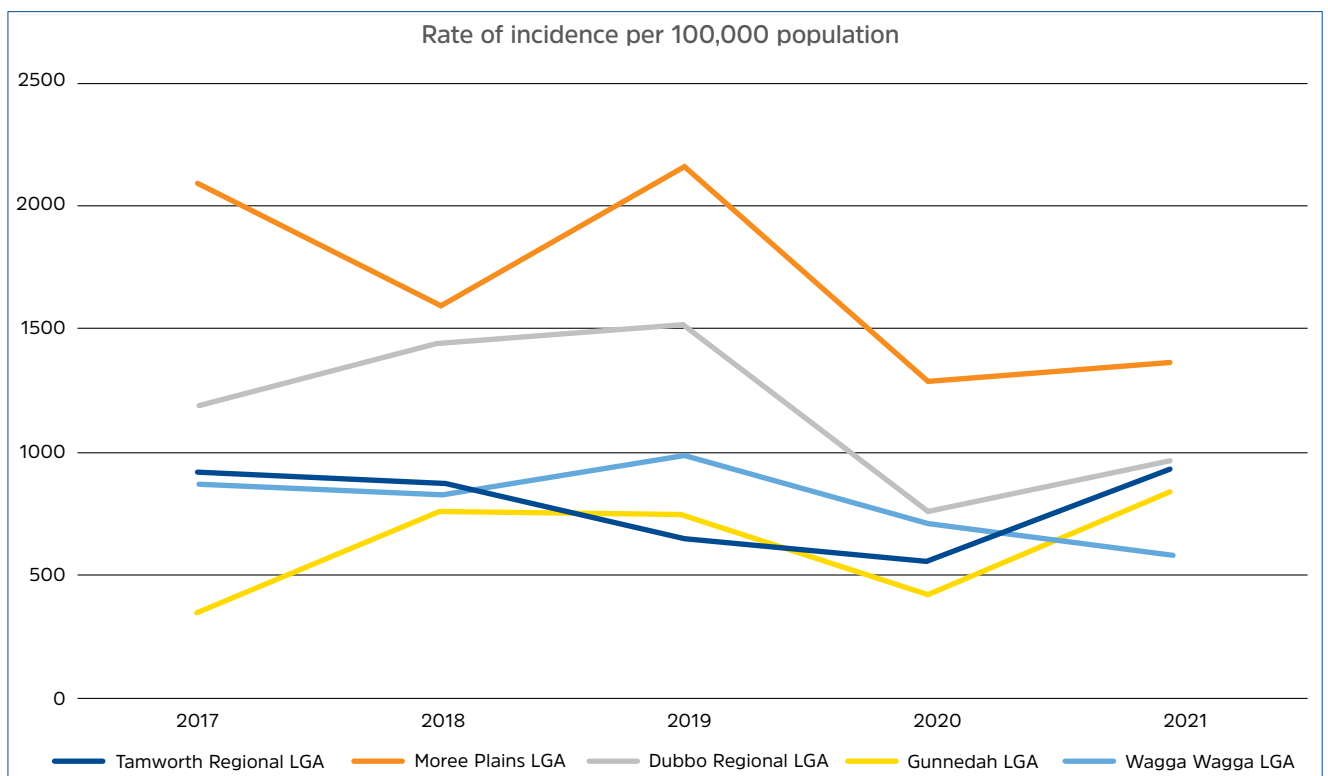
While no one area was targeted, vehicles were most commonly stolen during darkened hours and from a residential premises.

The most common method of theft is by the offender breaking into and stealing the vehicle's keys from residence not properly secured.

The offender in this type of offence is likely to be male and aged under 19 years old.

Age of alleged offender

- 28% 10-17 yrs
- 25% 18-19 yrs
- 22% 20-29 yrs
- 19% 30-39 yrs
- 6% 40 yrs +

Primary offence location

- 86% Residential
- 13% Outdoor/Public Place
- 1% Carpark

Gender of alleged offender

- 95% Male
- 5% Female

Breakdown of steal from a motor vehicle offences over a five-year period as contrasted to other comparable LGA's

Rate of incidence per 100,000 population

- Tamworth Regional LGA
- Moree Plains LGA
- Dubbo Regional LGA
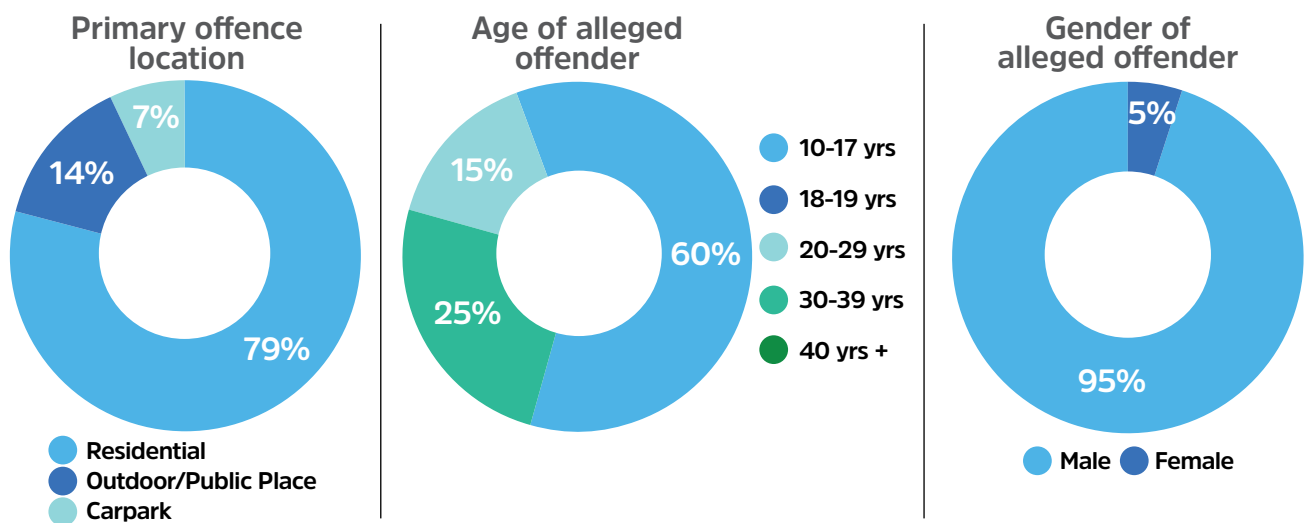- Gunnedah LGA
- Wagga Wagga LGA

Key elements for the offence of stealing from a motor vehicle

The information contained within this synopsis has been obtained from the most recent data set available and is for the year 2021. Key takeaways from the data include:
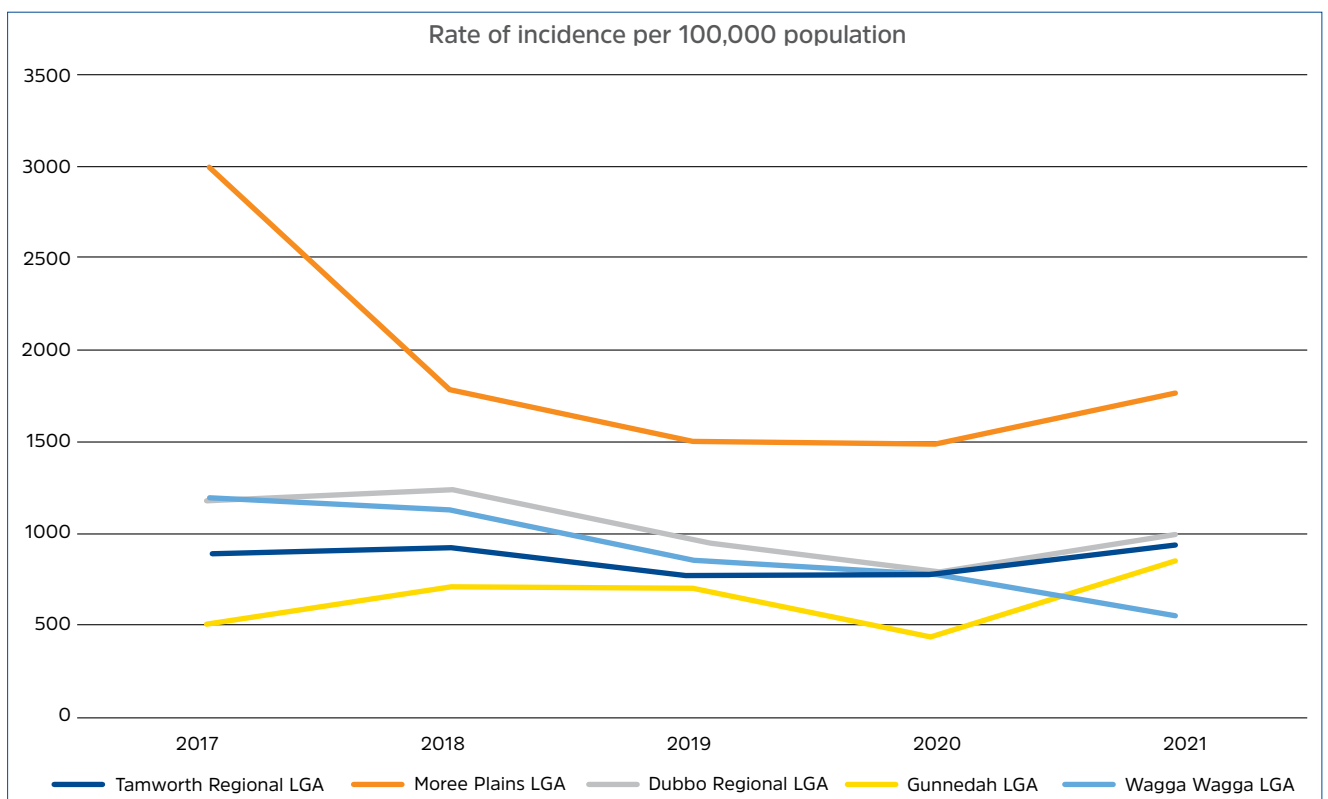
Property was almost always stolen from vehicles in a residential setting, during darkened hours;

This offence is mostly opportunistic. While not the sole method of entry, victim's vehicles were often unlocked and valuables left in plain sight. This may act as encouragement for would-be offenders to view the vehicle as a soft target.
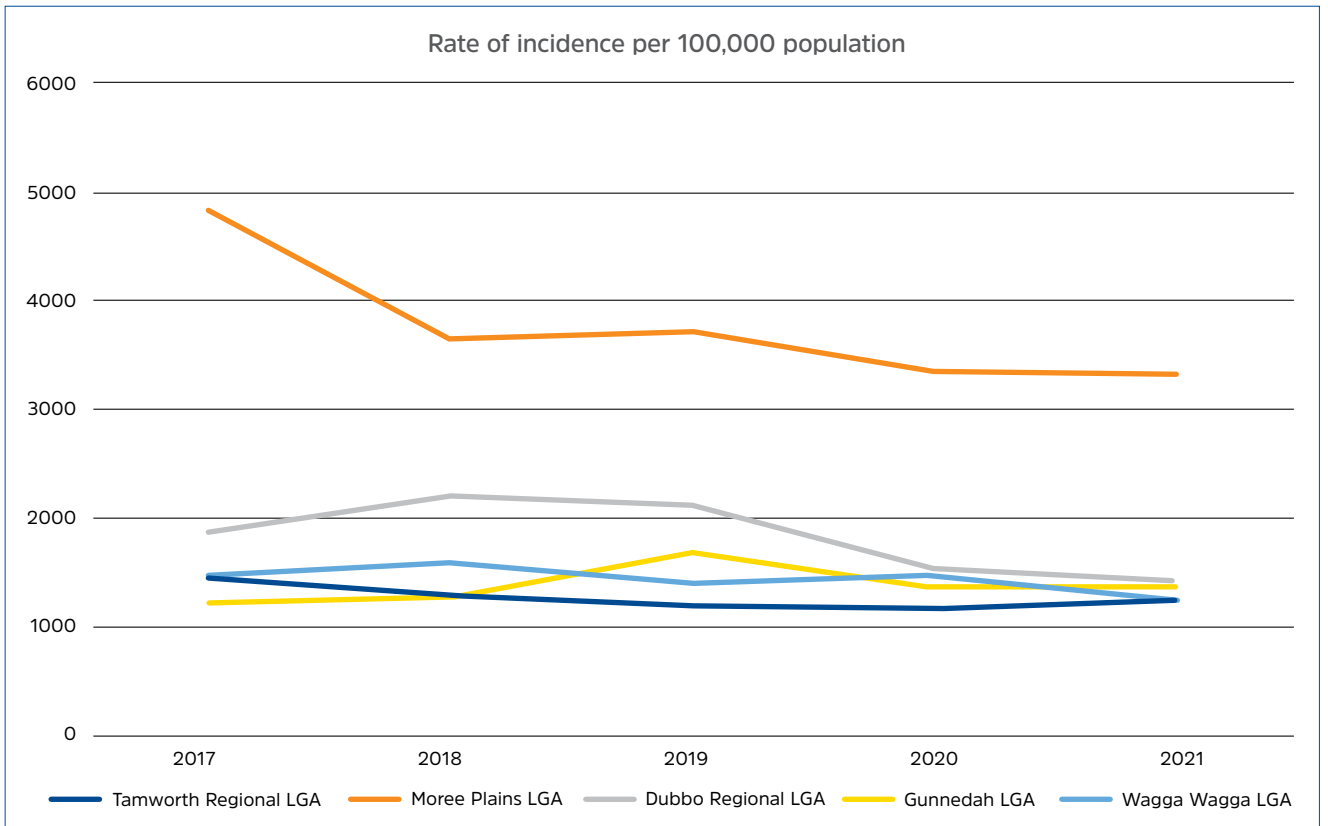
The offender in this type of offence is likely to be male and aged under 17 years old.
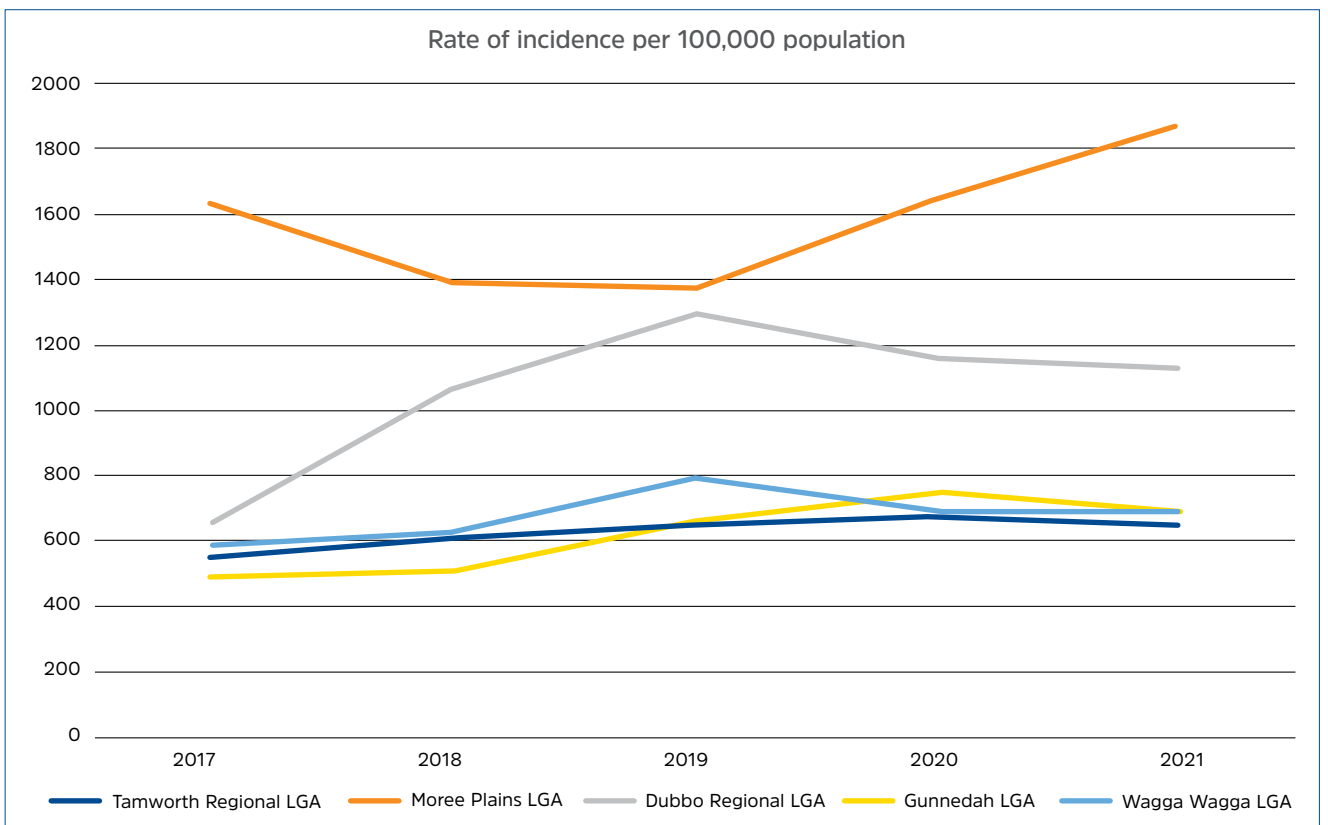
Primary offence location

- Residential
- Outdoor/Public Place
- Carpark

Age of alleged offender

- 10-17 yrs
- 18-19 yrs
- 20-29 yrs
- 30-39 yrs
- 40 yrs +

Gender of alleged offender

- Male
- Female

Breakdown of break and enter – dwelling offences over a five-year period as contrasted to other comparable LGA's

Rate of incidence per 100,000 population

- Tamworth Regional LGA
- Moree Plains LGA
- Dubbo Regional LGA
- Gunnedah LGA
- Wagga Wagga LGA

Breakdown of malicious damage offences over a five-year period as contrasted to other comparable LGA's

Rate of incidence per 100,000 population

| | Tamworth Regional LGA | Moree Plains LGA | Dubbo Regional LGA | Gunnedah LGA | Wagga Wagga LGA |

Breakdown of domestic related violence offences over a five-year period as contrasted to other comparable LGA's

Rate of incidence per 100,000 population

| | Tamworth Regional LGA | Moree Plains LGA | Dubbo Regional LGA | Gunnedah LGA | Wagga Wagga LGA |

What did we learn in preparing the plan?

In preparation for the delivery of this Plan, extensive consultation was undertaken with our community. This consultation process included liaising with local community groups including our youth, disability groups, business representatives and local law enforcement. We also undertook a detailed analysis of Council's Customer Request Management System (CRMS) and launched an online Community Safety Survey.

This interaction provided an insight into the community's sense of safety as well as an understanding of what its expectations of Council are. While Council is not singly responsible for preventing crime in the Region, the consultation provided an opportunity for our community to have an influence on the future direction of safety and crime prevention strategies in our region.

The experiences shared by residents allowed us to gather a perspective of issues which may have otherwise been unnoticed by the broader community. The diversity of members brought together across our local community groups provided opinions and raised concerns from their personal perspective.

Tamworth Regional Council's Customer Request Management System (CRMS) provides a direct gateway for customers to interact with Council operated services. This can be done via many electronic applications, telephone or face-to-face. All requests are referred to the appropriate Council officer or section for action. The CRMS proved a valuable resource in identifying safety issues across the region and revealing how they were resolved.

The online survey provided an avenue to connect with a broad-cross section of the community, enabling contributors to voice their opinion anonymously. The process reinforced our understanding that perceptions of safety and crime were influenced by a number of factors including:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Residential locality;
- Past experience of crime; and significantly
- Social media commentary.

What constitutes the perception of an unsafe situation can differ dramatically between individuals, often dependent on personal experience or what information that person has access to. Similarly, levels of crime can seem overwhelming to some, while others will be unconcerned. For these reasons, it was essential that the many different experiences our community members shared were considered as we seek to address both actual and perceived crime and safety issues.

It is also important the community view social media comments with caution. At times an individual's opinion may be misrepresented as facts. This can lead to an inaccurate post which may gain momentum and cause a significant but unnecessary negative impact.

What did the community tell us?

These are the views as expressed by community members throughout the consultation process.

Perception of safety:

- Our Region is a place where you generally feel safe;
- Women are more likely to state they feel unsafe when walking alone or when home alone at night;
- Men are more likely to state they felt unconcerned at night and were comfortable in most situations;
- Residents aged 50 years + are more likely to be concerned about safety;
- Younger people are more likely to have committed, experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour;
- CCTV provides a sense of security;
- Most people felt safer at festivals or larger events due to the presence of police or security;
- The majority of people spoken to had not personally been the victim of a crime however knew someone personally who had been.

Your main concerns:

- Personal safety, especially when walking alone at night;
- Incidence in the crime categories of Motor Vehicle Theft, Stealing from Motor Vehicles and Break and Enter to homes;
- Insufficient numbers of Police or a lack of adequate resourcing;
- Levels of youth crime;
- Members of the community who are experiencing homelessness;
- Areas of the Region having insufficient lighting or with lighting that is not working;
- Areas of footpaths in the Central Business District being obstructed by objects and structures;
- Inadequate access to public transport during festivals or large public events.

You want Council to prioritise:

- Fostering a resilient and connected community to increase safety;
- Increased services for youth and the elderly;
- An expansion of CCTV coverage into more vulnerable areas of the region;
- Improved lighting, roads and pathways to ensure safety while travelling;
- Safe design of the region including recreation facilities and new developments;
- The promotion of crime prevention and safety education to the community;
- Support for housing for the disadvantaged and/or vulnerable community members;
- Development of programs to connect disengaged youth with appropriate services;
- Creation of programs aimed at connecting with disengaged youth.
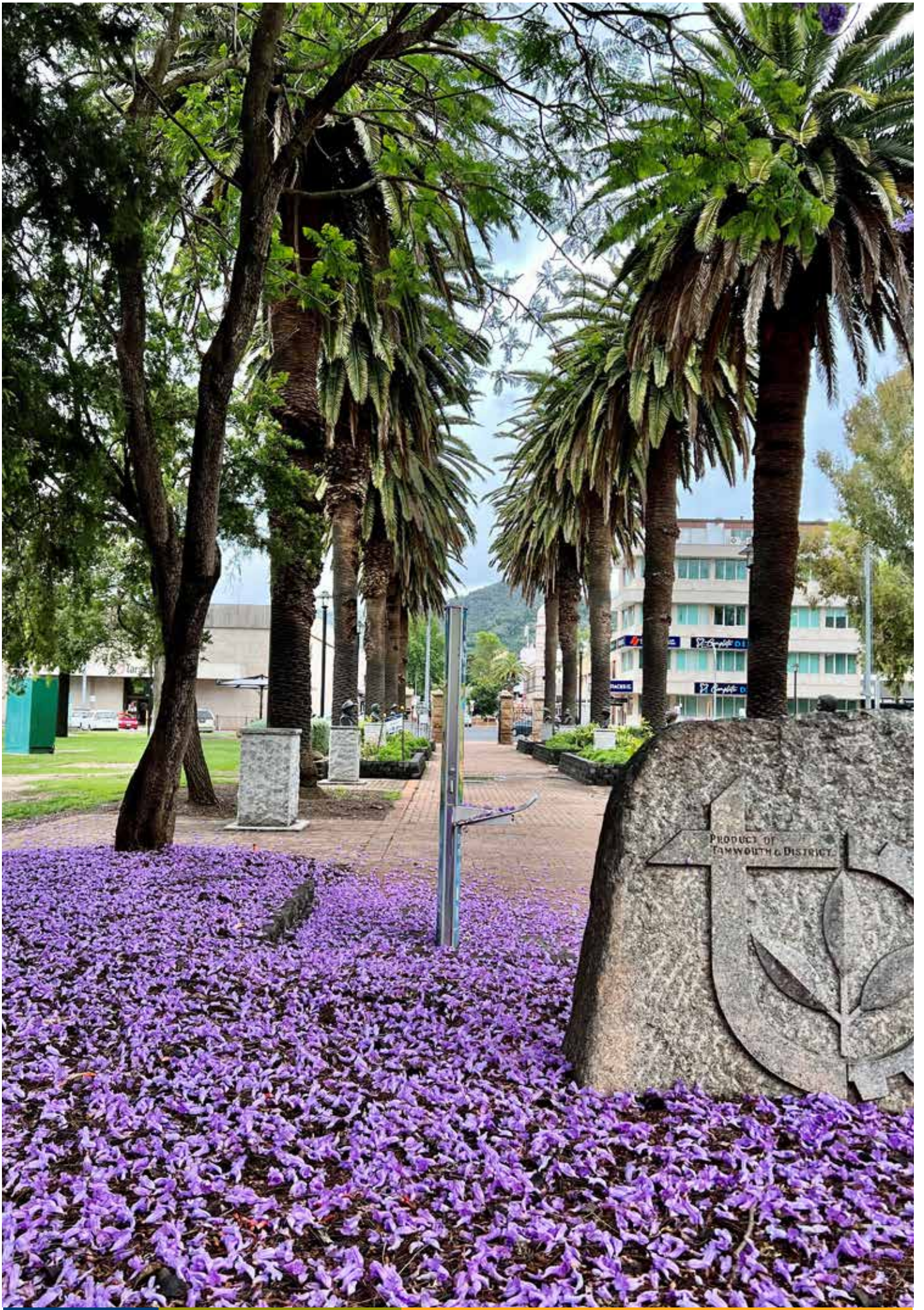
Our focus moving forward

As this Plan was being developed, we heard from and considered input from our partners, service providers, stakeholders and our community members. Additionally, information was drawn upon from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, available crime statistics as well as broader government and local strategic plans.

The Plan recognises that a number of underlying causes or factors contribute to crime and the overall feeling of safety. Working with the relevant services and authorities, to tackle identified priority offences, it is hoped our residents will experience an improved overall perception of crime and safety. Through consultation with key stakeholders, analysing available data and understanding our community's perception of crime, four priority offences have been identified. Those being:

- Motor vehicle theft;
- Stealing from motor vehicles;
- Break and enter – dwellings; and
- Malicious damage.

A focus will also be placed on domestic related violence and anti-social behaviour.

Targeting the priority offences will require a collaborative approach with stakeholders and be guided by advice from local police. A common feature linking the priority offences is that they are often opportunistic, that being crimes committed without planning and strongly impacted by the surrounding environment. As such, Council's response will be to implement strategies which directly target the three main contributors of opportunistic crime.

- Rational Choice – whereby offenders weigh up risk versus reward when considering committing a crime;
- Routine Activity – whereby during regular activity, offenders uncover vulnerable targets and perceive a lack of safeguards; and
- Crime Pattern – whereby offenders familiarise themselves with specific routes and look for opportunities for crime based on their awareness of specific targets within that recognised space.

Council also recognises the identified primary offences are more likely to be committed by young people. With this in mind it is important that we work with our partners to continue implementing diversion programs targeting at risk youth.

Additionally, Council will continue to support police in its operations by applying supplementary detection and deterrent measures. These measures include a range of CCTV options, enforcement of local government regulatory functions and where practicable, introducing traffic controls.

Council will also contribute to reducing domestic and family violence by collaborating with other agencies to raise awareness and support the many beneficial programs.

More broadly, Council will focus on two safety objectives, which are to create and maintain safe spaces and safe people. These two objectives contain individual categories and are accompanied by strategies aimed at protecting and connecting our community, reducing crime including our priority offences, improving safety and supporting our partners to manage broader social issues.

Priority Offence 1 - Motor Vehicle Theft

"The taking of another person's motor vehicle illegally and without permission with the intent of temporarily or permanently depriving the owner or possessor of the use of the motor vehicle. Includes the police incident category of stolen vehicle/vessel".

Priority Offence 1 – Motor Vehicle Theft						
Objective:	To deliver Community Education, Risk Assessment, Awareness and Protection programs which provide residents with information aimed at improving personal security and reducing the risk of crime. To engage with 'at risk' youth, encouraging participation in diversion programs aimed at re-directing those individuals away from crime and toward positive, meaningful outcomes. To support enforcement programs using available resources such as fixed and mobile CCTV systems.					
Expected Outcome	Increased understanding in the community about personal security measures and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques which aim to reduce opportunities for crime to occur. 'At risk' youth to be engaged in constructive programs, leading to positive outcomes. Increased community education and youth engagement which will lead directly to a reduction in the incidence of Motor Vehicle Theft offences in the region.					
Ref	**Action Description**	**Lead Agency**	**Partnership Opportunities**	**Priority**	**Funding required**	**Performance Indicator**
1.1	Investigate funding opportunities for Community Safety and Crime Prevention initiatives	TRCSWG	State and Federal Authorities Non-Government Agencies TRC Local community groups	Medium	No	Number of funding opportunities identified and secured
1.2	Distribute educational packages promoting better security habits.	Oxley Police	TRC	Immediate	Yes	Number of packages developed Number of packages distributed
1.3	Identify alternate platforms to distribute awareness messages to the community.	TRC	TRC Oxley Police Tamworth Business Chamber Local community groups Regional Media Outlets	Immediate	Yes	Number of platforms identified Number of programs completed
1.4	Explore opportunities to fund engagement programs targeting 'at risk' youth.	TRC	Regional Youth Centre Oxley Police Dept of Education State Authorities PCYC	Immediate	Yes	Number of engagement programs implemented

Priority Offence 2 – Stealing from Motor Vehicle

"The unlawful taking of parts or contents from another person's motor vehicle illegally and without permission".

Priority Offence 2 – Stealing from Motor Vehicle						
Objective:	To deliver Community Education, Risk Assessment, Awareness and Protection programs which provide residents with information aimed at improving personal security and reducing the risk of crime. To engage with 'at risk' youth, encouraging participation in diversion programs aimed at re-directing those individuals away from crime and toward positive, meaningful outcomes.					
Expected Outcome	Increased understanding in the community about personal security measures and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques which are aimed at reducing opportunities for crime to occur. 'At risk' youth to be engaged in constructive programs, leading to positive outcomes. Increased community education and youth engagement which will lead directly to a reduction in the incidence of Steal from Motor Vehicle offences in the region.					
Ref	**Action Description**	**Lead Agency**	**Partnership Opportunities**	**Priority**	**Funding required**	**Performance Indicator**
2.1	Distribute educational packages promoting better security habits.	Oxley Police	TRC	Immediate	Yes	Number of packages developed Number of packages distributed
2.2	Identify alternate platforms to distribute awareness messages to the community.	TRC	TRC Oxley Police Tamworth Business Chamber Local community groups Regional Media Outlets	Immediate	Yes	Number of platforms identified Number of programs completed
2.3	Offer free safety audits of commercial carparks and visitor accommodation centres to minimise the risk of criminal activity.	Oxley Police	TRC Tamworth Business Chamber	Medium	No	Number of safety audits conducted
2.4	Explore opportunities to fund engagement programs targeting 'at risk' youth	TRC	Regional Youth Centre Oxley Police Dept of Education State Authorities PCYC	Immediate	Yes	Number of engagement programs implemented

Priority Offence 3 – Break and Enter – Dwelling

"The unlawful entry of a structure with the intent to commit an offence where the entry is either forced or unforced. Dwellings include residential premises such as houses, home units or villas. Includes the police incident categories of break, enter and steal, break, enter intent to steal, break, enter and commit other felony, break, enter intent to commit other felony".

Priority Offence 3 – Break and Enter – Dwelling	
Objective:	To deliver Community Education, Risk Assessment, Awareness and Protection programs which provide residents with information aimed at improving personal security and reducing the risk of crime. To engage with 'at risk' youth, encouraging participation in diversion programs aimed at re-directing those individuals away from crime and toward positive, meaningful outcomes.
Expected Outcome	Increased understanding in the community about personal security measures and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques which aim to reduce opportunities for crime to occur. Future subdivision developments in residential areas to incorporate CPTED measures.

Ref	Action Description	Lead Agency	Partnership Opportunities	Priority	Funding required	Performance Indicator
3.1	Distribute educational packages promoting better security habits and encouraging increased safety measures including the installation of CCTV in targeted locations	Oxley Police	TRC Local Community Groups	Immediate	Yes	Number of packages developed Number of packages distributed
3.2	Offer workshops to interested community groups on safety awareness techniques	Oxley Police	TRCSWG TRC Local Community Groups	Medium	No	Number of workshops conducted Number of attendees Number of enquiries made
3.3	Local Development Control Plan review to include enhanced CPTED measures	TRC		Medium	Yes	CPTED measures included in DCP
3.4	Future Council developments in residential areas to incorporate enhanced CPTED measures	TRC		Immediate	Yes	CPTED measures included in future developments

Priority Offence 4 – Malicious Damage

"The wilful and unlawful destruction, damage or defacement of public or private property or the pollution of property or a definable entity held in common by the community. Includes the police incident categories of graffiti, malicious damage to property, public place - damage fountain/wall etc and public place - damage shrine/monument".

Priority Offence 4 – Malicious Damage						
Objective:	To improve security-related infrastructure and implement remediation works in existing and emerging 'hotspots'. An additional education and awareness program aimed at addressing contributing social issues will also be delivered.					
Expected Outcome	A reduction in the incidence of Malicious Damage offences.					
Ref	**Action Description**	**Lead Agency**	**Partnership Opportunities**	**Priority**	**Funding required**	**Performance Indicator**
4.1	Undertake safety audits and identify existing and emerging 'hotspots'	Oxley Police	TRC	Immediate	No	Number of audits undertaken Number of hot spots identified
4.2	Implement remedial actions to rectify detected damage on public land within designated timeframes	TRC	Local Community Groups	Immediate	Yes	% of detected issues on public land rectified within timeframes
4.3	Advocate for increased Police patrols and improved response times around identified 'hotspots'	TRC	Oxley Police	Immediate	No	Increased police presence around identified hots pots
4.4	Explore opportunities for funding to install CCTV in identified 'hotspots'	TRCSWG	TRC State and Federal Authorities	Long term	Yes	Number of funding opportunities identified.
4.5	Explore opportunities for funding for graffiti diversion projects such as the installation of legal graffiti walls	TRCSWG	TRC State and Federal Authorities	Medium Term	**Yes**	Number of funding opportunities identified and projects introduced

Community safety objectives

Safe spaces

Our goal is to design and maintain public places to discourage crime and enhance public safety.

Safe spaces include:

Open spaces

- **Parks**
- **Sporting facilities**
- **Open community spaces**

Neighbourhoods

- **Community facilities**

Business

- **Community spaces in business districts**

Transport

- **Roads**
- **Footpaths**
- **Cycleways**
- **School zones**
- **Public transport**

Safe people

Working with our partners our goal is to ensure every community member feels safe in all aspects of their life.

Areas we will target:

Residents

- **Crime Prevention**
- **Awareness Programs**

Visitors

- **Accessible information**
- **Safety Awareness**

Community

- **Create connected and resilient residents**
- **Encourage robust partnerships**
- **Maintain Working Groups**
- **Advocate for local Support and funding**

Objective 1: Safe spaces

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Open Spaces	To create an environment that is safe, secure and welcoming, one that meets the needs and desires of its intended users. To reduce opportunities for crime by introducing situational crime prevention techniques.	• Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles during the planning and maintenance of the space; • Ensure governance of relevant legislation is of the highest standard in areas such as planning, the responsible ownership of companion animals and traffic management; • As funding permits add additional layers of security to the space such as CCTV and sufficient lighting to deter anti-social and criminal activity; • Increase safety and support for at-risk or vulnerable groups by measures such as creating Smoke Free zones; • Manage anti-social behaviour through governance in areas such as the implementation of Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited areas; • Ensure adequate safety information is readily available to patrons of the space; • Undertake ongoing inspections of the space and conduct required maintenance in a timely manner; • Ensure the activation of strategies that create safe areas for events that cater to the community and visitors; • Enhance outdoor community spaces that are designed to encourage connection and a sense of ownership; • Investigate opportunities to create shared spaces or activity generators such as legal graffiti walls and recreational facilities;

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Neighbourhoods	To create residential areas that feel as safe as possible through design and maintenance of community spaces. To have communities that are connected, clean and well maintained with services readily accessible to the community. To ensure residents are informed and well equipped to deal with challenges as they arise.	• Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles during the planning and maintenance of the space; • Install appropriate lighting in key pedestrian areas; • Provide situational crime prevention options such as offering security assessments for victims of crime; • Create and distribute educational packages encouraging better security habits. • Ensure governance of relevant legislation is of the highest standard in areas such as swimming pool fencing, responsible ownership of companion animals, traffic management, overgrown vegetation, vermin control and chimney smoke; • Provide flexible mixed purpose facilities to accommodate the needs of the community; • Undertake regular inspections of Council owned property and conduct required maintenance or graffiti removal in a timely manner; • Investigate opportunities to revive a 'neighbourhood watch' scheme; • Invest in schemes that create socially connected communities;

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Businesses	To ensure local businesses feel supported and provided with a safe environment to conduct their profession without hindrance. To create an environment that is safe, secure and welcoming for all patrons.	• Provide well designed public areas that are accessible to all community members; • Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles during the planning and maintenance of the space; • Encourage businesses to enhance security of the space through measures such as the installation of CCTV; • Ensure governance of legislation is of the highest standard in areas such as planning, traffic management and local government regulations; • Enforce compliance with safety including fire safety, structural integrity, food safety, skin penetration services and beauty treatment; • Manage anti-social behaviour through governance in areas such as the implementation of Alcohol-Free Zones, Alcohol-Prohibited areas and Smoke-Free Zones; • Ensure adequate safety information is readily available to patrons of the space; • Undertake regular inspections of Council owned property and conduct required maintenance or graffiti removal in a timely manner; • Support the local Business Chamber to connect businesses by encouraging participation and networking with the local community; • Engage with the business community to build crime prevention capacity;

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Transport	To create a well-connected and efficient network that serves commuters and businesses, as well as citizens who opt to walk and cycle. To provide safe movement for commuters.	• Deliver well maintained roads, pathways and cycleways; • Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles during the planning of the network; • Provide the Local Traffic Committee with information and resources to continue providing safe roads and paths for use by all members of the community; • Continue to monitor and implement 'Black Spot' projects; • Advocate for strengthened transport networks across the region as outlined in Blueprint 100; • Develop a network of paths and trails that can be used by all commuters despite any physical limitations; • Continue to patrol school zones to protect our youth; • Collaborate with partners and key stakeholders to raise safety awareness while travelling across the network; • Explore initiatives to enhance and expand facilities associated with the Tamworth Regional Airport precinct; • Advocate for and support opportunities to increase frequency and improve public transport accessibility across the region;

Objective 2: Safe people

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Residents	To create an environment that enables our residents to be empowered to live safe, active lives while feeling connected to the broader community. To remove barriers which may prevent community members accessing support mechanisms or opportunities. To enable our residents to have access to a wide range of education, housing and employment opportunities.	• Promote education regarding online safety and the use of safe language with a view to reduce harassment; • Investigate opportunities with partners and advocate for equitable, affordable and accessible housing; • Work with community service providers to support people who are homeless or sleeping rough in open spaces; • Collaborate with key stakeholders to access the extent of family violence and advocate for appropriate community action; • Support the delivery of services to address unsafe behaviours in domestic relationships and broader connections within our community; • Provide awareness packages with an emphasis on programs, services and events;

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Visitors	To provide services that support visitor safety and encourage safe participation in events and local experiences. To maintain a region that is welcoming and accessible to all visitors.	• Work with Federal and State partners to ensure transport networks that connect our region with other areas are well maintained and safe; • Deliver a well-maintained local transport network including roads, pathways and cycleways; • Ensure the highest standards are maintained in the health of food premises and visitor accommodation through governance in relation to relevant legislation; • Create safe open spaces such as parks and playgrounds that are well managed and inviting to guests; • Ensure safety is considered when developing or supporting events that attract visitors to the region; • Provide safe management of events including the implementation of enhanced mitigation strategies; • Ensure safety and wayfinding information is easily accessible;

Category	Desired Outcome	Strategy
Community	To empower our residents to live safe, active lives while feeling connected to the broader community. To create a community that has the capacity to confront difficult and complex issues, while knowing their rights and values are respected. To achieve a region that proactively manages risks to the community and the environment.	• Encourage growth and employment opportunities by delivering a prosperous economy with high living standards as outlined in 'Blueprint 100'; • Identify partnerships and investigate initiatives that connect the community and reduce social isolation; • Collaborate with community working groups and service providers to understand and deliver programs that target the needs of our community; • Increase awareness of information and support services available to the community to provide better support, connections and outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances; • Investigate and advocate for additional resources to support our youth, the elderly, families and the vulnerable; • Continue to improve emergency management in potential threat areas such as bushfire risk management, flood mitigation; • Manage anti-social behaviour through governance in areas such as the implementation of Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited areas; • Advocate for additional resourcing for local police; • Identify safety initiatives and deliver positive messaging campaigns;

Monitoring and evaluation

While the monitoring and evaluation of this Plan is ultimately the responsibility of the Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group, Council's Community Safety Officer will oversee the implementation of each strategy. The Community Safety Officer will also be responsible for assessing any changes in offending behaviour, incidence of crime and community sentiment.

The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan will be reported on in the following ways:

a)   Report to the Tamworth Regional Community Safety Working Group on a quarterly basis;

b)   Report six monthly as part of Council's Corporate Performance Management system;

c)   Report annually as part of Council's Annual Report and Annual Operational Plan.

Additionally, Council will seek the Attorney General's endorsement of the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan as a 'Safer Community Compact'. Reporting on the effectiveness of the compact will be undertaken in accordance with *Section 41 of the Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997.*

This Plan has a projected life span of an initial five-year period with review and amendment as required in 2028.

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