Engage, Respect, Support.

youth action plan
2008 – 2012

Ararat Rural City
Contents Page

Mayors Introduction................................................................. 3

Acknowledgements............................................................... 4

Introduction: Purpose of the Action Plan............................... 4

Methodology used to develop this Action Plan....................... 5

What we found ........................................................................ 6

The Action Plan........................................................................ 10

Appendices............................................................................... 14
Mayor’s Introduction

“I am pleased to introduce Ararat Rural City Council’s Youth Action Plan, a clear framework that will help Council improve opportunities for young people in our community over the next four years.

This Action Plan was developed by Council’s Community Development team in consultation with hundreds of young people living in our community including students from Ararat Community College, Marian College and Lake Bolac College. Feedback was also received from staff of council, fellow councillors and many groups and organisations involved with young people in our community.

I am confident that the Action Plan responds to the important issues and opinions that were unearthed during the community consultation process, and will help council and the broader community to better engage, value and respect our young people.

For council, the main changes we should see over the next few years is an increased number of young people involved in community decision making, a greater recognition of the contribution young people make to our community and a greater presence of young people around council!

There will also be improved opportunities for young people to bring to the table creative ideas that will deliver more excitement and atmosphere to events and activities across our local sporting, cultural and entertainment environments.

Council looks forward to giving our young people a stronger voice and more responsibility in decision making. Not only does this make living in our municipality more appealing to young people– it strengthens relationships across our entire community and closes the generation gap.”

Fay Hull
Mayor - Ararat Rural City Council
October 2008
Acknowledgments

Ararat Rural City Council would like to thank each individual and group that have contributed to the creation of this Youth Action Plan. Their time and input into this project has been invaluable in forming and developing this plan.

Special thanks must go to Lauren Shea and Rose Rowe, two very important staff members at council, for coordinating the development of this Action Plan.

Introduction: Purpose of the Action Plan

The Ararat Rural City Council Youth Action Plan has been developed over an 18-month period and focuses on young people aged 12 to 25 years living in Ararat, its surrounding townships and outlying areas.

The Plan identifies the aspirations of our young people and their vision for the future, what young people see as the community's assets and strengths, and where there are opportunities for improvement. These were all identified through consultation with young people, service providers and the wider community.

The Action Plan enables Council to provide a framework for how we will work with young people over the next four years, the broader community and agencies to support young people in our community.

Council recognises that we are a key player in shaping a community that is responsive to young people, but also understand that we are not the only stakeholder. We recognise that there are many agencies and organisations in the community already doing excellent work.

This Action Plan outlines council's commitment to our young people, and works within the context of State government policies and the goals and long-term objectives of Council as laid out in its Council Plan.

The Department for Victorian Communities also released Connecting Young People in Local Communities - A Guide for the Development of a Local Government Youth Charter. This document encourages youth participation and their direct involvement in decision making. These two publications have been influential in the creation of this Action Plan, its recommendations mirroring the desired aforementioned outcomes.

Coinciding with these two initiatives, council's Strategic Plan [Council Plan 2006/10] recognised the need for the preparation of a Youth Action Plan (under the key strategies for Social and Recreation 7.2). This Action Plan is a project coordinated and developed by the Community Development department and it is Council's aim to respond to the ongoing aspirations, vision, needs and concerns held by our young people.

The focus of the Ararat Rural City Council Youth Action Plan is what we as an organisation can do for young people and defines our responsibilities to young people in our community.
Methodology used to develop this Action Plan

Consultation and Engagement

Consultation and community engagement were fundamental to the development of this Action Plan and occurred at many stages throughout its development.

Stakeholders consulted with included approximately 400 students surveyed through the three secondary schools in the municipality and young people consulted with through Focus Group discussions.

These Focus Groups were targeted through Marian College and LenZone! Youth Resource Centre, including those who use programs there such as the Young Mothers Group. Youth workers and those working for organisations that work toward youth outcomes were also consulted via group meetings and one-on-one interviews (refer to the Appendices for a full list of participants).

Representatives from Ararat’s surrounding townships including Streatham, Tatyoon, Wickliffe, Buangor, Willaura, Elmhurst, Pomonal, Lake Bolac and Moyston were also consulted with. These individuals were primarily involved with the young community through sport and recreational pursuits.

Community Profile

Statistics were gathered from various sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Community Indicators Victoria Project, the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (current and projected figures), and have been referred to in the development of this Action Plan.

Literature Review

A literature review and analysis of relevant documents and reports was conducted, including other Council Youth Strategies, Community Action Plans, various publications by the Department for Victorian Communities, Ararat Rural City’s Council Plan, Recreation and Open Space Strategy and 2005 Healthy Communities Plan, the Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership Youth Mental Health and Social Wellbeing Health Promotion Plan, the Central Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network’s Inquiry into Retaining Young People in Rural Towns and Communities report and the Agency Agreement Action Plan that Ararat Rural City Council has with the Grampians Education Partnership, which recognises the Youth Options Guarantee.
What we found

An analysis of the statistics tells us several important things about the community profile of our young people in Ararat. From these statistics we can see that whilst our young population is showing slight growth in the short term, it is projected to decline steadily over the longer term.

In 2006, residents aged 12 to 17 years were 969 in number, representing 8.8% of the total population for this municipality. At the same time, young people aged between 18 and 24 were 674 in number, representing 6.1% of the total population (ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing [enumerated]).

An Inquiry into retaining young people in rural towns and communities conducted by the Rural and Regional Services Development Committee projected that young people in these two age categories are projected to fall to 1110 by 2016 and then fall again to 685 by 2031.

Based on feedback from secondary school student surveys where students were asked if they would remain living in Ararat Rural City once their education was complete, the reasons cited for moving away from Ararat were almost exclusively due to a perceived lack of employment and entertainment opportunities. This perception is supported by the data available on unemployment; almost one third of those under the age of 20 years are receiving Youth Start Allowance but not engaged in any kind of employment, education or training (Centrelink, 2006).

However, it is important to state that many people said that they enjoyed living in the area and intended to stay due to family connections and the enjoyable country lifestyle. These young people were mostly residing in one of the rural townships within the Ararat Rural City.

It is also important to note that the municipality has a small but significant number of young people living with a disability, the majority of which are receiving Centrelink support payments (Association for Children with a Disability, 2006).

A significant number of young parents also reside here who receive Centrelink parenting payments and five people aged 12 to 25 years are currently enrolled in programs at McGregor House. Many of the concerns raised by our young people were reflected by the concerns raised by stakeholders involved in the project, the most obvious ones being underage drinking, smoking, drug use, and the need for appropriate entertainment. These two issues are connected in that many young people report that drug and alcohol use are a means of escaping boredom and the ‘there’s nothing to do here’ factor.

Another recurring theme was the way the adult community views young people in the community. Young people felt that they were often not respected or recognised for their skills and abilities and contributions they make to community life.

Many of the issues raised by young people highlight the fact that, while there are several programs and services in place that address these issues, there are still some gaps that Council can assist in closing.
Following are the key themes that arose from the consultation and engagement process held with young people, agencies, organisations and other community stakeholders.

**Major issues emerging from the consultation process with young people**

- Underage drinking
- Smoking and drug use
- Bullying
- Peer Pressure
- Nutrition
- Lack of entertainment in Ararat Rural City
- Careless driving (ie. drink driving, speeding, etc.)
- Family Issues
- Vandalism
- Truancy
- The way they are viewed and treated by the adult population
- The need to be supported and sponsored in their sporting and cultural pursuits
- The need to be actively encouraged to be involved in their community
- The need to be encouraged to explore their options outside of Ararat Rural City for education and work, but also making it an appealing lifestyle option to return to in the future

**Major issues emerging from the consultation process with people who work with or spend recreational time with young people**

- The need to coordinate youth services in the area and for these organisations to create a working partnership with Ararat Rural City Council
- The need to recognise and celebrate youth diversity and culture
- The need to address issues around alcohol, drugs and unsafe sex
- The need for external organisations to inform and update Councillors about what is happening around youth in the area
- The need for long-term crisis housing in Ararat Rural City Council for young people
- The need for adequate public transport for education, recreation and entertainment purposes, especially for youth in our rural townships
- The need to address mental health issues and to recognise that young people suffering from mental health issues are not adequately recognised or supported
- The need to address issues specific to young people living with a disability
- The need for schools to have sufficient knowledge of youth services in the area

**Discussions with Community Leaders**

One on one consultation with community leaders from each of the smaller townships were conducted either in person or via telephone. These leaders were mostly involved with young people of their community through sport and recreation. Many are, or had been coaches. The major outcomes of this consultation with representatives of the smaller townships were that sporting activities were the main forms of entertainment and a good social outlet for young people. Many young people are kept busy with after-school work on the family farm.
Ararat is generally viewed as a hub for shopping, use of the YMCA and entertainment (such as Freeza events and the cinema.) However, many young people in these rural areas are not interested in sport or may be living in these towns due to the inexpensive rental prices. This raises the issue of what to provide for rural young people and how.

Many young people are not able to attend functions that they are interested in ‘in town.’ This raises the issue of transport and how to provide access to resources, programs, recreation and events for young people living in areas isolated by lack of public transport. Lake Bolac representatives reported that they use Ballarat as a hub for activities and entertainment rather than Ararat and did not feel a part of the municipality. Other smaller towns recognised that they are a part of Ararat Rural City and used the facilities offered in Ararat.

**Discussions with Industry Leaders**

Three employers of young people were consulted with. These businesses were Safeway Pty Ltd, Gason Pty Ltd and East Grampians Health Service. These businesses all recognised the need to retain young people in the area to bolster the workforce. Many businesses have put methods in place to achieve this.

Depending on the employer, these methods include offering student placements, graduate programs, work experience (EGHS), apprenticeships (Gason), keeping weekend/holiday employment open to university students (Safeway), participating in Careers Month and in the case of EGHS, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Careers Expo.

This is done as a means of specifically recruiting young people. Industry representatives recognise the importance of getting the message out to young people about employment opportunities at their place of business for the mutual benefit of industry and the younger workforce.

Small business operators were also consulted with. It was suggested that parents and caregivers of young apprentices/trainees can have a positive impact on their success by offering support, assistance and involvement.

**Major assets of living in Ararat Rural City emerging from the consultation process with young people**

Young people were also asked to list what they saw as the community’s assets. These are described below.

- The friendliness and feeling of community that comes with life in a small town
- Knowing many people
- Family ties
- Rural lifestyle: fresh air, wide-open spaces, etc.
- A feeling of safety
- Proximity to larger towns for activities
- The YMCA
- Sporting Clubs
- Alexandra Gardens
The Surveys of 400 students from Years 7 to 12 at the three secondary schools in Ararat Rural City (Ararat Community College, Lake Bolac College and Marian College) also provided us with additional information about access, information and entertainment.

What they revealed was that most young people use school, friends and TV/Radio as their main means of finding out about news, with family and the Ararat Advertiser also used to a lesser extent. Research undertaken by the Central Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network also reveals that instant messaging [SMS] is the most common form of communication amongst young people in our community.

Young people also said that they would like to see more information on free entertainment, recreational activities, employment opportunities, safe spaces for young people to congregate in and information about their health.

The facilities most used by young people in our community included the Cinema, recreation precincts, special community events (ie. Ararat Show) and Lenzone! Youth Resource Centre.

Young people see themselves as an asset to this community through the unique contribution they make and the life and atmosphere that they create in the Ararat Rural City.
The Action Plan

The information gathered has helped to develop a core set of values, four key commitments and numerous strategies – together which form Council’s Action Plan. Council views this plan as a ‘living document’ and will review and revise [where necessary] the plan every 12 – 18 months to ensure it is meeting the needs of young people in our community.

Values

The following statements have been derived from extensive statewide consultation and the direct views of young people carried out as a part of the development of Local Government Youth Charters. These values are supported by the opinions of young people in our community and underpin our Action Plan.

- Young people are diverse and have individual potential
- Young people have a fresh outlook, are open minded, accepting and have new ideas
- Young people are entitled to be given responsibility and opportunities
- Young people are entitled to be treated equitably, with the same human rights as other members of the community
- Young people’s participation requires a mutual and supportive relationship between young people and the community, based on respect and acceptance
- Young people are concerned about the future, and can contribute to both local and global issues
- Young people are willing to express their own opinions to decision makers, help develop solutions and be accountable.

Our Commitment

Council has agreed to four key goals and has developed a number of strategies to address these. Our commitments are:

1] We will work with our partners to ensure that young people are not lost to, or within the education & training system in the Grampians region prior to completing Year 12 or its equivalent
2] We will, through strong leadership, provide opportunities to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people by being a student friendly workplace
3] We will consider the needs of young people in all council planning and decision making processes
4] We will celebrate the diversity of our young people and recognise the valuable contribution they make to our community.
OUR COMMITMENT: (1)
We will work with our partners to ensure that young people are not lost to, or within the education & training system in the Grampians region prior to completing Year 12 or its equivalent

Youth Options Guarantee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WE WILL</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work collaboratively to develop policies and facilitate arrangements that will assist the implementation of the Youth Options Guarantee</td>
<td>Actively participate in the CGLLEN Committee of Management</td>
<td>Attend at least 80% of the CGLLEN Committee of Management meetings annually</td>
<td>GM Community Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Include support of the Youth Options Guarantee in Council’s Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Youth Options Guarantee will appear in Council’s Strategic Plan [2009-2012]</td>
<td>GM Community Services</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage our constituent member organisations and staff to actively support the development of the Youth Options Guarantee at the local level through the CGLLEN</td>
<td>Brief managers about the Youth Options Guarantee initiative to raise their awareness of this initiative, and to gain support for it where the initiative has links with the work of their staff</td>
<td>Briefing to managers about the Youth Options Guarantee to occur at least annually [Council, Leadership Group &amp; Executive Management Team]</td>
<td>GM Community Services</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively promote and raise awareness of, the Youth Options Guarantee within our communities</td>
<td>Inform the community of the Youth Options Guarantee and the need for this initiative through regular communications to the Ararat Rural City ratepayers</td>
<td>An article relating to the Youth Options Guarantee is included in the Ararat Rural City newsletter or Rural City Focus at least twice a year</td>
<td>GM Community Services/Media Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR COMMITMENT (2):
We will, through strong leadership, provide opportunities to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people by being a student friendly workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WE WILL</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for young people to learn and experience working in local government</td>
<td>Look for opportunities to host students on work experience across all areas of council</td>
<td>Meet with CGLLEN staff &amp; Careers teachers to discuss opportunities to place young people on work experience, SWL, School Based Apprentices and Summer Placements</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture /HR Officer</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look for opportunities to host students on Structured Workplace Learning [SWL]</td>
<td>Aim to employ at least one young person on one of the above initiatives at council</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture /HR Officer</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employ a School Based apprentice or trainee</td>
<td>Develop partnerships with tertiary institutions within our region</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture /HR Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offer summer placements to students studying at University and other tertiary institutions</td>
<td>Work with careers teachers and CGLLEN to track the education pathways of young people and where possible offer summer placements to students relevant to their study</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture /HR Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OUR COMMITMENT (2) Continued:

**We will, through strong leadership, provide opportunities to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people by being a student friendly workplace**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WE WILL</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for young people to learn and experience working in local government cont..</td>
<td>Be a guest speaker at careers forums/expos for young people</td>
<td>Council participation in at least 80% of events/forums held</td>
<td>Relevant staff time</td>
<td>As requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen partnerships and links with education employment and training institutions and their networks</td>
<td>Be an active member in CGLLEN Skills and Pathways breakfast meetings</td>
<td>Attend at least 80% of meetings annually</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture/HR Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be an active member of the Grampians Education Partnership alliance</td>
<td>Attend at least 80% of meetings annually</td>
<td>GM Community Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support the CGLLEN Careers Month Expo and associated activities</td>
<td>Host an industry tour as a part of CGLLEN Careers Month</td>
<td>Manager People and Culture/HR Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide sponsorship to the CGLLEN for this event</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>Bi annual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OUR COMMITMENT (3):

**We will consider the needs of young people in all council planning and decision making processes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WE WILL</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To foster understanding and collaboration between young people, stakeholders and Council</td>
<td>Invite young people and/or/agencies representing young people to brief council and managers on matters of interest</td>
<td>Quarterly briefings held with council annually</td>
<td>Municipal Recreation Officer, Community Building Officer, GM Community Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Councillors’ to visit Student Representative Councils to discuss matters of interest</td>
<td>Annual visit to each of the three secondary colleges in the municipality</td>
<td>Councillor time</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actively participate in the Grampians Region Youth Affairs Network</td>
<td>Attend 80% of meetings annually</td>
<td>GM Community Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure young people are represented in planning and decision making forums of council</td>
<td>Have young people represented on committees, reference groups and working groups of council as they arise</td>
<td>Young people represented on groups and/or consulted with as a part of the process</td>
<td>Relevant staff time</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage young people’s input into township community action plans</td>
<td>Young people consulted with in the development and review of plans</td>
<td>Relevant staff time</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage young people’s input into any strategic planning undertaken by council that affects young people in the community</td>
<td>Young people represented on groups and/or consulted with as a part of the process</td>
<td>Relevant staff time</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**OUR COMMITMENT (4):**

*We will celebrate the diversity of our young people and recognise the valuable contribution they make to our community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WE WILL</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support young people to undertake activities and events that celebrate their diversity</td>
<td>Provide funding in Council’s budget to support youth identified and led activities</td>
<td>Number of activities and events held annually / An agreed budget allocation annually</td>
<td>Municipal Recreation Officer/Community Building Officer / $10,000</td>
<td>Ongoing / Reviewed annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support young people’s art and cultural achievements through regular exhibitions at the Ararat Regional Art Gallery</td>
<td>One exhibition held annually</td>
<td>Gallery Director and Municipal Recreation Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognise young people’s achievements in sporting and recreation pursuits through relevant local/regional and state awards</td>
<td>Nominate at least one young person annually through the recognised award programs</td>
<td>Municipal Recreation Officer</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise the contribution young people make to the community through volunteering</td>
<td>Showcase the volunteering work carried out by young people at the annual Volunteers Week held by council</td>
<td>At least one young person invited to speak on their volunteering activities annually at this event</td>
<td>Community Building Officer/Events Coordinator</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hold an exhibition at the Ararat Regional Art Gallery of young people’s contributions to the community through volunteering</td>
<td>Annually, leading up to and during Volunteers week in May</td>
<td>Gallery Director/Community Building Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profile young people’s contribution to the community through volunteering using local media</td>
<td>Profile a young person in the volunteers edition of the Rural City Focus during volunteers week in May</td>
<td>Community Building Officer/Media Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix One - Organisations consulted with

*Education and Training*
- Central Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network
- Workco Limited
- BEST Community Development
- Ararat Community College
- Marian College
- Lake Bolac College
- University of Ballarat TAFE

*Health*
- Grampians Community Health Centre
- Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership
- East Grampians Health Service and the Centre of Community Health
- Child and Family Services
- School Community Approaches to Drug Education group
- Ararat Rural City Council Maternal and Child Health Nurse
- McGregor House (Ararat & District Disabled Persons' Association)

*Recreation*
- LenZone! Youth Resource Centre
- The YMCA

*Cultural*
- Church of England
- Church of Christ

*Justice*
- Ararat Police

*Welfare*
- Wimmera Uniting Care
- Grampians Youth Network

*State Government*
- Department for Victorian Communities
- Regional Development Victoria

*Industry*
- Gason Pty Ltd
- Safeway Pty Ltd
- East Grampians Health Service
Appendix Two - Focus Group Discussion Points: Marian College

Ararat Rural City Council is currently constructing a Youth Strategy. Your input is essential for the creation of this document. The information that we receive from you, the youth of Ararat Rural City, will provide us with direction in order to make recommendations to our Councillors as to how we provide for local youth now and into the future.

Participant details: Age/Gender/Education/Employment

(6 Victorian Certificate of Education students/aged 16 to 18 years/4 female and 2 male /5 casually employed)

1. What is the unique contribution that you make to your community?

2. What do you expect from adults?

3. What do you expect from your community?

4. In what way is your local area important to you and your friends?

5. How would you:
   - Change it?
   - Preserve it?
   - Improve it?

6. Will you be staying in this community or coming back to it?
   - If so why?
   - If not why not?

7. What advice would you give to decision-makers about how to engage the energy and participation of young people?
Appendix Three – Youth Survey

Ararat Rural City Council is currently putting together a Youth Strategy for the young people of this area. The information you provide in this survey will be used primarily to identify issues that are affecting young people in Ararat Rural City. The strategy that comes out of this research will address these issues in order to make Ararat and its surrounding districts a better place for young people to live.

### About You

1. What is your age in years?

2. What is your gender?  Male □ Female □


4. How long have you lived in Ararat Rural City?

5. What do you identify as your cultural/religious background?

6. What is your current means of studying if any? (including any enrolments to study even if you haven’t commenced studying yet.)
   - Secondary School
   - VET/VCAL/Apprenticeship
   - Higher Education/University/TAFE
   - Distance Education
   - Alternative Education Program
   - Not currently studying

7. How would you describe your employment status?
   - Full-time
   - Part-time
   - Casual
   - Seasonal
   - On Youth Allowance
   - Too young to work or receive benefits
   - Job-seeker

8. Are you considering leaving this area in the years to come? If “Yes”, why?

### Information

9. Indicate the top 3 methods in which you usually find out about news, events and activities relating to young people:
   - School
   - Friends
   - LenZone!
   - Email
   - Websites
   - TV/Radio
   - Poster/Flyer
   - Family Member
   - Ararat Advertiser/Weekly Times
   - Other (please specify)
Indicate which issues you would like to see more information about:
- Employment Opportunities
- Free Entertainment
- Recreational Activities
- Health
- Safe areas for young people to meet
- Youth Support Services
- Other (please specify)

10. Is there a way that information could be provided in a more easily accessible manner?

**Health and Lifestyle**

11. How do you spend your weekends and after school/work time?

12. In the past 12 months have you attended or used any of the following (tick as many as you like):

- Cinema
- YMCA
- Outdoor Pool
- Sports Ovals
- Motorbike Track
- Skate Park
- Community Events (ie. Ararat Show)
- Music Events (Freeza/YMCA disco)
- Skills Workshops
- Youth Camps (Tribal Youth, etc.)
- Lenzon! Youth Centre
- Public Transport
- Tennis Courts
- Public Library

13. What other activities or services would you like to see in the district where you live?

14. How do you find information about youth support services and programs? (ie. ‘Happening Families’ at Lenzon!, ‘Tribal Youth’ at Grampians Community Health Centre.)

15. Are there any services or programs that you would like to access but are unable to?

- Why are you unable to access these services/programs?

16. In your opinion, what are the three major issues affecting young people in this district today?

17. What changes do you think are needed in order address these issues and make Ararat and its surrounding townships a better place for young people to live in?

**Public Space and Safety**

18. Do you ever have safety concerns when you are in public (eg. parks, neighbourhood?)

- No
- Yes

*If “Yes”, why?*

19. Do you feel welcome in public places?

20. What could be done to make public places more youth friendly?
## Transport

21. Does the current public transport system meet your current needs?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   
   *If ”No”, why not?*

22. What is your most common mode of transport?

23. What mode of transportation would you most likely use to access a recreational activity?
   - [ ] Walk
   - [ ] Bus
   - [ ] Bicycle
   - [ ] Lift with parents
   - [ ] Lift with friends
   - [ ] Drive myself

## Family and Multiculturalism

24. Do you have a lot of family in this region?

25. If you have few or no family members in this area, how does this impact on you?

26. If you are from a different cultural/religious background, does this have any impact on you at school, work or with friends and if so, in what ways?

## Any Last Words?

27. Do you feel that the opinions of young people are acknowledged and appreciated in this area?
   - If not, why not?

28. Can you name any ways that you know of where young people’s voices can be heard (ie. Forums, Youth Action Groups)?

29. What is good about living in this area?

30. How can we use these good things to make things even better?

31. Overall, are you happy living here?

32. Any other comments or suggestions?
Appendix Four - Focus Group Discussion Points: LenZone! Groups

1. Do you see yourself as an asset to this community?

2. What can you offer this community?

3. What positive things do you have to say about living here?

4. Thinking about these things, can you suggest different ways to use these positive things to our advantage? (This may need an example, ie. local halls are an asset which could be used for various activities.)

5. Do you want to stay living in Ararat in the future? If so, why? If not, why not?

6. What vision do you have for the future of Ararat?

7. If this vision is for Ararat to stay the same, why?

8. If this vision is for Ararat to change, how would it ideally look?

9. What can we do as a community to realistically make that happen?

10. Would you access any youth-related information on the Ararat Rural City Council website or post your own articles or artwork on there? What things would you like to see on it? (ie. a “What’s On” Youth Directory of activities, clubs, events, helpful stuff like health resources, etc.)

11. Would you like to see a youth page in the Ararat Advertiser? Would you read it? (How easily can you access the paper?) Would you contribute?

12. Do you feel that you are well informed?

13. How can we help to improve your access to information?

14. Where would you go if…
   - Your mates was kicked out of home
   - Your friend/girlfriend was pregnant
   - You weren’t happy at home
   - You were worried about a friend’s relationship (ie. someone being physically abused)
If you would like a copy of the Youth Action Plan, please contact Council’s Municipal Recreation Officer on (03) 5355 0256 or visit www.ararat.vic.gov.au/publications