

Cardinia Shire Council

Background to Arts and Culture Policy 2009–12



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1. ART AND CULTURE IN CARDINIA SHIRE

Cardinia Shire already has a strong local cultural heritage and arts community that is evolving. A brief overview of Cardinia Shire's cultural heritage and local arts scene follows.

1.1 Celebrating our local history today

Cardinia Shire's cultural history is celebrated and acknowledged by many local groups, historical societies and through a diverse range of festivals, events and projects, including Pakenham's Yakkerboo Festival dating back over 30 years; the St Sofia Festival, celebrating Koo Wee Rup's Italian history; Emerald's annual PAVE Festival, celebrating the region's long connection with the arts and aboriginal culture; and Gemco Players' One Act Play Festival, also in Emerald. A recent project reflecting the character and local heritage of the Shire was the Cardinia Embroidery Project (2006) consisting of eight large panels featuring historic buildings, parks and events in all of Cardinia's towns, which is on permanent display at the Cardinia Cultural Centre in Pakenham.

1.2 Cultural heritage

Cardinia Shire has a rich and diverse history for its community to enjoy. The area known today as Cardinia Shire was the traditional home of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people. Many of the Shire's place names reflect this aspect of our history, including the Shire's own name, which was taken from the Bunurong word Kar Din Yarr – meaning 'to look to the rising sun'. White settlement in the region dates from the 1830s when the land was taken up for farming, and towns like Emerald and Pakenham have been settled as communities since the 1850s. Cardinia has a range of interesting heritage sites such as Emerald's Nobelius Heritage Park, Gembrook's Kurth Kiln and many sites of indigenous historical and cultural significance have been, and continue to be found across the Shire.

1.3 Local arts scene and participation

A large proportion of the Shire's residents are actively engaged in creative activity – almost 50 per cent of the population, which is higher than the Victorian State average.¹ This includes activities such as painting, drawing and craft, playing a musical instrument, singing, performing and creative writing.

Consultation and research undertaken to develop this policy has identified the importance to recognise that there are many levels at which people are involved in arts and culture in Cardinia Shire; from community (such as in a voluntary or hobbyist role) to professional activity.

The range of arts and cultural based groups and organisations in Cardinia Shire is diverse. The Shire boasts several acclaimed performing arts companies and musical bands, as well as long established groups practicing in the fields of painting, photography and craft. Local art and cultural facilities include the Cardinia Cultural Centre in Pakenham and Emerald's new arts and community facility (due for completion in mid-2009).

Cardinia Shire is also privileged with a large number of artists and arts workers with strong links into communities. Many of these work in local schools, businesses and other community organisations such as libraries, community centres and neighbourhood houses. With higher than average participation in arts, it is essential that Cardinia Shire's community is well supported and that greater opportunities are developed and explored to connect professional and community arts activity.

¹Drawn from *Community Indicators Victoria Survey* at www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/cardinia (accessed 2/6/08).

2. KEY THEMES AND CHALLENGES

While Cardinia Shire already has a talented arts and cultural sector, a number of key themes and challenges need to be addressed for the sector to grow and become sustainable (these are detailed below).

2.1 Managing population growth

Cardinia Shire will continue to experience considerable growth with an expected population increase of almost 27 per cent by 2011. Cardinia Shire's population is located in three distinct areas known as the hills area, the growth area and southern rural regions, all growing at differing rates. As such, a major challenge is balancing the arts and cultural needs of the growing regions with those of the existing communities.

2.2 Strengthening our communities

Cardinia has a proud history of strong communities within its 30 townships, each with a unique history and character. However, issues relating to the disparity between townships and associated transport issues can result in the isolation and lack of identification and communication within a community. Arts-based projects providing greater focus and celebration of local identity as well as those that bring the community together and highlight our shared experiences need to be supported.

2.3 Access and participation for all

In meeting the challenges of growth and isolation, we must continue to support and strengthen all sections of our community by facilitating meaningful arts and cultural experiences for people of all abilities, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and geographically isolated communities.

Consultation undertaken for this policy placed a strong emphasis on engaging young people; recognising levels of social isolation and disengagement within Cardinia Shire. Specific strategies for increasing engagement with young people, particularly by encouraging school activity and working across Council business units to encourage arts projects for young people is required.

2.4 Valuing artists and arts activities

There is a need for recognising and promoting arts and culture as an important part of Cardinia Shire's lifestyle. Seeing arts activity as a valuable contribution to the community for residents and Council, will be a foundation for the development of many other strategies.

2.5 Resource and infrastructure

Community consultation highlighted venue access in the Shire as a major concern; encouraging a decentralisation of programs and revision of existing venues, particularly programming and venue hire costs. Similarly, the need for new, dedicated arts facilities and regional venues, provision of new programming (both community-based and professional across all disciplines) and support from Council officers in areas such as funding opportunities was also sought.

The lack of adequate public transport was identified in consultation as a major obstacle to participation and access to arts activity. Recent research data also suggests that Cardinia residents experience more transport limitations than the Victorian State average.² There is potential to utilise the arts as an accessible vehicle for exploring and highlighting transport needs in the Shire, as well as developing strategies for increasing transport opportunities to arts events.

2.6 Coordinating, networking and relationships

There is a strong need for Cardinia's growing arts community to be able to network and promote their skills, events and services to the rest of the regional sector and local community. Coordinated communications, community involvement, and the development and maintenance of relationships within the community and with Council, are needed to assist a strong and vibrant arts community.

² Drawn from Community Indicators Victoria Survey at www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/cardinia (accessed 2/6/08).

3. GLOSSARY AND KEY TERMS

Art

Art is a creative manifestation of the act of self-expression and intention by an individual or group. It refers both to the 'product' as well as the process. Art is not culture, but is often regarded as a subset or artefact of culture, that is a creative expression of culture. Making art is a meaningful way to liberate the voices, imagination and creativity of a community to generate values, communicate these values and bring about change or agreement. In contemporary communities, art often reflects and challenges many influences and values including: local, international, cultural, environmental, political and aesthetic concerns through an ever widening range of art forms, such as visual, performing and literary arts and new media technologies.

Artist

If art is a product or act of self-expression, then anyone can be an artist. However, it is important to recognise the expertise that a professional artist contributes to community and cultural development practices. A professional artist is someone who devotes significant time to their artwork, has a history of public presentation and (generally) has specialist training in their field. Professional artists make a significant contribution to community development and wellbeing by giving voice to imagination, creativity, diversity and innovation.

Community art

A community art project is where members of the community actively participate in the making of the artwork. This type of project allows for a community to express ideas, concerns or issues through a collective artistic process.

Community cultural development (CCD)

Community cultural development (CCD) is a way of working through the arts and creativity with communities to achieve social change outcomes.³ CCD is not an art form, but an arts practice. CCD activities can incorporate a range of practices and methodologies, which are often developed specifically for each project. Such projects ideally involve professional artists and/or arts workers to facilitate the project. In doing this, care and attention is paid to collective decision making and community building processes.

Culture

The concept of culture is a widely discussed notion closely aligned with an idea of our 'way of life'.⁴ It is a word that describes what makes individuals, communities and places unique. It is the system of beliefs and behaviours that inform our everyday life and identify us as belonging to one or other group. The application of culture in the real world is a growing trend internationally, nationally and at state and local government levels in Australia.

Cultural industries

The term cultural industries is used to understand the economic dimension of arts and cultural activity. It describes those involved in the development, production, marketing and consumption of cultural products. They can include independent artists and businesses working in areas such as graphic arts, publishing, music and film, as well as historical and cultural venues such as libraries, theatres and museums.

³ Michelle Evans, *Partnership Inclusively: Whose are the Unheard Voices?* (2006), Victorian College of the Arts, p.51 (unpublished essay).

⁴ Jon Hawkes, *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability* (2001), Cultural Development Network (Vic), p.3.

Cultural industries are significant employers when seen as a sector. Recent research from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) shows that the arts and cultural sector is a vital component of the Australian economy, with:

- cultural goods to the value of \$534.1 million exported by Australia in 2006–07⁵
- Australian production of cultural goods and services valued at \$48.6 billion in 2001–02⁶
- 77,900 registered businesses in the cultural industry sector across Australia in June 2006.⁷

Many of the businesses in this industry belong to the not-for-profit sector (increasingly referred to as ‘the third sector’, alongside commercial business and government sectors).

Cultural events

A wide range of activities can be classified as cultural events from large-scale festivals to smaller activities such as arts-based workshops. While not limited to arts-based events, they generally refer to events that have an arts-based component. Cultural events present great opportunities for community cultural development (CCD), including community building between different cultural or interest groups and for the celebration of local arts and culture.

Public art

Public art is all artistic works located in open public spaces or facilities and accessible to the public. Public art can include sculptural and mural-based forms as well as functional pieces often integrated into buildings such as seating, lighting, or paving.

Not all public art has to be a permanent feature. Public art of a temporary or ephemeral nature can allow the artists to address site-specific issues that may only be relevant in the short term. Examples include video and sound projection and live performance-based works for festivals and events.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Cardinia Shire Council *Arts and Culture Policy 2009–12*
- Cardinia Shire Council *Arts and Culture Action Plan 2009–12*
- Cardinia Shire Council *Public Art Policy 2009–12*

⁵ ABS, *International Trade, Australia: FASTTRACS Service – Electronic Delivery*, 2007 (cat. no. 5466.0).

⁶ ABS, *Australian National Accounts: Input–Output Tables (Product Details)*, 2001–02 (cat. no. 5215.0.55.001).

⁷ ABS, *Counts of Australian Businesses, Including Entries and Exits*, June 2003 to June 2006 (cat. no. 8165.0). Cultural goods and services are a very broad industry and include advertising, printing and publishing, radio and television services, music recording and commercial art services.

5. APPENDIX 1

Cardinia Shire Council key strategy links to arts and culture aims

<i>Creating the Future – Council Plan 2007–2011</i>	Council's Strategic Statement	2009–2012 Arts and Cultural Strategies
<p>We support a variety of lifestyles through programs and activities that promote and develop the wellbeing of Cardinia's people.</p>	<p>Provide an expanded range of services to meet community needs.</p>	<p>Increase opportunities for all sections of the community to access, participate and appreciate arts and culture.</p>
	<p>Support learning activities for all ages.</p>	<p>Facilitate learning opportunities for young people in creative and innovative industries.</p>
	<p>Provide active and passive recreation facilities to meet the needs of our residents.</p>	<p>Review existing facilities and plan for future arts and cultural resources and infrastructure which are accessible and affordable and cater to the needs of a growing and changing community.</p> <p>Promote the Cardinia Cultural Centre as a dynamic venue which contributes strongly to Cardinia's cultural, business and community life.</p>
	<p>Increase opportunities for participation in a range of sport, recreation and leisure activities.</p>	<p>Increase opportunities for all sections of the community to access, participate and appreciate arts and culture.</p>
<p>We will foster a strong sense of connection between Cardinia's diverse communities.</p>	<p>Facilitate and support opportunities for participation in a diverse range of artistic and cultural pursuits.</p>	<p>Support existing arts and cultural practitioners and foster new forms of artistic and cultural expression.</p> <p>Enliven public places and spaces with art and create opportunities for the community to encounter and engage with art and culture as part of everyday experience.</p>
	<p>Plan for provision of services and support for new residents from diverse backgrounds.</p>	<p>Foster and celebrate expressions of local culture and heritage, cultural diversity and the cultures of new communities.</p>
	<p>Promote initiatives that connect and strengthen our communities.</p>	<p>Create opportunities for coordinating promotional and relationship building networks.</p> <p>Foster and celebrate an understanding and appreciation of local Indigenous heritage and living culture.</p>
	<p>Encourage, publicise and support community participation in local events and activities.</p>	<p>Raise the profile of Cardinia's existing and expanding arts and culture sector through advocacy, promotion and improved communication.</p> <p>Provide support to local artists, arts organisations and community groups through an accessible and viable grants program, in-kind support and physical resources.</p>
<p>We will create and support local employment and business opportunities for our community and the wider region.</p>	<p>Support the development of existing and new businesses.</p>	<p>Provide support to local artists and creative industries to encourage economic growth and cultural vitality.</p>

6. APPENDIX 2

Cardinia Arts and Cultural Reference Group members

Cr Ed Chatwin, Chair Arts and Cultural Reference Group (2009)

Kate Lempriere, former Councillor, Cardinia Shire Council (2007–08)

Fiona Hodges, General Manager Community Wellbeing, Cardinia Shire Council (2007–09)

Jim Davine, Manager Sustainable Communities, Cardinia Shire Council (2007–09)

Lani Seligman, Cultural Development Officer, Cardinia Shire Council (2007–08)

Rebecca Christensen Page, Cultural Development Officer, Cardinia Shire Council (2008–09)

Holly DeMaria, community cultural development practitioner (2007–09)

Ian Jensen-Schmidt, local arts practitioner (2007–08)

Peter Biram, local artist and art lecturer (2007–09)

Catherine Manning, local arts practitioner and event coordinator (2009)

Eugene Mackinnon, local musician and instrumental teacher (2009)

David Griffiths, local arts practitioner and event coordinator (2009)

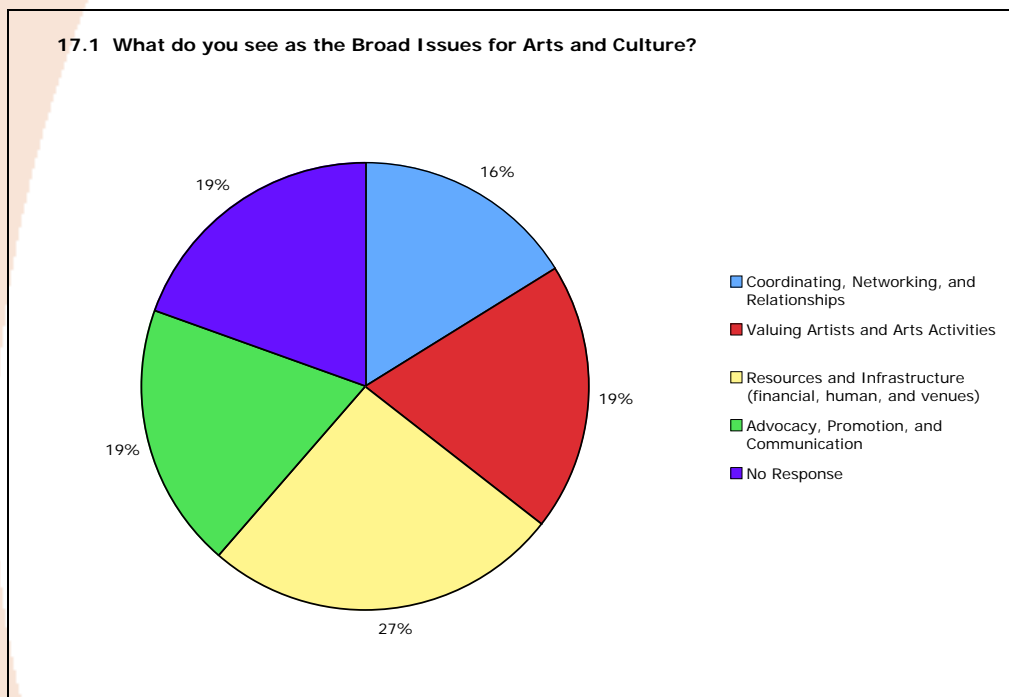
7. APPENDIX 3

Summary of consultation and survey results

A summary of the key broad and specific issues regarding arts and culture in the Shire for respondents from both the community consultation planning day and arts and culture submission form, as detailed in the report prepared by United Notions, Creative Solutions are listed below.

Broad issues – arts and culture submission form results

There is a diverse list of broad issues for arts and culture in the Shire. The responses are spread fairly equally across the five strategies.

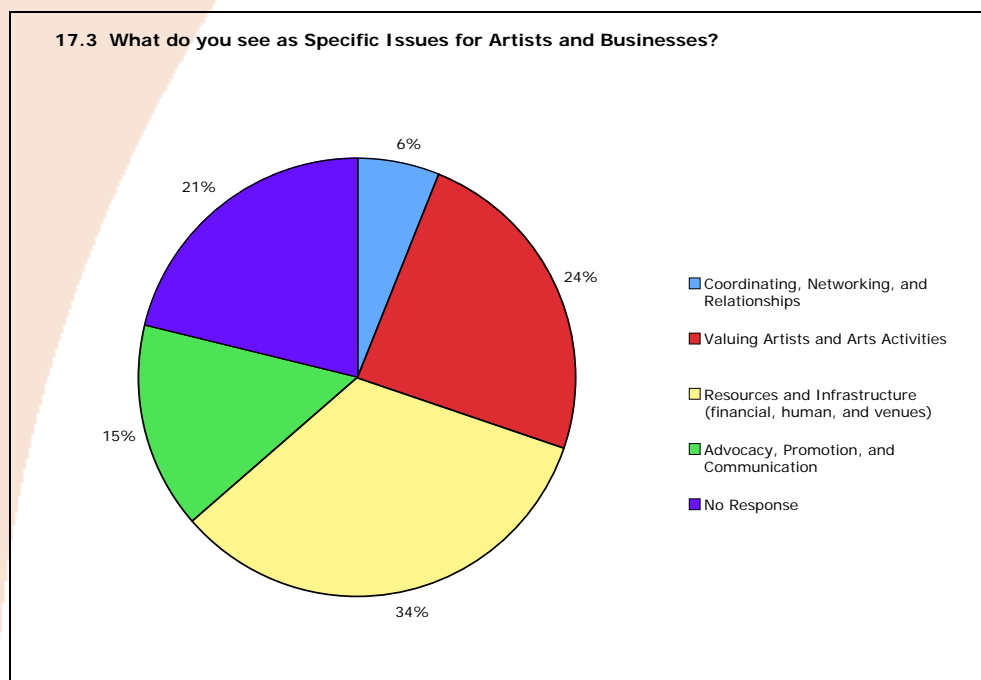


Broad issues – community consultation planning day

- need for dedicated visual arts venue
- youth opportunities, voice and leadership possibilities
- great need for artist newsletter
- youth and changing demographics: development of leadership and spaces
- local identity issues: bringing groups together but unique to each town
- being aware of the environment with petrol, travel, and facilities for multi-use
- lack of liaison regarding public funds – what is available and how to access these funds? How to facilitate accessing that funding?
- isolation of towns, artists, mothers, youth, seniors, etc. leads to lack of identification and communication within the community... people don't know what's out there
- transport is difficult between communities
- role of cultural officer – unclear
- venues – not adequate and too expensive
- sub committees for all arts groups (public liability issues and insurance issues)
- linking townships: central points to gather information and maintenance of roads to travel
- design problems with the Cultural Centre.

Specific issues for artists and businesses in Cardinia – arts and culture submission form results

Thirty-four percent of respondents focused on resources and infrastructure when it came to specific issues for artists, organisations and businesses in Cardinia.



Specific issues for artists and businesses – community consultation planning day

- need for dedicated visual arts venue (for use as gallery, with selection committee for quality control)
- great need for artist newsletter/ multidisciplinary directory/ register, need communication tools like these
- lack of venues for performing arts
- arts directory would help us with profiles and events, grants, etc.
- independent funding for arts in Cardinia – needs to be separate fund in council funds, private sectors, self generated revenue?
- showcase the arts in Cardinia
- affordability – access to free activities in their community helping to cover costs are organising events, advertising, media access to get people along to try things
- public liability insurance for group events, memberships, how artists can get covered, access to lawyers and accountants for artists and groups
- affordability and access to venues – to practise, perform and storage issues
- purpose built spaces – “Pakenham-centric”, satellite towns to have more multipurpose venues
- security in the spaces needs
- lack of government support – arts orgs are needing to be more proactive in getting access to funds, less government support in future
- problems with theatre design at Cardinia Cultural Centre: no fly tower, inadequate wing space, motorised bars, problem with heat/ air conditioning
- need a Shire festival of the arts
- need master classes from touring artists.