

Dungog Shire  
**CULTURAL PLAN**  
2024 – 2028





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# INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

“  
The Valley was  
always there in the  
Dreaming, though  
mountains, trees,  
animals and people  
were not yet formed.  
Everything was  
sleeping. Until the  
Great Sky Spirit  
Baime opened  
his eyes. ”

**Wanaruah/Wonnarua Creation Story**

Dungog Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Cultural Custodians of Country in the Dungog Shire, including the Gringai, Geawegal/ Geawal, Wanaruah/Wonnarua, and Worimi peoples. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and emerging.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



The Dungog Shire Cultural Plan highlights opportunities for Council, creative practitioners, the business community, local community groups, and others to work together to sustain existing cultural activities and events and to develop new cultural initiatives across the Shire, over the next five years.

The Cultural Plan recognises that Dungog Shire Council, as a rural and regional Council, with a low rates-base and significant assets to maintain and manage.

Council has a limited capacity to self-fund cultural activities and events. At the same time, the Cultural Plan acknowledges that local artists, businesses, and community organisations have a finite ability to resource and sustain existing and new cultural initiatives.

In this context, the Dungog Shire Cultural Plan focuses on ways in which Council and its cultural partners, can work together to leverage arts and cultural funding from State and Federal funding bodies, the business sector and philanthropic organisations, for the benefit of the community. The Plan also recognises that Dungog Shire is made up of a series of villages, each with their own unique local identities and cultural offerings.

As the Mayor of Dungog Shire I am honoured to launch the Dungog Shire Cultural Plan and I extend Council's appreciation to the many community members, cultural practitioners, business people and community organisations that have assisted Council to develop the Cultural Plan and who share our vision for Dungog Shire to continue to develop as a culturally vibrant place, set in a stunning natural environment, with an already significant creative economy.

**Cr John Connors**  
**Mayor**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



The Cultural Plan is the key document that guides what we do at Council in relation to culture in Dungog Shire. You have told us what your highest priority issues are and what is important to you. The Cultural Plan is built around these critical elements.

An important aspect of our plan is that it reflects the collaborative approach we take to planning our shire's future, working with various government agencies, key stakeholders and the community to achieve the outcomes presented in this plan.

We are committed to ensuring our community continues to be involved in the decision-making process and to providing opportunities for all stakeholders to have their say. Council will report on actions taken to achieve the vision and values outlined in our Cultural Plan within the available funding and resources. I encourage you to take opportunities to engage with our plans and strategies as they become available.

I look forward to working with you all to help reach the goals of the Dungog Shire Culture Plan 2024-2028.

**Gareth Curtis**  
**General Manager**

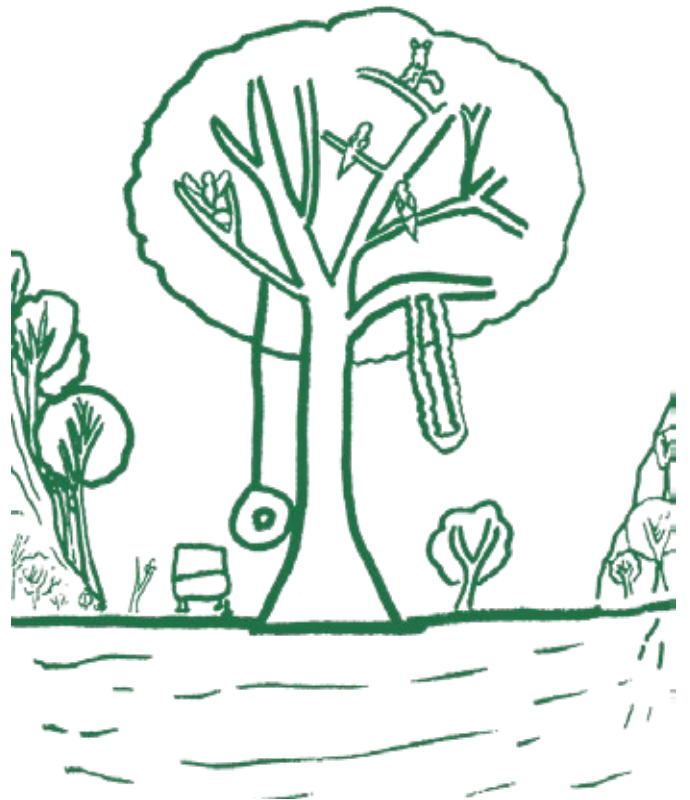
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dungog Shire Cultural Plan defines how Dungog Shire Council within its capacity, will work in partnership with the community and governments to deliver cultural activities and events, that celebrate the unique identities of Dungog, Vacy, Paterson, Gresford, East Gresford, Martins Creek, and Clarence Town whilst helping to grow a sustainable creative economy across the Shire.

As a rural, regional Local Government Area with a limited rates-base and a large number of assets to maintain and manage, Dungog Shire Council does not have the capacity to deliver arts and cultural programs by itself. Similarly, Dungog Shire’s creative practitioners, local arts organisations and community groups, are already stretched in terms of their ability to provide resources and additional volunteer hours for the development of new cultural initiatives.

The Dungog Shire Cultural Plan has been informed by extensive community consultation and designed to promote the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights. Whilst Council will take a lead role in implementing the Cultural Plan, it’s success will depend upon productive and collaborative partnerships with creative practitioners, entrepreneurs, arts organisations, business people, community groups, and other levels of government.

So therefore this plan provides a roadmap for the future, capitalising on our existing strengths and assets whilst encouraging the adoption of innovative solutions and strategies to ensure the sustainability of our creative and cultural sectors.



*Drawing by Laila Reid, age 10*



## FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

The Dungog Shire Cultural Plan focuses on achieving five strategic goals, to deliver cultural activities that celebrate Dungog Shire's unique identity and which support a thriving creative economy.

The five strategic goals identified by the community consultation process include:

- 1** Celebrate local heritage, history and way of life to **enhance local identity and encourage cultural activation** across Dungog Shire.
- 2** Strengthen the capacity of existing cultural facilities and public spaces to **deliver relevant and accessible arts and cultural activities and events** across Dungog Shire
- 3** Support local arts and cultural practitioners, creative industries, cultural groups and the **growth of the cultural economy across Dungog Shire**
- 4** In consultation with local Aboriginal people and community organisations, recognise, celebrate, and promote the **cultural heritage of our First Nations peoples** throughout Dungog Shire.
- 5** Support **open communication, collaboration and leadership** between arts and cultural partners in Dungog Shire, including Council, arts practitioners, local businesses, entrepreneurs, community groups, philanthropists and external funding partners.

# DUNGOG SHIRE SNAPSHOT



## Aboriginal Lands

Dungog Shire extends over an area that includes the contemporary Aboriginal lands of the Gringai, Wanaruah/Wonnarua and Worimi Peoples, represented by the Worimi, Karuah, Wanaruah/Wonnarua and Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Councils.



## Townships & Environment

Dungog Shire is a unique rural and regional LGA made up of a series of townships and villages, including Paterson, Vacy, Clarence Town, Martins Creek, East Gresford, Gresford, and Dungog. These villages are spread across two valleys and four rivers including the Williams River, Chichester Dam, Paterson River and Allyn River. Dungog Shire extends across 224,999 hectares, with 73% of total lands covered by natural herbaceous woody vegetation and 18% gazetted as protected lands managed by NSW Government, and Aboriginal Land Councils. These areas include major dams at Chichester and Lostock. Dungog Shire Council has responsibility for managing and maintaining more than of 730km sealed and unsealed roads, which is a legacy of Dungog Shire's history as a centre for dairy farming.



## Shire Population

In 2021, the population of Dungog Shire reached 9,784 people (2021 ABS ERP), an increase of 9% over five years. In 2021, 548 residents (5% local population) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, and at the start of 2022, there were 97 ATSI students enrolled at Dungog High School, comprising 13.5% of the total school population. CALD – 6.3% of shire population have parents born overseas.

The population remained rather static until recent times during which the Shire has already exceeded NSW Government growth predictions for 2040.



## Business & Employment

1,059 businesses registered in Dungog Shire providing 5,825 jobs and employing 3,885 people, a statistic which remained unchanged from the 2016 census. In the period from 2015 to 2020, 91 new businesses were established, but 108 businesses exited the Shire or were wound up. In 2020, the Arts and Recreation Sector provided 70 full-time equivalent jobs across the Shire, which represented an increase of just 0.1% in five years. The official local current rate of unemployment is 5.5%, Reference 2021 ABS Statistics.



### Volunteering

Dungog Shire has a strong and active culture of volunteering, with 25.2% of residents undertaking some kind voluntary work each year, and 16.1% volunteering on a weekly basis.

Most community organizations and welfare services in Dungog Shire require volunteers to operate and provide services such as Dungog and District Neighbourcare etc. The community survey indicated that 25% of residents undertake some kind voluntary work each year, and that 16% volunteer on a weekly basis. Despite this, many organizations have experienced reduced participation as demographics have changed over the last 20 years.



### Welfare

In 2020, the Australian Census also found that 12.1% of adults living in Dungog Shire were in receipt of an aged pension, 4% were receiving a Disability Support Pension, 0.7% were on a Centrelink Parenting Payment and 0.1% were dependent on a Youth Allowance. However, the average income of \$55,420, indicates that there is significant income disparity between wealthier residents of the Shire and those who are welfare dependent. Roughly 1/3 of people in Dungog Shire live in rental properties and 2/3 live in properties which they own or are paying off under a mortgage. Rental vacancy rates across the Shire are very low and it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to find stable and affordable rental accommodation anywhere in the LGA, especially for single mothers and their children.



### Internet Access

77.2% of residents have internet access at home.

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

# OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SURVEY

When describing the culture of Dungog Shire respondents frequently used the words: **growing, emerging, evolving and developing.**

Cultural programs available in Dungog Shire were generally rated as “fair” by respondents. Similarly, most survey respondents and community members who were interviewed, rated currently available cultural venues and spaces in Dungog Shire as “fair” with a significant number of respondents commenting on accessibility issues.

A majority of survey participants and interviewees, said that they obtained most of their information about cultural activities and events in Dungog Shire, via “word of mouth”, through family and friends, with

the next most frequently cited source of information being local newsletters and community group pages on Facebook. The extended community consultation process confirmed that many people in Dungog Shire rely on ‘word-of-mouth’ to find out about local cultural activities and events, but that local independent newsletters such as the Paterson Psst, the Gresford News, the Sentinel, the Dungog Chronicle and newsletters published by local sporting clubs and schools are also key sources of information about arts and culture in the Shire.

People also repeatedly advised that the biggest barrier to their participation in cultural activities and events in Dungog Shire, is a lack of accessible information about cultural activities and events.

The word cloud set out below, highlights the most frequent words used by people, to describe what they love about Dungog Shire:



# FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL SURVEY & COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

There is very little broader community knowledge of the First Nations history of the area including very limited cultural knowledge of the Gringai and Geawegal/Geawal peoples. What is known is precious and valued. All those consulted expressed a very keen interest in reinvigorating that knowledge, starting with language revitalisation, sharing of cultural knowledge and truth telling, to ensure that future generations have a cultural connection, and the wider community can progress with reconciliation. Some Aboriginal names are already in use for example “Dungog” is a Gringai word meaning “thinly wooded hills”. “Tocal” is an Aboriginal word meaning “plenty” and “Wallarobba” means “a rainy gully”. Recent dual-naming initiatives have been welcomed, for instance, the dual-naming and sign-posting of The Common/The Girriwa was embraced as a very significant milestone by local Aboriginal people.

The First Nations Community Consultation process identified that it is vital that young Aboriginal people in Dungog Shire have opportunities to learn about their culture from people with whom they share their culture, so that they can strengthen their cultural identities and connections to their Aboriginal heritage.

**The First Nations Community Consultation process identified that it is vital that young Aboriginal people in Dungog Shire have opportunities to learn about their culture from people with whom they share their culture.**



1826 – Painting by local Aboriginal Artist Debbie Becker

## **ABORIGINAL ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE**

The Aboriginal Community Consultation process that was undertaken for the development of the Cultural Plan, highlighted that language revitalisation is one of the most important cultural priorities for Aboriginal people in Dungog Shire. The Shire is fortunate to have two local Elders who are Gringai language speakers and who are currently involved in language revitalisation programs on a volunteer basis. It was identified that these programs could be extended across the Shire, with additional funding and support. It is proposed that the language revitalisation programs would include weekly small-group language classes for different age groups during school terms, together with a school holiday program of immersive language and culture camps on country lead by local Elders and focused on local bush tucker and medicinal plants that are endemic to Dungog. The project is currently being scoped and will require funding to develop curriculum, learning materials and meeting space.

Dungog Shire Council does not have an Aboriginal Cultural Officer, and has a limited capacity to facilitate Aboriginal cultural programs, but there is an opportunity for Council to partner with local Aboriginal Land Councils and other local Aboriginal community organisations who have the required cultural knowledge and expertise to undertake such activities.


In addition to cultural practices and language, the First Nations community is extremely keen to share and learn more about cultural sites and bushfoods across the LGA. A number of culturally significant sites in the area are known, but there is limited transference of knowledge about these sites to the community. This creates opportunities to support Aboriginal-led events to revitalise and share Indigenous culture.

The Aboriginal community is aware that there are a number of culturally significant artefacts in the custody of local non-Indigenous people that have been handed down over generations. For instance, artefacts collected by local landholders, farmers, foresters, Police officers, Judicial officers and educational institutions. There is a keen interest from the local First Nations community that these artefacts be returned to local Aboriginal cultural organisations and Land Councils, and there is the potential for the development of a local Aboriginal 'Keeping Place' for such artefacts.

Dungog Shire has a Reconciliation Group that are engaging with the local Aboriginal community to develop and produce their own cultural activities and events.

Opportunities for the Dungog Shire Library to expand its collection to increase the number of books by Aboriginal authors.





The Aboriginal community is aware that there are a number of culturally significant artefacts in the custody of local non-Indigenous people that have been handed down over generations.

# A CHANGING COMMUNITY

## Early Settlement

The area which is now Dungog Shire seems to have overlapped at least two major aboriginal tribal groups of the broader Hunter River Valley and coastal region; the Wonnarua of the Hunter Valley and the Worimi of the Port Stephens coast area. Within the Williams, Paterson and Allyn River Valleys and continuing as far as the Barrington Tops were the family groups of the Gringai. The consensus is that the Gringai were not a separate tribe but a sub-group of one of the two region's tribes, though which one is in some doubt. There is very little broader community knowledge of the First Nations history of the area and culture. What is known is precious and valued.

The coming of Europeans to the area now known as Dungog Shire had a devastating effect on the local aboriginal population. Apart from the conflicts which arose between Kooris and whites, European diseases significantly reduced the Koori population. In 1835 McKinlay noted the sharp decline in the Koori birth rate, attributing it to factors arising from contact with Europeans. By the 1830's Koori society in the area had been irrevocably changed and damaged. From this time the population of Kooris in the Hunter as a whole fell steadily and the distribution of the population changed.

Initial logging for cedar that was growing along the river systems gave way to grazing and agriculture into the 1820's. Busy river ports were established at Paterson and Clarence Town towards the furthest extent of tidal influence. River transport played a very important role in servicing this part of the NSW Colony. The first ocean going ship in Australia was constructed at Clarence Town.

Horses, bullock teams and river transport were superseded by the railway and motor transport. Tracks that once served remote communities and farms became an intricate road system linking them with larger towns and villages. After WWII, the increasing availability of motor transport and farm mechanization reduced requirements for manpower, so on farm populations and many smaller localities declined.

Logging and dairying were once major rural industries that thrived until being adversely affected by government legislation around the year 2000. Many systematically logged State Forests were gazetted as National Parks, and deregulation of the dairy industry resulted in many farms losing their viability. Similarly, the poultry industry has declined due to external economic factors. Grazing of beef cattle has become the default rural industry throughout the Shire, but the prevalence of small properties that once supported a dairy coupled with relatively high land values has limited the number of operations where 100% of farm income can support a family. Most farmers require a supplementary source of income. New initiatives have been and are being introduced but to date none have received widespread acceptance. The construction industry and education sector have eclipsed agriculture as major employers within Dungog Shire.

Widespread use of motor vehicles and proximity to major centres of employment and population have facilitated structural, economic and social change. Many residents of towns and villages travel for employment and an increasing number of rural properties are held by absentee owners living in the city. COVID 19 attracted many new landholders in this way.

Also, subdivision of once viable farms for residential development and small holdings has attracted new residents from the city. Areas around Paterson and Clarence Town have become dormitory suburbs of Maitland and Newcastle offering cheaper land and a relaxed rural lifestyle. There has been a general population trend away from farming areas towards urban centres resulting in the residents of Dungog Shire becoming less rural than ever before.

New residents tend to expect the level of services available in the city, but as with Wallarobba Shire before its amalgamation with Dungog Town in 1958, the substantial road infrastructure burden has always been beyond Council's financial resources. Accordingly, Dungog Shire has very limited capacity to provide many basic services without grant funding.

Over the last 20 years, the number of rateable properties in Dungog Shire increased from about 3600 to about 5000, yielding additional rate revenue, but Councils finances did not increase in real terms until the recent SRV.



Drawing by Lauren Upward, age 11

# CULTURAL ASSETS

# INFRASTRUCTURE, ASSETS & CULTURAL VENUES

The community consultation process and existing plans such as the Dungog Shire Destination Management Plan and Arts Upper Hunter Strategic Plan 2022-24, have identified a need for infrastructure to support cultural activities and events, particularly those that are relevant to the visitor economy in Dungog LGA.

The Cultural Plan Survey revealed that people living in Dungog Shire would like to be able to attend cultural activities and events in their local area rather than having to travel longer distances to access such opportunities.

Dungog Shire is blessed with a unique suite of cultural venues and assets that are available and suitable for cultural activities and events, produced locally and/or by external providers. These include community centres, church halls and school of the arts buildings, heritage halls, showgrounds and private properties.

The ownership of these venues ranges from Council-owned properties managed by s355 committees to church properties managed by volunteer groups to heritage halls managed by local historical societies to halls owned and managed by community organisations such as the CWA to privately owned properties.

These venues have been maintained and upgraded to differing standards over the years and they currently have widely varying usage levels for community cultural activities and events.

The Cultural Plan places a strategic priority on investment in Dungog Shire's unique and valuable collection of School of the Arts buildings, Heritage and Church Halls, and Community Centres.

The community consultation process identified that for many potential users of these cultural venues, accessibility remains the number one barrier.

# INFRASTRUCTURE, ASSETS & CULTURAL VENUES



# THE JAMES THEATRE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The James Theatre Community Centre is a well-loved cultural venue and an icon of the Dungog Township. This was reflected in responses received as part of the Cultural Plan People in the other villages and townships surrounding the Dungog township, also expressed a willingness to travel to the James Theatre Community Centre to attend arts and cultural events.



*Drawing by Rhiani Houtsma, age 8*

# HERITAGE SHOWGROUNDS

## Equine history of the Shire

Dungog Shire, is well known for its beef, timber and dairy industries, is perhaps less known of its long history of horse breeding. It was common for the earliest landowners to advertise their best horses for stud which still is apparent today throughout the Shire with a number of our horse studs being nationally recognised. We have an emerging tourism and events sector focused on our agricultural strengths such as agricultural shows, horses and nature-based experiences in national parks and reserves. Our agricultural based events attract thousands of visitors each year rolling into our towns across the Shire.

The Dungog Show was established in 1887 to promote and protect the agricultural and horticultural resources of the Dungog Shire. The Dungog Agricultural & Horticultural Association was originally called the Williams River Agricultural & Horticultural Association. The Sydney Royal Ag Show Miss Showgirl Competition (as it was formerly known), was first held in 1962, and in that inaugural year, was won by horse exhibitor Margaret Mackay of Dungog. Margaret was the daughter of ringmaster and Horse Committee Chairman Ken Mackay. The Mackay family settled in Dungog late 1800's and are recognised as pioneers in Australia's history, as prominent graziers, polo players and horse breeders. On 24th October 1925, members of the Gresford community attended a meeting in the Brosie's rooms at East Gresford to develop a society aimed at the agricultural, horticulture and pastoral interest within the area. The association was first known as the "Allyn and Paterson Rivers and District Agricultural Horticultural and Pastoral Association". On 20th May 1927, the first show commenced at the Showground at East Gresford. Paterson Show was held around the 1950's and Eccleston Show in the early 1900's.

The horse industry, or equine industry, is the economic activity associated with horses which was and continues to have a strong influence in the Dungog Shire. This includes core agribusiness activities related to the use, possession or ownership of horses, as well as leisure activities and related economic activity that provides associated goods and services.

Dungog Shire has 2 heritage showgrounds that could be used to further support arts and culture in the Shire.

*Appendix 1* the Cultural Plan identifies areas for potential investment for the Dungog showground as cultural asset.



Drawing by Jeanie Briggs-Seers



# EVENTS



Events provide opportunities for communities to come together and to celebrate their unique local identities. A diverse, authentic and engaging calendar of events will also attract visitors and lay the foundation for a successful cultural tourism strategy that provides economic, social and cultural returns for locals.

Before the onset of Covid19, Dungog Shire was home to a diverse range of local and touring events. Some of these events have not survived Covid19 or the tight funding environment that has faced festival organisers in recent years. In 2022 and 2023, a range of new events by local arts practitioners, arts and cultural organisations, art gallery operators, community groups, volunteers and business people are emerging.

Establishing one Shire's calendar of events under a collective banner is an identified priority, promoting Dungog Shire as a cultural tourism destination with a vibrant and ever-changing cultural offering. Working collaboratively with Arts Upper Hunter's developing projects including Cultural Trails Project.

Many of Dungog Shire's existing and planned events are local events, produced by local volunteers, celebrating local produce, local arts, local culture, local music festivals, sporting based events including motor cycling, and Dungog Shire's beautiful natural environment.

## HERITAGE BUILDINGS, MUSEUMS & HERITAGE GROUPS

Dungog Shire is home to a large number of heritage groups and small museums. Some are very active, for example, the Rail Motor Society in Paterson has 200 active members, with up to 80 volunteers showing up each week, but with only two local members from Dungog Shire. Tocal Homestead (the CB Alexander Foundation) is one of Australia's oldest working heritage farms; a site that holds space for educational programs, school tours, seniors tours, major events and weddings. The Friends of Tocal, an active volunteer group, have raised money for conservation projects at the Homestead which has been imperative to its Preservation so it can continue to be used as an educational tool for today's youth. Most importantly, the Friends of Tocal provide a link between Tocal and the community, encouraging wider local community use of Tocal facilities and providing an avenue for community involvement and support of Tocal. Tocal Homestead has multiple heritage buildings and artefacts relating to the families of the past.

From the well preserved Aboriginal-grinding grooves to where Captain Thunderbolt worked and was thought to live, Tocal Homestead's heritage site brings history to life. The Paterson Courthouse has an active volunteer group with a strong local history-publishing arm. This group has managed to secure a diverse range of funding and to attract new members and volunteers. Clarence Town Courthouse Museum and Dungog Museum are investing time into recording local history to be kept and displayed for next generations to have insight of our Shire's past. While the Gresford and District Historical Society maintains an extensive collection of local artefacts.

These groups manage and control a range of valuable cultural assets that have significance for Dungog Shire, including very rare but culturally important local Aboriginal artefacts. Grant funding would be required for resourcing or expertise to conserve, preserve and manage their collections long term.

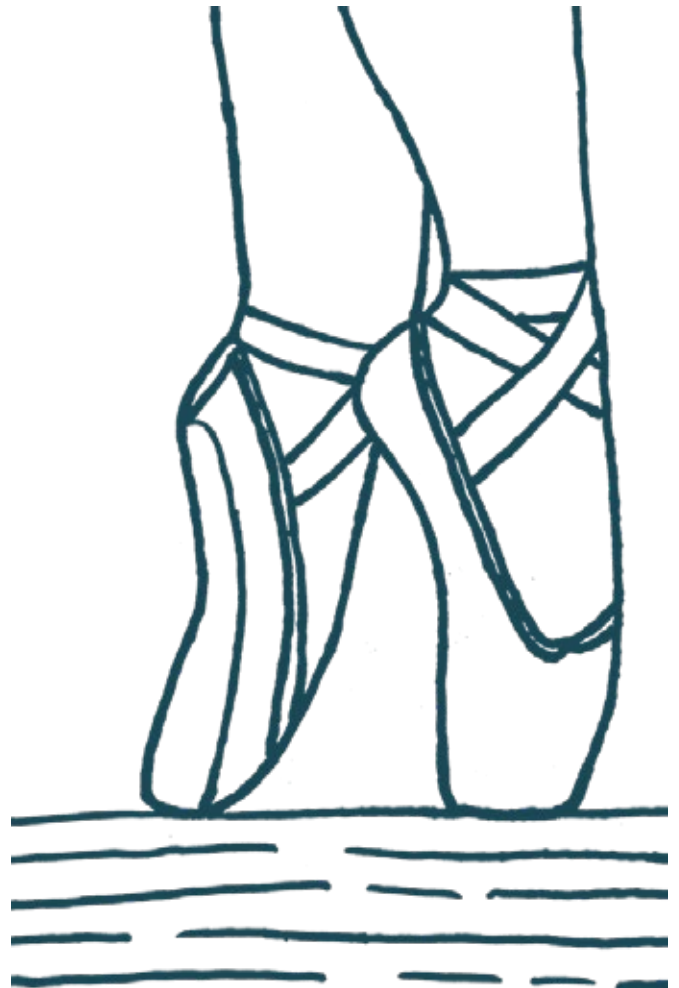


# ART GALLERIES, ART ORGANISATIONS & CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

Dungog Shire has a flourishing arts and cultural sector.

This group of creative businesses, cooperatives and community organisations currently play a pivotal role in the cultural activation of Dungog Shire and will be key partners in the arts and cultural future of Dungog. Collectively they hold a huge repository of knowledge, experience and business expertise.

Due to Dungog Shire Council's limited rates-base and extensive asset management responsibilities, Council's role would be to support arts and cultural initiatives and projects developed by creative practitioners, rather than acting as a cultural producer or as a gatekeeper.



*Drawing by Isla Briggs, age 13*

# CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism is when visitors are motivated to discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural products that are unique to a particular destination.

In Dungog Shire, cultural tourism has the potential to provide economic growth and employment opportunities. It is also noted that the critical role of cultural tourism in developing a strong visitor economy for Dungog Shire over the next five years, is highlighted in the Destination Management Plan 2021-2026 developed by Dungog Regional Tourism.

Dungog Shire can become a significant cultural tourism destination, with the development of cultural branding and other marketing collateral for local art galleries, local arts organisations and local cultural offerings.

This could include but not limited to art trails, cultural maps, place making, signage and “Made in Dungog” labelling for local produce and arts and cultural products.

Working in partnership between Council, arts and cultural organisations, the business community, local tourism operators and other levels of government this is an achievable outcome taking a regional approach to the development of cultural tourism offerings, may provide more funding opportunities for Dungog Shire for example through partnerships with other organisations.

Cultural tourism is a type of tourism in which visitors are motivated to discover experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural products that are unique to a particular destination.



Guudji Yigu

Greetings

Nyirun warraliyn barrayga

Guringayga

We are standing on Guringay country

Nyirunba ngarragal ya:n.gliyn

Yiga barrayga dangaygibirang  
Our elders have walked on this land for  
a long time

Nyirun nyuranang dijuvaliyn

Gathangga

This is our welcome to you in our  
Gathang Language



Minya nyura wubaliyn  
wa: nyi:li: Guringay  
What are you doing?

Nyura yigu marala barrayga  
Ny:li: nyi:li: marala barrayga  
You have come here to this country

Yi: Guringay barray  
the Guringay country  
This is Guringay country

Nyirun gathay wakalida  
We all go together  
We will go together



## BIKE CULTURE

From a cultural perspective, Dungog Shire's emergence as a premiere destination for cycling tourism in NSW, offers significant opportunities for the creative industries. Some of these are starting to be realised with arts and cultural events like the Dungog Moving Forward Festival and PedalFest which are both centred around bike riding events and developed in partnership with bike riding businesses and community groups. These synergies are helping to create unique cultural experiences for locals and visitors.



*Drawing by Maisie MacCormick, age 10*

Future development of ready-to-fund ‘shelf-projects’ involving collaborations between creatives and cyclists which celebrate local bike culture and bike riding assets across Dungog Shire and the Hunter Region, should be considered.



## AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE & PERMACULTURE

Dungog Shire has a long history as an agricultural and dairy farming district and farmers have continually responded to changing environmental and economic circumstances. Whilst the health and community services sectors have overtaken farming in terms of local employment, agricultural activity dominates the landscape with beef cattle grazing prevailing on most farms.

The community consultation process for the Cultural Plan identified a strong desire for cultural activities and events that celebrate and support Dungog Shire's local food producers and providers.

A number of survey respondents, took the time to provide written comments, expressing a wish for regular night markets focusing on local produce and endorsing the local growers' markets in each village, as sites for community connection and resilience. There is opportunities within the Dungog Shire for the establishment of a food trail. From a cultural perspective, the Cultural Plan also identifies synergies between the biodynamic and whole-food industries, farm stay, eco-tourism sector and the creative industries, with the potential for cultural activities and events that celebrate Dungog Shire as a destination, which caters for diverse tastes.



Drawing by Sophie Watkins, age 10



# ECOTOURISM

Ecotourism is tourism that is directed at experiences set in natural environments or focused on the conservation of threatened species. In recent years, a number of initiatives and events have been developed by local organisations to promote and celebrate Dungog Shire's unique natural environment.

There is significant potential for initiatives that use arts and culture to showcase Dungog Shire's beautiful environment. The recent Dungog Moving Forward Festival demonstrated that collaborations between Ride Dungog, Dungog Arts Society, Dungog Arts Foundation and local tourism operators strengthened the event and ensured that there was 'something for everyone' visiting for the festival.

## Activities that include ecotourism and culture include:

- development of a Master Photography Competition and Exhibition featuring photographs of Dungog Shire's natural environment
- development of a Bird-watching or Twitching Weekend in Dungog Shire with associated arts and crafts activities
- development of a Lostock Dam Festival featuring swimming, kayaking, rowing, SUPping, music, camping and food stalls
- promotion of a Harvest Festival showcasing local produce including bush tucker foods that are unique to the Dungog Shire Region and featuring cooking demonstrations, a Long Table Dining Event, Consecutive Dinners spread across different locations and a night market of local produce
- delivery of a Sustainability Festival focusing on ecological initiatives and opportunities across the Shire
- development of an Ultra Running Marathon from Dungog to Gloucester featuring a film festival about running and smaller running events through National and State Wildlife Parks located in Dungog Shire and neighbouring LGA's
- development of a Landscape Painting Festival – featuring high profile artists, workshops, exhibitions, artist residencies and competitions
- development of motorcycling tours and events for example 'The Twin Rivers Tour' which is a proposed ride from East Gresford, following the loop up Paterson River Road, across the top and linking to Allyn River Road and back to Gresford.

# GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

# GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

Five strategic goals have been identified to guide the implementation of Dungog Shire Cultural Plan



# GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

## Strategic Goal 1

Promote local heritage, history and way of life to enhance local identity and encourage cultural activation across the Dungog Shire.

- encourage the development of an arts, heritage and cultural trail comprised of public art installations and activities throughout the region that links places of cultural significance and interest
- support the development of maps, branding and signage, cultural trails and a cultural directory for eco-tourism
- investigate interpretative signage and artworks on major entry roads into the Shire
- encourage opportunities to enhance the Night-time Economy of village and town centres to support an active street life after 5pm
- support local businesses or local community members who are interested in starting a food or produce business, market stall or food trails
- support initiatives that establish a sense of place and belonging such as murals and public art installations
- acknowledge the work of local entrepreneurs, creative practitioners and not-for-profit groups in developing, supporting and delivering arts and cultural activities and events for the Dungog Shire
- facilitate and support initiatives by local and visiting organisations to develop and deliver arts and cultural activities

## Strategic Goal 2

Strengthen the capacity of existing cultural facilities and public spaces to deliver relevant and accessible arts and cultural activities and events across Dungog Shire.

- support and encourage the use of parks and public spaces as both every day and special event cultural and creative spaces
- investigate opportunities to repurpose existing assets for cultural uses such as artist studios, writing spaces, maker spaces, exhibition and performance spaces or cultural organisational venues
- review and investigate signage for local cultural attractions across Dungog Shire using consistent branding
- incorporate public art and place making initiatives into asset maintenance and management budgets as part of Dungog Shire Council's Annual Operational Plan
- support the development of externally led youth cultural opportunities/ activities
- support the development of cultural and heritage trails in Dungog Shire
- plan and implement town centre public domain improvements and public art precincts to create welcoming and event-ready spaces to meet, gather and create

# GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

## Strategic Goal 3

Support local arts and cultural practitioners, creative industries, cultural groups and the growth of the cultural economy across the Dungog Shire.

- investigate opportunities to engage the creative community within all Council activities
- ensure our economy is strong, creative, innovative and sustainable and provides us with jobs, business and creative opportunities and easy access to goods and services
- support and promote live music events across the LGA
- streamline Council's event development application and approval processes to encourage and increase community delivered events and activities
- investigate the feasibility of providing or encouraging artist live/work studios to attract and retain creative talent



# GOALS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

## Strategic Goal 4

Promote the  
promotion of  
Aboriginal cultural  
heritage throughout  
Dungog Shire

- support the development of mentorships and professional development opportunities for First Nation artists and cultural practitioners.
- support community groups and organisations to provide programs or activities that promote First Nations' cultural identity
- investigate signage in consultation of dual language at each local townships and important landmarks, and other sites of cultural significance
- support opportunities for local Aboriginal artists to develop place making artworks opportunities and signage and supporting the creation of a community lead an Aboriginal tourism experience as a cultural business and Aboriginal employment initiative.



## Strategic Goal 5

Promote cooperation between arts and cultural partners in Dungog Shire, including Council, arts practitioners, local businesses, community groups, philanthropists and external funding partners.

- investigate partnerships with cultural centres in neighbouring LGA's
- participate in local, regional and national creative arts and cultural networks and planning opportunities.
- review and maintain the Visit Dungog website to improve functionality.

# MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE CULTURAL PLAN

1. Implementation of the Cultural Plan is incorporated into Council’s Operational Plan.

**Performance Indicators**

There are a range of performance indicators that Council and other stakeholders may like to use when measuring the success of the Cultural Plan.

Strategic Goal	Outcome	Data Source
1. Promote local heritage, history and way of life to enhance local identity and encourage cultural activation across Dungog Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased profile and enhanced identity of Dungog Shire’s unique places and cultural offerings</li> <li>increased cultural activity in town and village centres</li> <li>increased visitor numbers to the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local business and community feedback</li> <li>number of visitor nights in local accommodation as measured by ABS</li> <li>number of people employed in creative enterprises as measured by ABS</li> <li>participant feedback gathered through surveys, questionnaires and google reviews</li> </ul>
2. Strengthen the capacity of existing cultural facilities and public spaces to deliver relevant and accessible arts and cultural activities and events across Dungog Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased recognition and awareness of First Nations culture in Dungog Shire</li> <li>delivery of new First Nations cultural activities and events</li> <li>increased participation in First Nations cultural activities and events</li> <li>extension and development of language revitalisation programs</li> <li>development of new Aboriginal artworks and signage to identify and interpret places with cultural significance for local First Nations people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal community feedback</li> <li>participant and visitor feedback</li> <li>number of new Aboriginal artworks created and installed across Dungog Shire</li> <li>number of dual-language signs installed across the LGA</li> <li>number of participants in language revitalisation programs</li> <li>number of participants in First Nations cultural activities and events</li> </ul>
3. Support local arts and cultural practitioners, creative industries, cultural groups and the growth of the cultural economy across the Dungog Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased quality and accessibility of facilities and public domain spaces for cultural uses</li> <li>increased usage of spaces and venues for cultural activities</li> <li>increased level of external funding secured for the delivery of arts and cultural programs in cultural facilities and public spaces in Dungog LGA</li> <li>increased audience participation at cultural activities and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased venue usage as evidenced by facilities booking data and feedback</li> <li>number of open space bookings</li> <li>s355 committee annual reporting</li> <li>increased total dollar value of external funding and grants secured across Dungog LGA</li> <li>numbers of tickets sold</li> <li>numbers of participants at arts and cultural activities and events in Dungog Shire</li> </ul>

Strategic Goal	Outcome	Data Source
<p>4. Promote the promotion of Aboriginal cultural heritage throughout Dungog Shire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased participation in cultural activities and events</li> <li>• increase in number of cultural events and activities</li> <li>• increase in number of visitors to the area</li> <li>• increase in the number of creative partnerships in Dungog LGA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilities booking and ticket sales data</li> <li>• number of arts and cultural events produced in Dungog LGA</li> <li>• number of visitor nights booked in local accommodation as recorded by ABS</li> <li>• participant numbers at free public events</li> <li>• number of people employed in arts and cultural enterprises as indicated by ABS data</li> <li>• number of arts and cultural business operating in Dungog Shire as measured by ABS data</li> <li>• number of collaborative partnerships producing arts and cultural activities and events</li> </ul>
<p>5. Promote cooperation between arts and cultural partners in Dungog Shire, including Council, arts practitioners, local businesses, community groups, philanthropists and external funding partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in number of partnerships for the delivery of arts and cultural activities across Dungog Shire</li> <li>• Increase in number of successful joint funding applications for delivery of arts and cultural activities across Dungog LGA</li> <li>• Increase in level of external funding received for arts and cultural activities in Dungog Shire</li> <li>• Increase in audience and participant numbers for arts and cultural activities and events in Dungog LGA</li> <li>• Increase level of economic activity for creative industries in Dungog Shire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of creative partnerships</li> <li>• Number of successful joint funding applications</li> <li>• Total value of external funding received for arts and cultural activities in Dungog LGA</li> <li>• Audience and participation data as evidenced by ticket sales and surveys</li> <li>• Total value of economic activity for creative industries in Dungog Shire as measured by ABS data</li> </ul>

# OUR APPROACH

Culture in Dungog Shire is delivered both formally and informally by government authorities and agencies, the arts and creative industries, business, creative practitioners and residents.

To be successful the Dungog Cultural Plan needs to be delivered collaboratively in partnership with a range of stakeholders. The roles of each are outlined below:

## Delivery Partners and their roles include:

### Dungog Shire Council

- engage with and respond to the changing needs of Dungog Shire’s growing community
- support artistic and cultural programs, events and activations support and champion local creatives, community groups and organisations and their cultural achievements
- support public art projects, dual-signage and place making activities subject to available funding and resources
- work with state and federal government funding bodies that support culture and creativity in Dungog Shire
- encourage Philanthropic organisations and industry groups that support culture and creativity in Dungog Shire
- communicate the value of Council’s investment in arts and culture to ratepayers and the wider community in Dungog LGA
- partnerships with strategic entities such as Dungog District Chamber of Commerce, Dungog Regional Tourism, and Arts Upper Hunter.
- acknowledges Shire Schools and early childhood schools/centres as important links for collaboration and inclusion

### Businesses and Enterprises

- partner with local creative practitioners and arts organisations for the delivery of an innovative program of arts and cultural activities across Dungog Shire
- provide venues for participation in cultural activities and events
- activate local neighbourhoods
- market and promote Dungog LGA as a destination for cultural tourism
- provide in-kind and philanthropic support for local arts and cultural activities and events
- promote the economic value of investment in arts and cultural activities



Drawing by Ashleigh Walters, age 8

### Artists, creatives and cultural organisations

- live and work, dream, propose ideas, create and collaborate,
- develop funding proposals for the delivery of innovative arts and cultural activities in Dungog Shire
- produce art works and cultural activities and events that celebrate Dungog LGA's unique identity and natural environment

### State & Federal Government

- fund a diverse range of arts & cultural projects in Dungog LGA
- support Dungog Shire Council to partner with neighbouring LGAs for the delivery of regional arts, cultural activities & events
- provide leadership through policy and investment

### Shire community

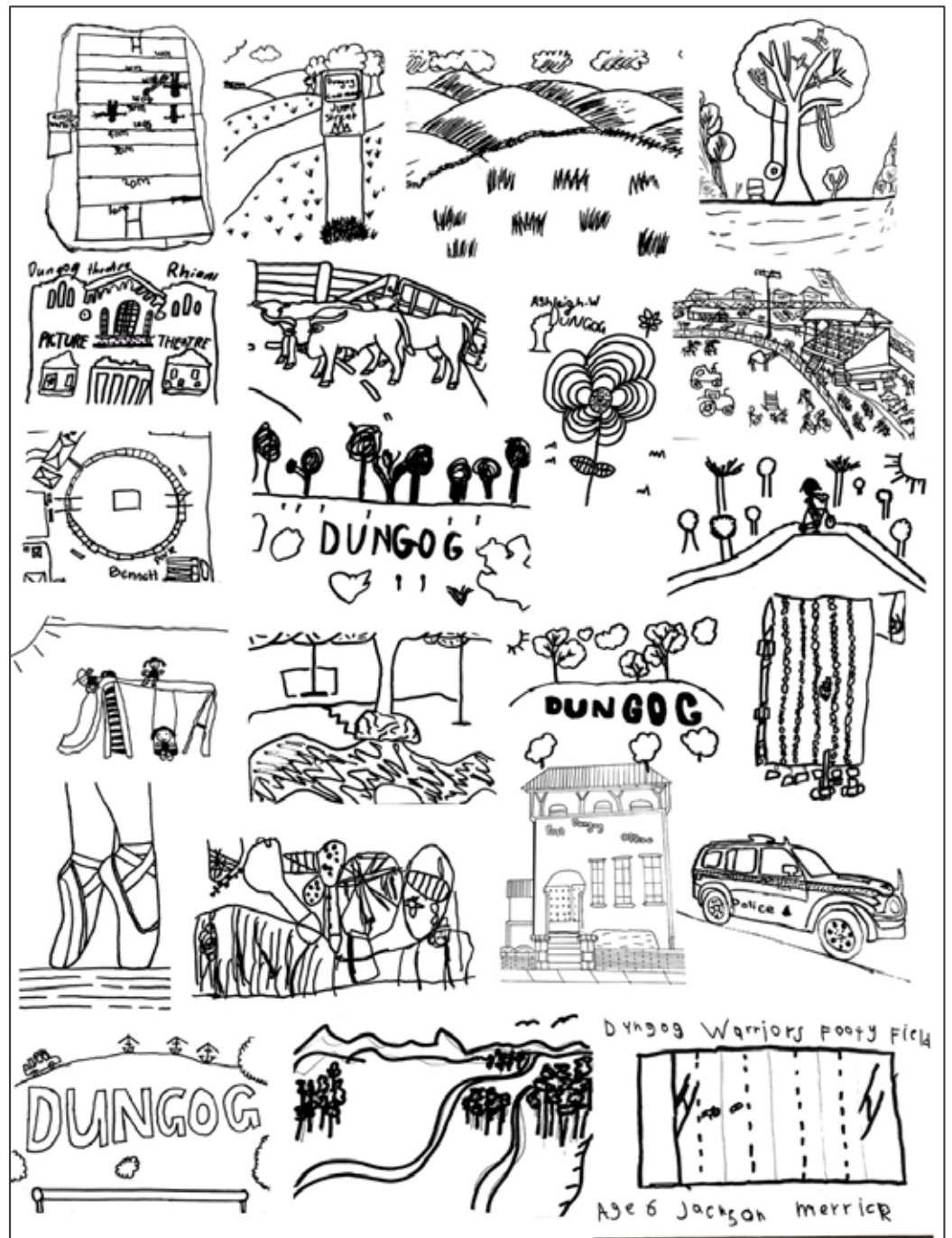
- participate in arts and cultural activities & events in Dungog LGA
- volunteer in and support arts and cultural activities and events
- shop local and purchase local produce and creative products
- support Dungog Shire Council's investment in arts and cultural activities and events
- support input and advice from broader community



*Drawing by Macen Watkins, age 8*

# FAT TEXTA COMPETITION

All of our fantastic entries have now been made into the 'Fat Texta Tapestry – What I Love About Dungog Shire' (pictured right).





1925

THIS TABLE WAS ERECTED BY EX MEMBERS A.I.F. DUNGOG DIST. IN CAREFUL APPRECIATION OF LOYAL SERVICES RENDERED BY OUR WARRIORS DURING THE GREAT WAR 1914 - 25.4.25

DUNGOG MEMORIAL BSL CLUB  
PLEASE DO NOT FEEL AND HAVE A COLD DRINK OF WATER AND...

CROSS

LEST WE FORGET

# APPENDICES

The table following summarises cultural venues in Dungog Shire and includes assets that are owned and managed by Dungog Shire Council, assets that are owned by Dungog Shire Council but managed by committees that are independent of Council.



# APPENDIX 1

## DUNGOG SHIRE CULTURAL ASSETS

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Clarence Town Courthouse</b>	Cnr. Prince and Grey Streets, Clarence Town	Council/ managed by Clarence Town and District Historical Association Inc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum</li> <li>• Historical tours</li> <li>• Night markets</li> <li>• Cultural events</li> </ul>	20-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage listed</li> <li>• Accessible toilets</li> <li>• Active Historical society with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for illumination of courthouse to provide point of interest</li> <li>• Seeking grants for restoration of the original building, fence and exhibitions.</li> </ul>
<b>Clarence Town School of the Arts Hall</b>	48 Grey Street, Clarence Town	Council / s355 committee	Wedding and functions venue Music events School holiday activities Dance classes Yoga classes	224	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beautiful Hall with heritage fittings and original artworks</li> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> <li>• Has a large kitchen / supper room which can be used for functions</li> <li>• Chandelier lights and stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilets behind stage and not accessible for people with disabilities or during shows;</li> <li>• Accessible toilets are available next door in Council-owned public toilets but people have to leave the hall to use them;</li> <li>• Electricity is a major outgoing and the hall would benefit from 'user-pays' air conditioning and solar power</li> <li>• Disability access is to the rear of the building, upgrade required to make it fully accessible;</li> <li>• Current hall income does not cover maintenance or improvements</li> </ul>
<b>Clarence Town Sporting Park Reserve and Reg Ford Oval</b>	Queen Street Clarence Town	Council / s355 committee	local community organisations and sporting organisations including cricket, rugby league, soccer, local schools, local service organisations and community events	2500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a s355 committee with diverse range of skills and experience</li> <li>• recently constructed facility with two canteens, change rooms, first aid room, public toilets, accessible infrastructure,</li> <li>• all sealed carparks with pedestrian links,</li> <li>• large indoor space for diverse uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development as a community hub for events and activities, improved external infrastructure on Reg Ford Oval area.</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 1

## DUNGOG SHIRE CULTURAL ASSETS

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Doug Walters Pavilion and Bennett Park</b>	35-40 Mackay Street, Dungog	Council owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used for a range of community events and functions</li> <li>Used as an Emergency operations Centre</li> <li>Used for artist's talks, book launches and other functions</li> </ul>	102 Bennett Park 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting rooms</li> <li>Pavilion</li> <li>Disabled toilet</li> <li>Kiosk for community hire</li> <li>Field open reserve</li> <li>Public Amenities including change rooms</li> <li>Accessible options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving lighting within the field open reserve/upgrade southern carpark for event parking, establish pedestrian links</li> </ul>
<b>Dungog Museum</b>	105 Dowling Street, Dungog	Managed by Dungog Historical Society	Houses collections of artefacts which have local historical significance	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded by Museums &amp; Galleries NSW</li> <li>Income from entry fees</li> <li>Potential partnership with Newcastle Museum for cataloguing / archiving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible toilets required</li> <li>Ageing cohort of volunteers who are unwilling / not able to undertake marketing to grow volunteer base</li> <li>Management Committee do not have capacity to open Museum more than a few days per month</li> <li>Valuable artefacts and assets are not being preserved, catalogued or secured due to lack of resources</li> <li>Lighting upgrade required</li> </ul>
<b>Dungog Shire Community Centre</b>	103 Dowling Street, Dungog	Council owned building, managed by Dungog Shire Community Centre (NGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community services</li> <li>Non-for-profit NGO hub for community</li> <li>Living Local Growers Stall</li> <li>Financial counselling</li> <li>Boomerang bags</li> <li>Centrelink agency</li> <li>Employment services</li> <li>Adolescent and family counselling</li> </ul>	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managed by Dungog Shire Community Centre (NGO)</li> <li>7 x part-time staff</li> <li>Large volunteer cohort</li> <li>Funded by various local, state and federal sources</li> <li>Has PBI – tax-deductibility status</li> <li>Computer /internet / printing and photocopying</li> <li>Well-maintained</li> <li>Fully Accessible</li> <li>Commercial kitchen</li> <li>Pizza oven</li> <li>Community garden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs landscaping</li> <li>Water usage bills</li> <li>Limited accessibility</li> <li>Toilets need an upgrade</li> </ul>

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Dungog Showground</b>	63 Chapman Street, Dungog	NSW Govt (Crown Land) DSC is the appointed Crown Lands Manager; managed by s355 committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dungog Agricultural and Horticultural Society (organises Dungog Show)</li> <li>Girl Guides</li> <li>Pony Club</li> <li>Motorcycle Club</li> <li>Campdraft &amp; Rodeo Committee</li> <li>Ladies Auxiliary</li> <li>Agricultural &amp; Horticultural Society</li> <li>Dungog Showground Committee</li> <li>Rodeo events</li> <li>Emergency Evacuation Centre</li> <li>Larger music events (eg Mumford &amp; Sons)</li> </ul>	5,000	<p>The site has a range of assets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grandstand</li> <li>Sheds</li> <li>Horse stalls</li> <li>Cattleyards</li> <li>Toilet blocks</li> <li>Kiosks</li> <li>Arena</li> <li>Raked seating</li> <li>Offices</li> <li>Girl Guides Hall</li> <li>Shower block</li> <li>Pavilions</li> <li>Dam</li> <li>Lions Club</li> <li>Caretaker's residence</li> <li>Powered and unpowered campsites</li> <li>Strong volunteer base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade of facilities would make it more attractive to RV, motorhome and campervan visitors</li> <li>No camp kitchen</li> <li>Site subject to flooding and drainage issues</li> <li>Potential for site to have a solar powered EV charging station</li> <li>Not fully accessible</li> <li>Ageing cohort of volunteers</li> <li>Amenities block with showers and disabled access but upgrade required to provide for wider range of users with disabilities (eg Riding for Disabled) (eg only has one accessible shower/toilet)</li> </ul>
<b>Gresford School of the Arts Hall</b>	42 Park Road, Gresford	Council / s355 committee	Local community groups for various activities	164	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Hall is used by several community groups on a regular basis;</li> <li>Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current hall income does not cover maintenance and capital works</li> <li>Under-utilisation of hall for cultural activities and events</li> <li>Electricity is a major outgoing and the hall would benefit from solar power</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 1

## DUNGOG SHIRE CULTURAL ASSETS

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Gresford Sporting Complex</b>	Park Road Gresford	Council / s355 committee	Local community organisations and sporting organisation's including Cricket, Soccer school based activities and regional sporting events	2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> <li>• Facility is used minimum of twice a week and most weekends</li> <li>• Has recently constructed amenities facility including canteen</li> <li>• Accessible change rooms and toilets, undercover area and onsite parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All weather car park for increased event uses</li> <li>• Upgrade of original amenities building including accessible upgrades</li> <li>• Outside barbeque area</li> </ul>
<b>Martins Creek Memorial Hall</b>	Grace Avenue, Martins Creek	Council / s355 committee	Community events	150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village hall with ANZAC memorial roll</li> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has new roof</li> <li>• Solar power would help with financial sustainability and attracting users</li> <li>• Needs user-pays air-con</li> <li>• Needs accessibility upgrade and accessible toilets</li> </ul>
<b>Paterson Courthouse Museum</b>	29 Kings Street Paterson	Crown Lands/ Council managed by Paterson Historical Society	Houses collections of artefacts which have local historical significance, hosts cultural events and local historical tours.		Heritage listed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not cater for people with access needs</li> </ul>
<b>Paterson School of the Arts Hall</b>	6 Duke Street, Paterson	Council / s355 committee	Weddings and private functions Charity events Dances Film nights School holiday programs Dance schools Art exhibitions	192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a commercial kitchen</li> <li>• Has capacity to show films</li> <li>• Meeting room</li> <li>• Centrally located</li> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The toilets need an upgrade</li> <li>• The disabled access is up a sloping side path that has no cover</li> <li>• Electricity costs are prohibitive (especially for air conditioning) and they want to install solar power and/or coin-operated air-con unit</li> </ul>

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Paterson Sportsground</b>	Webbers Creek Road, Paterson	Crown Land managed by Council in partnership with Paterson Sportsground Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passive recreation</li> <li>• Structured sporting activities like cricket, tennis, golf and Little Athletics</li> <li>• Scouts</li> </ul>	2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nine-hole golf course</li> <li>• Golf Clubhouse &amp; workshop</li> <li>• Badminton Shed</li> <li>• Tennis Clubhouse (including commercial kitchen) &amp; shed</li> <li>• Synthetic grass tennis courts</li> <li>• Active but ageing volunteer cohort</li> <li>• Koala habitat</li> <li>• Multipurpose sporting court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting across the site needs to be upgraded</li> <li>• Netball courts need re-surfacing</li> <li>• Facilities and amenities are ageing, maintenance plan required</li> <li>• Drainage and flooding issues impact use</li> <li>• Upgrade of camping facilities and provision of camp kitchen and showers could generate significant income for maintenance of assets</li> </ul>
<b>The James Theatre Community Centre</b>	6 Brown Street, Dungog	Council / s355 committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Films</li> <li>• Wedding hire</li> <li>• Music events</li> <li>• Community meetings</li> </ul>	500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iconic and well-loved local venue</li> <li>• Heritage listed</li> <li>• Often identified with Dungog township</li> <li>• Main Auditorium can host a range of activities and events</li> <li>• 2 x cinema screens</li> <li>• Digital projector</li> <li>• Tiered cinema seating</li> <li>• Dolby surround sound</li> <li>• Kiosk and ticket box</li> <li>• Elevated main stage</li> <li>• Portable stage units</li> <li>• Moveable chairs and tables</li> <li>• Air-conditioning</li> <li>• Kitchenette</li> <li>• Lovely outdoor functions space including BBQ and landscaped garden area</li> <li>• Permanent user and champion for the James theatre Community Centre “Friends of the James Theatre”</li> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for income from activities and events to cover maintenance and costs of capital works;</li> <li>• Accessibility issues</li> <li>• Venue is under-utilised</li> <li>• There is an outdoor area available for functions</li> <li>• Lack of staff/volunteers with technical skills to operate projectors and equipment</li> <li>• No fly tower, shallow stage</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 1

## DUNGOG SHIRE CULTURAL ASSETS

Hall / Venue	Location	Ownership	Current Users	Venue Capacity	Identified Strengths	Identified Needs / Opportunities
<b>Vacy School of Arts Hall</b>	779 Gresford Road, Vacy	Council / s355 committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wedding / functions venue</li> <li>• Weekly yoga classes</li> <li>• Weekly playgroup subsidised by DCJ</li> <li>• Vacy Public School</li> </ul>	96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> <li>• Coin-operated air-con (\$2/hour)</li> <li>• Located next to a fully-fenced playground and across the road from Vacy Public School</li> </ul>	
<b>Vacy Sports Ground</b>	Gresford Road	Council / s355 committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacy Public School</li> <li>• Local community and sporting organisations including Cricket, Soccer, League and Vacy Country Carnival</li> </ul>	1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a s355 committee with a diverse range of skills and experience</li> <li>• Located next to a fully fenced playground and picnic area including barbeque</li> <li>• Has a recently constructed shade shelter and boundary front fence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved car parking areas for all weather uses</li> <li>• Upgrade of boundary fences and improved infrastructure onsite including amenities</li> </ul>



E W

GRESFORD  
NATIONAL PARKS & FORESTS  
CHICHESTER DAM

FULCRUM

CHICHESTER DAM  
1998-2000  
JAMES WATSON  
AND  
MURRAY WATSON



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*Photo credit: Aithyn Grove.*

