Strategic Framework Review 2021-2025

Framework 2021 - 2025

The strategy was designed with the aim of increasing participation in physical activity, enhancing social connections and ensuring inclusive access to recreation and sports for all Stonnington residents.



Vision: A Stonnington community that is more physically active, leads a healthy lifestyle and is socially connected.

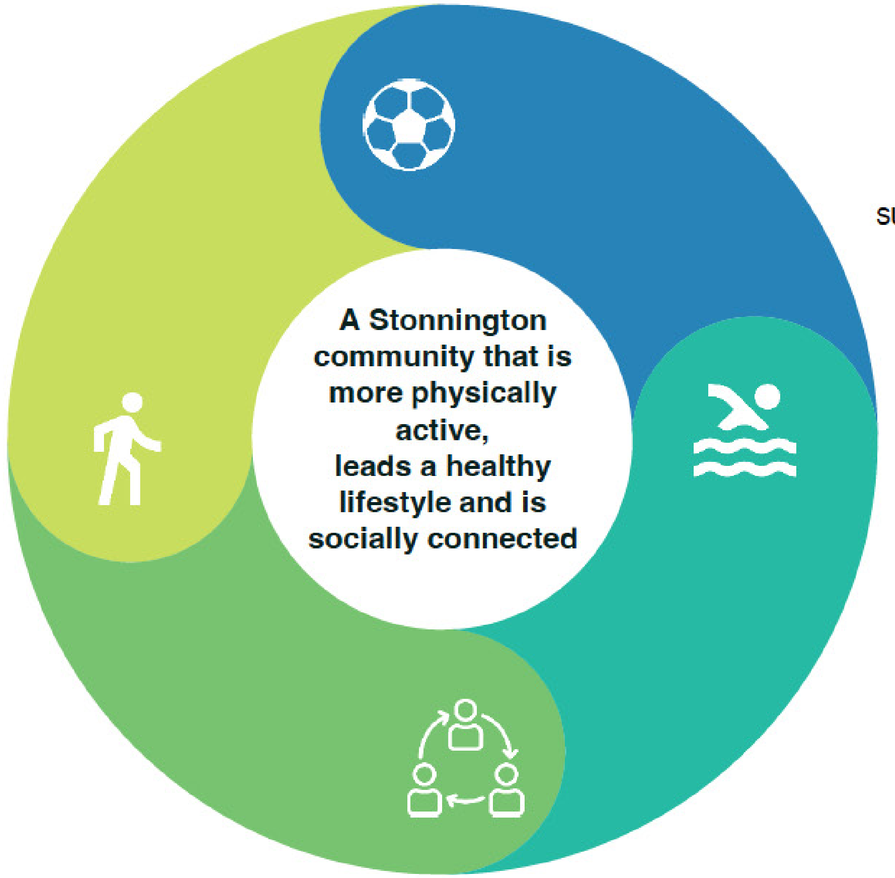
Strategic Directions

VISION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ACTIVE STONNINGTON STRATEGY

ACTIVE RECREATION

Increase the awareness and diversity of physical activity offerings, improve physical environments for greater participation in active recreation, focusing on those who are least active.



ORGANISED SPORT

Improve the capacity of sporting infrastructure and clubs to enable sustainable participation growth; whilst promoting inclusion and diversity.

SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Creating opportunities to connect with the community through programs and events, to strengthen community connections and belonging

AQUATIC SERVICES

Increase program participation, strengthen partnerships to cater for non-traditional users and develop an ongoing review of the product offering to adapt to the current trends.

What actions have been achieved?

Strategic Priority 1: Active Recreation

Built environment:
4 playgrounds upgraded, **3** sportsground improvements, **5** exercise equipment installed, **14** basketball courts maintained, **3** new skate and BMX facilities.

Programming:
Programs delivered including Yoga in the Park, Mums n Bubs, Pickleball and Game On Days.

Active Transport initiatives:
Bike/scooter parking at schools, walking groups, bike maps, Open Streets event.

Awareness and Communications:
This Girl Can campaign, growth in Active Stonnington website views and newsletter subscribers.

What actions have been achieved?

Strategic Priority 2: Organised Sport

- **Facilities upgraded or delivered:**
  Major redevelopments including Toorak Park Pavilion, Stonnington Sports Centre, Orrong Park Tennis Centre, Harold Holt Swim Centre and Princes Gardens Sports Courts.

- **Participation growth:**
  Over 16,000 club members, plus 1,600 volunteers with notable increases in junior male soccer, female cricket and netball participation.

- **Club support:**
  Club development training delivered and IMS booking system launched.

- **Policy and planning:**
  Fair Access Policy 2024–2027 endorsed to improve equity and facility use and a new Sports Infrastructure Plan is now underway.

What actions have been achieved?

Strategic Priority 3: Aquatic Services

Participation and usage:
Increased centre occupancy with classes reaching or exceeding capacity and more classes introduced, 50+ users of Harold Holt community bus service.

Facility upgrades:
Heritage dive tower restored, Prahran Aquatic Centre refurbished and Harold Holt changeroom upgrades.

Inclusive programming:
Low sensory swim times introduced, migrant swimming program and school partnerships.

Communications and feedback:
Voice of the Customer surveys have been informing ongoing improvements.

What actions have been achieved?

Strategic Priority 4: Socially Connected

Inclusive community programs:
Disability Pride Month event 2025, new community support programs like Tai Chi, Walk and Talk Buddies, Move it to Music with 800+ monthly attendees, new youth programs including programming through partnerships with existing sport providers.

Research and feedback:
Social and Community Health Survey conducted with Swinburne University in 2023 where insights led to more casual, low-commitment programs and value-based marketing.

Equitable access:
Fair Access Audit completed to assess gender equity and accessibility in sports pavilions and courts.

Key Numbers

219%
increase in Active Stonnington website views

1,200 subscribers
to Active Stonnington newsletter

$9,309
value of infrastructure per capita 2024 (up from $7,000 2022)

14,954 individual bookings
at redeveloped Princes Gardens Sports Courts

Approx 20% occupancy increase
in aquatic centres FY 2024–25

37% increase
in daily skatepark users in Prahran Skatepark since redevelopment

4.83 visits per capita
to aquatic facilities 2024

Key Numbers

16,000
registered community sports club members

1,600
community sports club volunteers

Over 700
participants at Come & Try programs facilitated by Council

800+
monthly attendees at community-led wellness programs

90
financially disadvantaged young people accessed team sport through the Australian Sports Commission grant so far

39.6% overweight or obese rate down from 41%

Case Study 1: Our new stadium

Margaret Connellan Stadium (also known as Stonnington Sports Centre) is a multi-purpose sporting facility opened in Chadstone in 2023.

The centre includes a bowls club, a 7-court tennis club, and a four-court indoor stadium. This facility has become the cornerstone for indoor sport in Stonnington, with growing participation. The centre is managed by Leisure Services in collaboration with stadium user groups to maximise access and utilisation.





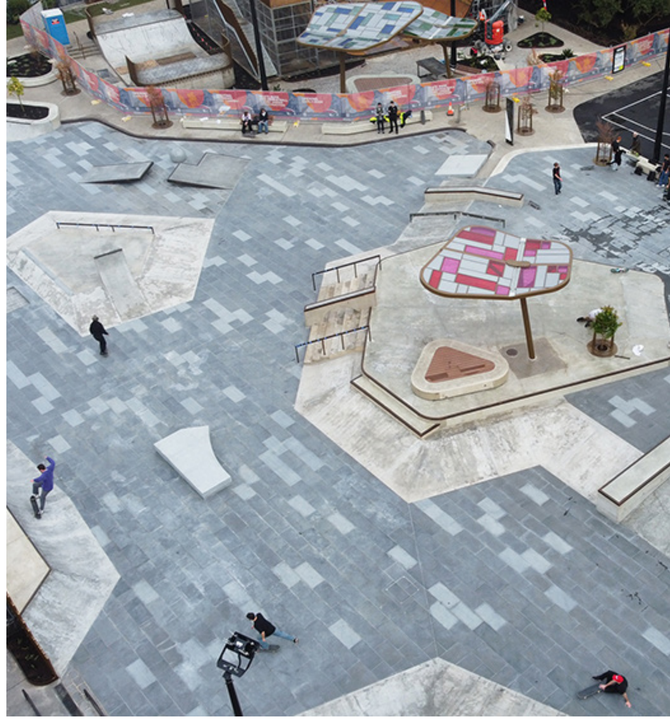




Case Study 2: Prahran Skate Park

In 2024, Council opened a new world-class skate park at Princes Gardens. The redeveloped park was designed to cater to all skill levels, from young beginners to pro level. The redevelopment has increased average daily users by 20% and established Prahran Skatepark as a premier Melbourne skate and basketball facility.









Case Study 3: Community Support Programs

Council offers a variety of programs for older adults to stay active and socially connected in Stonnington. Recent programs have included Stonnington Seniors Festival, Fitness over 50, support for community cultural groups and community transport initiatives.

Community-led wellness programs such as Tai Chi, Walk and Talk Buddies, Move it to Music and Fit Club are especially popular with total monthly attendance now exceeding 800 participants.









Reflections and learnings

- **Programming is just as important as infrastructure investment**. Building new facilities alone doesn't guarantee higher participation.
- **Casual and flexible is key.** There is growing demand for flexible, low-commitment and social forms of active recreation to work around our community's busy lifestyles.
- **Non-participation often comes from lack of awareness**. Continued investment into promotion is critical and marketing should focus on affordability and ease of access.
- **We can make existing infrastructure work harder.** Introducing non-traditional sports and adapting facilities for multi-use and at non-peak hours can increase participation.
- **Growth can also come from equity and inclusion**. Removing barriers to entry and eliminating threshold fear is a powerful tool for engaging new parts of the community.
- **Data, data, data.** A strong monitoring and evaluation framework is essential to understand what is working and provide for evidence-based planning.