

The State of the Shire- Year 2000 Benchmark

Chapter 6 - The Shire Community Technical Paper

April 2001

Chapter 6 The Shire Community

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CHAPTER 6 – THE SHIRE COMMUNITY

6.1. Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the Johnstone Shire community by reporting on the demographic profile of residents, auditing social infrastructure available, and detailing the social development issues impacting on the well being of residents in the Shire. The role of community groups in contributing to the status of the Shire is also examined.

A demographic profile was obtained using population, births, deaths, age profile, cultural composition, and household census data. This profile provides a platform against which to measure the adequacy of existing social infrastructure.

An audit of social infrastructure was also undertaken under the headings of services, facilities, networks and planning processes and key issues for the major categories of infrastructure, housing, health, education, family support community development, culture and recreation, and legal and public safety. By examining the services and facilities available, gaps could be identified, with recommendations subsequently formulated to address these and ultimately improve social services in the Shire.

Social development issues directly affect community ability to maintain or improve its status. Previous studies identified community connectivity, well being of the community, responses to change, strategic planning processes, transition to the market economy, and human resources as the main social development issues affecting the community in the area. These issues are examined in this paper with responses proposed to address these.

6.2. Demographic Profile

At the time of the 1996 Census, the Johnstone Shire local government area had a total population count of 19,780 persons. On the night of the 1996 Census, the Johnstone Shire population represented 0.6 per cent of Queensland’s population (3,368,850).

Innisfail was the largest centre within the Johnstone Shire, with a total population count of 8,989 persons at the 1996 census, comprising 43.3 per cent of the Johnstone Shire population.

The average number of live births registered within the Johnstone Shire was calculated at 310 births per year over the five-year period 1994 to 1998. A total of 127 deaths of residents of the Johnstone Shire were registered in 1998. The main causes of death to residents in the Johnstone Shire in 1998 were registered as diseases of the circulatory system (including heart disease and strokes) and neoplasms (including cancer of the colon and trachea, bronchus and lung).

At the time of the 1996 Census, 42.4 per cent of the total population in the Johnstone Shire was recorded as being in the dependent age groups (0 to 14 years and 60 years and over).

Indigenous persons accounted for 7.5 per cent of the total Johnstone Shire population in 1996, with over 70 per cent of indigenous persons counted within the Innisfail urban centre. A total of 12.9 per cent of persons in the Johnstone Shire population were recorded as overseas born in 1996, with the most significant overseas birthplace being Southern Europe. 48 language groups were recorded in the 1996 census for the Johnstone Shire. At the time of the 1996 Census, 10.0 per cent of persons aged 5 years and over spoke a language other than English at home.

A total of 74.8 per cent of households within the Johnstone Shire in 1996 were recorded as family households, with the majority of family households further defined as one family households. Over half of the family households consisted of a couple with children.

6.3. Social Infrastructure

6.3.1. Definition

Social infrastructure is the framework of human services, facilities and social development processes, which promote quality of life and social justice within a particular geographic area (place). Social infrastructure is financed and managed through a range of different arrangements by and between government agencies (local, state and commonwealth) non-government community organisations and groups (not-for-profit) and, increasingly, the private sector.

Social infrastructure services, facilities and processes has been broadly categorised under the following headings:

- Housing
- Health
- Family support
- Community development
- Education
- Culture and recreation
- Legal and public safety

6.3.2. Housing

6.3.2.1. Services and Facilities

Housing services and facilities in the Johnstone Shire are detailed in the table below.

HOUSING PROVIDER	TARGET GROUP	UNITS	PERIOD	FUNDING SOURCE
Chjowai	Families	36	Long Term	ATSIC
Innisfail Youth & Family Care	Youth	8 Beds 3 x 1br 2 x 2br	Short Term Long Term Crisis Accommodation	Shelter Community Assistance Program
Wet Tropics	Youth, Disability, Domestic Violence, Families & Aged	30	Medium to Long Term	Community Rent Scheme
Johnstone Shire Council	Aged/Disabled	31	Long Term	(Rural & Regional Community Housing Program) (HAAS), (CHPP)
Johnstone Shire Domestic Violence Service	Domestic Violence	1 x 3br 2 x 2br	Up to 10 weeks	Community Housing
Endeavour Foundation	Intellectually Disabled	2		Unknown
SPK (HMONG)	Families	5	Long Term	Community Housing
Innisfail Jubilee Housing (South Sea Islander)	Families	3	Long Term	Community Housing
ATSI	Families & Aged	55	Long Term	ATSIHP
Public Housing	Families, Aged & Disabilities	179	Long Term	
Lakes Village	Over 60 years	30	Long Term	

Table 6.1 Housing services and facilities in the Johnstone Shire

6.3.2.2. Networks and planning processes

Johnstone Shire Council is working in cooperation with the Department of Housing to address housing issues in the Shire, and representatives meet at least twice annually. A

meeting was held in December 2000 to document the housing stock in the Shire and identify gaps.

6.3.2.3. *Key Issues*

There are 179 housing units in the Johnstone Shire comprising of the following: Youth, Families, Aged, Disabled and Domestic Violence victims. The area is well provided for with the exception of crisis accommodation, supported accommodation for people with mental illnesses and a safe house for domestic violence.

6.3.3. Health

The Innisfail Health Service District services a population of approximately 35,000 people, which extends beyond the Shire boundary. The district extends from Fishery Falls in the north to Cardwell in the south, encompassing the townships of Innisfail, Tully, Babinda and communities of Tully Heads, El Arish, Mission Beach, Murray Upper and Jumbun.

6.3.3.1. *Services*

The district offers a wide range of health services, with the management and administration centre based at Innisfail Hospital. The Innisfail Hospital offers a wide variety of quality services, which are summarised below.

Services Provided	Extent of Services
Hospital	Accident and Emergency Care Services, Medical Services, Acute Care Services, Long Term and Respite Care Services, Allied Health
Specialist Services	Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Aged Care, Palliative Care, Alcohol and Drug, Speech Pathology, Social Work, Occupational Therapy, Oral Health, Pathology, Radiography, Pharmacy
Clinics	Antenatal, Wound Management, Internal Medicine, Mental Health
Outreach Services	Gynaecological, Paediatric
Visiting Specialist Services	General Medicine, Orthopaedics, Thoracic Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Psychiatry, Surgical
Community Health	School/Child Health Screening, Immunisation Clinics, Parent Education, Mental Health, Women’s Health, Palliative Care, Aged Care Assessment, Drug & Alcohol Services, Health Promotion

Table 6.2 Services offered by Innisfail Hospital

In addition to these services, an emergency helicopter service is provided by the State Emergency Service from the Innisfail District to Cairns Base Hospital. The helicopter flight takes approximately 15 minutes to Innisfail from Cairns.

The Innisfail District Community Mental Health Service has a Recreational Group for consumers weekly and a Carers Group monthly. The service operates between 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday and Friday excluding public holidays.

6.3.3.2. *Facilities*

The table below provides a summary of facilities.

HEALTH SERVICES AND FACILITIES as at December 2000	Johnstone Shire (Innisfail, part Mission Beach, Kurrimine Beach, Flying Fish Point) population approx 20000)
Hospitals	1 public (104 beds)
Health Clinics/Centres	1 community health centre, 1 maternal & child health
Nursing Homes	2 (80 beds)
Alcohol & Drug Services	2 Workers based at MAMU and Community Health – Service name: Wulngah Drug & Alcohol Counselling Program. 1 Alcohol Tobacco and other Drug Service visiting worker.
Family Planning	Offered through the Child Health Service
Domiciliary Services	Blue nurses Home help
Specialists	7 visiting Specialists
Youth Health	1 Youth Suicide Prevention worker
HIV/AIDS Services	Cairns Sexual Health Service provides an outreach service in the Innisfail area
Dental Services	Several private and public at the Innisfail Hospital. School Dental Van.
Indigenous Services	1- Mamu
Mental Health Services	1 local service incorporating Adult and Child & Youth Mental Health Teams
General Practitioners	~ 15
Allied Health Professionals	~ 4 (excluding Mental Health)
Palliative Care	A palliative care service is provided at the Innisfail Hospital
Aerial Ambulance	Queensland Emergency Service

Table 6.3 Health Services and Facilities in the Innisfail Health District

6.3.3.3. *Networks and planning processes*

In partnership with the Far North Queensland Regional Division of GPs, the Innisfail Health Service District Offers a Phase 2 Cardiac Rehabilitation Program. It is a comprehensive education and exercise program designed for cardiac patients recently discharged from hospital and encourages involvement of spouse/family. The program is conducted over a 6 week period and education covers heart disease and risk factors, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, medications, stress management/relaxation, nutrition and activities of daily living.

The Innisfail District Community Mental Health Service is progressing with the pilot of the GP Shared Care program along with the Tablelands District Community Mental Health

Service and to date, has had a positive experience with regard to this. The service enjoys strong links with General Practitioners in the community and values the development of new initiatives aimed at enhanced consumer focused service delivery.

The Innisfail District Community Mental Health Service is supporting the establishment of a Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) for the district as well as GROW group for Innisfail, CAG will provide a voice for consumers and GROW support for consumers.

6.3.3.4. *Key Issues*

In the year 2000, the Innisfail District Community Health Service:

- Successfully achieved 3 year accreditation in 2000
- Innisfail was the pilot site for the Mental Health Module for accreditation developed from the National Standards for Mental Health Services and is the first community mental health service in the north to achieve accreditation.
- Innisfail was successful in achieving funding in 2000 for a 3 year Mental Health Promotion and Prevention project that will commence in 2001. Innisfail will be the pilot site for Queensland for this population model in line with the National Action Plan for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health 2000 under the 2nd National Mental Health Plan.
- There is a lack of specialist care based in Innisfail. In particular surgeons, psychiatrists, gynaecology and obstetrics, orthopaedics, and an ear, nose and throat specialist.

6.3.4. Education

6.3.4.1. *Services*

State Education in the Johnstone Shire

The schools work cooperatively through a cluster arrangement, which enables both human and material resources being more effectively, and efficiently utilised. Some of the more prominent programs include the sharing of specialist teachers and services to support school based education programs in areas such as:

- Primary physical education
- Primary music
- Primary and secondary instrumental music
- LOTE – Languages other than English
- Primary teacher/librarian services
- Advisory visiting special education teachers
- Therapy services to assist students in accessing educational programs
- Guidance and counselling
- Primary learning support teachers, and
- Reading recovery programs

6.3.4.2. *Facilities*

Public Education in the Johnstone Shire

Education Queensland delivers education programs to the students of the Johnstone Shire at 16 sites. These sites are comprised of:

- 1 secondary school special education class attached
- 1 environmental education centre
- 1 special school
- 4 larger primary schools – special
- 1 special school
- 4 larger primary schools – special education class at one site

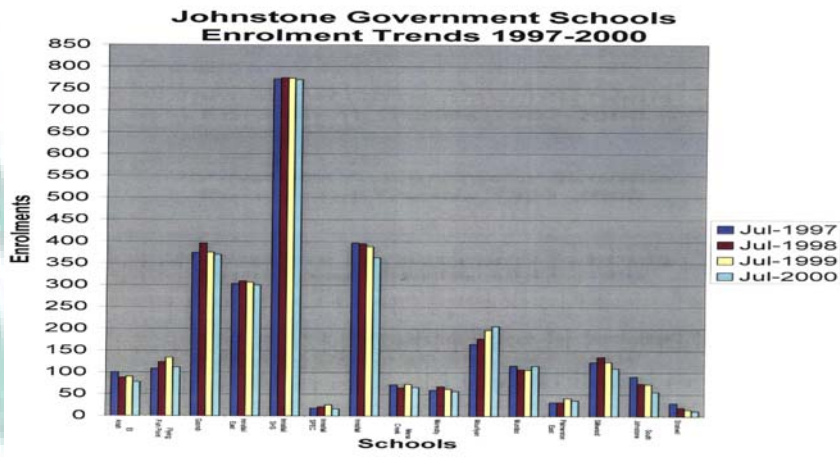


Figure 6.1 Enrolments in the Johnstone Shire by School

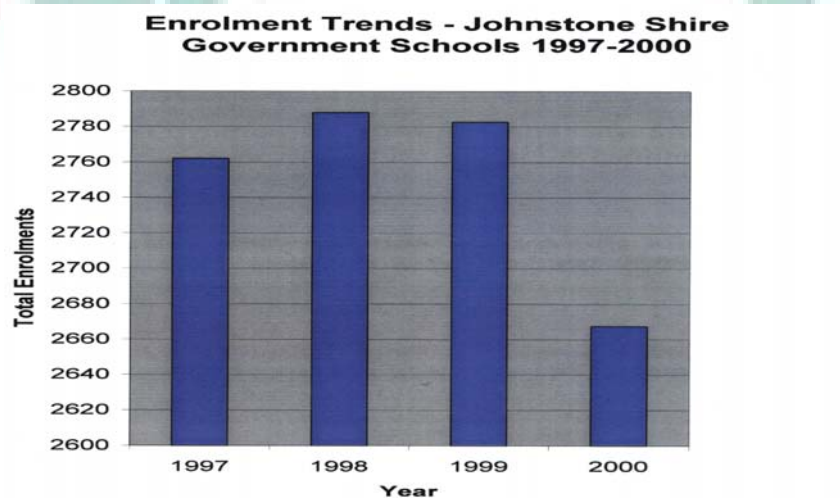


Figure 6.2 Enrolment Trends by Year

Private Education in the Johnstone Shire

Private Education is delivered to students of the Johnstone Shire at four sites.

- 3 Catholic Primary Schools
- 1 Catholic High School

Attendance at these schools is illustrated in the graphs below.

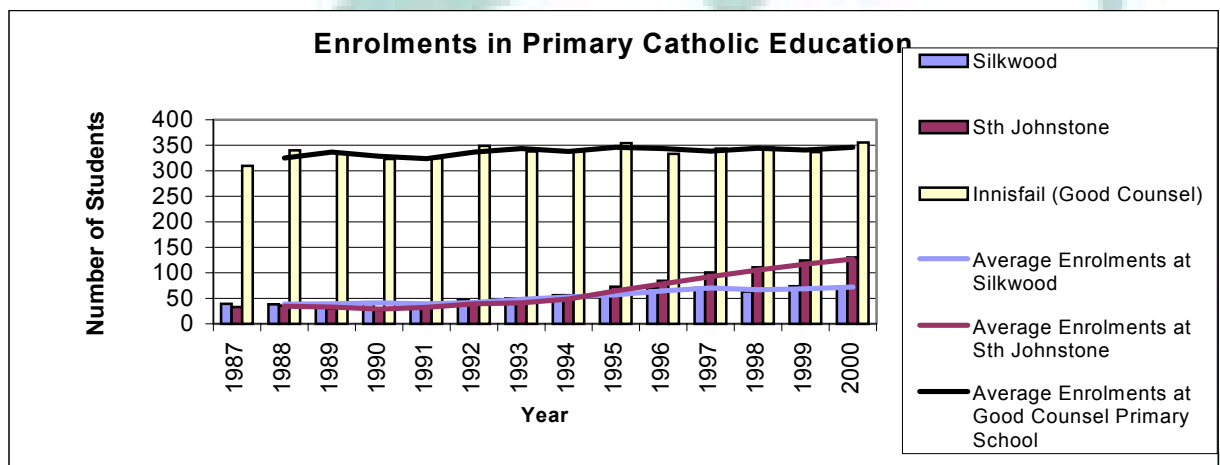


Figure 6.3 Enrolments in Primary Catholic Education

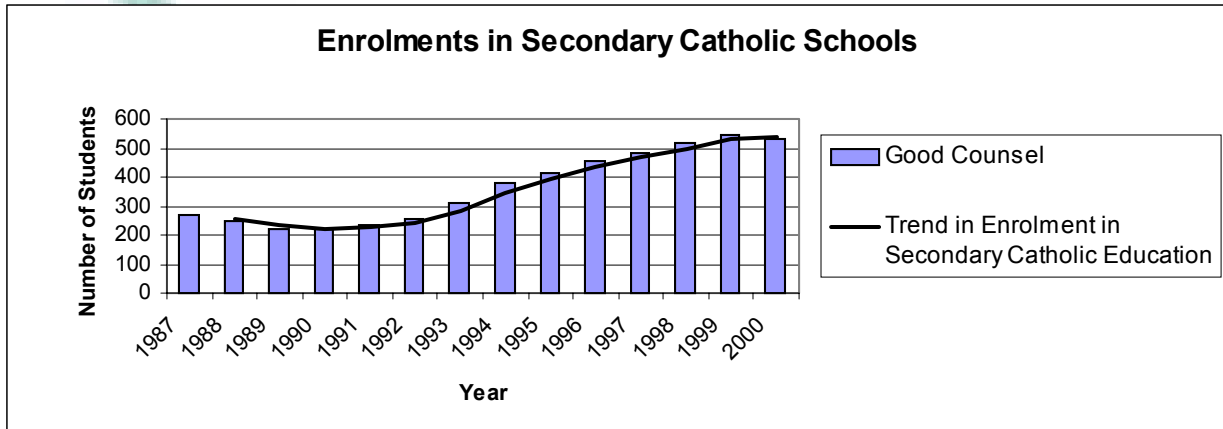


Figure 6.4 Enrolments in Secondary Catholic Education

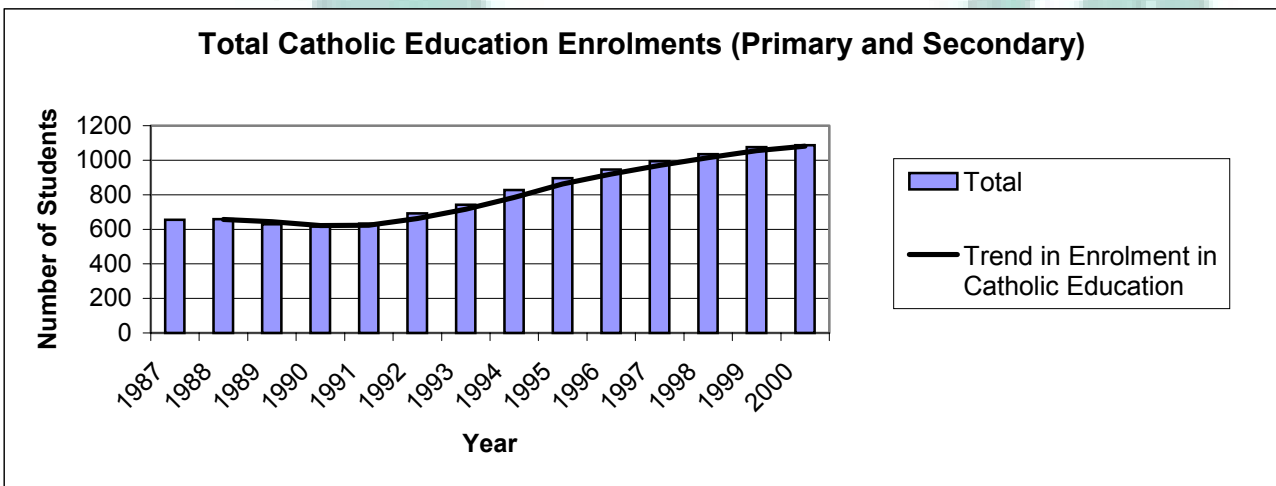


Figure 6.5 Total Enrolments in Catholic Education

6.3.4.3. Key Issues

State Education in the Johnstone Shire

The major contextual factors impacting on education in the Johnstone Shire at this time include:

- Erratic economic pressures on families living in rural areas and the reduction in the amount of permanent labour traditionally required. These have impacted on the length of time students remain enrolled at any one school.
- Shorter harvesting seasons have resulted in an increase in student itinerancy.
- The overall rural economic climate has seen a recent drop in student numbers with local predictions supporting the continuation of this trend in the near future.
- An increase in school based management practices, which enables local decision making groups to respond more effectively to community identified issues and aspirations.
- A recognised need to harness interagency resources and programs to address identified student welfare issues instead of individual government agencies attempting to do so.
- The fact that Queensland State Education’s 2010 strategies have enabled longer-term goals to be set and their achievement to be through productive pedagogy and an outcomes based focus.

State schools will continue to provide relevant curriculum programs to all students within the Johnstone Shire within a community oriented management structure. They will also

endeavour to ensure that continuing to provide a responsive and supportive school environment caters for the physical, social and emotional needs of students.

Higher Education

TAFE Queensland provides vocational education and training services through 16 TAFE Institutes with 85 campuses and colleges throughout the State. The institutes deliver local and industry-focused vocational and education training solutions to meet client needs.

Johnstone College of TAFE is a College of Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE (TNQIT) and comprises two campuses, one in Innisfail and one in Tully. The Innisfail Campus was opened on 28th October 1988. The Tully Campus was opened on 12th March 1993.

Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE has 4 Colleges and 8 campuses. The Colleges are Cairns, Tablelands, Johnstone and Torres Strait.

Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE operates in one of the largest and most challenging training environments in Australia. The area covered is 268,000 kilometres, which is larger than the entire state of Victoria, yet contains only 6.3% of the state's population. Training is delivered over vast distances, to dozens of small, remote communities with limited infrastructure and major social and economic barriers.

Pressures on TAFE

Vocational Education and Training in Australia has made some very difficult and important transitions of late. Most importantly is the establishment of a national training system. This has been done through the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF) which is a comprehensive approach to national recognition of vocational education and training (VET). “It is based on a quality assured approach to the registration of training organisations seeking to deliver training, assess competency outcomes and issue qualifications.”¹

TAFE has also recently moved from being “supply driven” to being a more “demand driven” (ie industry-led) system. Wherever possible TAFE courses are now delivered via competencies from a National Training Package which individualises training wherever possible to the needs of the client. This means teachers and administrators are faced with more administrative duties than ever before and more delivery occurring in industry and out in the field than in face-to-face delivery in a College environment.

Another huge pressure on TAFE has been the opening up of TAFE to open competition from the “VET market”. Private providers have offered more choice to the customer and have provided TAFE with the impetus to be more “customer focussed”. Whilst this has been positive in some respects it has also eroded a number of the underlying strengths of the TAFE system by forcing the organisation to look for more economic ways to deliver training.

In the northern area, faced with the challenges of our region, TNQIT has developed new and innovative means to deliver training to the 22 000 students enrolled across 28 vocational areas. Some of these involve such technology as video streaming, videolinq, teletutoring, workshops, flexible learning, and TAFE on-line.

The State of the Organisation

¹ Australian Recognition Framework Arrangements January 1999. ANTA Pg. 1

Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE was a finalist for Training Provider of the Year in the State Finals of the Queensland Training Awards in 2000.

The Johnstone College of TAFE with campuses at Innisfail and Tully delivered training to 1 850 students in the year 2000. The following table breaks down the students into areas of study.

Faculty	Course Area	Students in Johnstone	Students in Tully	Total
ACE	Adult Community Ed Courses	299	58	357
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	ATSI Vocational Access	5	0	5
	Justice Studies	138	0	138
	Legal Studies	85	0	85
Business	Information Technology	69	12	81
	Office Administration	264	166	430
	Learning Support	105	0	105
	Literacy/Numeracy	11	9	20
	Vocational Access	58	0	58
Hospitality	Hospitality	70	0	70
	Catering Operations	11	0	11
	Fashion Studies	55	0	55
	Childcare	13	0	13
Technology	Engineering	125	7	132
	Construction	22	0	22
Horticulture & Rural	Aquaculture	32	0	32
	Extractive Industries	3	0	3
	Rural Business Management	57	0	57
	Horticulture	151	0	151
	Chainsaws	16	0	16
GRAND TOTAL		1601	249	1850

(This figure does not include students co-ordinated by staff but enrolled through other campus locations i.e. rural trainees enrolled in remote areas, extractive industries enrolled through remote areas, NILS etc in Atherton, or Horticulture in Mossman, or Fashion Studies in the Torres Strait etc)

Table 6.3 total student numbers enrolled through Johnstone and Tully campus from 1st January 2000 to 31st December 2000

Response

While implementing the National and State changes to vocational education and training TNQIT strives to deliver quality training where, when and how it is wanted. TNQIT aims to be the premier provider of vocational education and training in North Queensland and ultimately in the Asia-Pacific region.

The objectives of the Institute include responding promptly to client needs by delivering training to reflect and embrace the changing market. This means, in many cases, delivering training in the workplace.

TAFE uses accredited training packages, wherever these are available and tries to deliver these in as flexible a manner as possible.

6.3.5. Family Support

Family support is defined as the formal community structures that assist individuals, couples and families to maintain a good quality of life. Traditionally, family support has been the reserve of the cultural cluster, wider family groupings, extended and nuclear family and of the churches. The once close and supportive ties of each cultural cluster have been impacted on by factors common today in most Australian communities and have been replaced by more formal family support services.

6.3.5.1. Services

Counselling Services

- Community Support Centre Innisfail
- Johnstone Shire Domestic Violence Support Service
- Wulgah – Drug and Alcohol Counselling program
- Centacare – outreach once a week from Cairns
- Innisfail Youth and Community Care
- Family Law Court (outreach/fortnightly)
- Cairns Sexual Assault Service (outreach)

Respite Services

- Johnstone Shire Council Day Respite Centre
- Meals on Wheels
- Blue Nurses
- Flexi Respite
- Endeavour Foundation – Walumba Unit

Child Care and Services

- Johnstone Shire Council Family Day Care
- Early Learning Centre
- Innisfail Day Care Centre
- Mourilyan District and Community Kindergarten
- Innisfail District and Community
- Innisfail Kindergarten
- Innisfail PCYC – After School Hours Care and Vacation Care
- St Rita’s Catholic School After School Hours Care

Emergency Relief

- St Vincent de Paul
- ADCARE
- Christian Outreach Centre
- St Flannan’s Ladies Conference
- Community Support Centre
- Radiant Life Church
- Chjowai Housing Cooperative

Child Protection Services

- Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland

Income Support Services

- Centrelink Innisfail

Migrant Services

- Migrant Settlement Service
- Local Area Multicultural Partnership Program

Legal Services

- North Queensland Women’s Legal Service (outreach from Cairns once a month)

Family Support and Self Help Groups

- Nursing Mothers Association
- ADD and ADHD Support Group
- Single Parents
- Cancer Support Visitors
- Diabetes Support Group
- Grow
- Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group
- Survivors of Suicide Support Group

6.3.5.2. *Key Issues*

Following discussions with various family support services in the community, a variety of environmental, social and economic pressures on the industry are evident.

Alienation

- Johnstone Shire is still a place where people know and are known by many others. A simple shopping expedition can take extra time because of the numbers of people who meet and chat. But even in this friendly community there are reducing numbers of activities that attract continuing support. Volunteer numbers are low in Educational, Sporting, Cultural and Environmental areas. Youth find the attractions of the television and computer stronger than the effort of social activities.

Mobility

- 70% of the Shire’s youth leave the Shire after the completion of their formal education.
- Increasingly they do not return to the area

- Families move away from extended family in search of employment.

Divorce rates and breakdown in couple relationships

- Often people are not able to access assistance in times of need from partners and family members.
- A total of 273 male and 277 Female separated people and 505 Male and 446 Female divorced people live in the Shire.

Extended family

- Relationship breakdown often separates children from grandparents
- Mobility and relationship breakdown distances people from the older generation

Premature death in Indigenous communities

- The high incidence of suicide in Indigenous males
- The number of Indigenous people over 60 in the Shire is proportionately lower than non-Indigenous over 60.

Disenchantment with organised religion

- There are approximately 20 different denominational church groups within the Shire. Some are gaining or maintaining their membership but in most cases there is a reduction in the number of people attending services regularly. Traditionally the Minister/Priest was the counsellor and the congregation was the support network of families.

Employment

- Unemployment rates of 4-6%
- The trend of employed people to work long hours – has been a way of life for the farming community but now is true of town workers as well.
- The tendency for workers to now be given a car, computer and mobile phone and sent on their way to do their job on their own – to cover the distances in the region and take advantage of technological advances and related efficiencies. This removes people from the supports of social work grouping.

The percentage of women in the workforce

- Women are not available to fulfil roles traditionally taken by women who chose to work in the home – neighbourhood nurse, teacher, counsellor, cook, problem solver, childcarer – a very long list.

Awareness

- Lack of awareness in the community
- Need to establish the identity of new services and raise the identity of existing services
- Need to advertise in local media, brochures, community events, contact with other services, networking/collaboration with other service providers.
- By increasing awareness, families and agencies will have greater ability to access services that will most adequately meet their needs

Networking/Collaborating

- Limited collaboration between family support services in the community at present
- Limited understanding of community support services and their roles

- Community Sector Network which meets once every two months to discuss issues and collaborate
- Increasing contact between organisations and sharing of resources between them
- Family support agencies need to support each other to gain a greater understanding of roles and the sharing of information

Isolation/Networking

- Family support services are generally isolated from larger centres and major resources
- Difficult to access outside support
- Maintain contact with other professionals in the same field to gain access to updated information/resources
- Family support services need to make themselves known to larger centres
- Need to access training opportunities and latest information to enable more effective service provision

Public/Private Transport

- Physical access to services
- Lack of public transport means some families are unable to access family services
- The little public transport that is available is too costly and not accessible for some with private transport required for access to some services.
- The limited amount of transport limits the ability to be involved in the community, increasing isolation and creating a decline in social well-being
- Apply pressure for more public transport to enable greater access to services and ability to become involved
- Establish private transport within each organisation

Accessing People Who Are Indigenous And Non English Speaking Background

- Lack of family support contact with indigenous and non-English speaking communities
- Indigenous and non-English speaking background people’s alienation and inability or unwillingness to access appropriate services.
- Need for collaboration with ATSI organisations or people dealing with Multicultural issues
- Services need to collectively aim to implement culturally appropriate practices
- Need for access to knowledge on culturally sensitive/appropriate practices and cultural awareness
- Services need to aim towards establishing more culturally specific and sensitive services

Part Time/Outreach

- Part time/outreach nature of family support services creates pressures on families in the community and individuals working in these services
- Lack of awareness of services available
- Specialist services not always available
- Limited service times result in gaps in service provision, forcing people to travel to Cairns
- Organisations with space available should offer it to outreach services that visit the area
- Advertise services via local media and word of mouth
- Design specialist training programs for welfare/family support professionals in the Shire. This will have long term benefits for families and the family support industry in general

Economic Pressure

- Pressures on industries in the Shire are causing an increase in stress, grief and depression
- Financial and emotional pressures on families and couples increase the possibility of family breakup
- Inability of the Shire to attract skilled staff to reside and become employed in the area
- Family support services need to remain aware of pressures on families and attempt to respond appropriately
- Continue to advertise for positions both outside and inside of the Shire

Financial Constraints

- Increasing number of families accessing family support services
- Support for professionals experiencing a high level of demand on their response to identified need
- Limited funding available to many organisations also constrains their ability to respond more specifically and thoroughly to the high level of need
- Targeting of resources for certain projects or in certain aspects narrows the perspective on issues and results in gaps in service provision
- Increasing clientele but stagnant level of funding
- More time spent seeking funding instead of seeing clients
- Administrative demands of the GST

6.3.6. Culture and Recreation

6.3.6.1. Services

Many cultural organisations, sporting clubs and organisations are represented in the Shire, generally falling into one of the following categories:

- Aquatic
- Field sports
- Outdoor sport (non-field)
- Indoor sport
- Recreation grounds
- Sport and recreation State peak bodies
- Clump Mountain youth wilderness camp
- Police citizens youth club
- Girl guides and scouts.

6.3.6.2. Facilities

Major facilities in the Shire include Calendar Park, Markets Art Recreation Community Sport (MARCS) Park, Warrina Lakes, the Conservatorium, Environment House, Pease Park and the Shire Hall. There are also plans to construct a skatepark in the Shire.

Skatepark

For some time a permanent skatepark facility has been identified as the top recreation priority for young people in the Shire. Evidence supporting this has come from many different sources including the Shire’s sport and recreation facilities study, letters to Council from young people, community attendance at a public rally, petitions, surveys, use of the mobile skating facility.

In response to this need a community taskforce has been established which has undertaken the role of gaining community and Council support; promotion; sponsorship and general co-ordination of the project.

A skater’s reference group, (made up of local young people), has also been established. This taskforce advises on the technical aspects of the project such as inclusion of elements and design.

It is expected that funding for the project will come from a variety of sources including State Government, Local Government, corporate and local business sponsorship. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$120,000.

Existing infrastructure has been a major factor in the identification of an appropriate location. The taskforce has undertaken a site analysis of various sites within the Shire and a recommendation will be forwarded to Council for consideration.

A tender process will be employed to determine the most appropriate companies for the construction of the facility.

The completion of project rests on successful state government grants, local government financial assistance and sponsorship. Should the financial and construction goals be met, it is hoped that the facility should be ready for use sometime in 2002. The mobile skate facility will continue to be used in the outlying areas of the Shire on a rotational basis.

6.3.6.3. *Networks and planning processes*

It would be appropriate that peak cultural group in the Shire, the Johnstone Shire Cultural Association hold a forum to get all the cultural groups together to exchange ideas and collaborate on projects.

6.3.6.4. *Key Issues*

Some people believe that cultural groups in the Shire are fragmented.

Key issues for sport and recreation are covered in The Johnstone Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Study completed in 1999. Key issues identified by this study include:

- **Communication and liaison** – ensure effective communication between all sport and recreation organisations and other relevant organisations eg Local government, state government. A Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee was established to represent each discipline of sport and recreation. The role of the committee is to act as an interface between organisations and Council and make recommendations to Council on issues pertaining to sport and recreation. This committee would provide bi-annual sport and recreation forums and newsletter.
- **Facility planning** – including multi-use of existing facilities, developing plans for major facilities, integrated planning with Cardwell Shire. Master plans for the Shire’s major facilities such as Calendar Park, MARCS Park, Warrina Lakes, Pease Park and the Shire hall need to be developed. Multiuse of facilities by sport and recreation organisations is being encouraged. Open space needs to be developed and rationalised. Informal facilities such as BMX tracks, bikeways and waterways need to be developed and improved. Adequate drainage of all sports fields needs to be apparent in any new development and addressed in existing ones. Joint facility planning with Cardwell Shire Council over the Mission Beach area needs to be investigated and implemented.
- **Skill development** – encourage and support improvement of standards in club administration and coaching through provision of financial support and training opportunities. A Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee is responsible for identification of and provision of some training. Opportunities for training in club administration has been offered and undertaken. Provision of structured financial support for individual recognition has been implemented. Training in club administration and GST implementation has been provided to date.

- **Policy development** – revision of existing policies and development of new ones which address pertinent issues facing sport and recreation organisations eg land tenure, infrastructure charges, environmental and heritage issues. The Sport and Recreation Advisory Committee has reviewed and updated the existing policy. Policies for financial assistance are being developed. There is a need to develop and streamline policies relating to infrastructure charges, land tenure and environmental and heritage issues.
- **Participation** – encourage, support and promote increase in participation levels in all sport and recreation disciplines. A sport and recreation promotion strategy, which addresses all age groups, needs to be developed to encourage an increase in participation. Youth participation has been identified and addressed by provision of school holiday programs and youth space through the Boileroom and Innisfail Youth and Family Care. There is still an identified need for unstructured youth recreation facilities. This will be addressed with the construction of a Skatepark, which is subject to financial availability.

6.3.7. Legal and Public Safety

To continue the reduction in reported property offences the Innisfail Police Division in conjunction with the Brisbane Crime prevention Unit is trialing the At Risk Premises Project which focuses police resources on premises that have experienced an unlawful entry offence.

Police provide the occupiers of a dwelling with a security assessment report which explains security improvements that can be employed to reduce the re-occurrence of offences. At industrial premises the District TRAP Co-ordinator and/or Volunteers in Policing complete a similar assessment with the same outcomes in mind. Cards are delivered to neighbours of the victimised premises inviting them to free security assessments and other services provided by police.

This is supported by a number of long term initiatives including Neighbourhood Watch and Marine Watch that reduce the opportunity for offences in neighbourhoods in the Innisfail District.

Initiatives include engraving of property and registering inscriptions. Promoting the ‘community mindedness’ creating a safer environment to live is also an outcome of these initiatives.

Proactive police beat patrols of the Innisfail CBD have also been employed to increase the perception of safety in the Community.

A survey was conducted of businesses in the Innisfail CBD and it revealed that police assistance was required to train business people in managing the perceived threat of armed hold-up and shop stealing. The District Community Policing Co-ordinator is planning to present workshops to address perceived crime in the Innisfail CBD.

6.4. Social Development Issues (as identified by the “towards a Learning Community – revitalising Innisfail and Surrounds’ report).

6.4.1. Community Connectivity

The Community is lacking energy because of too many single focused organisations and a proliferation of committees. It could be argued that such high activity could be an indicator of social vitality, however, coordination and focus is needed to achieve solutions to coping with changing economic and socio-economic challenges.

6.4.2. Community Well-being

The community is presently experiencing stress (eg sugar problems and economic decline creating marriage break-ups and family stress). Grief and depression are growing in the community, with people working longer hours to make ends meet. There is a lack of infrastructure in relation to health, forcing people to travel to Cairns or Townsville for treatment of serious health problems. Better information dissemination regarding support services is needed so people can be referred to help and counselling.

6.4.3. Response to Change

Many people are not adapting to change with a need existing for training and counselling particularly with computers and sustainable farming practices. Government agencies and private providers are supplying training to meet these needs.

6.4.4. Strategic Planning Processes

The community has been invited to a number of consultations/forums/workshops. It has been beneficial having well known facilitators such as Peter Kenyon coming to Innisfail but it would be good to have co-ordination of all of these initiatives to prevent the current disjointed approach. Too many consultations/forums are causing dissipation of community energy. It is perceived that Government Departments are building separate partnerships with their sector resulting in a proliferation of planning groups and some duplication and as a result sustaining community energy is limited because they believe the actions are not followed through.

6.4.5. Marginalisation of some sectors of the community

People on low incomes have problems in participating in community and economic development. Racism has also been identified at both Kenyon workshops and by key individual members of the community. Rural youth have a lack of transport, a high suicide rate, are socially isolated and are forced to leave the area for work and higher education. Some sectors of the community have expressed a need for more public transport, disability access. In addition information on opportunities to participate is required. To address some of these community relations issues, the Council is auspicing a Multi Cultural Worker funded by the state under the Local Area Multicultural Partnership Program to address racial and multicultural issues.

6.4.6. Transition to the Market Economy

‘Family farm commodity agriculture is under pressure with the shifts in national policy to accommodate globalisation through integration of markets, corporate farming and agribusiness. The ability to be competitive is also hindered by distance from markets, climatic problems, and the history of farming in the area’. The forces of production, market and market forces, over which the individual has little control, govern the market economy. Sugar, Bananas, Tropical Fruits, Agroforestry and Horticulture are but a few industries requiring assistance in the transition to a market economy. Whilst solutions have been put forward to assist the transition to a market economy, these solutions are hindered by:

- Distance from markets and accompanying transport pressures
- Difficulty in attracting business and investment to the area
- The poor market intelligence systems in the region
- Lack of a market strategy
- A low level of facilitative capacity in the community to be the driving force behind bigger initiatives
- The need for public sector support for research and development to foster entrepreneurship.

6.4.7. Human Resources

The Shire has an aging profile of cane farmers with a gap in the population base of people between the ages of 17-30. Young people leave the area in search of education and employment due to poor access to these opportunities in the Shire. These people are not reflected in unemployment statistics and represent drainage of a potentially skilled workforce. These factors contribute to a perception of high unemployment in the community, which faces the constant threat of increased unemployment due to mill variability, early season closure and restructuring in local industry.

Other statistics show that Aboriginal and Islander people have a low completion rate at high school, unemployment among the Filipino and Hmong community due to a lack of appropriate skills for employment in a small rural area, and the need for knowledge enhancement and training. In response, TAFE and the DPI are offering training to meet some of these needs.

6.5. Community Groups input into the Shire

For the purposes of this report, Community Groups are summarised into three categories:

- Community Service – Rotary, Lions, Apex, Chamber of Commerce, Inner Wheel, Disability Advisory Committee, etc. The objects of the Inner Wheel club are to promote true friendship, encourage the ideals of personal service, and foster international service. Inner Wheel Clubs exist at a Local District, National, and International Levels. The Disability Advisory Committee collaborates with Council to advise of disability service issues in the Shire. Their achievements include electronic doors in the Shire Hall and Library, increases in accessible parking bays, and public toilets to name a few.
- Recreational - Sporting Groups, Birdwatching Groups, Bushwalking Groups, etc. The Wangan Sports Club has been operating since the early fifties. Over the last thirty years the club has moved away from running sports and on to providing the best community hall in the district, and the major sports played on the fields have moved from cricket to AFL then on to touch football. All profits are returned to the hall and its fittings in a bid to make in the best community hall in Queensland.
- Cultural – Performing Arts Groups, Johnstone Shire Cultural Association, Innisfail and District Historical Society, etc. The Innisfail & District Historical Society arose out of a concern of a number people to see that the heritage of this area should not be lost. It was established to research, preserve and display the history of the Johnstone Shire. In 1990, permanent quarters in the renovated Innisfail Memorial School of Arts building were occupied by the society and the District Museum was set up. Volunteers keep the museum open and members are involved in collecting oral histories.

6.6. Deficiencies in Existing Data

The demographic data in this chapter is drawn from the 1996 census, and is thus 4-5 years old. This data should be updated as soon as the latest census information is available.

6.7. Recommendations

Housing

- That an investigation into the quantity of crisis housing, supported accommodation and safe housing be investigated and that sufficient accommodation be in place within three years of the publication of this report.

Health

- An increase in medical specialist care be provided to the Shire. In particular, surgeons, psychiatrists, gynaecology and obstetrics, orthopaedics, and most importantly, an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Education

State Education:

- That investigations be conducted into ‘whole of government’ solutions to the management of specialised student and school support resources and services.
- That investigations continue into alternative education pathways which assist in customising learning experiences and programs that are relevant to students and help prepare them for life after school.
- That remedial action be implemented to alleviate the pressure on school organisational structures and associated resourcing parameters, which will be brought about by enrolment fluctuations due to the well documented indicators of economic uncertainty in the rural sector and the resultant impact on the local manufacturing and business sector.

Family Support

- That further promotion of social and support services available in the Shire is required so that all those people in need are aware of the services offered. That this promotion be responsive to the different multicultural groups in the Shire.
- That the resources for services currently offered in the Shire be increased to cope with the current demand on these services.
- That the services offered in the Shire are culturally sensitive and that training be provided to each service in the Shire in the next three years.
- That non-education based public transport be resourced and improved in the Shire.
- That an annual cultural forum be held in the Shire to exchange ideas, collaborate on projects and establish a cultural register.
- That a joint facility planning committee be established to address recreation in the Mission Beach area.
- That unstructured youth recreational facilities be provided in the Shire. The construction of the skatepark be the first priority.
- That awareness of training programs, services and facilities be increased to inform the community of available services
- That industries in the Shire that believe their training needs are not being met contact their Industries Training Advisory Board (ITAB) so that their needs are identified for future training programs.

6.8. Bibliography and Further Reading

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