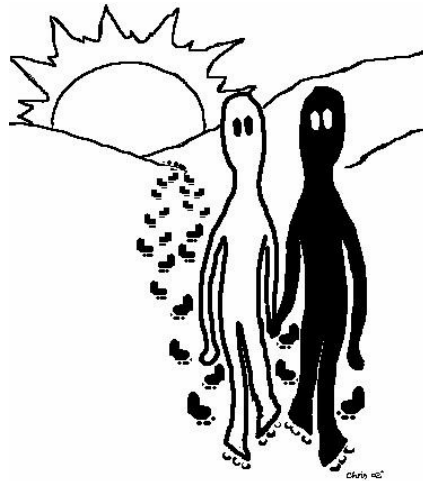


Bowraville Strategy For The Future



making the journey together

The First Steps

Summary of the
Community Survey

November 2002

THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY OF BOWRAVILLE

A big thank you to all the members of the Bowraville community who took the time to participate in the survey. With more than 240 responses to summarise, I have tried to capture the ideas and sentiments of your responses in this report. This is just one of the small steps that we are taking together to make our future better.

Dawn Thornton, on behalf of the Bowraville Community Alliance. November 2002.

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BACKGROUND TO THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Bowraville Community Alliance (BCA) was established by members of Bowraville Aboriginal, Educational, Economic and Community Groups to discuss local issues with a view to helping to create a better future.

To do this, the BCA is managing a strategic planning process for Bowraville with the following objective:

To have the Bowraville community decide and document what it wants for the future in terms of social, cultural, environmental and economic development and to develop a strategic plan to enable that vision to become a reality.

As a first step, the BCA sought community views as an input to the strategic planning process through a written survey form and phone surveys.

The next steps will involve community meetings and workshops to be held in Bowraville over the following few months.

This document summarises the information and views the community provided in the written and phone surveys.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

More than 240 people completed the survey form or participated in a phone survey, about 40% from Bowraville Central School and the rest from the broader community. In total, that represents almost 30% of the town's population or over 10% of the entire district population – a wonderful response.

Demographic	No. People Completing the Survey
<u>Men who completed the survey</u>	
Less than 16 years old	36
16-24 years old	1
25-35 years old	3
35-45 years old	5
45-65 years old	14
More than 65 years old	2
Men who did not state their age	8
<u>Women who completed the survey</u>	
Less than 16 years old	57
16-24 years old	5
25-35 years old	11
35-45 years old	19
45-65 years old	24
More than 65 years old	3
Women who did not state their age	18
<u>Others</u> (respondents did not specify their sex or age)	38
Number of phone survey respondents	8
Total Number of Respondents	244
Total Number of Respondents Less than 16 years old	93
Total Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Respondents	37

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF BOWRAVILLE? WHAT DO YOU WANT BOWRAVILLE TO BE LIKE IN 2020?

Everyone has a very positive view of what Bowraville will be like in the future. People crafted beautiful visions and some are included for you to read in **Attachment 1 – Visions**. The box below tries to capture the feel of the visions that people expressed on their survey forms.

a vision of the future

Our vision is of Bowraville as a friendly and safe place for all of us and our families. We value the character, diversity and people of the town and we will be a united community where everyone takes care of and pride in their neighbours, the town and the surrounding environment.

We want Bowraville to be a place where there are opportunities and choices for all people, and understanding and respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people flourishes.

We want to see more employment opportunities available for all local people, based on strong small businesses, a strong rural sector and tourism. There will be successful shops offering a wide range of goods and services and lively markets.

Our vision is for a town with less crime, less social problems and less alcohol and drug problems. Our families will be healthy, free from poverty, neglect and violence.

Our vision is for a town where young and old respect each other and there are plenty of activities and facilities for young people.

In our town there will be equal access to good levels of education, health and social services, employment and public transport. We will not tolerate racism.

We want a thriving arts and cultural scene – bringing together the talents of our indigenous and non-indigenous community – supported by the theatre, museums, restaurants and cafes. Tourists will love our tidy “veranda post” town, our heritage, our events and our environment and want to stay here.

In the future Bowraville will have community festivities, activities and events that everyone can participate in and which will attract tourists.

We want to be a learning community – learning at school, learning from all the knowledgeable and talented people in the area and learning from each other. We will need some places and tools to be able to do this.

We value and want to protect and promote our cultural knowledge, heritage and places, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

We value our beautiful countryside and landscapes and we want to conserve and restore these and our rivers.

Our future is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and everyone is living harmoniously. We are a community with hope for the future, working – and walking – together for the good of the community.

young visions

Our young people also crafted wonderful visions for the future and some are included for you to read in **Attachment 1 – Visions**.

Some of our younger respondents like Bowraville just the way it is. Others wanted Bowraville to be bigger – with more jobs, houses, people, shops, facilities and services. Youth see Bowraville in the future having better sporting facilities, food and clothes shops, improvements to the school, a hospital, more doctors, an old persons home, better play facilities and more things to do.

Their vision is for a clean and safe town with more tourists, residents and entertainment with everyone getting along and good police-community relations.

Most of the youth have very positive views of what Bowraville would be like in the future but some think the town is so boring that they do not want to live here when they are older.

WHAT ARE THE TOP FIVE THINGS WE CAN DO TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION?

People who responded to the survey listed a wide range of things we will need to do in order to achieve our vision. The suggestions ranged from broad brush approaches to very specific, practical ideas. We have summarised the suggestions under several headings – but remember that many of the issues and suggestions are interrelated - one idea may lead to many beneficial outcomes.

agriculture

Several people mentioned the need for a robust rural sector and suggested that we encourage agriculture and small holdings and develop horticulture and organic agriculture.

arts

The arts was a common theme and there are many suggestions to develop a thriving Aboriginal and European arts sector:

- give incentives to create the various arts and crafts.
- encourage the arts and crafts of both aboriginal and non aboriginal people.
- encourage the artists in town to become more visible.
- display and promote local arts, for example through something like a “School of Arts”.
- encourage and support people to use their various talents (woodworking, pottery, lead light, painting etc).
- develop an arts centre to showcase local work.

communication and participation in decision-making

To build community ownership of decisions we need to have good methods for involving and communicating with the community. There are many suggestions to improve communication between people in the town, including:

- Community consultative committee with semi formal public forums where community members can openly discuss issues – held at all times of day/night to suit all people. Invite long term investment in forum to kick start enterprise and initiative.
- Set aside a place dedicated to improving communications in the community – where people can express their views, information can be sought on conflict resolution within families and the community.

- Aboriginal people sitting on more committees to fade out racism.
- Normalcy for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal mix in our community at many events.
- Inter-racial associations and meetings.
- Make opportunities where young and old can meet with mutual respect and desire to learn about each other.
- Involving youth in everything.
- Make opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can get together to learn about each other.
- Provide genuine support to the Aboriginal community,
- Improve skills and representation on Council.
- Planning, partnerships and participation in decision making.
- Workshops.
- Regular community meetings attended by shire councillors, representatives from schools and sporting clubs, medical professionals and the like to “keep the focus” on what is needed and subsequent delivery of services.

Many people expressed support of the Bowraville Community Alliance and think that it should continue as one of the ways to work towards our vision. It is very important that the Alliance listen to all parts of the community. Several people said that BCA should raise public awareness of what it is doing with plenty of publicity so everyone knows when and where the BCA workshops will be held.

community events and activities

Many people think that more community events and activities would draw the community together, provide entertainment for all and attract visitors to the town. Some of the suggested activities are:

- Music based, art-based, sports-based multicultural activities – bands, films, etc.
- Fair days to meet children’s need for fun. With community based planning leading up to these days including school work, public forums and workshops – the outputs from these would then be available for display at the fairs and progress with long term projects reported.
- More multicultural festivals.
- Community events and fun activities!
- Community celebration of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal special dates.
- Free and regular gatherings for social fun purposes.
- Monthly community get-togethers – markets, music, dances, art and craft displays.
- Attend church or home groups for TLC.

community facilities and infrastructure

A suggestion made by several people is the development of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre – it would be a museum, café serving indigenous food, gallery selling indigenous arts and crafts plus an area to perform songs, dance and tell stories. This would provide employment for Aboriginal people as well provide more facilities for tourism so everyone benefits.

Many people expressed the need for better public transport 7 days a week and suggestions include: arrange with bus companies to work out better transport; a community bus; greater coverage and access to public transport.

Other suggestions include:

- Improve facilities e.g. mobile coverage, ATM, local buses, soften the toilet block with gardens, colour High St.
- Child-centred drop-in centre for young parents.
- Provide a drop in centre open 24 hours 7 days a week providing a “soup kitchen”, resident counsellor and referrals to appropriate help for people of all ages.
- Youth facilities such as: skate park, BMX track, pool, tennis squash, youth centre, movies, better access to community halls for youth.
- Tourist rest stop with caravan parking.
- Mobile library service.
- More parking for customers of the shops.
- Establish a Bowra Progress Centre to promote Bowra and the valley as a whole.
- A community centre.
- A sporting complex to “get kids off the street” providing computer services and sporting activities supervised by dedicated personnel.
- Install Olympic sized swimming pool.
- Restaurant and recreation club overlooking river views.
- Coffee shops, tea shops, pavement café’s.
- Open air dining in areas of High St where road is sectioned off and trees planted.
- Develop the butter factory site.
- Better transport to other centres within the Nambucca Valley and beyond.

education and training

Some of the remarks focussed on schooling. One person felt that we need commitment from the Department of Education for Bowraville Central’s long term viability and to improve the school infrastructure. Others noted the need to ensure all children attend school. One person suggested we need alternative school options and another that the Aboriginal community should become more involved at the Central School. Several people suggested that Bowraville Central School should offer Years 11 and 12 and that they wanted to see more Aboriginal children completing their HSC.

Several people suggested that community education was needed to tackle issues such as racism, domestic violence, youth, aged care, family support, education/training options, health and engendering respect.

One person wrote that “education and training are the most important facilities required – from this will come good health and economic development and good community relations, environmental issues addressed and care of families and the aged.” Many felt that we needed better access to education and training opportunities with greater support for job seekers young and old to get them ready for and in work.

employment, tourism and local business

Most people think that we must promote business in Bowraville in order to create local job opportunities. However, as one respondent stated, we don’t just need jobs – they need to pay a decent living wage. Those jobs also must be available to members of the black and white community.

Many people think that tourism is a major opportunity for Bowraville’s economic future, seeing Bowraville as a centre for tourism with places to visit, eat and shop and new tourist industries such

as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal arts and major events and sporting fixtures to attract people to the area.

Some of the practical suggestions to achieve this are:

- Identify the current nature and extent of economic activities in Bowraville and district.
- Identify all the skills and talents available in Bowraville and district (a skills inventory).
- “Buy in Bowra” campaign. Shop locally, support our small business people, keep the dollar in Bowra if possible.
- Encouragement for small business to set up in Bowra.
- Local businesses should provide the best quality, friendly service at competitive prices.
- Reinstate the markets.
- Provide places to visit and things to buy – museum, coffee, bars, Phoenix, natural therapy centre.
- Plan more events and sporting fixtures to attract tourists.
- Invite and canvass government and commercial visits to the area.
- Develop a history guide covering Aboriginal and European history and heritage. This should include a plan and walking tour and a trained guide to meet tourist coaches.
- Develop scenic drives and 4 wheel drive tours in more remote areas around Bowraville.
- Develop tourism signs and information and encourage tourists to stop not just drive through.
- Generate tourist activities and facilities for weekend visits.
- Develop picnic areas on the river.
- Encourage eco-tourism, promote the natural beauty and climate of this area.
- Develop horticultural businesses and employment.
- Spread the word that Bowraville is worth a visit or two. Advertise the attractions, such as Museums.
- Consider how backpackers can best be accommodated.
- Develop a botanical garden style park with kiosk near/in High St to use as a public park and open space (e.g. the old mill site).
- Open up the empty shops in Bowraville, for example as a high quality Arts Centre where paintings, craft, etc would be displayed and sold.
- Have a shop displaying all aspects of Aboriginal culture open to all.
- Lobby government to assist in the development of an industry base.
- Identify and investigate the requirements of tourists and tourism operators.
- Develop a rest stop area with caravan parking (must be signposted) and encourage other types of accommodation (camp sites, B&B).
- Encourage and assist small businesses.
- Attract more coast tour buses and encourage business to cater for these very important outside customers.
- Support the theatre business.
- Promote the area externally and create pride locally.

environment & landscape

People think that Bowraville's natural environment, unspoilt beauty and landscape are fantastic assets that should be promoted to encourage pride and to generate tourism. Education and practical care is required to ensure these assets are protected.

Suggestions include:

- negotiate with willing landholders to access areas for picnic sites and appreciation of the environment.
- action to protect and restore the river.
- development must meet Ecologically Sustainable Development principles.
- oppose development which would have a negative impact on Bowraville.
- preserve the peace and space.

health and well-being

Suggestions to improve community health include:

- programmes to reduce alcohol and substance abuse.
- improve health facilities.
- programmes to reduce domestic and other violence.
- enhance and educate families in parenting skills and care for their children.
- provide all children breakfast and lunch at school.

reconciliation and relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people

Many people want to see Bowraville free from racism and the community reconciled so that everyone is equally involved in the development of Bowraville. People feel we should accept each others differences and concentrate on the benefits and good things of all cultures. Several people suggested that non-Aboriginal people needed to have opportunities to gain insight and understanding of the cultural heritage of the local Aboriginal people, the disadvantages in the Aboriginal community and the efforts that are being made to overcome it. The Bowraville Community Alliance can play a role in continuing the promotion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups working together. One person made a commitment on their form to respect Aboriginal culture and speak up when racist remarks are made.

There were some practical suggestions, including:

- Cross-cultural education – camps and cultural activities for young people.
- Local aboriginal language workshops.
- Local employers to employ all races.
- Encourage mutual respect of black/white cultures and peoples through events and activities.
- Specific youth reconciliation activities.
- Support reestablishment of cultural practices, such as respect for Elders.
- An Aboriginal leader on Council.
- More Aboriginal people on local committees.
- An Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
- Erect a sign post at the entrance to Bowraville, welcoming to Gumbayngirr country.

safety & security

People want to create a safe town where people feel comfortable and property rights are respected. Several people reported feeling intimidated when intoxicated or aggressive people are

on the streets. Many people think greater police presence and enforcement are required to deter crime, vandalism and anti social behaviour. Several people suggested police should be stationed in Bowraville and a full-time liaison officer required. Better understanding and relations between police and the community are needed.

relationships with government

Several people mentioned that we need to improve our relationships with government so that the town gets the services and support it needs. This could mean lobbying local, state and federal resourcing bodies to help us to address our needs and expecting and receiving equal treatment from all levels of government.

streetscape and the beautification of Bowraville

Many people want to see a tidy and clean town which is pleasant to live in and that will attract visitors. Some of the suggested ways in which we can protect and enhance the streetscape are:

- Restore buildings to as close to original as possible i.e. facades.
- Achieve quality in restoration work.
- Clean and paint the main street.
- Prevent littering and vandalism.
- More shade trees in the main street and extra seats.
- Organise a volunteer working committee to tidy up the town and develop it so it retains its character but becomes more attractive
- Develop the town along its heritage lines, developing an arts and craft centre and theme.
- New road to the cemetery.
- Increased community involvement in projects of beautification – gardening, restoration, maintenance.
- Beautify shop fronts, colour the footpaths and buildings with plants.
- Enter tidy towns contest.
- Commitment to management of Bowra’s unique cultural heritage – both Koori and European.
- Council to better patrol the main street.

working together

People identified communication, co-operation and co-ordination as important in working towards our vision. This is critical so that we can build community cohesiveness, building bridges between indigenous and non-indigenous communities and the young and the elderly. There is a need for everyone to get involved, work together and to “believe it can happen”. Community involvement stimulates pride in ourselves and our town. We have lots of people who want to help but don’t know how so we need to make sure we involve and engage the community.

People suggested that we need to:

- Be positive, focussed and develop goals and aims.
- Build slowly through regular gains/achievements.
- Persistence and commitment to the process.
- Acknowledge and value the diversity of our community.
- Provide opportunities to meet together.
- Utilise existing creativity of people.
- Spread the word about what different and creative approaches are happening here.

- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people work together to achieve joint benefits and realise we are all in the same boat.
- Take advantage of available facilities.
- Always promote Bowra in a positive way and generate awareness of Bowra's strengths.
- Generate understanding and demystify sections of the community.
- By building up not bringing others down – believing that we can make a difference.
- Investigate the feasibility of an Aboriginal Centre.
- Ensure Aboriginal people employed in the community or set up businesses.
- Increase the number of community-based activities and other projects that draw different people together.
- Conduct a programme to generate respect and pride for self, others and the environment.
- Encouraging local people to support the community.
- Educate the residents on the benefits of a cohesive community.
- Resourcing and value adding.
- Individuals allowed to voice their opinions without fear of reprisal.
- Visit similar towns for inspiration.
- Award prizes to people who have good ideas.

youth

Adults included suggestions to improve the involvement of and facilities for young people in the town to keep minds and bodies active. Suggestions include:

- Increased potential involvement and responsibility for children and youth – at school, home and play.
- Support youth.
- Youth working together for everybody's good.
- Parents to take control of their children and take personal responsibility for anti-social activity.
- Things for young people to do – playgrounds, swimming pool and entertainment – and a place where they can be themselves.
- Mentors or advisors for youth, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.
- Reach and teach our youth to appreciate what we have.
- More community gatherings.

The youth are the future of Bowraville, their participation in community development is vital.

young people's responses

Kids had a lot of great ideas about the things we need to do to improve Bowraville, including:

- Get everybody to sit down and talk to each other and get everyone together more often and freely.
- Consider all cultures.
- Hold more community activities.
- Get community support.
- Help each other and work co-operatively. Be nice to each other.
- Do the work ourselves.

- Make a plan.
- Be seen as a community that gets along, irrespective of colour.
- Start being kind to all people now.
- Make people's thoughts count.
- Be a smart community.
- Encourage reconciliation and friendships.
- Encourage more business to the area and promote existing businesses. This will create more jobs and wealth.
- Unemployed people could open some businesses.
- Open more shops and a shopping plaza including a pet shop, clothes shops, motorbike shop, toy shop, video shop etc.
- More food outlets, fast food shops, restaurants, health food and a lolly shop.
- More accommodation in town.
- Have more jobs in town, such as council workers, builders, plumbers.
- Encourage more people to live in Bowraville.
- Have more health and social services, such as a hospital and more doctors, a child care centre, an old persons home.
- Tidy up the town and prevent littering and graffiti.
- Repaint and fix up some of the buildings.
- Improve the town clock and have more public toilets.
- Improve the roads in town and in the district.
- Improve buses.
- Have a train station and an airport.
- Encourage tourism.
- Promote Bowraville – put it on the map.
- Encourage volunteers.
- Get the whole community together on "Clean-Up Australia Day".
- Promote the town.
- More government funding.
- Better security.
- Have a greater police presence and better law and order.
- Aboriginal and white police courses.
- Prevent speeding through town.
- Have housing for the homeless.
- Solve mental health and substance abuse issues.
- Reduce public liability costs.
- Have fund raising events.
- Hold more social events.
- Have more entertainment, such as a cinema, circus
- Have a community centre.

- Make a place for kids to hang out.
- Have a place and meetings where kids can have their say.
- Improve the youth club.
- Dancing in Grant's Hall for kids.
- Have more fun days, parades and more sporting events.
- More medals and ribbons for sporting events.
- Have more parks with play equipment.
- Make a meeting place for parents.
- A better school and more teachers.
- Get more people coming to school.
- Year 11 and 12 at school.
- New school buildings and more equipment.
- More space at school.
- More playgrounds and better play equipment.
- A hall for dance, music, gym and community meetings.
- Have more sports facilities - a swimming pool, skate park, bike track, bowling ground, netball court, gym, long jump pit, skating rink, motor cross – and more sports events at the weekend.
- A riding school, horse shows and a rodeo.
- Have a vet in town.
- Develop the timber mill site.
- Plant trees.
- Stop gravel mining.
- Prevent pollution of the river and fix up the river banks.
- Recycle rubbish.

WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE BOWRAVILLE COMMUNITY?

The key strength identified in the survey is the community itself – Bowraville is our home, full of friendly country people. There is a great community spirit with many committed people willing to work together, help each other and put in a lot of effort. Most Bowraville people are loyal to each other, law abiding, appreciate the district's beauty and welcome tourists. The community is willing to tackle the difficult issues, build bridges and begin a journey together. There appears to be a growing group of indigenous and non-indigenous people who are willing and ready to work together for community harmony and reconciliation.

Cultural diversity is seen as a strength - both Aboriginal and European elements and the inclusion of the Phoenix community. Our Aboriginal community, Elders and cultural heritage are seen as a great strength.

We have some great community groups, activities and services such as Miimi, BCA, 2NVR, Phoenix, Museum, youth club, theatre group, pub and its friendly staff, bank, tree fairs, races, Back to Bowra. Many people mentioned that Phoenix is a great example of what a community is all about. We have strong sporting clubs and good sporting facilities for a small town and high membership of RSL and Rec Clubs. Many people think Bowraville's schooling is an enormous asset to the community.

Having an important media facility, the radio station, in town is seen as a strength, providing a communication tool that most places do not have.

The town's unique character is seen as a strength, as a largely intact timber town with veranda posts still common in the main street this appeals to a lot of the touring public. The town's appearance as a historic town to outsiders is a great asset upon which we can build. Residents see the town as easy to get around with good parking and shops.

People believe Bowraville is in a great location. It is a beautiful town, geographically well placed not far from coast and highway and has a wonderful climate. We have a fairly pristine natural environment, a beautiful river and we take pride in the built environment and look of the town.

Our history is interesting, strong and diverse – full of reasons for celebration and the cause of pain and suffering for others. From this history we need to draw our vision for change.

People think that Bowraville residents persevere under hardship, are caring, close knit, are tolerant and easy going, strong-willed, many work hard and have a great love for the place. We seem to get on pretty well with each other and there is a growing community commitment. Our relative distance from other centres means we have to work things out for ourselves, we have the patience and resilience to be able to do this.

Cumulatively there is a great deal of community knowledge, ideas and experience, however there is still unrealised potential amongst the community, amongst young and old, black and white, new arrivals and long time residents and this is what we need to build upon. We have a thriving and energetic youth population that can help to create the Bowraville of the future.

The many creative, talented people with broad experience and expertise in the town and district is a great strength and there is much more potential to nurture and develop these talents to benefit individuals and the town. We have some good communicators within the community. We need to make the most of the many our skills in art, craft and music.

Several people think that we have a good basis of businesses from which we can build and that there is fairly high community-business sector support. Town is virtually self sufficient on a daily basis and we produce locally some wonderful products. Local shops employ local students.

We have reasonable basic infrastructure – sewerage, water, roads – and available assets, such as vacant buildings, land and the river, so there is a lot of potential, and property and housing is still inexpensive.

One person raised the question whether people who live in the rural areas and valleys surrounding Bowraville, see themselves as part of the Bowraville community. Certainly the BCA had many responses to the questionnaire from people who live outside of the town itself.

Practical things are already happening in Bowraville – many people mentioned the reopening of the theatre and one the upgrading of a park.

A couple of respondents think Bowraville has few strengths and were pessimistic about the future.

Responses from youth

Many kids think that Bowraville's residents looks after each other, everyone is nice, friendly and "does stuff together". The strength is the people and there is good connection between them. It is a small place and everyone knows each other – it's like a big family. One Aboriginal youth said "I feel safe here it is better than Sydney".

Some of our younger respondents think the best things about Bowraville are:

- Friendly people who are always there to help.
- Lots of volunteers – fire men and women and school helpers.
- The school and friendly teachers.
- Police.
- The shops and friendly shopkeepers.
- The land.
- The environment.
- Quiet countryside.
- Wildlife.
- Clean, fresh air.
- The water/river.
- Lovely properties out of town.
- Healthy food.
- The museum.
- Historic buildings.
- The houses and gardens.
- The restoration of the theatre and the cinema.
- The cricket ground, tennis court, football field and basketball court.
- The art studio.
- Shops and pub.
- The bakery.
- The churches.
- RSL and Vietnam Vets.
- Youth Centre.
- Back to Bowra, concerts, ANZAC day parades, Clean-up Australia days.
- Athletics carnivals.

HOW SHOULD WE BUILD ON THOSE STRENGTHS?

Many people think the best way to build on our strengths is for the community to pull together, involving everyone, so that we take everyone with us on the journey and build up strong community support for new projects. This means finding some common goals and a focus and harnessing the growing energy and enthusiasm. Focal points of interest like the theatre restoration project and events can assist in drawing people together.

Many support the need for a simple plan. We need to share skills, knowledge and expertise within the community and recognise that everyone has something to offer. We could consider developing an inventory of all the skills and talents we have – then these can be utilised and promoted better.

Many recognise that the journey may be slow and gradual, but through education, continuing to work together and developing pride and respect we can get there. The Bowraville Community Alliance is viewed by many people as a good start. It is important to encourage people to become involved.

One person wrote that we can build on our strengths through “understanding, understanding and more understanding”.

We need to ensure we celebrate our successes – publicly – and work on the areas that need improving. People suggested that we need to:

- Become one community - listen to the issues and do something about it.
- Work with, support and strengthen the existing community groups such as Miimi Mothers.
- Have more meetings, events and projects.
- Promote business from further away.
- Create opportunities for people to meet and join in community minded activities.
- Create opportunities for parents to come together to share ideas.
- Reach out to parts of the community that are hurt and angry and develop trust.
- Promote respect and pride and the desire to improve our living environment.
- Promote greater acceptance and interest in local culture through education for all.
- Celebrate all our different cultures.
- Address reconciliation from youth up.
- Get to young petty criminals or vandals early – to prevent slide into more serious trouble.
- Be more youth friendly to keep them in the area.
- Make youth sports and activities affordable.
- Encourage our youth in all areas e.g. sport, culture.
- Reinforce attendance at school.
- Seek government grants for community projects.
- Build social capital through communications, training, mentoring.
- Protect our environment – without it we have no future.
- Market and promote Bowraville.
- Buy locally and use local trades people where possible.
- Attract more small business and light industry.
- Improve transport to help address youth boredom and crimes.
- Encourage local shopping.
- Promote law and order.

Several people raised the need to obtain funding for community projects – such funding must be directed to the right projects by the community, not people from outside of Bowraville. We must make sure we access services in existing agencies, either in the community or from nearby centres (i.e. organise agreements with agencies for Outreach services, such as Children's Safety group once a week run by the Coffs Harbour refuge workers, or regular visits by midwives or counsellors from the Area Health Service etc.) and where our needs are not being met by the existing services we must apply for funding and lobby to obtain them.

We need to promote Bowraville and develop a high profile through advertising, more workshops, by word of mouth, and taking every opportunity to let the outside world know we are here.

Several people mentioned that cultural heritage (European and Aboriginal) is very important to Bowra's future, this means taking steps to raise community awareness of and involvement in cultural heritage management. The natural environment is important too and there were suggestions to restore the river and surrounds to its former glory and utilise banks for picnics and to enhance revegetation.

Some of the suggestions made to improve communications within and about Bowraville include:

- Make a movie about Bowraville.
- Radio 2NVR should be broadcast out to the street – particularly weekends, public holidays, Back to Bowra, music the universal language, traverses all barriers and brings people together.
- Undertake symbolic and practical reconciliation actions such as cross-cultural activities and learning, tours, camps etc.
- Develop and promote Aboriginal art.
- Youth and cultural centres and outlets, workshops and courses.
- Prepare a starter kit for all new residents and encourage newcomers to become involved quickly.
- Bring diverse people together through sharing life stories.
- Listen to older people – to what has worked and what has not worked in the past, so that the same mistakes are not repeated.
- Appoint a "Bowraville Community Advocate" to whom all queries and complaints concerning local government and state or federal government bodies could be addressed and lobbied on behalf of individual residents.

Many people think we should have more and diverse community events in Bowraville, for example:

- Provide a showcase for local multi-talented people.
- Aboriginal dancers and dances for tourists.
- Art and craft weekend.
- Race meetings are good but people should be encouraged into town.
- Back to Bowra is good – a new PA is needed.
- Use fun fairs to point to positive actions and celebrate.
- Outdoor bands.
- Have a big get together.
- Regular street markets.
- Continue programmes such as Harmony Day but get them to Bowra.
- Have a man/woman of the town – a yearly award with a ceremony which would give the community something to aspire to.

People suggested specific services, facilities or infrastructure that are needed:

- Establish a retirement village in Bowraville to take care of local elderly residents and provide jobs.

- Aboriginal cultural heritage centre.
- Develop a permanent art workshop and music recording studio.
- Speciality shops (e.g. confectionery shop) for tourists to visit.
- Butcher's shop is too far away from main shops.
- Seek funding grants to secure public space e.g. cultural neighbourhood centre.
- Library facilities.
- Improve parking.
- Keep improving infrastructure – fix roads, more street lights, keep parks well maintained.
- Should be phones at community halls (e.g. Missabotti).
- More public buses.
- Develop tourist attractions and accommodation.
- Develop business through improving presentation, competitive pricing and correct customer service standards.

Responses from youth

Some of our younger respondents think we should:

- Get to know each other better.
- All work together and be proud of what we do.
- Be friends not enemies.
- Let the kids have a say.
- Work hard.
- Encourage more people into business.
- Encourage larger businesses.
- Open some more shops.
- Shop locally to support the businesses in Bowraville.
- Construct lots of new buildings.
- Build a community centre and generate jobs.
- Look after our valley more to keep people coming to the area and to maintain the community.
- Fix up the Grant's Hall, the cricket pitch, tennis courts, Lane's Bridge.
- Increase Council and other government spending.
- Have more police and a court.
- Make Bowraville a tourist attraction.
- Promote and advertise events in Bowraville.
- Join local clubs.
- Put up signs and displays.
- All volunteer more.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING BOWRAVILLE TODAY?

Many people noted that all the issues listed in the survey should be given consideration as they are all important and all interlinked. Some are more important than others to different sections of the community. Table 1 lists the top ten issues identified by adults and young people in the survey, where 1 is the most important issue.

Attachment 2 – Data and Figures includes Table 2 and charts which summarise the information people provided on their survey forms. Figure 1 shows that the most important issues (law and order and aged care) received about 7% of the total score and the least important (promotion of arts) about 2% - most of the other issues received between 4 and 6 % of the total score. Figures 2 to 8 chart the importance of issues to the whole community and to different segments of the community.

Adults ranked job creation and unemployment, law and order, economic development, education and training and community relations as their most important issues. Young people ranked Aged Care as their most important issue for Bowraville (although it is possible that young people interpreted this category as referring to the care of young and old, not just senior citizens).

Some of the other issues that people raised in their responses were:

- lack of government and council services and support;
- cultural and social differences;
- violence against children, women, everyone;
- alcohol and substance abuse;
- welfare dependency;
- anti-social behaviour
- litter and graffiti threaten tourism potential;
- dogs roaming the streets;
- social and racial prejudice;
- proposed gravel extraction on Graces Road will threaten tourist development;
- boredom of the unemployed and young people;
- lack of pride in ourselves and our town;
- skate boards and bikes on streets and footpaths are a hazard;
- a few people can undo all the good work and achievements of all the rest.

Some of our younger respondents think Bowraville is boring and needs more things to do and more entertainment. Adults also believe there is a risk that young people will leave if more support is not given to youth.

Table 1 - The Top Ten Issues¹

Rank	All respondents to the survey	Adult Females	Adult Males	Females under 16 years of age	Males under 16 years of age	All ATSI Respondents
1	Law & Order	Job Creation & Unemployment	Community Relations	Aged Care	Aged Care	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
2	Aged Care	Law & Order	Law & Order	Family Support Services	Environmental Issues	Aged Care
3	Job Creation & Unemployment	Education & Training	Job Creation & Unemployment	Health Medical & Facilities and Services	Entertainment & Community Events	Education & Training
4	Education & Training	Economic Development & Business Growth	Education & Training	Law & Order	Sporting Facilities & Activities	Youth Services
5	Family Support Services	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Reconciliation	Education & Training	Law & Order	Family Support Services
6	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Community Relations	Economic Development & Business Growth	Conservation of Bowraville's Streetscape & History	Health & Medical Facilities & Services	Law & Order
7	Community Relations	Youth Services	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Sporting Facilities & Activities	Job Creation & Unemployment	Community Relations
8	Entertainment & Community Events	Reconciliation	Entertainment & Community Events	Entertainment & Community Events	Conservation of Bowraville's Streetscape & History	Job Creation & Unemployment
9	Economic Development & Business Growth	Family Support Services	Youth Services	Environmental Issues	Community Relations and Education & Training	Promotion & Support for Arts
10	Health & Medical Facilities & Services	Entertainment & Community Events	Promotion of Bowraville	Community Relations		Sporting Facilities & Activities

¹ Each respondent was asked to rank the order of the issues on the survey form. This information was scored (10 points for the most important issues to 1 point for the least important) to produce an overall score for the issue. The graphs and tables used in the text are based on the cumulative ranking of the scores. See Table 2 in Attachment 2 for the full ranking of issues.

OTHER COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

Many people expressed support of the Bowraville Community Alliance and think that it should continue as one of the ways to work towards our vision. It is very important that the Alliance listen to all parts of the community. Several people said that BCA should raise public awareness of what it is doing with plenty of publicity so everyone knows when and where the BCA workshops will be held. Some of the comments on the survey forms are:

"Many thanks for the opportunity to contribute and participate. I hope this is the beginning of something very beneficial for Bowraville."

"Thank you for this survey a journey begins with the first step...it is better to light one small candle than to curse the darkness."

"Youth Club has received nothing but positive comments as a direct result of the BCA."

"Good on you and good luck".

"This strategic planning process for Bowra is an excellent idea – those involved are to be congratulated."

Several young respondents wrote that we must do something about the results of the survey – otherwise we are just wasting paper.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The Community Survey is only one way in which Bowraville Community Alliance is gathering information and opinions. The Alliance will then hold some workshops and community meetings where we can discuss some of the solutions to the issues that the community has raised.

Information about Alliance meetings and activities will be put up on the Community Notice Board. If you would like to attend an Alliance meeting or want further information please contact:

Jenny Joske, President of BCA on 6564 7162

Or

Tracy Bugden, Secretary of BCA on 6564 8855

If you have any comments on this document please contact:

Dawn Thornton, on 6564 8747 or email semgt@zip.com.au

Bowraville – doing it for ourselves



ATTACHMENT 1 - VISIONS

Visions for the future

- "I want Bowraville to be restored, healed of its past hurts. For families to live in harmony, to work together for the common good of the community. To be really happy that they live in one of the most beautiful country towns in Australia. For hope, confidence and a belief in all that we can do anything we put our minds to".
- "In 2020 I would like Bowraville to enjoy greater cultural harmony – that is the non-indigenous community having greater understanding of and respect for indigenous culture; the indigenous community will learn to understand the non-indigenous life and learn to maintain their own culture whilst living in a modern, white community. A thriving tourist trade bringing greater economic prosperity to Bowraville is also part of my vision".
- "I'd like to see more Koori faces being involved in the workforce".
- "A better understanding of each other (black and white), how we live in this community, with this we would prosper in equal employment, better schools and in health."
- "A place people aspire to live, with services meeting the community's need. An economically sustainable country town, which has and will use both the human and natural assets of this areas to be successful."
- "Basically an escape from a world gone mad. A safe haven from the frantic, technologically geared, terrorist fearing city societies that are on the materialistic treadmill where the \$ is most important. A microcosm of tolerance and friendly atmosphere with clean air, clean water and fresh foods. Somewhere to feel safe and relaxed (but with a window to the outside world). Visitor friendly and user friendly".
- "A thriving centre, displaying the advantages of aboriginal and non aboriginal cooperation in attracting tourists to the area. The service industry would seem to be the best thing we have to offer city people who have the money.
- "My vision would be for a more cohesive and loving community".
- "A Christian town where all have a loving concern for each other".
- "I would like it to be the sort of town that people would take the time to detour off the highway to look around and spend money. This happens now with the Phoenix and Museum but other ventures – such as Aboriginal Cultural Museum with art and story telling plus music - would benefit the whole community. A town that people want to move to for lifestyle reasons. A town that offers essential services for its people."
- "Prosperous. Safe. Green. Proud. Healthy. Caring. Harmonious."
- "I'd like to see more Aboriginal kids complete their HSC..."
- "Not financially impoverished where youth, creativity and work skills stay within the community. A cultural mecca for residents of Bowra, the Nambucca Valley and the region. Harmonious relations with indigenous population and positive achievements for their community."
- "A small town with a stable economy where small businesses can achieve success through hard work. Better employment prospects through small business. A community at peace without the "them and us" "black or white" tensions. A community that can accept change but retain good past histories. A community that can celebrate success and work together on problems/failures."
- "Safety - at school, in streets, at home. Reconciled – mission as part of the community. Thriving – recreation, business, culture".

- “Bowraville in 2020 could be a small but active rural town, one in which most needs of all community members are met, where education, employment are high and where all parts of the community feel that they are welcome to play a part in building our future”.
- “Strong community relations with people understanding and respecting one another in general. Improved employment opportunities through education, vibrant creative society producing goods and services furthering opportunities for young peoples development and success.”
- “More understanding with white and Aboriginal then talk for the future.”
- “A place where all people are well educated, self esteem is high, work is plentiful and the children of all people have meaningful purpose in their lives.”
- “I want it to retain its classic Australian streetscape and friendly, relaxed atmosphere – easy way of life. I want it to be a town that is proud of itself and its past and respected throughout the region. A town known for its acceptance of the spectrum of people. Shops filled with local and Australian products – clean and green.”
- “Drug and alcohol free. One community working together in a safe environment where we all care for each other.”
- “To be a thriving bustling town, where local arts and craft are at the forefront making Bowraville the centre of the Nambucca Valley.”
- “A thriving business community boosting employment and catering to and promoting tourism. An able police presence promoting zero tolerance of crime. Hostel style accommodation provided for those in need of a home and a community “soup kitchen”. I would like to see footpaths and roadways scrubbed clean and kept tidy every week”.
- “A colourful, exciting, positive and close knit rural/regional centre”.
- “Harmony – working together – all people.”
- “A town committed to reconciliation between its past and present, its young and old, its left and right, its indigenous and naturalised constituents. Not where these differences cease to exist, but rather where they are honoured as a source of vitality. A town self-sustaining in the necessities of life, both material and non-material. Where the inhabitants are vigorously engaged in the community, and where this interaction encourages the towns constant evolution.”
- “A bustling cosmopolitan town comfortable with its Aboriginal and European heritage and with an easy unity in the community. Caring, sharing, understanding, living and working together as a community. Viable tourism and arts destination and strong horticultural and organics sector.”
- “A clean tidy town with lots more shops and small industry and commercial enterprises providing jobs for young people of the area. Keep the area primarily agricultural. Establish Bowra as a cultural and happy community with all residents having a mutual respect for each other which must be earned.”
- “A vibrant community, where Kooris and Whites live and work harmoniously together in an interesting cultural environment.”
- “To see Bowraville become a friendly, sociable, clean, law-abiding, progressive community”.
- “...My vision is for Bowra to be a friendly town where everybody is welcome to participate without exclusion...”
- “...A town other committees and towns look to for examples...”
- “I would love to see more integration between the Aboriginal culture and the white culture. This would improve the reputation of Bowraville as a wonderful place to live”.
- “Vision and reality are two entirely different concepts...”
- “Aboriginal people able to work in with the white society”.
- “A community that works together for the good of the whole community”.

- “Reconciliation, decrease racism, the community should come together as one. Implement activities for everyone, the young and old, black and white people. Transportation (public) e.g. an individual could have a job in Nambucca Heads but transport is a problem”.
- “My vision is to see the Bowraville community support the younger generation in every aspect of life...”
- “To stay as a quiet, unspoilt country town. It’s most important to me that Bowraville doesn’t become another crazy, overpopulated busy place on the east coast. I’d like to see it becoming a leader in environmental and aboriginal issues. It’s good to have tourism but let’s base that on showing our breakthroughs in environment, aboriginal issues and community and cultural heritage.”
- “A town in control of its destiny and living in harmony.”
- “I’d like to see Bowraville as a multi-cultural community working together as a team, e.g. support the unemployed with some kind of working/trainee scheme, assisting the young/youth/teenagers/juniors with social events on weekends.”

Young Visions – vision statements from the under 16s

- “I would like to see Bowraville as a prosperous small town with more harmony between white and aboriginal people”.
- “I’d like to see Bowraville grow and be safe”.
- “I want Bowraville to look like a lovely and peaceful place”.
- “I want there to be a highway through Bowraville. The population would go up and more businesses. The towns size will grow and more jobs. And it is quicker to go to Tamworth and other places out west if there was a highway through Bowraville.”
- “I want Bowraville to be a bit like Macksville, like a local library, a swimming pool and tarred roads everywhere. I would like people in Bowraville able to talk without fighting”.
- “Aboriginal people and white people should come together and spend time together.”
- “An up and running town with all the latest technology and buildings”.
- “I want Bowraville to have a few extra toilets and a good petrol station, town library, maybe another take-away shop and another hall or stadium. Improving the school a little bit also might be good as well”.
- “My vision for the future of Bowraville is for the community to help the tourist parts of Bowraville and the shops which are going”.
- “I want Bowraville to look like a peaceful place. There should be a shopping centre, the school should go to Year 12, and a takeaway food shop.”
- “It will become a better town for the next century.”
- “My vision for the future of Bowraville is a good safe town with law and order. I think that Bowraville will be like in 2020 will be an old country folk town, like now”.
- “I would like to see Bowraville to be a bigger and beautiful town, kids going to school, just like it is now.”
- “I would like a motor bike track. It has to have lumps – high lumps, lower lumps, medium lumps...”
- “I would like Bowraville to be like it is now”.
- “...I want everyone to get along”.

- "I want to have less crime and hatred. To have a small shopping centre with clothes shops, shoe shops and food shops. Also to have homeless people have a place to go in times of trouble. To have a fast food shop. Bridges would be fixed. To not fight each other but to get along and be able to do stuff together."
- "I would like Bowraville to be less racist and more people working together as a community. And also have clothes shops so we wouldn't have to travel far to purchase clothing".
- "Really bushy and nice..."
- "...more work options for young people".
- "People who are nice, friendly and kind. Clothes shops and a general town like Macksville."
- "Computers at every desk and the same teachers that we already have and see children not be bullied..."
- "Better toilets in the school, air conditioning, animals in the school. Cleaner streets, more bins, more shops".
- "I would like Bowraville Central to be really well know as a clean and nice school. I want it to be the best educated school in the valley (not that it isn't). I would like Bowraville to have lots of shops. And I want Bowraville to be a clean town."
- "I would like more kids, more co-operating, more friendly people and that they are all friends and that there are not any fights or arguments."
- "I would like Bowraville to be more exciting, for example: of an afternoon go out for a class game of netball or do more crafty things during class time and for the last thing Bowraville needs more kids and mostly boys. Second the Police need to be on the lookout a bit more."
- "Stop Wia-Ora getting mined for gravel because the rivers are getting too shallow and no good swimming spots."

ATTACHMENT 2 – DATA AND FIGURES

Table 2 –Ranking of Issues by Respondents to the Written Survey²

Issue	All Respondents		Adult Females > 16		Adult Males > 16		Young Females < 16		Young Males < 16		All ATSI Respondents	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Law & Order	863	1	295	2	128	2	211	4	118	5	118	6
Aged Care	813	2	167	13	52	16	312	1	179	1	174	2
Job Creation/ Unemployment	749	3	322	1	120	3	115	15	107	7	96	8
Education & Training	733	4	274	3	99	4	182	5	93	9	147	3
Family Support Services	647	5	201	9	74	11	252	2	61	15	134	5
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	641	6	245	5	83	7	134	11	89	11	246	1
Community Relations	638	7	228	6	133	1	137	10	93	10	106	7
Entertainment & Community Events	626	8	182	10	81	8	149	8	124	3	65	11
Econ. Devt. & Business Growth	618	9	257	4	88	6	113	16	70	12	52	15
Health & Medical Facilities & Services	606	10	136	17	52	17	215	3	117	6	64	13
Cons. Streetscape & History	558	11	146	16	60	13	157	6	97	8	29	17
Youth Services	551	12	214	7	80	9	134	12	66	13	147	3
Environmental Issues	539	13	160	14	67	12	138	9	125	2	60	14
Reconciliation	528	14	212	8	96	5	132	13	49	18	65	11
Sporting Facilities & Activities	449	15	110	18	36	20	156	7	120	4	77	10
Promotion of Bowraville	419	16	177	11	75	10	59	20	65	14	24	18
Transport Services & Access	405	17	176	12	53	15	79	18	38	20	33	16
Infrastructure	358	18	77	21	53	14	132	14	52	17	17	20
Primary Industry	332	19	87	20	35	21	100	17	61	16	5	21
Tourism Facilities & Services	327	20	152	15	51	18	27	21	10	21	21	19
Promotion & support for arts	286	21	102	19	42	19	77	19	47	19	80	9

² Each respondent was asked to rank the order of the issues on the survey form. This information was scored (10 points for the most important issues to 1 point for the least important) to produce an overall score for the issue. The graphs and tables used in the text are based on the cumulative ranking of the scores.