

LISTEN

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUNG PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS AND IDEAS.

Ensure young people are considered and acknowledged in all community consultations.

BE HONEST AND TRUTHFUL.

Be direct and clear when speaking with young people and acknowledge when there are limits.

ACTIVELY LISTEN WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

Demonstrate that young people have been listened to and communicate what will happen next.

FACILITATE

PLAN CONSULTATIONS SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Support an ongoing Youth Advisory Group to consult with when engaging young people in decision making processes. The Youth Advisory Group should be involved in planning the consultation process with other young people.

WHEN CONSULTING USE SPACES THAT YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL COMFORTABLE IN.

Ensure that youth specific consultations are held in youth orientated spaces.

CHOOSE APPROPRIATE TIMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO ATTEND MEETINGS.

Enable young people to have space in consultations away from adults. Consider times young people are available.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any comments or would like more information about the Mount Alexander Council Youth Engagement Charter please feel free to contact Mount Alexander Shire Council Youth Development Team on 03 5471 1700 or email youth@mountalexander.vic.gov.au

CONSIDER

CONSIDER HOW TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION AFTER CONSULTATIONS.

Give feedback on the information that young people provide. Explain why things were taken on board or why they were not.

GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE THE POWER TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS.

Provide support and information to young people in decision making positions.

CONSIDER HOW TO CATER FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES.

Ensure all communications with young people in the community are accessible and inclusive.

ENGAGE

HOLD INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

Use alternative methods to consult with young people; go to spaces where young people are and speak with them.

CREATE DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE PART IN SO THAT THE INTERESTS OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE ARE REFLECTED.

Aim to challenge Council's understanding of young people and what they are interested in.

MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL
YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT CHARTER

WHAT IS A YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CHARTER?

The Mount Alexander Shire Youth Engagement Charter aims to guide Council when engaging young people within decision making processes.

The Charter will assist Council as an organisation to respond to the needs of young people in our planning, policy, advocacy and service delivery.

The document has been written by young people within the Shire who have identified key terms to consider when engaging with young people within community consultations.



HOW WAS THE CHARTER DEVELOPED?

The Mount Alexander Shire Youth Engagement Charter was developed over a six month period. A group of 10 interested young people were recruited to research and prepare the Charter. These young people made up the Youth Advisory Group who met regularly for three months.

The group attended workshops where they:

- were informed of the Project;
- learned about the purpose of Charters and the definition of engagement;
- critiqued other Youth Charters;
- decided on a preferred model and founded the four 'Pillars' — Listen, Facilitate, Consider and Engage;
- developed the 11 guiding statements; and
- facilitated a workshop with Council staff to develop the 11 commitment statements.



There are 11 guiding statements written by young people within the document which are matched with 11 commitment statements developed in a collaborative workshop between Council staff and young people.

The statements sit underneath the following themes:

LISTEN FACILITATE CONSIDER ENGAGE

The Youth Engagement Charter is not a stand alone document. It has been incorporated into Council's Community Engagement Policy and Framework which outlines Council's commitment to effective community engagement.

The Mount Alexander Shire Youth Engagement Charter will be supported throughout Council with professional development and resources for all staff.

The Youth Advisory Group presented the Charter to Council in July 2012 and the Charter was officially adopted in September 2012.

The development of the Charter was funded through the Victorian Government's Rural and Regional Youth Inclusion Grant program. The grant is a component of the Victorian Government's Youth Action Strategy which aims to increase the number of young people in regional and rural Victoria who feel connected to their local community and feel that they have a say in the future of their community.