

LOCAL OPERATIONAL RECOVERY PLAN

Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton



RECOVERY NARRATIVE

About our community

This plan has been developed for the Shire of Chapman Valley and the Shire of Northampton across three zones:

1. Coastal townsites of Kalbarri, Port Gregory and Horrocks.
2. Town of Northampton and surrounding agricultural areas.
3. Shire of Chapman Valley.

Shire of Northampton

The Shire of Northampton encompasses several towns and settlements, from popular coastal destinations and historical fishing locations to broadacre cropping and grazing land. Industries include broadacre agriculture, tourism, fishing, horticulture and mining. Northampton is one of Western Australia's oldest towns, with historic buildings lining the main street. Kalbarri, historically a small fishing village, is now a popular tourism town with focus on the sea and inland national parks. Northampton and Kalbarri have primary and secondary schools, regional tier hospitals, supermarkets, and cafes. At the 2021 Census, the Shire of Northampton had a population of 3227, and a median age of 53.

Shire of Chapman Valley

The Shire of Chapman Valley comprises of broadacre agriculture to the central and east, and fast-growing peri-urban development to the west. Local industries include broadacre farming and smaller diversified farming lots, agri-food tourism and creative industries, with limited retail and commercial industry. There are several sporting and community groups across its three main townsites, Nabawa, Nanson and Yuna. The Shire's administrative centre is in Nabawa and primary schools are in Nabawa and Yuna. At the 2021 Census, the Shire of Chapman Valley had a population of 1556, with a median age of 44. The most significant age range in the Shire is 45-54 years, with median age increasing in the rural localities.

Key Challenges

Key challenges for the Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton include an ageing population which impacts health profiles and support service requirements and infrastructure; susceptibility to supply shortages and broader economic challenges; and a lack of state infrastructure capable of supporting population and town growth.

About the disaster event

Severe Tropical Cyclone (STC) Seroja crossed the Western Australian coast south of Kalbarri on 11 April 2021, as a Category 3 system, bringing wind gusts of up to 170 kilometres per hour. STC Seroja is the strongest system recorded to have impacted the Midwest Gascoyne Region. The cyclone impacted a population of almost 50,000 people and an area of more than 170,000 km² in 16 local government areas. The Shire of Northampton bore the brunt of the cyclone, with Kalbarri being the most severely impacted townsite.

State and nation-wide events, community priorities, and existing vulnerabilities continue to influence recovery. These include the complexity of insurance; sharing of data at local, state, and federal levels; limited workforce accommodation; shortages in skilled tradespeople; COVID-19 restrictions; and seasonal weather patterns.

Local Recovery Coordination Group

The Shire of Chapman Valley and the Shire of Northampton have a joint Local Recovery Coordination Group (LRCG) established in November 2021. The LRCG includes representatives from local government, local community groups and relevant recovery agencies.

Chair: Elected Member Shire of Northampton (Cr Horstman).

Deputy Chair: Elected Member Shire of Chapman Valley (Cr Warr).

Key Recovery Stakeholders:

- Shire of Chapman Valley
- Shire of Northampton
- Industry / local businesses
- Community members / groups
- Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- St John Ambulance
- Australian Red Cross
- Department of Communities
- Department of Education
- WA Police
- Tourism WA
- WA Country Health Service

RECOVERY GAME CHANGERS

Through the development of this Local Operational Recovery Plan, activities were identified that form the foundation to the long-term recovery of the Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton.

These projects require significant collaboration, resourcing and expertise beyond the current capacity of local governments and community.

PRIORITY 1 Affordable Housing

Partner with all levels of Government and the private sector to develop affordable housing solutions to attract and retain a skilled workforce and their families across key industries in the district.

PRIORITY 2 Kalbarri Foreshore Revitalisation

Secure funding for coastal redevelopment in Kalbarri to support tourism and local industry and sense of place, per the Kalbarri Foreshore Revitalisation Plan.

PRIORITY 3 Multipurpose Community Centre

Secure funding for the development of a multi-purpose centre in Kalbarri and upgrade existing facilities in Nabawa that meets the requirements for an all-hazards evacuation centre and secure place for continuance of service delivery in an emergency.

PRIORITY 4 Individual and Community Support

Partner with local support services and relevant Government agencies to develop and resource a managed transition plan for at-risk community members into ongoing, long-term recovery support.

PRIORITY 5 Economic & Community Development Coordination

Engage an economic and community development coordinator to facilitate and support community building and place activation projects identified in the LORP across the Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton.

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	KEY DAMAGE AND IMPACTS	RECOVERY OBJECTIVES	RECOVERY TASKS/ ACTIVITIES	ACTIVITY STAKE HOLDERS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	<p>Air, Water, Land and Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for environmental asbestos contamination. Severe coastal/river erosion and degradation. <p>Hazardous vegetation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived and actual increase to fuel loads because of defoliation. Perceived and actual increase to risk of structurally compromised (uprooted/ defoliated) trees and widespread debris. <p>Public Land/Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant debris and fallen trees affecting creek lines, rivers, reserves and parks and reducing shade/shelter for public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create a safe natural environment that promotes vibrancy and encourages connection with nature. 	<p>N1 Finalise the removal and safe disposal of remaining cyclone waste, including asbestos and other hazardous waste and ongoing road verge clean-ups if required.</p> <p>N2 Facilitate community tree planting initiatives for public areas which also support community engagement.</p> <p>N3 Ongoing support for the recovery of significant community natural and culturally significant areas.</p>		<p>N1 All public areas, including road verges, identified as having remaining cyclone related waste are cleaned up by September 2022.</p> <p>N1 Number of homeowners, primary producers and small businesses receiving clean-up grant support or uninsured clean-up assistance.</p> <p>N2 At least one community tree planning activity in Kalbarri, Northampton and Chapman Valley by June 2023.</p> <p>N3 Work commenced on dune stabilisation, rehabilitation, fencing, signage and rebuild of infrastructure for high priority sites that support sense of place.</p>
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	<p>Public infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage to multiple community or shire owned properties. Damage to foot paths, trails and signs in public areas and national parks. Damage to public open space infrastructure. <p>Private infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residences deemed uninhabitable. High number of properties still under tarps, with uncleared cyclone debris and active clean-up notices. Difficulty accessing building contractors, engineers, materials. Inflation of costs associated with rebuild. <p>Essential services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road signs damaged. Debris on roads required clearing. Significant damage to electricity and telecommunication infrastructure with ongoing supply and reliability issues. <p>Clean up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage to private buildings and materials containing asbestos. Waste disposal, including a mixture of green waste, water, damaged building and shed material and general rubbish. Retail and supermarket food waste. <p>Rapid Damage Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further assessments are ongoing to validate and identify damaged properties. Significant number of properties impacted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support rebuild of high priority critical infrastructure and continued recovery of cultural sites. To ensure information is available to people and organizations to facilitate rebuilding efforts. Promote the Build Back Better philosophy to the repair and rebuild of private and public infrastructure. 	<p>Priority 3: Multipurpose Community Centre & Upgrades</p> <p>B1 Coordinate an approach to recovery for abandoned properties.</p> <p>B2 Connect under or un-insured owners with appropriate and relevant supports.</p> <p>B3 Conduct an audit of current housing stocks and needs.</p> <p>B4 Encourage rebuild and repair of public infrastructure to align with the 'Build Back Better' philosophy.</p>		<p>B1 Approach to coordinating recovery for abandoned buildings is developed and being implemented by June 2023.</p> <p>Number of abandoned properties managed.</p> <p>B2 Community satisfaction with support, and progress of reconstruction for private buildings in June 2023.</p> <p>B2 Number of planning permits and development approvals requested and granted for cyclone impact related work.</p> <p>B3 Feasibility of a housing audit investigated by September 2022. If viable, audit of housing stock completed by June 2023.</p> <p>B4 Adequate funding is secured to repair and replace public infrastructure.</p>

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SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	<p>Groups, Institutions and Social Connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools closed / temporarily relocated. Population loss due to lack of housing/rebuild times. Reduced activities for all cohorts and ages. Over time, pressures have caused some business closures. <p>Cultural / Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damage to heritage assets on private and public land. <p>Health and Medical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outpatient clinics operation impacted. Mental health and psychosocial support services under-resourced and overcommitted. Anecdotal increase in suicidal presentation, relationship breakdowns, domestic violence. <p>Psychosocial and Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about upcoming storm season. Insurance challenges and pre-existing mental and physical health conditions increase stress. Red Cross outreach suggests a higher-than-normal percentage experiencing distress. Those concerned for others were most concerned for the elderly, male family members and children.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen community resilience by supporting community leaders and community connection. To increase community awareness of and access to community mental health support. To increase community awareness and resilience to future disaster events. 	<p>Priority 4: Individual and Community Support</p> <p>S1 Develop a community resilience kit 'how to prepare' for upcoming storm season. Include disaster communication, keeping yourself and your property safe, the insurance process and info on building standards for cyclone and flooding.</p> <p>S2 Facilitate or sponsor a program of support for volunteer-run community groups and activities to reduce volunteer fatigue and increase collective capacity.</p> <p>S3 Funding made available to community organisations and groups to assist with delivery of activities with social value.</p> <p>S4 Develop and administer a program to collect lessons learnt/stories to support community wellbeing in recovery.</p>		<p>S1 Number of preparedness events and participation. # and % participants who take / intend to take action to prepare following session.</p> <p>S2 Community champions program initiated by September 2022.</p> <p>S2 Community groups report reduced volunteer fatigue and have recruited new people to participate or take on leadership roles.</p> <p>S3 # and \$ provided to support community groups to deliver activities to June 2023 and beyond.</p> <p>S4 Number of community lessons learnt sessions and participation.</p>

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ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT	<p>Individual and Household</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether people were insured or not is a key factor in level of financial impact. Most residents reported some financial impact.* Key challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uninsured residents. Navigating insurance and challenges with insurer engagement /processes. Fuel costs for generators. <p>Local and State Government Infrastructure/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited LG resources and fatigue of LG officers. <p>Primary Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% primary producers impacted both Shires. Key challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracting and housing workforce. Seeding and clean up competing priorities, impact to programs. Loss of critical infrastructure. <p>Tourism, Industry and Small Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition for accommodation between contractors, residents, and tourists. Extensive damage to critical, public tourism infrastructure. Loss of operational stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate new and existing businesses to thrive by connecting with small business support. 	<p>Priority 1: Affordable Housing</p> <p>Priority 2: Kalbarri Foreshore Revitalisation</p> <p>Priority 5: Economic and Community Development Coordination</p> <p>E1 Continue the provision of support programs and funding for businesses that want to restart or increase their capacity, to sustain economic recovery.</p> <p>E2 Support hospitality businesses to coordinate opening times, days and holidays to ensure visitors can access food and beverage.</p> <p>E3 Encourage innovative business models to deliver better food and beverage availability (food trucks, new events and community activities, making public space available to private traders etc.).</p>		<p>E1 Number of preparedness events and participation. # and % participants who take / intend to take action to prepare following session.</p> <p>E1 Number of businesses participating at June 2023, and # % participants that feel more positive or hopeful about their business future.</p> <p>E2 Hospitality businesses in Kalbarri have agreed and taken action to coordinate and ensure access to food and beverage.</p> <p>E3 At least 2 innovative business models have been trialed by June 2023 with community feedback and feedback on business viability.</p>

*Based on self-reported data to Red Cross from April-September 2021.

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Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Department of Communities

