



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2021-2025

INTRODUCTION

IP&R FRAMEWORK

As a NSW County Council, the Integrated Planning and reporting framework for NSW Local Government applies to Goldenfields Water.

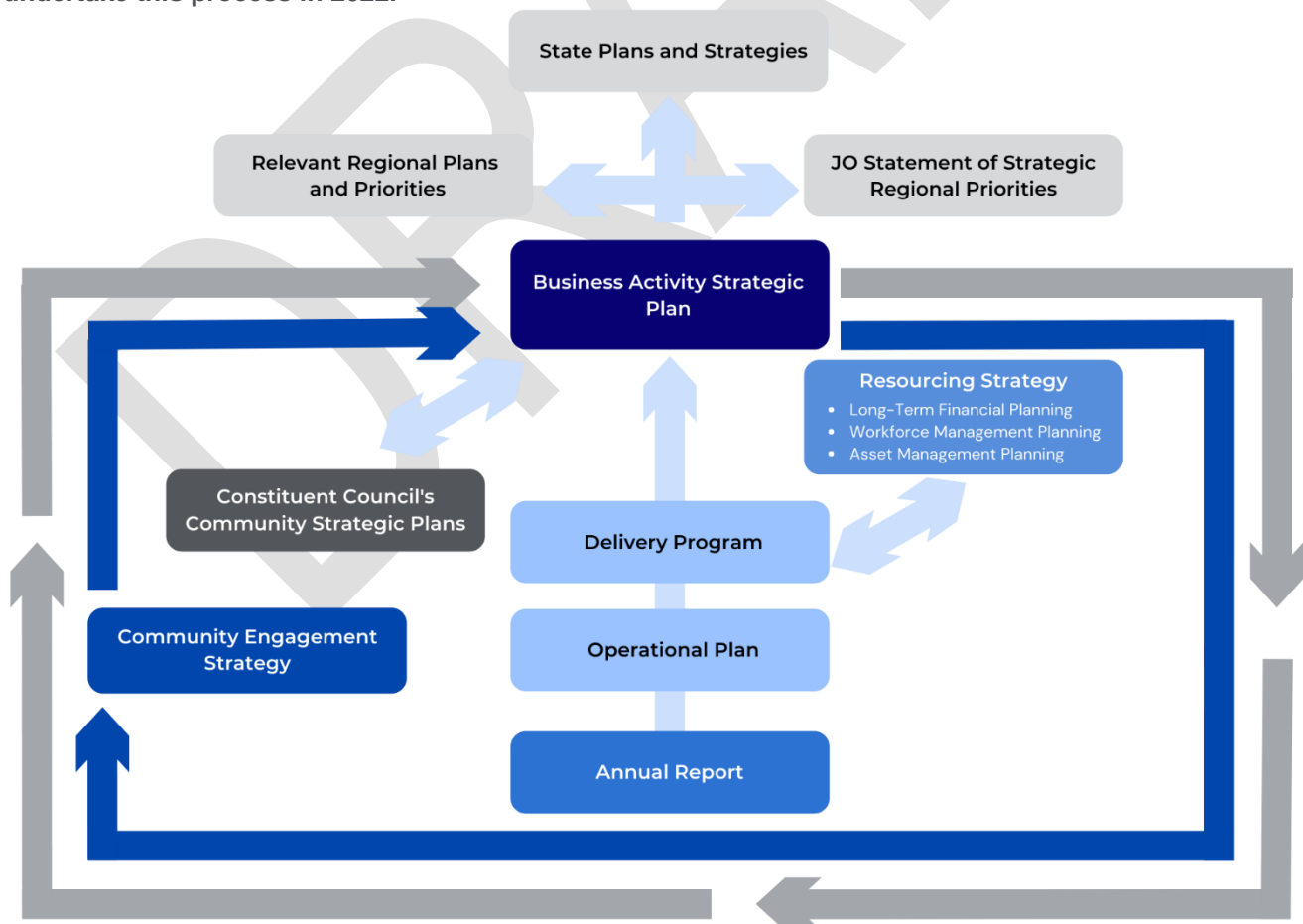
However, Goldenfields Water is not required to prepare a Community Strategic Plan under the framework because this work is already undertaken by each of its seven constituent councils. Instead, it is required to prepare a Business Activity Strategic Plan (BASP).

The BASP:

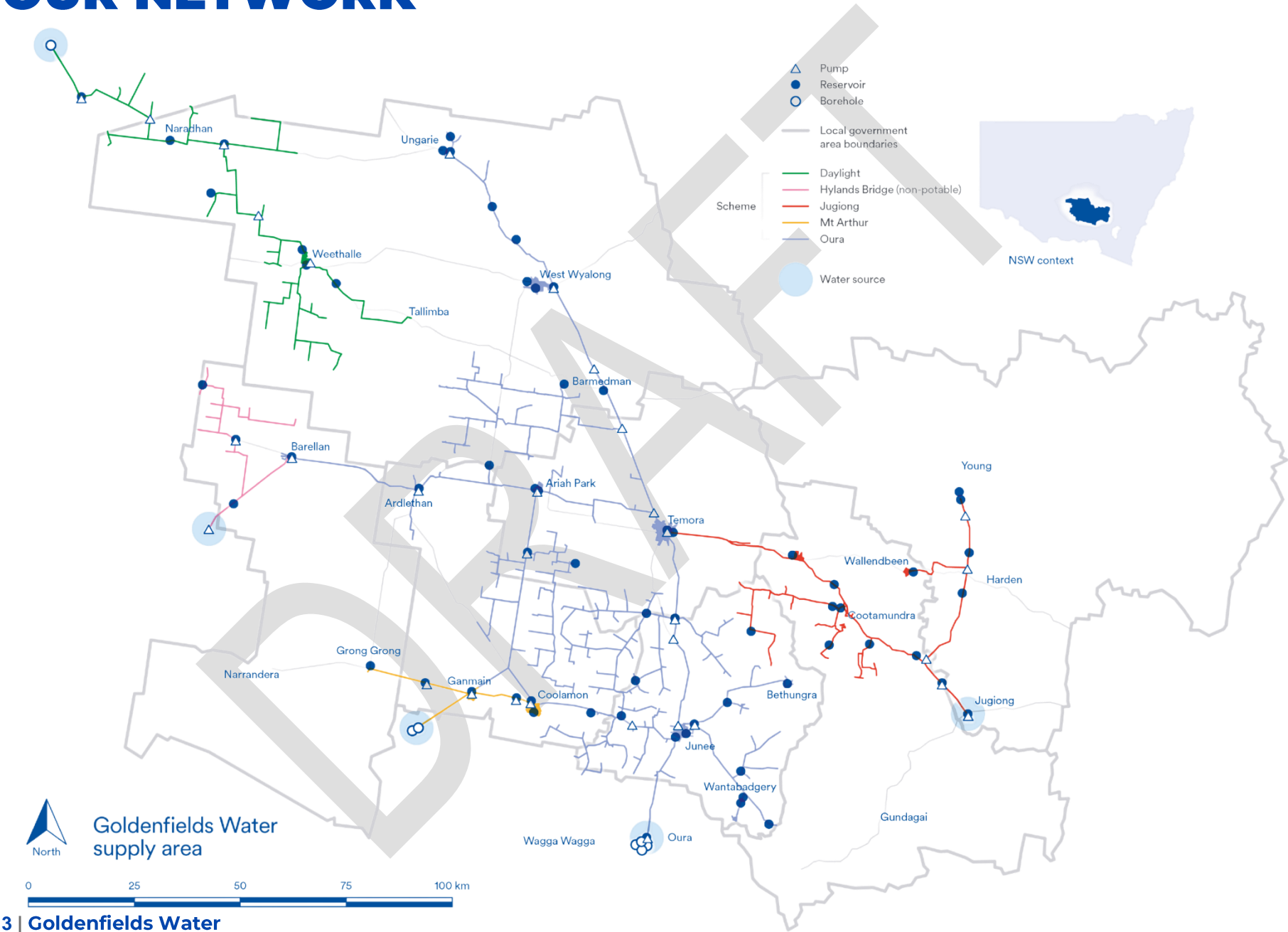
- Identifies Goldenfields Water's main business activity priorities over a period of at least 10 years.
- Establishes Goldenfields Water's strategic objectives and the strategies for achieving those objectives.
- Must be developed with due regard to the community strategic plans of Goldenfields Water's constituent councils and in consultation with these councils.

Goldenfields Water must develop a new or revised BASP following Local Government Elections.

Engagement with Constituent Councils, Customers and our wider Community is essential as we undertake this process in 2022.



OUR NETWORK





MISSION & VISION

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide regional economic opportunity and lifestyle choices through provision of a quality water supply by innovative leadership showing environmental responsibility in cooperation with the community, constituent councils and governments.

VISION

To be innovative leaders in the supply and distribution of water through regional efficiency, technical excellence and customer service.

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY



- We act in the best interest of the communities we serve.
- We promote equality and apply rules consistently.
- We are honest, ethical and take ownership of our actions by learning from our mistakes.

TRUST



- We rely on each other to work towards success.
- We support open discussions and are transparent in the process of making decisions.
- We value each other and empower one another to succeed.

RESPECT



- We listen, consider and value the views of others.
- We treat others with courtesy, empathy, professionalism politeness, and kindness.
- We recognise the contributions of all staff.

TEAMWORK



- We work collaboratively and support each other to achieve our goals.
- We communicate openly and positively.
- We build strong teams who are proactive, share their knowledge, skills, and experience.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



- We actively monitor and review our operations.
- We are open and acknowledge our shortfalls.
- We make ourselves accountable and share ideas to develop better ways of doing things.



COMMUNITY

We recognise our customers and community play a vital role in shaping our future, and only through engaging in meaningful conversations can we understand and achieve our mutual goals.

PROFILE

Over 46,000 farmers, residents, business owners and others across the South West Slopes and Riverina regions of NSW depend on Goldenfields Water for their essential water supply services each day.

As a county council Goldenfields Water is a unique organisation made up of 7 constituent councils:

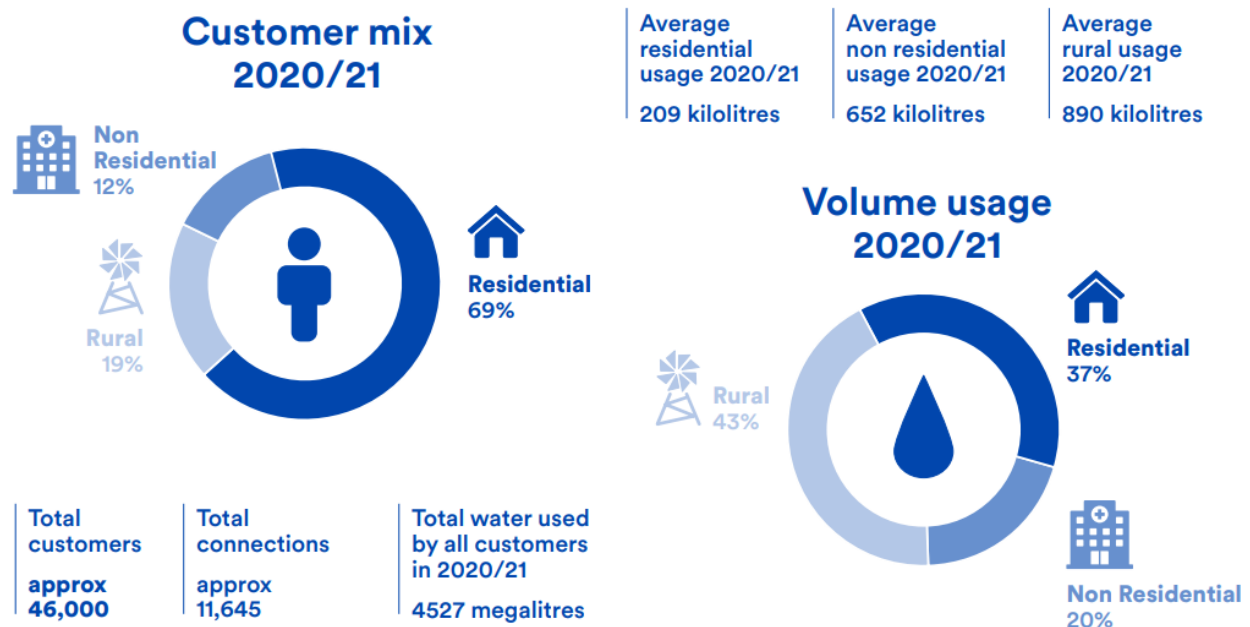
- Bland Shire Council
- Coolamon Shire Council
- Junee Shire Council
- Temora Shire Council
- Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
- Narrandera Shire Council
- Hilltops Council

We have approximately 11,645 properties connected directly to our drinking water supply network in Bland, Coolamon, Junee, Temora and parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai and Narrandera.

Residential and rural customers use around 90 per cent of the water supplied by Goldenfields Water. Business, commercial, and industrial customers, as well as other institutions (such as schools and TAFE campuses) use the remaining water it supplies.

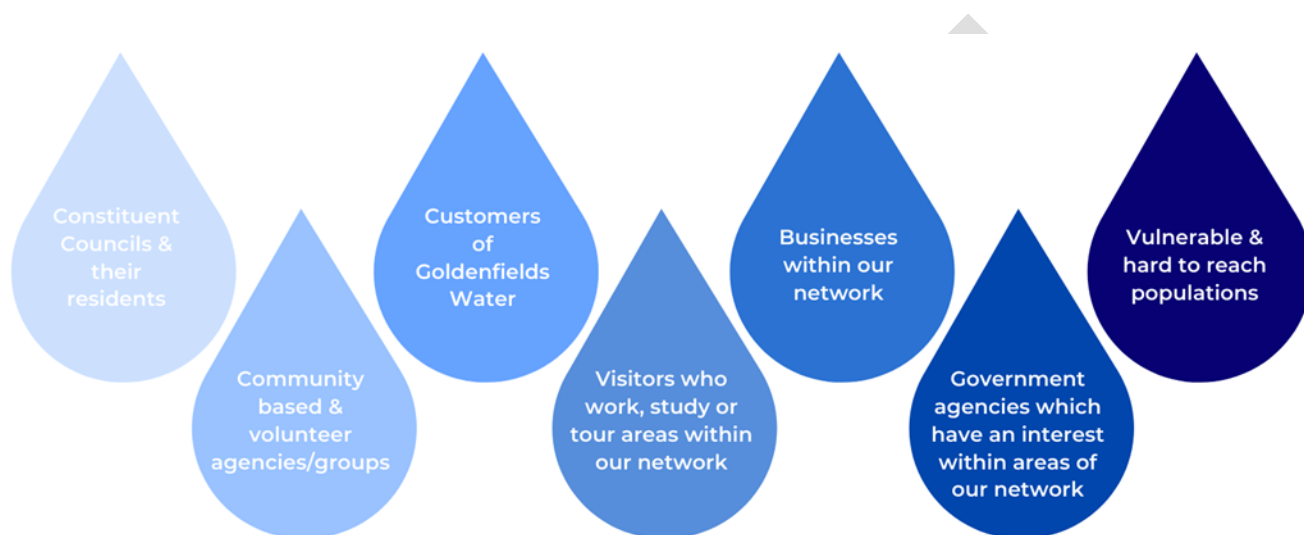
Goldenfields Water also supplies:

- Non-potable water (untreated water for non-drinking purposes) directly to 250 rural, residential, commercial, and industrial properties from the Hylands Bridge Scheme
- Water in bulk to Cootamundra-Gundagai and Hilltops councils, which then distribute water directly to their residents (except those supplied directly by Goldenfields Water in parts of Cootamundra-Gundagai)
- Water in bulk to Riverina Water County Council



COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDERS

To inform our BASP and future planning, our engagement activities provide opportunities to hear from a broad range of our community & stake holders including those that are vulnerable & hard to reach.



Community

Broadly refers to any specific group of people who share similar location, interest, or affiliation with Goldenfields Water County Council. These include but are not limited to residents of constituent councils, customers, business owners and operators, workers, students, visitors, including tourists, government establishments, community organisations, including clubs, churches, and charity groups.

Stakeholders

This refers to a person, group of persons or organisations that have or feel they have an interest or can affect/be affected by an issue or decision.

Vulnerable & hard to reach populations

Considered within our Community Engagement Strategy are those individuals and groups whose voices are often under-represented in the community engagement processes. These include people with disabilities, aboriginal communities, people from culturally & linguistically diverse backgrounds, young people, people within geographically isolated areas, single parents, and the elderly.



ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The Community Engagement Strategy is based on the guiding principles of social justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

EQUITY



There should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

ACCESS



Everyone should have fair access to services, resources, and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

PARTICIPATION



Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

RIGHTS



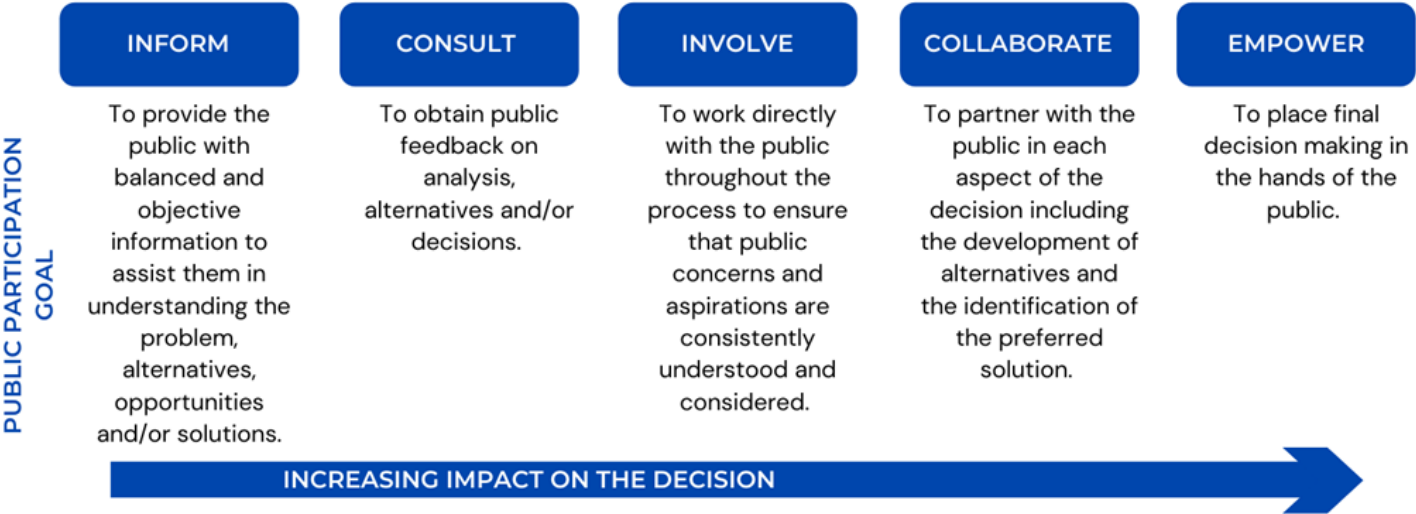
Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

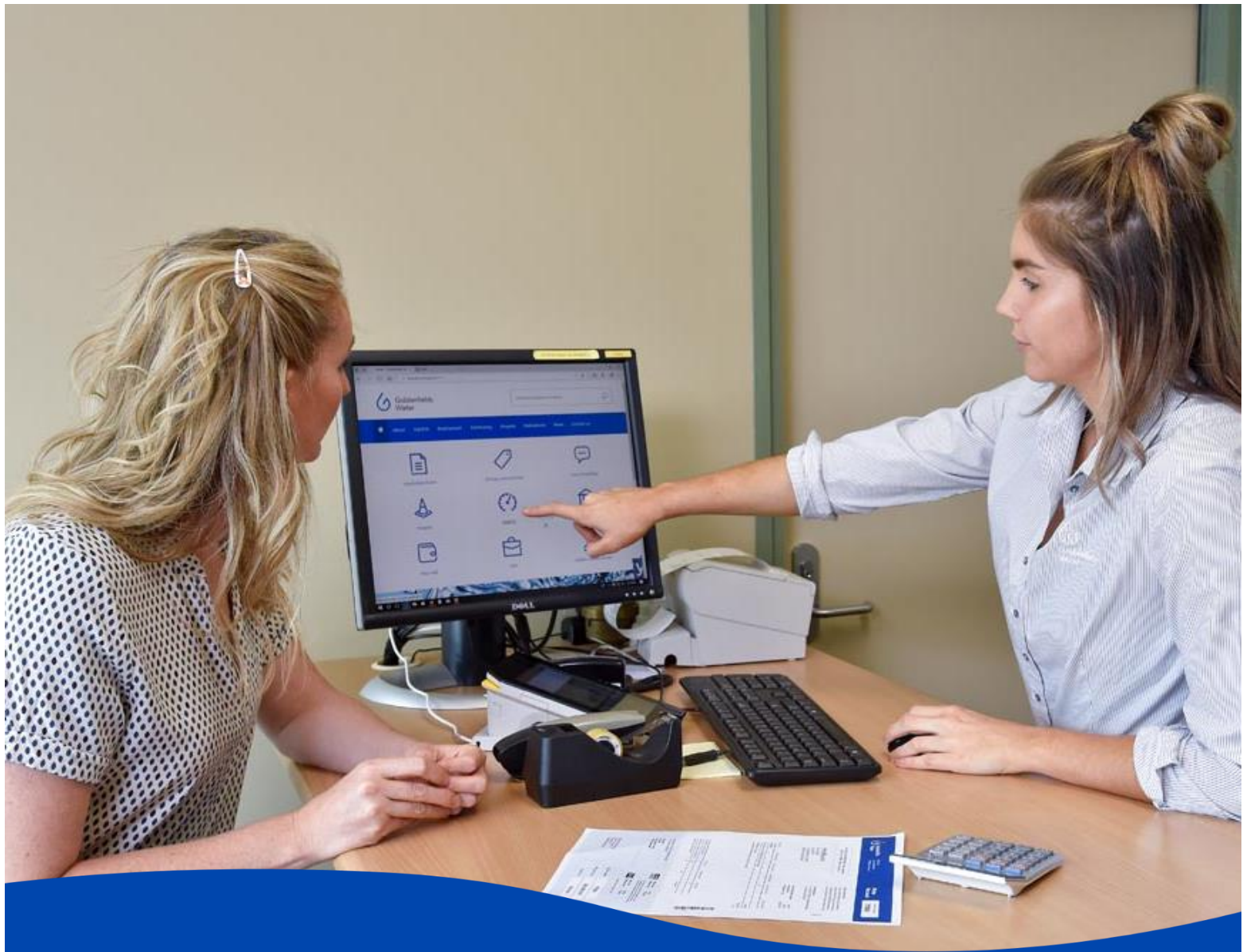
LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

The Public Participation Spectrum by IAP2 forms the basis for activities of engagement by Goldenfields Water with our communities & stakeholders.

The International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) spectrum of public participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process.

IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum shows the possible types of engagement with stakeholders and communities. The spectrum also shows the increasing level of public impact.



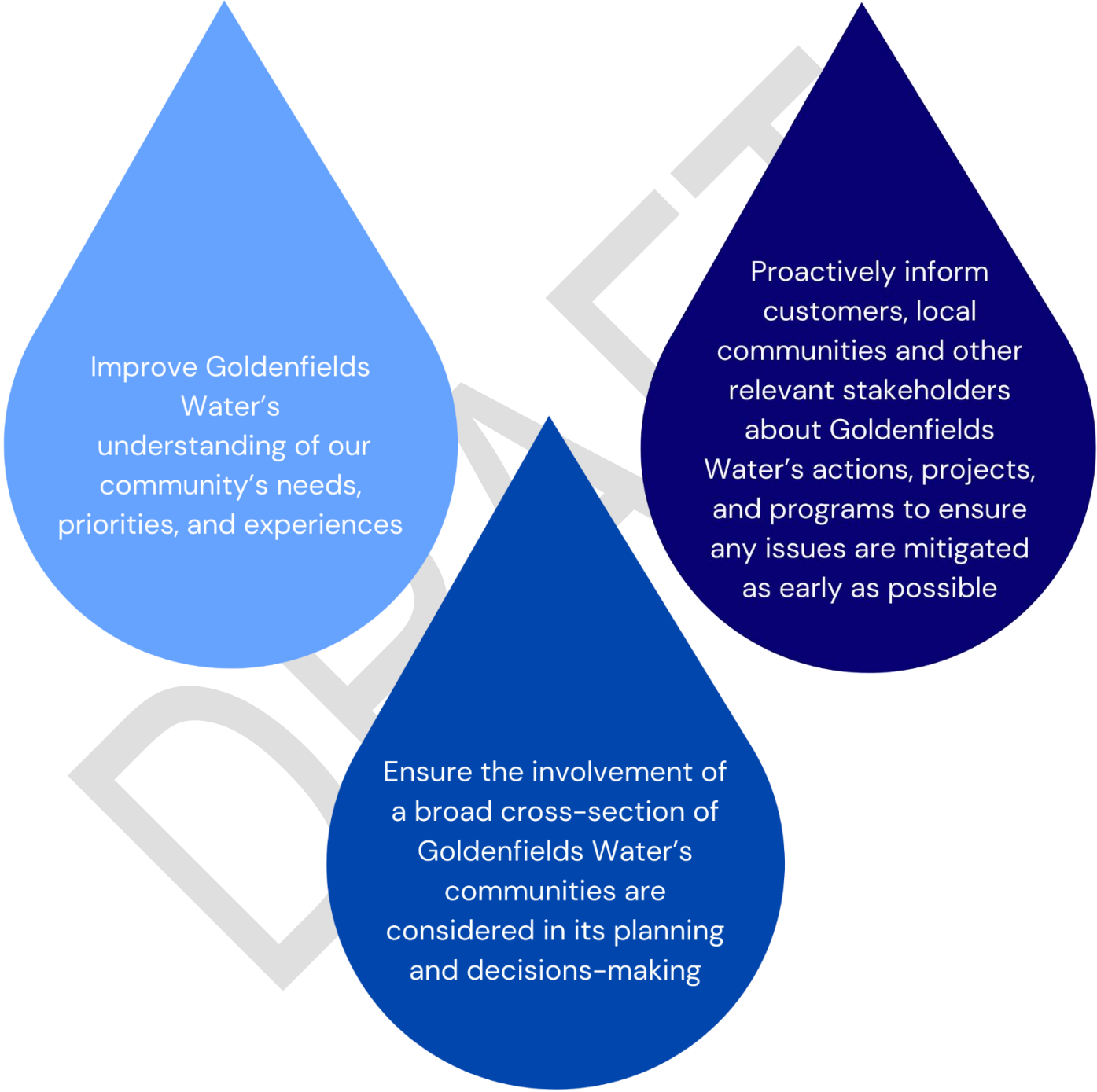


ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Identifying how, when & where stakeholders will be engaged.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Goldenfields Water's Community Engagement Strategy aims to:



Improve Goldenfields Water's understanding of our community's needs, priorities, and experiences

Proactively inform customers, local communities and other relevant stakeholders about Goldenfields Water's actions, projects, and programs to ensure any issues are mitigated as early as possible

Ensure the involvement of a broad cross-section of Goldenfields Water's communities are considered in its planning and decisions-making

KEY ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 Meetings with Constituent Councils

We engage with each of our constituent councils to:

- Determine priorities identified within each councils own Community Strategic Plan
- Agree on service levels provided by GWCC
- Discuss appropriate levels of resources and their potential for allocation

Schedule	Activity
November - December 2021	General Manager to conduct meetings with Constituent Councils
Annually	General Manager to conduct annual meetings with Constituent Councils

Activity 2 Customer Surveys

We undertake annual customer surveys aimed at:

- Establishing a baseline for customer satisfaction with water quality and service delivery
- Analysing and understanding our customer's experience when contacting GWCC
- Identifying future priorities and improvement areas
- Measuring the ideal price point for potential future upgrades

Schedule	Activity
September 2021-23	Conduct annual online community survey (via Survey Monkey) promoted via social media, website & newspaper advertisements
September 2024	Conduct formal survey of randomly selected customers supplied directly by Goldenfields Water
Ongoing	Simple social media polls on subjects such as water quality and water service

Activity 3 Social Media

We embrace the modernisation of our approach to communication via social media platforms:

- Maintain a presence for GWCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & LinkedIn
- Direct users to engagement opportunities, for example, encouraging click through to surveys
- Invite comments and feedback

Schedule	Activity
Ongoing	Consistently provide information to customers and encourage feedback
Ongoing	Simple social media polls on subjects such as water quality and water service

Activity 4 Goldenfields Water App

In 2019 we became the countries first water utility to launch a free consumer app allowing us to:

- Gather data on issues experienced by customers within our network
- Refine localities of common concern

Schedule	Activity
Ongoing	Extract and review data collected from the GWCC app to develop common concerns and localities

Activity 5 Other Media

We will continue to use more traditional methods to communicate with our communities, including:

- Newspaper advertisements
- Newspaper editorials
- Quarterly newsletter mailed direct to our customers

Through these mediums we will provide relevant information to our communities and encourage our communities to provide commentary

Schedule	Activity
September 2021-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertising in local papers to promote completion of online community survey
Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertising to encourage sign up to the GWCC app to obtain further data from customers
Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates in Goldenfields Water Customer Newsletter mailed directly to our customers
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistently provide media releases on current activities to local media outlets

REPORTING

The Community Engagement Strategy is a principal activity detailed in Goldenfields Water's Delivery Program for 2022-2025.

As such, progress in implementing the strategy's key activities and achieving its key objectives will be reported as part of the Delivery Program's Integrated Planning & Reporting framework requirements.

Requirements include:

Progress Report

At least every six months, a progress report must be produced that provides information to the community about Goldenfields Water's progress with respect to the principal activities detailed in its Delivery Program

Annual Report

At the end of each financial year, an annual report must also be produced that provides information to the community about Goldenfields Water's achievements in implementing its Delivery Program and the effectiveness of the principal activities in meeting the objectives of its Business Activity Strategic Plan and the Community Strategic Plans of each of its constituent councils.

