Junortoun All Hazards Workshop 1 Report

Collated data from activities

Thursday 11 September 2025

On 11 September 2025, around 20 Junortoun community members participated in a workshop facilitated by Maree Grenfell and Martina Holland (Once upon tomorrow and Martina Holland Consulting).
After broad group discussions regarding grievances participants have regarding their recovery from 2022 and 2024 flooding events, the workshop moved into a series of activities to explore an "all-hazards" approach to future events that may threaten what they love about living in Junortoun.

The following notes capture and makes sense of what participants expressed as most important, looking to their future preparedness.

What do you love about living in Junortoun?

Natural environment	Built environment	Social environment
▪ Home in the bush ▪ My huge gum trees ▪ Bird life ▪ Green spaces ▪ River Red Gums ▪ Wildlife ▪ Gardens ▪ Nature ▪ Creek ▪ The creek on my property ▪ Bushland ▪ Cockatoos ▪ Galahs ▪ Bees ▪ Natural outlook ▪ Natural waterways ▪ Rural living outlook ▪ Feel of living in the bush ▪ Acreage ▪ Space ▪ Country feel ▪ Lack of neighbours ▪ Bush and vegetation on blocks ▪ Honeyeater Bushland Reserve ▪ Honeyeater Reserve	▪ Large block ▪ Out of the city centre, but not too far ▪ My dressage arena ▪ Pub ▪ Rail trail ▪ Quick drive into Bendigo ▪ O'Keefe Rail Trail connection ▪ Access ▪ Bike friendly community ▪ Close to Bendigo ▪ The disconnect from Bendigo ▪ Low density residential: less estates	▪ Good neighbours ▪ Community gatherings ▪ Safety and security ▪ Home in the bush community ▪ Community feel ▪ Sense of space ▪ Small almost rural community ▪ Friendly neighbours ▪ Relaxed atmosphere ▪ Community involvement ▪ Our neighbours ▪ All the neighbours are welcoming ▪ People at the pub are welcoming ▪ Feels safe

▪ Open spaces ▪ Home in the bush/natural environment ▪ Forest environment ▪ Space ▪ Rural ▪ The bush setting ▪ The birds (even the suspicious number of pigeons!)		

What events might threaten what you love?

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
▪ Wildfire ▪ Busy highway ▪ Over development ▪ Development ▪ Flooding ▪ Kangaroos ▪ Traffic ▪ Smaller blocks ▪ Missed opportunities to address existing risk through development ▪ Another version of COVID ▪ Increasing traffic (noise) ▪ Power blackout ▪ Significant bushfire ▪ Being ignored and not taken seriously ▪ Congestion ▪ Amenities lost ▪ Bushfires ▪ Power disruption ▪ Infrastructure not keeping pace with development ▪ Loss of amenity ▪ Lack of a community centre	▪ Being a bypass ▪ Road congestion (school) ▪ Flood ▪ High density housing ▪ Heavy development ▪ Fire ▪ Highway pollution ▪ Development with deliberate negligence ▪ Less social gathering places (except pub)	▪ Residential development ▪ Crisis due to world event ▪ Flooding ▪ Traffic ▪ Angry wife ▪ Not having safety crossings ▪ Insurance costs ▪ Run off ▪ Bad or inappropriate fencing ▪ Injured wildlife ▪ Bushfire ▪ Storms ▪ Strong winds / trees down ▪ Inaction to our concerns ▪ Crime ▪ Car theft ▪ Vandalism ▪ Assaults ▪ Traffic

What actions can the community take?

Hazard	Before	During	After
Flood	▪ Gutters ▪ Streams ▪ Drains ▪ Trees ▪ Outdoor furniture ▪ Fencing ▪ Phone charged ▪ Generators ready ▪ Vic Emergency App ▪ Sandbags ▪ Move to higher ground	▪ Put away objects ▪ Tie down loose objects ▪ Close doors and windows ▪ Close shed doors ▪ Don't walk in flood waters ▪ Don't drive in flood waters ▪ Check on neighbours	▪ Check road closures ▪ Don't drive in flood waters ▪ Chainsaws ▪ Help and support neighbours
Bushfire	▪ Mitigate excess debris and dry grass ▪ Use community groups to get information out	▪ Check Vic Emergency app ▪ Check if the neighbour has had too many beers to realise there's a fire	▪ Check for recovery
Road accident	▪ Identify blackspots ▪ Repair roads, fences and poles	▪ Local volunteers respond to incident ▪ Let friends know to avoid the area ▪ Coordination of services with high-level preparedness	▪ Effective community briefing sessions

Unresolved issues

Information requested from community members

- Commentary from CoGB on how learnings from 2011, 2022 and 2023/24 floods have shaped changes in preparation for future floods.
- How can Junortoun have a stronger voice in Council decision-making?
- There is an appetite for a panel that includes senior leaders from Council, Coliban Water, the SES and other agencies involved in flood response and recovery.

Maps with hazards marked: pages 5-6

Key


Bushfire / Heat / Earthquake


Storm / Flood / Tornado

Infrastructure / service disruption (e.g., water, power, phone)


Disease (e.g., exotic animal, human pandemic)


Things you love














What is the data telling us?

What the community values

The Junortoun community has a deep attachment to its natural environment – the bush setting, River Red Gums, wildlife, open spaces, and rural lifestyle were mentioned repeatedly. People also value the balance of being close to Bendigo while retaining a "small, almost rural" feel with friendly neighbours, safety, and a relaxed community atmosphere. These assets form the heart of what residents want to protect.

Perceived threats

The strongest concerns were around development pressures – high-density housing, loss of amenity, traffic congestion, and infrastructure not keeping pace.

Bushfire and flooding were the most consistently named natural hazards, along with storms, strong winds, and the risk of power blackouts.

Crime, vandalism, and being "ignored or not taken seriously" by decision-makers also featured as threats, highlighting both safety and governance concerns.

Community readiness

Residents expressed practical knowledge and willingness to prepare for hazards.

- For floods, this included sandbagging, securing outdoor objects, and checking neighbours.
- For bushfires, fuel reduction, app use, and neighbourly support were noted.

The community identified the importance of local groups as information conduits and emphasised the role of checking in on neighbours before, during, and after events. This indicates a strong base of social capital that could be built on with clearer guidance and coordination.

Unresolved issues and requests

There is a clear appetite for better communication from Council and agencies. Community members specifically asked how lessons from past floods (2011, 2022, 2023/24) are shaping future preparedness.

They also want **a** stronger voice in decision-making, with suggestions for a panel including senior leaders from Council, SES, Coliban Water, and others.

Overall observations

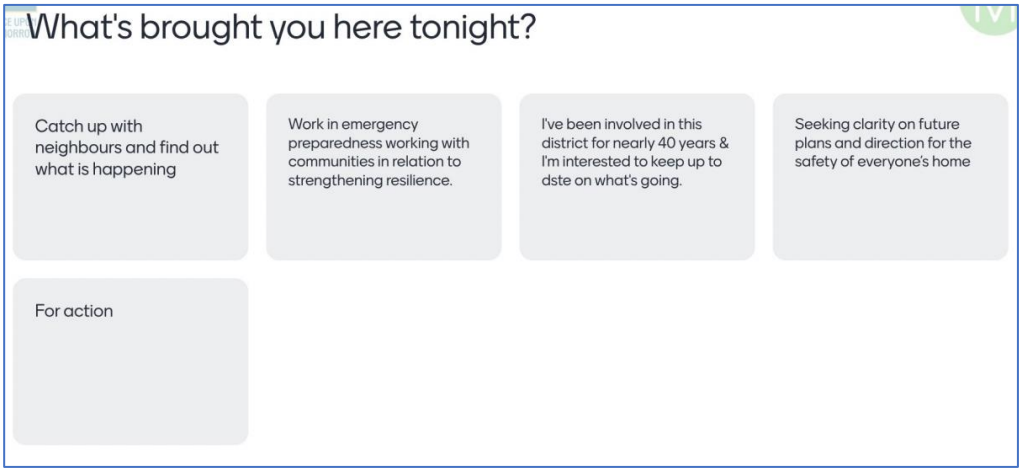
The data points to a community that is highly values-driven and protective of its environment and lifestyle, but increasingly anxious about over-development and infrastructure gaps.

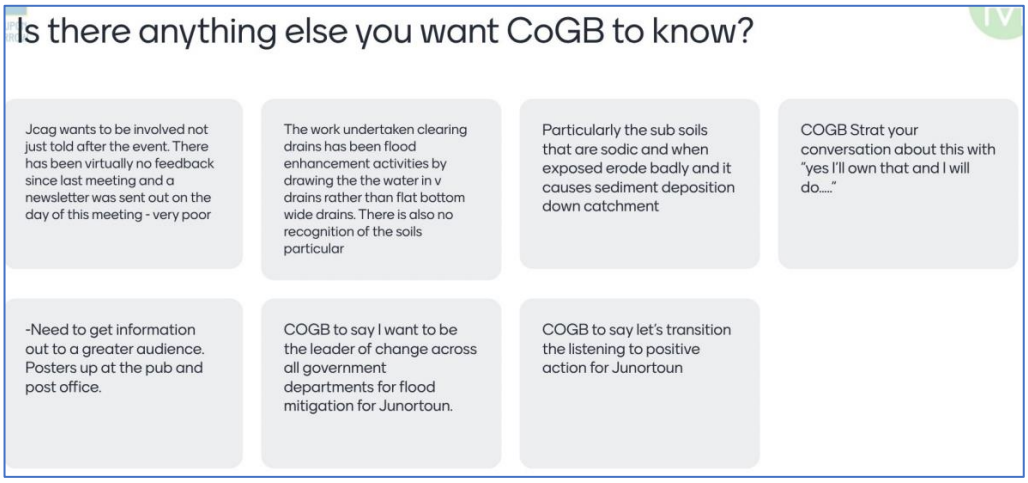
While there is strong grassroots readiness to act in emergencies, people feel under-informed and under-heard by authorities. Strengthening two-way communication, ensuring past lessons are visibly acted on, and recognising Junortoun's desire for representation will be key to building trust and resilience going forward.

Feedback received from participants

During the workshop Menti was used as an online interactive feedback mechanism. Below are results provided by participants.







To the question "Thanks for your anonymous feedback about tonight's session...: I felt comfortable sharing my views tonight", 100% of respondents reported either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree".

Next steps

The data collated from this workshop along with sentiments expressed by participants will guide the future workshop design in this series. Workshops 2 and 3 (Flood Deep Dive and Threats – Ideas and Opportunities), will build on information collected to date to design community-based action plans for improved preparedness in Junortoun.