



More than 40,000 people now call Sunbury home, according to the latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

SUNBURY

Population set to boom

Sunbury welcomes 6000 new residents in a decade with precinct structure plans to add to growth

Barry Kennedy

SUNBURY'S population has surged past 40,000, with 18 per cent more people calling the town home in the past 10 years.

Newly released Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows the town's population hit 40,978 in 2016, up from 34,721 in 2006.

Significantly, with the Victorian Planning Authority about to deliberate on two huge precinct structure plans, Sunbury could soon pass the 50,000 mark.

The precinct plans detail growth of 20,000 new homes, four extra town centres and another two train stations over the next 20 to 30 years.

Sunbury councillor Jack Medcraft said it was realistic there would be 60,000 residents in Sunbury in 10 years' time.

He said Sunbury retained many of the qualities of a much smaller town.

"It's a very safe place to live and people still go down the street and say hello to each other," he said.

"Sunbury seems to be a sleeping giant for people who have recognised you can buy affordable housing close to the city."

Cr Medcraft said while Sunbury had now been discovered, it was important to embrace the growth, as it was only through this that community infrastructure

such as a hospital, more public transport and further educational developments became viable.

"Some people don't like the growth, but if you look at a place like Melton and want to get a hospital, you have to grow," Cr Medcraft said.

Sunbury Community Health Service building healthier communities manager Bernadette Hetherington said the rise in population brought both challenges and opportunities.

"In our organisation, we are seeing the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and My Aged Care which are both personal-centred initiatives," she said.

"They are a departure in the funding models of the past for us so it is a massive adaptation and a challenge we are up for."

Ms Hetherington said the health service would continue to champion the community, but as the town grew there was likelihood of more residents not knowing about services available to them.

"In new estates there are not the established community directions, so at a really practical community level we are really big on people getting to know their neighbours," she said.

Overall, there were 207,830 residents in Hume in 2016, up from 152,797 in 2006 – a growth of 32 per cent.

HUME POPULATION

2016 population compared to 2006

- Hume up 36 per cent to 207,830
- Sunbury up 18 per cent to 40,978
- Craigieburn West up 6347 per cent to 14,905
- Craigieburn North up 254.9 per cent to 12,081
- Craigieburn South up 66 per cent to 17,051
- Craigieburn Central up 9.7 per cent to 8758
- Middleham-Yuroke up 198.2 per cent to 3554
- Greenvale-Bulla up 43.8 per cent to 17,297

- Australian Bureau of Statistics