

LODDON BULLETIN

A resilient, sustainable and prosperous community of communities.



Flood restoration works continue

Council continues to work on the restoration of roads and infrastructure throughout the Shire impacted by the October 2022 flood event.

More than 65 roads had to be closed, with many others impacted. The current estimate of claimable expenditure under the Federal Government's Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA) is \$36 million.

In addition to this, Council is undertaking a further \$8 million of repairs which are not funded by other levels of government such as caravan parks and sports/recreation infrastructure.

Following a publicly-advertised tender process and evaluation by an assessment panel, Council appointed a panel of 16 contractors to carry out flood restoration works. The panel provides an efficient and flexible way to engage the necessary contractor workforce to carry out restoration works, under DRFA.

The panel of contractors are required to provide quotations on packets of work. The entire program is expected to be ongoing until June 2025.

In May, \$1.37 million of restoration works commenced. These include gravel and sealed roads in Jarklin, Fernihurst, Boort and Dingee. This is the first of many packets of works, with a further \$1.25 million of restoration works recently approved.

Council officers and contractors continue to focus on fixing high-risk locations, with other officers inspecting and prioritising works for the remaining road network.

It is anticipated that Council will have completed approximately \$5.5 million of restoration works by December. A further \$15 million is planned for the 2023-2024 Financial Year, followed by another possible \$15 million in 2024-2025.

To get roads open and usable again within existing resources, Council activated the Exceptional Circumstances clause in its Road Management Plan, temporarily suspending the plan. This meant that Council had been unable to keep up with its usual road maintenance since October.

In July, some nine months later, Council is in a position to reinstate its Road Management Plan.

Council takes its responsibility to provide a safe road network seriously and appreciates the community's feedback. To report issues with Council roads, please call 5494 1200 or visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au and click on "Report an issue".

Urgent road issues identified after hours can also be reported via the 5494 1200 number. Issues on Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) roads can be reported by calling 133 778.

A list of RRV roads in the Shire is available at www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Services/Footpaths-roads-and-drains/Roads



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JUNE 2023

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Major projects update

Donaldson Park Community Hub

Works are continuing on Wedderburn's Donaldson Park Community Hub (*right*).

The building construction is well underway, with installation of footings and services. All foundations and slab works are complete. Work is continuing on electrical and plumbing installations through the park. Steel structural and framing works are complete.

Upcoming works include roof installations, brick work and cladding of the building.

Removed soil from the earthworks will not impact on use of the walking track and will be used for Stage 2 of the project.

Stage 1 includes the construction of a new multisport and community-focused pavilion. It also includes the construction of a carpark, solar installation with batteries, pavement works and landscaping. Works are anticipated to be completed in October/November this year.

The Donaldson Park Community Hub project has been made possible thanks to funding from the Commonwealth Government, Victorian Government, Donaldson Park Committee of Management, user groups, the community, Inglewood & Districts Community Enterprises Limited and Council.

The Donaldson Park Steering Committee has also provided input throughout the course of the project, including the building's design.

Pyramid Hill Streetscape Revitalisation Project

Works are continuing on the \$1.58 million Pyramid Hill Streetscape Revitalisation Project, including in Kelly Park.

Works in the park to date have included footpath installations and garden bed preparation, rectification of underground assets and preparation for new shelters.



Works at Lions Park include the replacement of the concrete path to and around the shelter, replacement of garden beds, planting of trees and shrubs, fencing and a new path.

Works for the pedestrian crossing will occur in the new financial year.

The project has been made possible through \$800,000 in funding from the Victorian Government's Building Works package and Council.

Godfrey Street culvert

Works on the replacement of the culvert in Godfrey Street in Wedderburn are complete (*below*).

Work included the laying of the concrete slab, followed by installation of the new culvert, providing a connection over Nardoo Creek when it is in flood.



A word from our Mayor

I thank everyone for their continuing patience with respect to the restoration of roads and infrastructure throughout our Shire.

As outlined on the front page of this edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*, flood recovery works are continuing on affected infrastructure, including via the panel of 16 contractors appointed by Council at its February meeting.

I'd like to encourage our community to head along to Newbridge on 24 June as the Newbridge Football Netball Club takes on Bears Lagoon Serpentine for the inaugural Flood Recovery Round.

This match day will be a fantastic opportunity to connect with flood recovery support services, with free kids' activities also on the day. More information can be found in this *Loddon Bulletin*.

Also highlighted in this bulletin is the 2023/24 draft budget, which sees continuation of a strong cash position, with no new borrowings, and ongoing commitment to community planning. The budget allocates a capital expenditure program of \$10.73 million, which includes \$5.53 million towards roads and \$1.33 million for parks and streetscapes.

Council will consider adoption of the draft Budget and Fees and Charges Schedule at its meeting on 27 June.

In May, Council invited residents who had moved to Loddon in the past five years to participate in a brief survey to help understand why people move to our Shire.

It's part of a project to investigate opportunities to unlock vacant urban land for growth, following the 2021 census which showed more people moved into Loddon than out.

I'd like to thank everyone who took part in the survey. This information will help Council respond in terms of residential development opportunities, target initiatives to capture growth and retain residents.

Finally, it was an honour to present citizenship certificates to our newest Australian citizens during a ceremony at the Council Chambers on 26 April. Receiving their Australian Citizenship were Grazyna Dominowska (formerly from France), Colleen Houghton, Rose Pavo, Shamica Castro (all formerly from Philippines), and Yan Jiang (formerly from China).



Loddon Shire Council Mayor
Cr Dan Straub.

Works update

Township street improvements

- The tender for the concrete footpaths program has been awarded and commenced in May 2023 in Newbridge, Boort and Inglewood.
- Footpath construction works on Commercial Road in Tarnagulla (between Poverty and Wayman streets) will take place in May/June.
- Works for kerb and channel, underground drainage and sealing upgrades in Grant Street (between Houston Street and the railway line) in Inglewood are nearing completion.
- The construction of a pedestrian barrier in Lakeside Drive, Boort is complete.

Other works

- The tender for the septic system replacement at Dingee Elderly Persons Units is expected to be advertised shortly.

Maintenance inspection summary

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023, 585 road, footpath and bridge maintenance inspections were completed (2149 defects raised).

Maintenance defect rectification

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023, 6,084 road, footpath and bridge defects were rectified, with 94.9% of all defects (5,771 in total) completed before their due date.

Maintenance grading program

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023, 2,293km of Council roads were inspected and 1,309km were graded.

VicRoads-controlled roads

Council is contracted to undertake routine maintenance of pavement, shoulders, roadside areas, drainage systems, road furniture and structures on various arterial roads within Loddon Shire (VicRoads roads). If you have any requests or issues with VicRoads arterial roads please call 13 11 70.

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023, 1,611 defects were rectified, with 83.6% of all defects (1,346 in total) completed before their due date.

Capital works

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023:

- 50% of building projects delivered by the works department were completed (eight jobs in total).
- 50% of road projects delivered by the works department were completed resulting in 30.3km local road resheets and shoulder resheets.

Waste vouchers

Residents are provided with four waste vouchers with their rates notices - one for each quarter. Each voucher can be used to dispose of up to four cubic metres of general domestic waste free of charge at Council's landfill and transfer stations.

This includes green waste, mixed recyclables, general household waste and e-waste (white goods, TVs, computers, electronic items, etc.).



Pedestrian barrier in Lakeside Drive, Boort.

Tyres, bricks and concrete, and mattresses are not included as these items have additional third party costs associated with their disposal, and will be charged as per normal disposal charges. Each voucher can only be used once, and only one voucher used per transaction. The voucher must be presented to attendants at landfill and transfer stations.

Each voucher must be used by its expiry date - with voucher 4 due to expire 30 June 2023.

From 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023, 2,082 vouchers were used.

Glass drop-off coming soon

The way you recycle at home is changing for the better – a small act makes a big impact.

A new recycling system is coming to Loddon Shire to help improve the way you recycle at home. In the coming months we'll be introducing a new glass drop-off service to recycle your bottles and jars.

Glass drop-off sites will be located at all Loddon Shire Council transfer stations and landfills.

It might seem like a small thing to sort your recycling properly, but it makes a big impact when we all do it correctly.

Broken glass in our Comingle Household Recycling bins can make other items like cardboard, paper and plastic more difficult to recycle.

By sorting recycling into separate streams, we keep valuable resources out of landfill. This means they can be used again and again. When taken to your glass drop-off site, your old jars can be turned into things such as new glass bottles and even roads.

New glass drop-off - purple lid bins

- Glass bottles and jars for food and drinks such as beer and olive oil bottles, and pasta sauce and condiment jars.
- Glass bottles and jars for medicine and toiletries
- Keep lids on your bottles and jars

We'll provide more information about how to use your new glass drop-off service closer to the start date. Until then, keep using the current waste and recycling system as usual.

Community projects update

Floodlighting upgrade projects

Serpentine Recreation Reserve

Installation of new fit-for-purpose light towers with sustainable LED floodlighting has been completed at the Serpentine Recreation Reserve (*pictured*).

The contractors, Laser Electrical Horsham, completed the installation in April 2023, providing compliant AFL training lighting to the oval, and match-quality lighting for both netball and tennis at the reserve.

The project was supported by the Victorian Government – Sport and Recreation Victoria, Country Football Netball Program, the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program, Inglewood & Districts Community Enterprise – Bendigo Bank, Bears Lagoon Serpentine Football Netball Club and Council.

Calivil and Mitiamo recreation reserves

Following a Council decision at the 28 February 2023 meeting, further funding through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program was allocated to the installation of compliant AFL training lighting to the Calivil and Mitiamo recreation reserve ovals.

DeAraugo & Lea Electrical Contractors were appointed following a tender process, with expected project completion by August/September 2023.

Calivil Bowling Club - synthetic green installation

Berry Bowls was the successful contractor following a tender process to replace the current natural bowls surface at the Calivil Bowling Club, with a synthetic surface.

The installation of the synthetic surface will enable use of the bowling green year round and reduce volunteer labour in having to maintain a natural surface.

Works are expected to be completed by August 2023, in readiness for the 2023/24 bowls season.



The project has been supported by the Victorian Government – Sport and Recreation Victoria, Local Sports and Infrastructure Fund, the Calivil Bowling Club and Council.

Bridgewater Foreshore

Beautification works at the Bridgewater Foreshore have continued as part of the Australian Government's Our Region Our Rivers funding program.

Works include planting within the gardens; landscaping; installation of lawn, park seats and picnic table settings; and further footpath construction. Works are expected to be completed by mid-2023.

Flood recovery projects

- Works at the Newbridge Recreation Reserve are expected to be complete by 17 June.
- New canoe launchers have been installed at Laanecoorie and Durham Ox.
- Preparation for the island pontoon replacement at Bridgewater Swimming Hole is ongoing.

Flood recovery football round

On Saturday 24 June Newbridge Football Netball Club will take on Bears Lagoon Serpentine at the inaugural Flood Recovery Round.

Council and Newbridge Football Netball Club have partnered to host the special round, which is testament to the resilience and tireless dedication of the entire Newbridge community.

Come along and get behind the Newbridge Club at what's sure to be an incredible day of fun for the whole family - entry is FREE!

The day will kick off with free kids' activities including AFL Victoria's "Footy 4 Fun" and Anglicare's Kit Van. Flood Recovery Round Best on Ground Medals will be presented to talented players for each of the football and netball matches.

Our committed partners in recovery, including the Rural Financial Counselling Service and the National Centre for Farmer Health will also be in attendance on the day to answer questions and provide information.

Community members are urged to come along and have a chat with the recovery support services. Even if you're travelling well, they might be able to provide help you didn't know you needed.

Council's Flood Recovery team are also keen to hear from you and assist you through your flood recovery. Please get in touch if you would like to chat about flood recovery for you and your community.

For more information call Mal on 0499 978 145 or Josie on 0474 911 783.

Melbourne Cup coming to Loddon

Loddon Shire Council has been selected to host the 2023 Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour!

Since 2003, the Melbourne Cup tour has provided towns and cities across Australia and New Zealand a valuable opportunity to raise funds for community groups and unite in celebration of the 'race that stops a nation'.

Boort has been selected to host the Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour on Friday 13 October and Saturday 14 October. The Cup will be seen at several local events including the 2023 Boort Show.



Adventure Bingo launched

Residents are being encouraged to get physically active while having some fun by taking part in *Adventure Bingo* – an initiative of Healthy Loddon Campaspe.

The initiative was launched in Boort on 30 March, with students from Boort District P-12 School walking the Little Lake Boort Adventure Bingo trail.

Adventure Bingo invites residents to get involved, either online or via hard copy, by walking one of six trails across the Loddon Campaspe region. Through the initiative, participants spot points of interest listed on a grid during their walk and once they've spotted three items in a vertical, horizontal or diagonal line, they've got Bingo.

Adventure Bingo encourages physical activity, especially for children and families, in our local region in a fun and simple way.

It also provides residents and visitors alike with a free, self-guided opportunity to explore walks in our region at any time that suits them.

Hard copy maps and Bingo cards are available free of charge at the Boort Resource and Information Centre or online by scanning the QR code.

Residents can participate online by downloading the map via www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Services/Health-and-wellbeing/Healthy-Loddon-Campaspe



Students from Boort District P-12 School help launch Adventure Bingo.

Other *Adventure Bingo* walks are located in Gunbower, Dunolly, Bendigo, Romsey and Maldon.

A new water station has been also been installed around Little Lake Boort. It includes a water refill station, drinking fountain and a foot-operated dog bowl.

Budget sees strong cash position

The Loddon Shire Council draft 2023/24 Budget sees continuation of a strong cash position, with no new borrowings. It includes a commitment to the Community Planning program, as well as projects and initiatives included in Council's various strategic plans.

Following the close of submissions to the draft budget on 19 May, Council will consider adoption of the draft Budget and Fees and Charges Schedule at its meeting on Tuesday 27 June.

The draft budget includes a rate increase of 3.5% – in line with the Victorian Government's Fair Go Rates System.

It allocates a capital expenditure program of \$10.73 million, which includes \$5.53 million towards roads, \$1.33 million for parks and streetscapes, and \$750,000 for recreational, leisure and community facilities.

Additionally, the draft budget includes a \$200,000 allocation for works associated with the Building Asset Management Plan and full funding of Council's ongoing commitment to community planning of \$750,000.

Waste service charges will increase by 3% per collection item, offsetting increases in the cost of kerbside waste and recycling disposal along with new licencing requirements.

As the draft budget was developed during recovery from the 2022 major flooding events, it may change to respond to future flood relief and recovery efforts.

The draft Budget and Fees and Charges Schedule for 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 are available on Council's website at www.loddon.vic.gov.au/OurCouncil/Financial-reports

Copies are available from Council's Wedderburn office during business hours or can be posted out by calling Council's Customer Service staff on (03) 5494 1200.

Electric vehicle chargers seeing savings

Loddon Shire's electric vehicle chargers at Inglewood (pictured), Newbridge and Wedderburn are continuing to see savings.

Charge sessions during the past 12 months have resulted in 45,016 of electric kilometres provided, saving 2,571 litres of petrol, six tonne of greenhouse gas emissions, and the equivalent of 167 trees through reduction of CO2.

Additionally, Loddon Shire has installed 170 kW of solar panels.

Council is part of the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), the largest emissions reduction project ever undertaken by the local government sector in Australia.

Through VECO, all of Council's power is now generated via renewable energy.

Fifty-one Victorian councils have pooled their electricity needs into one long-term contract with Red Energy which will provide the VECO group with renewable energy generated from wind farms in Victoria.

That renewable energy will be used to power council-owned infrastructure, such as town halls, sports grounds, community venues, leisure centres and streetlights.



Your Councillors



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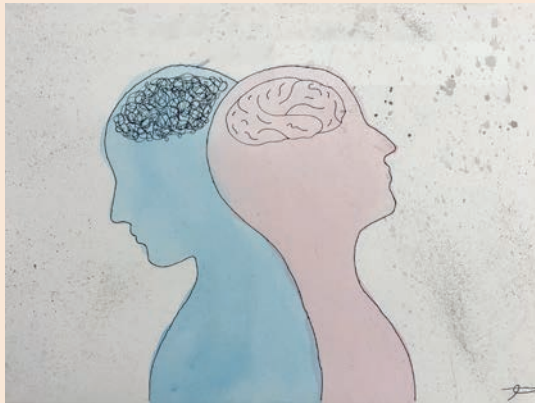


Cr Wendy Murphy

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Healthy Minds Network Art Competition

Entries for the Loddon Healthy Minds Network 2023 Art Competition are open until 7 August 2023.



2022 competition's 1st Prize Boort District School:
"Two Sides" by Ella Maxted, Year 10.

Open to students and community members, the competition continues to raise awareness of mental health within the Loddon community.

The Open Section is open to all Loddon Shire residents aged over 18 years, or residents under 18 who have either left school or are attending school outside of the Loddon Shire.

Students' categories include Upper Secondary (years 9 to 12) and middle school students (grades 5 to Year 8). There are two junior students' categories: grades 3 and 4, and grades Prep to 2.

For an entry form or more information, visit www.loddonhealthyminds.com.au/events/2023-annual-loddon-healthy-minds-network-art-competition

The benefits of book clubs

For many of us, reading is a solitary activity. We curl up with a book and immerse ourselves in its pages, lost in our own thoughts and imagination. But what if reading could be a social activity that allows us to connect with others and share those thoughts, feelings and opinions?

Book clubs are a great way to connect with others and make friends while discussing the stories and themes of your favourite (or not so favourite) books. They have many benefits, including:

Discovering new books, authors and genres – When you're part of a book club, you'll read books you might not have picked yourself. They'll broaden your horizons and introduce you to new genres, styles and perspectives.

Giving you a sense of community – When you join a book club, you'll surround yourself with like-minded people who share your love of books.

Improving your reading and critical thinking skills – When you discuss a book with others, you articulate your thoughts and opinions clearly and concisely. This can help improve your communication skills and your ability to analyse and interpret literature.

Being part of a book club is fun! You'll laugh, learn and grow together as you do what you love to do – read!

Goldfields Libraries has a growing collection of book club titles, handpicked especially for their suitability for group discussions. They also run a monthly online book club for those living in the Loddon Shire.

If you're interested in joining, please call 5449 2790. They can help you sign up and show you how to log in. If you're already part of a book club and want to register, please get in touch. It's free!

More information, including a list of titles, is available at ncgrl.vic.gov.au/bookclubs

Acknowledgement of Country

Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land comprising the Loddon Shire Council area. Council would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

Loddon Shire Council

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