

LODDON BULLETIN

A resilient, sustainable and prosperous community of communities.



Stage 1 of Donaldson Park on track for 2023 completion

Works are continuing on Stage 1 of Wedderburn's Donaldson Park Community Hub with the completion of the building's external brickwork as well as installation of windows.

Inside, the plastering has been completed, with the internal fitout of the building in progress.

The plumbing, electrical, mechanical (including air conditioning) and sewer are finished, while the power supply has been upgraded and connected.

Stage 1 is expected to be completed later this year, with Stage 2 of the project anticipated to start late 2023/early 2024. This stage of the project will include an all-abilities playspace, landscaping and internal paths adjacent to the new building.

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

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



The Donaldson Park Community Hub in August. Works since this image was taken include the completion of the facility's external brickwork.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
SEPTEMBER 2023

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Pyramid Hill Streetscape Revitalisation Project update

Works are continuing on the Pyramid Hill Streetscape Revitalisation Project, including preparation works for the installation of the shelter and barbecue facilities at Kelly Park.

Footpath installation at Kelly Park is underway, as are underground works, including stormwater and water supply. Concrete works around the basketball court (pictured) are in progress.

Work on construction of the pedestrian crossing on Kelly Street have also begun. The crossing will contribute to enhanced pedestrian safety and traffic management.

Benches at Lions Park have been installed, with gardens and fence portholes the remaining items to be completed.



The project has been made possible through funding received from the Victorian Government and Council.

A word from our Mayor

Works are continuing across our Shire on restoring roads and infrastructure. As outlined in the flood restoration article in this *Loddon Bulletin*, restoring our roads and infrastructure is a huge task, and we ask for your patience while these works continue.

On 24 August, I represented Loddon Shire at the Victorian Parliamentary Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee public hearing in Echuca, highlighting the profound impact flood events have had on our Shire, economies and lives.

I was joined by members from the Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC) who presented their insights and findings.

The hearing, part of the inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria, investigated the state's preparedness for and response to the event. These hearings enabled various groups and individuals to share their experiences and provide their viewpoints on the flood's causes and effects.

To find out more about the inquiry please visit <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/floodinginquiry>

Community Asset Committees

During the past month or so, I have had the privilege of attending Community Asset Committee meetings, and presenting the dedicated volunteers of these committees with certificates acknowledging their invaluable contributions.

I have enjoyed getting out and about and meeting these volunteers. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers in our Shire – your efforts are highly valued and appreciated.

If you would like more information about volunteering in our Shire visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Working-with-us/Volunteering-with-Loddon-Shire-Council

Advocating on behalf of our communities

Council continued to advocate on behalf of its communities and the broader region, including through its membership of the MRGC. This included a Canberra advocacy trip in May, where we represented Loddon Shire, alongside the MRGC. Our goal was to discuss a number of regional issues that affect our Shire with Members of Parliament. The response from Federal Members and advisors was positive.

This included the Minister for Energy the Hon Chris Bowen regarding the AEMO VNI West project, and Minister for Environment and Water the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP around the Murray Darling Basin Plan, and impacts of further water buybacks.

In mid June, local government leaders from around Australia gathered in Canberra for the National General Assembly and Australian Council of Local Government (ACLG). I was fortunate enough to attend this year's assembly along with Cr Holt, Cr Jungwirth and Cr Murphy (virtually), as well as Council's CEO Lincoln Fitzgerald.

There were around 1,000 delegates and federal members of parliament in attendance. Among them was Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Catherine King, Australian Local Government Association President Cr Linda Scott, and Coordinator – General, National Emergency Management Agency Brendan Moon.

A number of motions were put up by councils and voted on by attending council delegates. Motions that are passed then help inform the advocacy of ACLG during the coming year.

Australian Citizenship congratulations

In late June, I had the honour of presenting a citizenship certificate to our newest Australian citizen from Thailand Renu Pattison.

Renu, who survived the devastating 2004 Thailand tsunami, moved to Australia in 2013. Renu took the Australian Citizenship Pledge with great enthusiasm during a heartfelt ceremony held at the Council Chambers.

Recognising our Community Care workers

I want to take this opportunity to thank all dedicated community care services staff, following handover of in-home aged care services to new providers from 1 July. Your unwavering commitment and exceptional care for our community is nothing short of remarkable.



Loddon Shire Mayor
Cr Dan Straub.

Accessing free library services at home

Libraries are a great place to connect with others and, as the cost of living continues to rise, a great place for free entertainment. If you've visited recently, you'll be familiar with the pleasure of browsing the shelves, borrowing books, magazines and DVDs, and attending programs.

But what if you can't make it into the library? Well, that doesn't mean you have to miss out!

Firstly, there's the Goldfields Libraries eLibrary – an online library jam-packed with easily accessible resources, including digital books, audiobooks, magazines and newspapers, movies, children's learning and entertainment resources, history archives and more.

You will need an internet connection to access many of our eLibrary resources, but for some, once downloaded, you can listen or read offline at home.

Visit ncgrl.vic.gov.au/elibrary

Secondly, there's YouTube. Our channel has a great selection of author talks, history seminars, workshops, school holiday activities and many other fun videos. Check it out at youtube.com/goldfieldslibraries

And thirdly, there's the home library service. If you can't visit the library due to illness, frailty or disability, we can bring items to you. This also extends to full-time carers and those living in care homes, hostels, supported accommodations, prisons, and the children of those eligible.

If you'd like more information on how to access library services at home, please call 5449 2790, or email homelibraryservice@ncgrl.vic.gov.au

Works update

Township street improvements

- Footpath construction and drainage works are taking place at Sloan Park at Inglewood Recreation Reserve.
- Works for kerb and channel, underground drainage and sealing upgrades in Grant Street (between Houston Street and the railway line) in Inglewood are complete.
- Footpath construction in Lyons Street, Newbridge is complete.
- Footpath construction works in Southey Street, Inglewood are complete.
- Footpath works on McMillan Road and Armstrong Street in Boort are anticipated to be completed in September (dependent on weather).

Maintenance inspection summary

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 1,019 road, footpath and bridge maintenance inspections were completed (3,266 defects raised).

Maintenance defect rectification

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 7,420 road, footpath and bridge defects were rectified, with 94.7% of all defects (7,027 in total) completed before their due date.

Maintenance grading program

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, 860 maintenance grading work actions were completed resulting in 1,781 kilometres of grading and 3,736 kilometres of inspections.

Regional Roads Victoria controlled roads

Council undertakes routine maintenance of pavement, shoulders, roadside areas, drainage systems, road furniture and structures on various arterial roads within Loddon Shire (Regional Roads Victoria roads).

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, 1,956 defects were rectified, with 84.2% of all defects (1,646 in total) completed in accordance with contract timeframes.

This maintenance contract with Regional Roads Victoria will conclude in December of this year. This will close a significant chapter for Council as it has provided this service for well over 20 years.

If you have any requests or issues with Regional Roads Victoria roads they can be reported by calling 133 778.

Capital works completed

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023:

- Nine building projects were completed by the works department.



Footpath construction works in Southey Street, Inglewood have been completed.

These include upgrades at the Korong Vale Mechanics Institute, and septic system upgrades at Tarnagulla and Eddington public halls.

- 85% of road projects delivered by the works department were completed, resulting in 30.6 kilometres of road re-sheets and 12.5 kilometres of shoulder re-sheets.

Waste collections

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, 308,334 kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts were scheduled, with 62 garbage and recycling collection bins missed during normal operating conditions.

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.).

Tyres, bricks and concrete, and mattresses are not included as there is an additional cost to Council for their disposal, and will be charged as per normal disposal charges.

From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 2,714 vouchers were used.

Community grant applications open year-round

Applications are open year-round for Council's Community Grants Program.

This competitive funding program is aimed at helping clubs and organisations to enhance the provision of facilities, services or activities that improve the quality of life for people in their community.

This funding is open to not-for-profit organisations wanting to deliver projects/programs that directly benefit Loddon Shire residents.

Grants are available for a maximum of \$10,000 including GST. The grant will fund projects on a 2:1 basis - meaning that for every \$2 provided by Council, successful applicants must contribute a minimum of \$1 towards the cost of a project.

Groups can claim up to 50% of their contribution as an in-kind contribution or voluntary support.

To find out more, visit Council's website www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Community-support/Council-grants

Flood restoration works continue

Council asks our community for their patience while it continues the mammoth task of restoring roads and infrastructure impacted by the October 2022 flood event.

Council has responsibility for 4,800 kilometres of roads across the Shire, so inspections and repairs will take some time. There are approximately 1,300 flood-damaged sections of Council's road network that need to be repaired. Emergency works were undertaken on 115 of these sections, restoring them to a level acceptable to support the immediate flood recovery efforts. Some of these sites require further work.

By December this year, Council will have completed around \$6 million of restoration works. In total, \$20 million of restoration works are planned for the 2023/24 Financial Year, followed by another possible \$15 million in 2024/25.

Following our comprehensive network assessment conducted after the flood event, Council reinstated the Road Management Plan service standards from 1 July 2023.

The Road Management Plan provides details of Council's policies, service standards and actions relating to the management of its road and footpath network.

Council officers and contractors will continue to focus on fixing high-risk locations, and inspecting and prioritising works for the remainder of the road network.

Council takes its responsibility to provide a safe road network seriously and appreciates the community's feedback.

We ask our community to please remember to drive with caution, follow any warning signs and drive to the conditions.

To report issues with Council roads, including urgent road issues after hours, please call 5494 1200 or visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au and click on "Report an issue".

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

Packages awarded

Council has successfully awarded an additional four packages of flood restoration works totalling just over \$1 million. Restoration works are contracted to be completed by 30 November 2023.

Bridgewater North

- Gravel resheet - Old Bridgewater Serpentine Road
- Culvert - Old Bridgewater Serpentine Road

Wedderburn

- Gravel resheet - Old Boort Road
- Culverts - Old Boort Road

Korong Vale (gravel resheets)

- Maxwells Lane
- Hamiltons Lane
- Woolshed Flat Road (Woolshed Flat)
- Hewett Road
- Eucy Road

Serpentine (gravel resheets)

- Creek View Road
- Foleys Road
- Longs Road

The works are in addition to \$1.37 million of restoration works that got underway in May on gravel and sealed roads in Jarklin, Fernihurst, Boort and Dingee. In June, a further \$1.25 million in restoration works was approved, which are also underway.

The restoration works have been made possible through the Federal and State Government-funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Community Satisfaction Survey 2023

The latest Community Satisfaction Survey results have seen residents in the Loddon Shire rate positively the appearance of public areas, recreational facilities and waste management.

The Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is held each year to gather data on how satisfied residents are with Council's resources, facilities and services.

Council's overall performance was rated at 56 – matching that of the state-wide average and slightly above the rating of 55 for the small rural council average.

The survey also showed areas where residents thought more work needed to be done, including unsealed roads, planning and building permits, and sealed local roads.

Council continues to actively assist residents and ratepayers with planning matters, with 97% of all Planning Permit applications assessed and issued within the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* timeframes. This is 33% above the rural average - a great result for Council.

In addition, Council takes an average of 45 days to make a determination on applications, well below the rural average of 120 days.



You can view Council's 2023 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results at www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Community-Satisfaction-Surveys

Community projects update

Calivil and Mitiamo recreation reserves floodlighting

Installation of new fit-for-purpose light towers with sustainable LED floodlighting has been completed at the Calivil Recreation Reserve and Mitiamo Recreation Reserve.

DeAraugo & Lea Electrical Contractors completed the installation of AFL training lights at the end of August 2023.

The Country Football Netball Program - Sport and Recreation Victoria provided funding for the Mitiamo project. Funding for the Calivil Recreation Reserve project was allocated through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

Calivil Bowling Club - synthetic green installation

Berry Bowls were 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, which will take place from September to the end of October, will enable use of the bowling green year round and reduce volunteer labour in having to maintain a natural surface.

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 been completed as part of the Australian Government's Our Region Our Rivers funding program.

Works included planting within the gardens; landscaping; installation of lawn, park seats and picnic table settings; and footpath construction.



New barbecue shelter at Newbridge Progress Park.

Newbridge Progress Park barbecue shelter

Works for the Newbridge Progress Park barbecue shelter are complete.

The project was identified by the Newbridge Arnold Llanely Community Planning Committee Inc. in their Community Plan and funded through the Loddon Shire Council Community Planning Funding Program.

Flood recovery projects

- Flood damage repairs to the Newbridge Recreation Reserve pavilion are complete. Repairs to the tennis and netball court surface are progressing.
- Preparations for the pontoon replacement at Bridgewater Swimming Hole are ongoing.

Healthy Loddon Campaspe update

Healthy Loddon Campaspe has funded community garden beds (*pictured*) for the Bridgewater Inclusive Precinct community gardens, launched 13 July and officially opened by Loddon Shire Mayor Cr Dan Straub.

Four of the community garden beds are managed by the Kooyoora Women's Network and four by SportzRulz.

The gardens aim to improve food security and promote healthy eating for the Bridgewater community and surrounds.

There are plans for future community-owned garden beds as well as fruit trees, a rotunda and seating area.

Healthy Loddon Campaspe (HLC) also recently released results of its research on the cost of locally grown fruit and vegetables.

Researchers at Deakin University compared the prices of 10 fruits and 27 vegetables most commonly consumed across 60 stores.

Ten fruits and vegetables, including lettuce, cucumber, potatoes, leek, butternut pumpkin, radishes, eggplant, bok choy, sweet corn and garlic, were found to be cheapest when locally grown.

Three of these items – lettuce, corn and butternut pumpkin – were significantly cheaper when locally grown.

None of the fruits and vegetables analysed were significantly cheaper when imported from elsewhere/not grown locally, dispelling the myth that locally grown produce is less affordable.

HLC is highlighting these benefits through its recently launched *Support Our Own. Choose Locally Grown.* campaign. It will continue researching prices throughout the year for insights into other produce that may be cheaper when locally grown, particularly when in season in the region.



Your Councillors



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2024 Australia Day nominations open

Nominations for the 2024 Australia Day awards are open now until 4pm Friday 20 October 2023.

The awards celebrate the achievements and contributions by community members.

Council is receiving nominations for the Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year and Community Group/Event of the Year awards.

Nominations are also open for the Community Services Award, presented to a resident from each Council Ward.

Nomination forms and further information is available from:

www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Ceremonies/Australia-Day/Australia-Day-awards or by emailing australiaday@loddon.vic.gov.au

Spring into Loddon

Spring is in the air and the Loddon Valley is awash in colour. Wildflowers are blooming and the weather is perfect for exploring the region's natural beauty. Whether you're a water sports enthusiast, a hiker, cyclist, birdwatcher or gold prospector, you'll find plenty to do in the Loddon Valley.

Take in breathtaking views of the landscape, glide along pristine waterways, and discover incredible fauna and flora. Be on the lookout for vibrant wildflowers within State and National parks and forests.

If you're on the lookout for distinctive vintage treasures, plan a visit to Inglewood. For those with an art appreciation, Wedderburn boasts some stunning murals showcasing our beautiful local birds.

For adventure enthusiasts Terrick Terrick National Park is a must. Known for its stunning landscapes and enchanted White Cypress Pine Forest, the best way to explore the park is on foot. Ascend Mount Terrick Terrick, discover Davies House Ruins, go birdwatching and enjoy a picnic.

Seeking a First Nation's cultural experience? Make sure to visit to Yung Balug Museum. The museum features throwing stones and greenstone axes, stories, and incredible images from the 1850s.



If you're interested in a paddle, head to Little Lake Boort and Serpentine Creek at Durham Ox (Boort Lakes Holiday Park offers canoe hire). Another popular choice is the Laanecoorie River trail.

There is a range of exciting events this spring – Tarnagulla's Strictly Vintage Fair is a must do, as is Wedderburn's Annual Vintage Machinery Rally. Music lovers will enjoy the Whole Loddon Love music series, and for art lovers, the Loddon Valley Arts Trail. Laanecoorie Gold Bash and the Boort Annual Show will also feature - and that's just the start.

Plan an unforgettable journey in the Loddon Valley this spring - go to visitloddonvalley.com.au

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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