

LODDON

BULLETIN

A PROSPEROUS
VIBRANT AND
ENGAGED COMMUNITY



Young people have their say

Young people across the Shire have had their say about how they can feel supported and have access to employment, recreation, social, health and education opportunities.

The survey feedback will help form Council's Youth Strategy, which in addition to supporting young people, aims to address keeping young people in the Shire.

There are currently 931 young people aged between 12 and 24 living in the area, compared to 863 in 2011.

Despite the growth in this age group, retaining young people in the Shire remains a long term issue.

Mayor Cheryl McKinnon said a lack of availability of services, education providers and employment opportunities have been identified as reasons young people move elsewhere.

"Council has also found many of these people don't return for the same reason, in addition to many forming relationships and connections in their new environment," Cr McKinnon added.

Cr McKinnon said Council would work closely with young people, community groups and other government agencies to maximise opportunities for young people who live and work in the Shire.

"Young people are extremely important to the future of smaller shires such as Loddon. The median age in our Shire is 51 years old, which is eight years higher than the regional Victoria average and 14 years higher than the state average.

"Retaining, growing and diversifying Loddon Shire's population is a key strategic objective for Council, including retaining youth."

In addition to the survey, further feedback about young people's needs was gathered during July and August through visits to schools and football games.

Young people were also encouraged to provide their thoughts on Instagram answering the question *When Loddon grows up, what do you want it to be?*

To find out more about the Youth Strategy visit <https://bit.ly/2Ym9kRP> or call Allan Stobaus at Council on (03) 5494 1200.



QUARTERLY BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2019

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A word from our Mayor



Spring is the time our Shire comes alive with numerous events across the Loddon Valley to celebrate the arrival of the warmer weather.

Of course, a staple of this celebration is the Naturally Loddon Spring Festival, which once again brings with it an inspiring range of events, all of which showcase the Loddon Valley.

Along with the Naturally Loddon Spring Festival, is the Loddon Victorian Seniors Festival, which runs from 30 September to 11 October. As outlined in this edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*, this year's seniors festival features a range of enjoyable activities for our older residents, complemented by the many events in our region occurring at the same time.

It is very pleasing to see the anticipated September completion of Stage 1 of the Bridgewater Foreshore Project. The new infrastructure, which will incorporate shade shelters and seating along the existing pathway, in addition to formal landscaping, will provide the opportunity for locals and visitors alike to enjoy the unique beauty of the Loddon River.

I'd also like to thank the young people of the Shire who provided their feedback to help develop Council's Youth Strategy. Young people are extremely important to the future of smaller shires such as Loddon. The Youth Strategy is an important document towards helping support young people and address how we can encourage them to stay in our Shire.

For more Shire news, visit Council's website www.loddon.vic.gov.au and its Facebook page www.facebook.com/LoddonShire/

You can also read my weekly Mayoral Column in *The Loddon Times* each Tuesday, as well as on Council's website. Selected items from the column are also published in local community newsletters.

Citizenship congratulations

At the end of June, Mayor Cheryl McKinnon presented the Shire's newest Australian citizens Patrick Colleary and Feliz Garchitorena, with their citizenship certificates during a ceremony at the Serpentine office.

Patrick is originally from Ireland, while Feliz is from the Philippines.

At the time of writing, a citizenship ceremony was scheduled to be held on 27 August 2019. Further details regarding this ceremony will be provided in the December 2019 edition of the *Loddon Bulletin*.



Community projects update

A snapshot of the many community projects happening around our Shire:

- The extension of the boat ramp at the Laanecoorie foreshore is underway. It is anticipated works will be completed before the boating season.
- Works on the Bridgewater Town Hall have been completed. The works included the replacement of the lining in the roof of the supper room, new kitchen, heating and cooling, plastering and new paint.



Works are taking place on the boat ramp extension at Laanecoorie foreshore.

- Consultation is underway for the masterplan and feasibility study to investigate the future use of the Pyramid Hill Senior Citizens building.
- Construction of the new storage shed at Tarnagulla Town Hall is complete.
- Shade sails have been installed at Boort Swimming Pool and over the playground in Korong Vale's Borella Park.
- Repointing of the brickwork at the Newbridge Hall is underway. Other repairs at the hall include the replacement of doors as well as painting.
- Permits have been obtained and works are currently underway for the replacement of two timber light towers at the Bridgewater Recreation Reserve. The towers will be replaced with the latest light tower and LED lights for better lighting and efficiency.
- The playground redevelopment at Pyramid Hill between the tennis courts and pool is in progress, with fencing at the site completed. The redevelopment includes new playground equipment as well as concrete paths, which will be constructed once weather permits.
- A power upgrade has been completed at the Pyramid Hill Hall.

Discover our region during the Naturally Loddon Spring Festival

Discover even more of our wonderful Loddon region with this year's Naturally Loddon Spring Festival.

Having kicked off on 1 September with the annual Piccoli's Star Spanner Sculpture Gardens Father's Day Picnic, the festival continues until 3 November.

Regulars and newcomers to the Naturally Loddon Spring Festival will enjoy a range of events showcasing the region's history, art and natural wonders.

This year's festival will see the return of regular popular events, including the Wedderburn Vintage Machinery Rally (7 to 8 September), Kooyoora Wildflower Show (21 to 22 September) and the Terrick Terrick National Park activities weekend (4 to 6 October).

There's also the Boort Sculpture by the Lake competition (12 October), Nardoo Hills Reserves Guided Trip (12 October), Wedderburn Community House's Rock 'n' Roll Spring Dance (18 October) and the annual Boort Angling Club Family Carp Eradication Weekend (19 to 20 October).

For those with a green thumb, don't miss the chance to get along to Native Gardening for Sustainability on 13 October or take the opportunity to view Wedderburn Open Gardens on Sunday 20 October.



If you're curious about standup paddleboarding (pictured above), you have the chance to give it a try with a Learn to Standup Paddleboard lesson on Saturday 19 October at Little Lake Boort. Following your lesson, you can join in the Standup Paddleboarding Guided Tour on the Loddon River at Serpentine on Saturday 2 November.

Closing out this year's Naturally Loddon Spring Festival will be the Lions Inglewood Alive Festival on Sunday 3 November.

The event transforms the town's Brooke Street into a vibrant space filled with gourmet food, live entertainment, custom car and motorcycle show and shine display, market stalls and more.

For more information or a calendar of events, phone the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on 5494 1257, email loddonvisitorinformation@loddon.vic.gov.au or visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Get involved in 2019 Seniors Festival

Running from Monday 30 September to Friday 11 October, this year's Loddon Victorian Seniors Festival Program features a range of enjoyable activities for our older residents.

There are a number of highlights on the calendar for this year's program, including the Gala Day on Thursday 3 October at the Boort Memorial Hall, with great entertainment by Jefferson Smith and a free afternoon tea.

The popular Mystery Trip returns this year on Monday 7 October, while an Echuca River Cruise lunch and afternoon tea on Friday 11 October will be a fantastic opportunity to take in picturesque views of the Murray.

There will also be a day out to Cactus Country – complete with a tour and two-course lunch, and the Bunch of Lunches, with a free lunch at either Inglewood, Newbridge, Wedderburn or Pyramid Hill.

Copies of the Loddon Seniors Festival guide are available from Council's Wedderburn and Serpentine offices, local resource centres, supermarkets, post offices, Inglewood and Districts Health Service and Boort District Health.

To find out more about the Loddon Seniors Festival, call Council on 5494 1201 or visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Bridgewater Foreshore Stage 1 update

Works on Stage 1 of the Bridgewater Foreshore project are anticipated to be completed in September.

The works include the installation of solar bollards, seating and picnic facilities along the length of the existing walking path. The project also involves the installation of irrigated turf, shade structures, location sign and landscaping works – comprising an informal playspace, grassed areas and garden beds, and installation of a water access point for paddle craft.

The installation of shelters and seating and formal landscaping will make this section of the foreshore a focal gathering point for community and visitors.

The works will further drive economic growth by encouraging more visitors to stop and stay in the area while enjoying the unique beauty of the Loddon River. It also makes the most of its potential as a venue for water sport and informal recreation activities.



Final stages of works along the walking path at the Bridgewater Foreshore.

The project has been made possible thanks to \$300,000 from Regional Development Victoria and \$100,000 from Council.

Next free waste disposal days

The next free waste disposal days are scheduled for the following dates:

Saturday 16 November

Inglewood Transfer Station
8am - 12pm

Sunday 17 November

Wedderburn Transfer Station
8am - 12pm

Pyramid Hill Landfill 8am - 12pm

Dingee Transfer Station 10am - 2pm

Boort Landfill 1pm - 5pm

Newbridge Landfill 1pm - 5pm

You can dispose of up to four cubic metres of general domestic waste free of charge. This includes green waste, mixed recyclables, general household waste, television and computer screens, home appliances and electronic items, refrigerators, freezers, microwaves and air conditioners. You can also dispose of battery operated products that have reached their end of life.

Charges still apply for tyres, bricks and concrete, and mattresses, as these items have additional third party costs associated with their disposal.



Murphy Creek Bridge complete

Works to replace the Murphy Creek Bridge at Woodstock Road are now complete.

Located approximately one kilometre north of Bendigo-Maryborough Road on a sealed section of Woodstock West Road, the works involved the replacement of the former timber bridge. The replacement bridge ensures the road and bridge have adequate capacity to incorporate all classes of heavy vehicles.

The works were made possible through funding of \$350,000 from the Commonwealth's Bridges Renewal Program, which was matched by Council. Funding of up to \$300,000 was also received from the State Government's Local Roads to Market Program.

Works update

Railway Avenue solar lights

Solar bollard lights have been installed along Railway Avenue in Pyramid Hill from the station through to Victoria Street. In addition to providing extra lighting along the avenue, the new lights complement footpath works completed in April this year.

Township street improvements

Construction of footpaths in Wedderburn, Boort, Newbridge, Bridgewater and Mitiamo are complete. The works involved the construction of concrete footpaths and other associated improvements, providing an all-weather footpath and improved connectivity and safety for pedestrians. In total, 729 metres of footpath were constructed.



Solar lights along Railway Avenue in Pyramid Hill.



Completed culvert at Connors Road.

Culverts and crossings

Works for the construction and installation of culverts and crossings on Mologa Durham Ox Road, Pigeonhole Road and Hudson Lane have been completed.

Stormwater drainage Inglewood

The stormwater drainage upgrade at Verdon Street in Inglewood is complete, with paving finished (and the project completed) at the end of July.

Connors Road

Works on Connors Road, Leichardt (near the winery) are complete. The works involved the bridge being replaced with culverts and other associated works.

Drainage works, Sugargum Drive

Drainage works at Sugargum Drive in Bridgewater were completed in July.

Maintenance inspection and grading

During the 2018/19 financial year, 2121 kilometres of gravel roads and 974 kilometres of minor gravel roads were inspected and graded.

Residents' Satisfaction Survey 2019

The results of Council's annual residents' satisfaction survey are in, with more than 400 residents providing their thoughts about a range of Council services.

Overall, satisfaction with Council's performance increased, with an index score of 58, which is equal to the average for small rural councils.

Council's top five performing areas included waste services (weekly rubbish collection and fortnightly recycling collection), public swimming pools, playgrounds and parks and reserves.

Eighty-one per cent of residents were very satisfied with Council's weekly rubbish collections, while just under 80 per cent felt the same about Council's fortnightly recycling collection.

Scores for family and child care services were also positive, with more than six in 10 residents very satisfied with kindergarten/pre-school and immunisation services.

Council's customer service, with a score of 71, was just above the average for small rural councils and on par with the state average. More than six in 10 residents were very satisfied with Council's customer service staff, as well as the quality of services provided.

One area particularly noted for improvement was financial management. This includes perceptions of rates being fair and reasonable, which had a relatively low performance among those surveyed. Everyone would like to pay less in Council rates. However, it is worth noting that Loddon Shire has the smallest average annual rates bill across the state's 79 councils (as reported in the *Herald Sun* on 1 July 2019).

Council continues to ensure that responsible financial management remains a key focus of its activities and in delivering services. Around a third of Council's income is from rates. With more than 100 services to deliver to the community, Council manages this responsibility by seeking grants wherever possible.

These services include aged services, animal management, community support, disability access, economic development and tourism, early years services, parks and streetscapes, road maintenance, local laws, sporting reserves and more.

In terms of Council's 2019/20 budget, the 2.5 per cent average rates rise is in line with the State Government's Fair Go Rates System capping level – which is set each year by the Minister for Local Government.

To read the 2019/20 budget, visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-documents/Financial-reports

To view the survey report, visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au and click on "Community Satisfaction Surveys" under the "About Us" tab.



Small business bus coming to Wedderburn

Looking to start a small business? Want to develop your existing small business?

Help is on the way with the Victorian Government's Small Business Bus coming to Wedderburn on 27 November.

The Small Business Bus offers free mentoring throughout the day with an experienced business professional who can assist you in taking your small business to the next level.

On board the Small Business Bus you will find information on Small Business Victoria's programs and services as well as tools and tips to help you start or grow your business.

Bookings are essential for the mentoring sessions. Reserve your place now at business.vic.gov.au/sbb or call 13 22 15.

The bus will be located at 41 High Street Wedderburn (adjacent to the Council office) between 10am and 4pm on Wednesday 27 November 2019.



South West Loddon Pipeline update

Construction of the South West Loddon Pipeline is continuing, with pipeline construction effectively completed.

Construction of the pump stations is well underway and final system commissioning is anticipated to occur during September 2019.

Limited water supply is being made available to some landowners where feasible prior to final commissioning. Customers will be individually notified when water is available at their property.

The period for lodging an Expression of Interest to join the scheme under the initial terms and conditions of the project has now expired and so any future requests to connect will be managed under the standard new connections policy. Please contact GWMWater to discuss future connections to the system.

GWMWater will remain in contact with landowners who have signed up to the scheme to provide updates on when a water supply will be available and when final commissioning will occur.

Information provided by GWMWater.

Upcoming infant immunisation sessions

Immunisation sessions will be held at Boort Senior Citizens Centre, Dingee Bush Nursing Centre, Inglewood Maternal and Child Health Centre, Pyramid Hill Senior Citizens Centre and Serpentine Council offices on:

Thursday 12 September	Thursday 10 October	Thursday 14 November	Thursday 12 December
9.15am Serpentine	9.30am Inglewood	9.15am Serpentine	9.30am Inglewood
11.15am Boort	11.30am Dingee	11.15am Boort	11.30am Dingee
	1.45pm Pyramid Hill		1.45pm Pyramid Hill

To make an appointment for an infant's immunisation, call Council's Serpentine Office on 5494 1201.

Please bring your Medicare card and Child Record Book to each immunisation session and allow 15 minutes waiting time following immunisation.

For information regarding immunisation, or to contact immunisation staff during sessions, call 0488 095 205. Information is also available from Council's website at www.loddon.vic.gov.au Go to "Services for our younger residents" from the "Live" dropdown box at the top of the page.

Roundtable to discuss climate change

A free and inspiring roundtable discussion at Raywood Hall will aim to fine tune ideas and forward projects responding to the impacts of climate change.

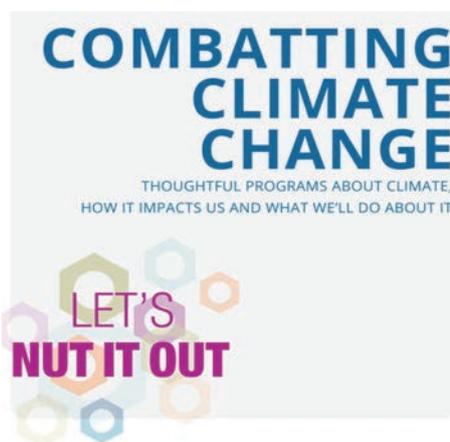
The *Combatting Climate Change* roundtable is part of the Ramp Up Resilience community initiative, which looks to generate relevant discussion and effective action for individuals, businesses and towns.

The Raywood roundtable follows Ramp Up Resilience's first two events, *Curious About Climate*, held in Rochester in June and *Caring for Climate* held in Inglewood in August.

Combatting Climate Change will be held on Tuesday 17 September from 10am to 4pm at Raywood Hall, 50-52 Inglewood Street, Raywood.

To register for the event visit <https://bit.ly/2JBjLvU>

For more information about Ramp Up Resilience go to: www.makeachange.org.au/ramp-up-resilience/



Upcoming Council meetings

Community members are always welcome to attend Council's monthly meetings to learn of issues affecting their community.

Meetings start at 3pm and are held at the Serpentine Council Chambers.

Upcoming Council meetings:

- Tuesday 24 September
- Tuesday 22 October
- Tuesday 26 November
- Tuesday 17 December

Shire offices

Wedderburn 41 High St, Wedderburn 3518 **T:** (03) 5494 1200 **F:** (03) 5494 3003
Serpentine 37 Peppercorn Way, Serpentine 3516 **T:** (03) 5494 1201 **F:** (03) 5437 8407

Offices open Monday to Friday 8.15am to 4.45pm

Email: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au **Web:** www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Your Councillors



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