

ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013





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Annual Report

The Annual Report finalises Council's reporting requirements for the financial year.

The report follows the adoption of the Council Plan, the strategic document that guides Council's activities over a four-year period, and the Annual Budget, which resources Council's activities for the financial year.

The Annual Report contains information as required under the Local Government Act 1989 (Act) and Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004 (Regulations), Council's audited Financial and Standard Statements for the financial year and Council's Performance Statement for the financial year.

Information required by the Act and Regulations includes details of Councillors and senior staff, services provided by Council, contact details of Council and major highlights for the year.

Our Vision

2013/2017 Council Plan

In 2013, Council engaged a facilitator to work with Councillors, senior officers and members of the community to assist in preparing the 2013/2017 Council Plan.

The ideas and philosophies contributed by those involved led to a restatement of Council's Vision, Mission and Strategic Platforms and an identification of Council's core business, all of which were included into the document.

Our Vision and Mission

The Loddon community vision is:

Strong communities proud of their individual identities.

In order to achieve this, Council's mission is to:

Deliver services that enhance the sustainability and liveability of our communities.

Council's Core Business

Council's core business was identified under 10 headings:

1. **Leadership:** Providing vision and leadership in planning for our community's longer term future.
2. **Provision of wellbeing services:** Cost-effectively providing for the basic needs of our communities.
3. **Planning for future needs:** Anticipating and planning for demographic and economic shifts.
4. **Economic development:** Supporting the growth and diversification of our economy, based on areas of competitive advantage.
5. **Providing quality infrastructure:** Developing and maintaining both built and natural assets appropriate to community priorities.
6. **Financial sustainability:** Planning and managing for long-term financial needs and keeping our ratepayers informed about the financial situation.
7. **Education and life-long learning:** Advocating for better youth engagement and life-long learning outcomes.
8. **Compliance:** Ensuring we are compliant with all legislative reporting requirements.
9. **Regulation:** ensuring community compliance with local regulations.
10. **Advocacy and partnerships:** Collaborating internally and externally to achieve our region's goals and promoting the interest and position of our Council.

Council's Strategic Platforms

Council's strategic platforms for the next four years are:

1. **Build a network of strong communities:** Support our townships in preserving their individuality whilst leveraging their collective strength.
2. **Grow our population through appropriate development:** Capitalise on the demand for lifestyle properties, without compromising premium agricultural land or our environment.
3. **Champion our agrifood enterprises:** Be an advocate for our agrifood sector and support it to remain the backbone of our shire's economy.
4. **Make our towns liveable and memorable:** Improve the liveability of our towns by making them attractive to existing residents, prospective residents and tourists.
5. **Grow and diversify our economy:** Attract investment that introduces new industries, presents opportunity to existing businesses and grows our working population.
6. **Support our transitioning townships:** Support small town communities to retain the best possible quality of life in the face of a declining population with increasing needs.
7. **Connect with the next generation:** Engage our youth to equip them for a positive future and keep our communities young, vibrant and energised.

The priorities and key projects identified in the Council Plan aim to assist Council in achieving these objectives.

Our Shire

Loddon Shire is located in central Victoria, about 175 kilometres north-west of Melbourne. It is bounded by the Gannawarra Shire in the north, the Shire of Campaspe and the City of Greater Bendigo in the east, Mount Alexander and Central Goldfields Shires in the south and Northern Grampians and Buloke Shires in the west.

Loddon Shire is a predominantly rural area, with many small towns and communities. The largest towns are Boort, Bridgewater on Loddon, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

The Shire encompasses a total land area of about 6,700 square kilometres. Land is used mainly for agriculture and horticulture, particularly grain, sheep, wool, beef cattle, dairy, pigs and poultry. In recent years, there has also been an increase in viticulture, olives and fodder crops.

Major features of the Shire include the Loddon River, Terrick Terrick National Park, Leaghur State Park, Kooyoora State Park, Lake Boort, Major Mitchell Trail, Mount Korong, Melville Caves and Laanecoorie Reservoir.

Major highways passing through the Shire are the Calder Highway, the Loddon Valley Highway and the Wimmera Highway.

Our people

Population

The official figure for Loddon Shire is an Estimated Resident Population of 7,491 (23 fewer people than in 2011) living in 4,143 private dwellings.

The overall median age of people in the Shire was 50 years, the median weekly household income was \$686 and the median weekly rent \$100.

The proportion of rented households was 16% and those with a mortgage 23%. Overall, 52% of the population owned their dwelling.



Census population figures for our bigger towns in 2011 were given as follows: Boort (760), Inglewood (711), Wedderburn (680), Pyramid Hill (419) and Bridgewater on Loddon (363).

Population is spread across the following age groups:

Children and young people, 0 to 19 years	23%
Adults, 20 to 69 years	60%
Mature adults and seniors, 69+ years	17%

During the year, Council recorded 75 births in the Shire (65 in 2011/2012).

Origin

The top five ancestries claimed by residents of the Loddon Shire were Australian (44%), English (41%), Scottish (13%), Irish (11%) and German (3%).

Overall, 86% of residents were born in Australia and 93% speak only English at home.

Education

Overall, 32% of the population aged 15 and over held educational qualifications, while 55% had no qualifications.

Employment

2011 Census data shows that 2932 residents of Loddon Shire were employed.

Of that total, 37% of workers were involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing, 10% in health care and social assistance, 7% in retail trade and 5% in public administration and safety.

In 2011, the car was the principal method by which people travelled to work. In total, 57% used a private vehicle, 20% worked at home and 8% always walked to work.

Volunteers

Loddon Shire has a strong sense of self-reliance and community spirit and this is reflected in the rate of volunteerism experienced. The 2011 Census showed a rate of 34% of the population volunteering – and many of those volunteers have roles in a number of community organisations.

This figure compared with a total of 23% in regional Victoria generally.

In addition, 13% of our people provided unpaid care for others.

MAYOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The flavour of Council's year has been one of energy and growth, during which we've drawn the curtain on the traumatic flood events of 2010/2011 and looked firmly to the future with major building projects under way and some key long-term planning finalised.

The end of June signalled the end of a remarkable period in the life of Loddon Shire, with Council's huge flood restoration program concluded after 27 months of hard work by our staff and contractors.

The mammoth task was made possible by generous grants from the Department of Treasury and Finance under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, a joint federal/state agreement.

All up, Council spent around \$39 million repairing and rebuilding road, bridge, footpath and drainage networks and restoring a number of integral community assets.

To achieve that, Council provided a boost to local employment by taking on 25 extra outdoor and six indoor staff for that two-year period.

It was a tall order, but Council's overall flood recovery program came in under budget and on time.

Along the way, Council was able to forge a highly productive relationship with the Victorian Government.

The Coalition has only been in power since late 2010 and it normally takes some time to build strong relationships between tiers of local government, but the state's excellent support of our efforts here in Loddon Shire have been met with efficient management and positive returns on its investments.

It has been the generous support of both federal and state governments



Geoff Curnow.



John McLinden.

which has allowed Council to achieve what it has, hand-in-hand with local communities.

The past year also saw the election of a new Council and the formalisation of a changed ward structure.

One ward was split into two and some significant adjustments made to our electoral boundaries.

The Boort, Terrick and Wedderburn wards continued, albeit with some shifting of their borders.

The Kooyoora ward, though, disappeared, to be replaced by two new wards, Inglewood and Tarnagulla.

The changes followed a review conducted in 2011 by the Victorian Electoral Commission, which told a story about the changing shape of the Shire.

Basically, while our townships are holding their own – and, in some cases, growing – population is emptying out of the northern part of the Shire and shifting to the south.

The October municipal elections ran smoothly, resulting in Crs Beattie, Curnow and Holt being returned and two new faces added in Cr Condliffe and Cr McKinnon.

We farewelled former councillors Christine Brooke and Allen Brownbill and thank them for their years

of service to the Shire and their communities.

The new Council has settled quickly into its stride and is working productively to support and enhance our shared life in Loddon Shire.

Looking forward, we are excited by seeing some significant infrastructure projects completed and others well under way.

A genuine high point was the official opening of the new multi-purpose pavilion at Newbridge.

Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty was there to lead the formalities, which highlighted the combined efforts of government, Council and the people of Newbridge in rebuilding the facilities they had lost so dramatically in the floods of 2011.

MLC for Northern Victoria Region Damian Drum was also present.

We sincerely thank the Victorian Government, which, through its Flood Recovery for Community Infrastructure Fund, approved funding of \$2,275,619 for this project.

Thanks to this funding – and more from Council and the Newbridge community itself – the reserve now has a new building boasting football,

MAYOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

netball and umpires' change rooms, a function area, commercial kitchen, toilet facilities, office space and first aid areas.

That same momentum for change can also be seen at the historic Inglewood Town Hall, as planning for the development of a community hub on the site continues to evolve.

A number of local groups have come together on the project, including

the Inglewood Community Resource Centre, the Inglewood Town Hall Committee, the Inglewood and District Community Bank, Council, state government and community members.

Draft plans include a new kitchen, public toilets, disability access, a business and multi-purpose hub and restoration works on a building that has seen no significant improvements made since 1966.

With committed funding already reaching \$1.65 million and a further \$500,000 recently announced by the Regional Australia Development Fund, this project can now move ahead.

When complete, the hub will provide a permanent home for the Inglewood Community Resource Centre, among others.



Mayors and CEOs of the participating councils get together for the official signing. They are, at rear, Cr Alec Sandner (then Mayor of the City of Greater Bendigo), Cr Geoff Curnow (Mayor of Loddon Shire), Cr Janet Cropley (then Mayor of Mt Alexander Shire) and Cr Paula Nixon (then Mayor of Central Goldfields Shire). At front, from left, are City of Greater Bendigo CEO Craig Niemann, Loddon Shire CEO John McLinden, Mount Alexander Shire CEO Phil Rowland and Central Goldfields CEO Mark Johnston.

Loddon Shire partnered with three neighbouring councils in September 2012 to take a significant step forward in its tourism strategy.

In an effort to distance themselves from Ballarat and highlight the particular assets of their own region, the four municipalities got together to create a new entity, Bendigo Regional Tourism.

The councils involved were Loddon Shire, City of Greater Bendigo, Mt Alexander and Central Goldfields.

The board of the new body is made up of two representatives from each partner, plus additional members as agreed.

Bendigo Regional Tourism aims to work co-operatively to promote and market the region, deliver relevant industry training and encourage the development of tourism-related infrastructure.

Bridgewater, too, has its own major project well under way, with Council approving the winning tender at its May meeting for the \$3.4 million redevelopment of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park.

With drainage works complete at Bridgewater, the main contract to install services including sewerage, electricity, water, fire service, irrigation and road works, including kerbing and paths, can now proceed through the second half of 2013.

Other activities, such as the design of the manager's residence, camp kitchen and amenities building, are also well advanced.

Subject to the timing and extent of winter rains, Council hopes to have a working park by the end of December 2013.

Meanwhile, at the Wedderburn Community Centre, contractors were expected to start work on the site's \$1.75 million redevelopment in June.

When complete, the project will create a community hub and enhanced maternal and child health, tourism and neighbourhood house facilities.

All going well, a substantial amount of work should be completed by Christmas, 2013.

The contractors' brief is to build new consulting rooms from which the Inglewood Health Service will operate, a new tourism office, two interview rooms for visiting services, two improved multi-purpose rooms, new toilet facilities and two new meeting rooms.

Plans for several other significant building projects have also received a huge boost with news from the Victorian Government of Loddon Shire's latest allocation under the Local Government Infrastructure Program.

All up, the Shire is to receive \$1,854,870 for its infrastructure projects.

Planned improvements at the Boort Lakes Caravan Park will be boosted by a grant of \$250,000, while the Wedderburn streetscape project receives \$500,000.

There's \$304,870 for a major upgrade at the Serpentine Hall and \$100,000 towards Pyramid Hill's streetscape works.

The Boort Park Sports Pavilion project receives \$200,000, while more is expected soon for improvements at the Bridgewater foreshore.

All these hopes and plans for the future are encapsulated in two highly significant documents which were endorsed by Council in late June – the Shire's budget for 2013/2014 and the Council Plan 2013/2017.

These two documents lay out the priorities Council has set for the enhancement of life in Loddon and how it expects to achieve them.

The budget commits Council to pressing ahead with a busy job sheet of road works, township street improvements, Community Planning initiatives and an \$8.42 million capital works program.

The new Council Plan identifies seven strategic platforms to which Council will devote its energies and resources over the next four years, then goes on to lay down clear success indicators, detailed priorities and key projects.

Behind all this vision-casting lies a dedicated and professional staff, all whole-heartedly committed to delivering a high-quality service to the communities of Loddon Shire.

We recognise and thank them for their efforts during this past year.

We also record our appreciation of the high levels of support and co-operation Council has enjoyed from the community in seeking to bring about positive change.



Cr Geoff Curnow
Mayor



John McLinden
Chief Executive Officer

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Community Satisfaction Survey

Council has been involved in the annual Community Satisfaction Survey undertaken for the industry since 1998.

This survey provides Council with important information about how the community judges Council's performance in the current year, as well as giving Council staff the ability to assess the trends in results.

The survey questions refer to the broad areas of governance and service delivery.

Governance is covered by overall council performance, advocacy, community engagement, customer contact and the overall direction Council is taking.

Service delivery is captured by key service areas. Those collected for a number of years include local streets and footpaths, recreational facilities, appearance of public areas, waste management, enforcement of local laws, and business and community development and tourism.

This year, town planning policy and community and cultural activities have been deleted, and there have been no new indicators added. Last year a number of new indicators were added, and these can be identified by the limited trend data available (two years).

The 2013 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results for the Loddon Shire show Council's overall performance is rated at a score of 68, an increase of one point from last year's score of 67.

Council's performance in advocacy fell from 63 to 60 and community engagement remained at 62, while customer contact and overall direction decreased by three points each from 75 to 72.

Council scored higher than the median result of Small Rural Shires (a group of 22 like Councils) in all governance areas.

There were 12 service delivery areas showing analysis from previous years.

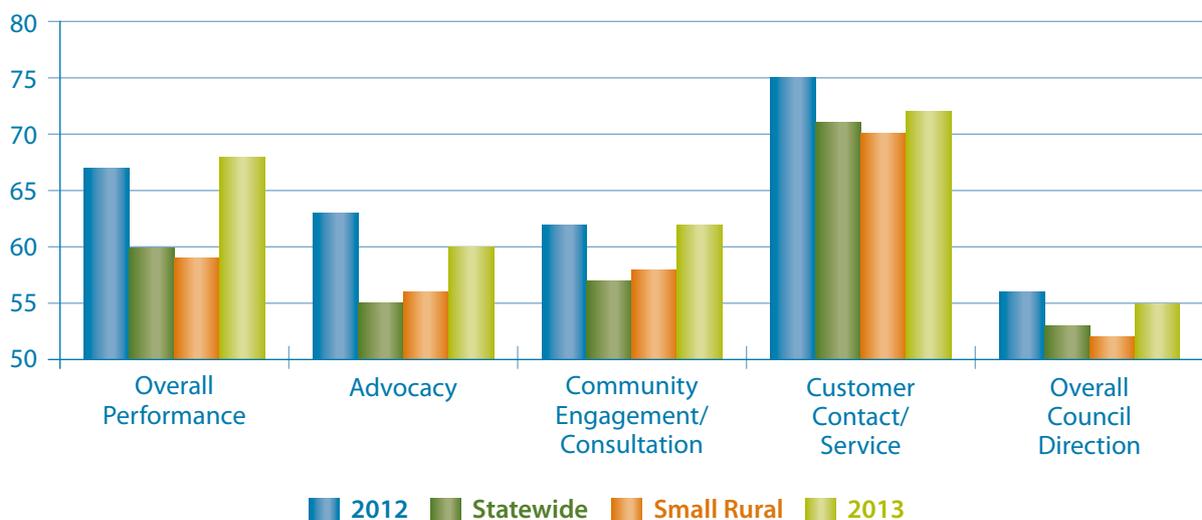
Council scored higher than last year in seven areas – local streets

and footpaths, waste management, enforcement of local laws, family support services, elderly support services, emergency and disaster management and maintenance of unsealed roads.

Scores remained the same for recreation facilities, appearance of public areas, business and community development and tourism and informing your community, while the score for planning and building permits decreased.

Of the 12 service areas surveyed in 2012, Council scored higher than the median result of Small Rural Shires in 11 areas, the same in one area, while no areas were lower.

Community Satisfaction Index Score Results

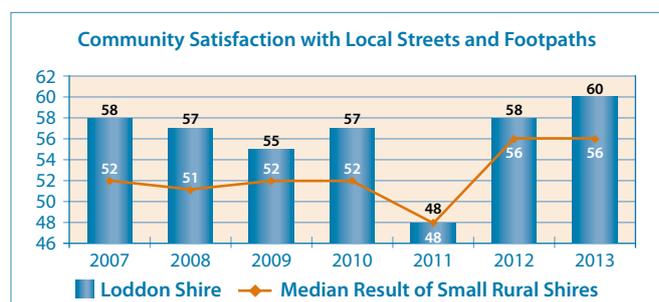
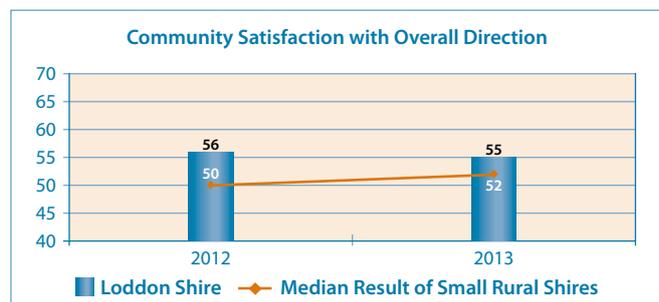
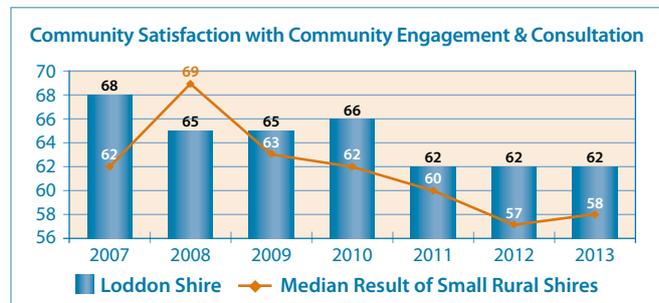
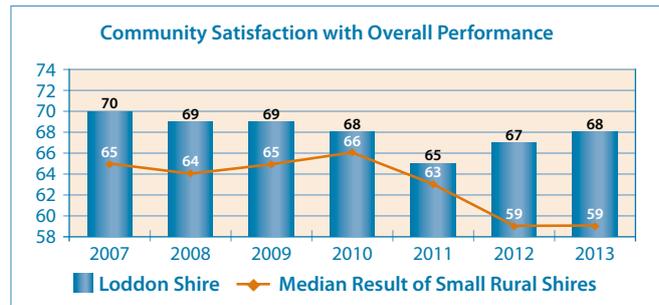


PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT INDICATORS

	2012/2013	2011/2012
Affordability / Cost of Governance		
Average Rates & Charges Per Assessment *	\$1,075	\$1,022
Average Rates & Charges Per Residential Assessment *	\$875	\$731
Sustainability		
Average Liabilities Per Assessment	\$949	\$886
Operating Result Per Assessment	(\$230)	\$1,184
Services		
Average Operating Expenditure Per Assessment	\$5,974	\$3,231
Community Satisfaction Rating for Overall Performance	68	67
Capital Expenditure		
Average Capital Expenditure Per Assessment	\$953	\$3,256
Infrastructure		
Renewal Gap	101%	378%
Renewal and Maintenance Gap	490%	266%
Governance		
Community Satisfaction Rating for Council's Advocacy	60	63
Community Satisfaction Rating for Council's Engagement	62	62

* The figures for 2011/2012 are based on actual results, while those for 2012/2013 are based on budgeted figures.

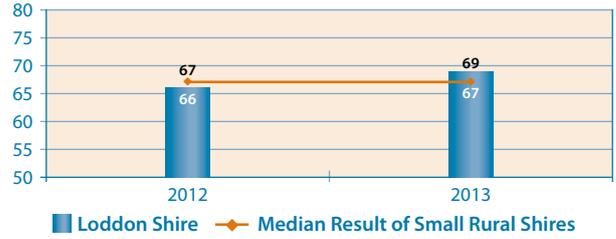


PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

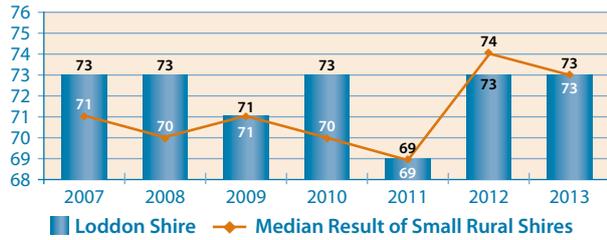
Community Satisfaction with Recreational Facilities



Community Satisfaction with Family Support Services



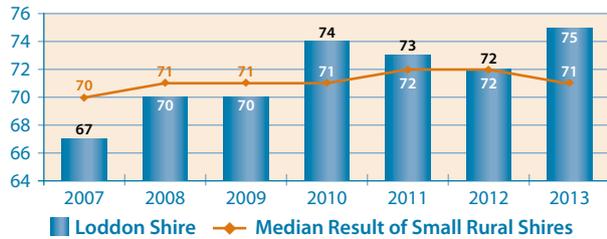
Community Satisfaction with Appearance of Public Areas



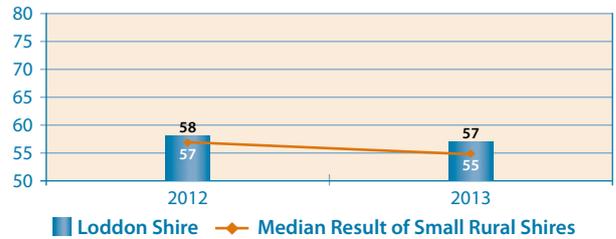
Community Satisfaction with Elderly Support Services



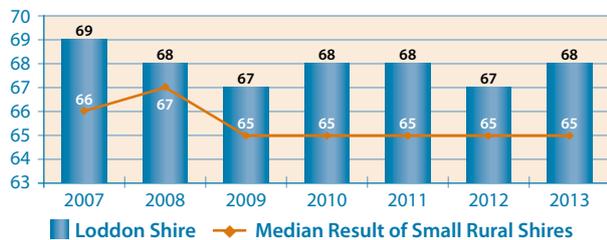
Community Satisfaction with Waste Management



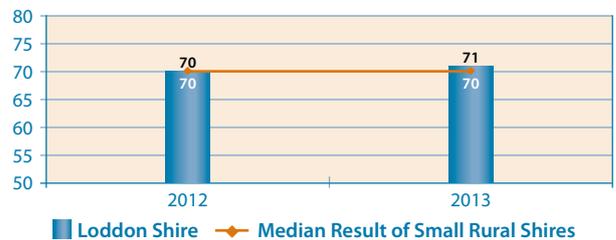
Community Satisfaction with Planning and Building Permits



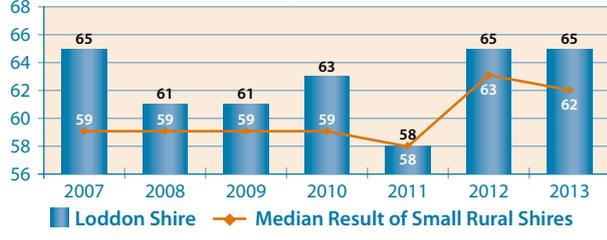
Community Satisfaction with Enforcement of Local Laws



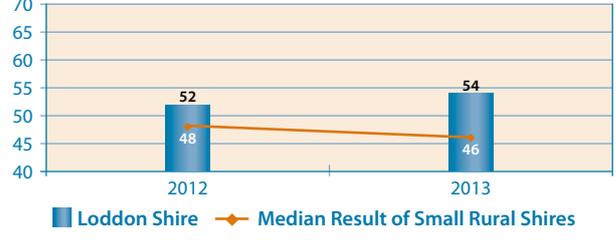
Community Satisfaction with Emergency and Disaster Management



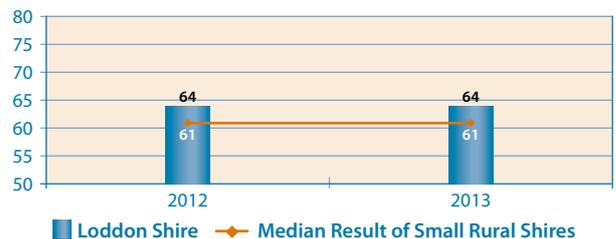
Community Satisfaction with Business & Community Development & Tourism



Community Satisfaction with Maintenance of Unsealed Roads in Your Area



Community Satisfaction with Informing Your Community



Financial Indicators

The following financial indicators are included in Council's Financial Statements.

They provide a snapshot of Council's performance during the financial year or its position at the end of the financial year.

Debt Servicing Ratio

The Debt Servicing Ratio identifies Council's capacity to service its outstanding debt.

The ratio expresses the amount of interest paid as a percentage of Council's total revenue.

The ratio is expressed as:

Debt Servicing Costs	\$35,258
Total Revenue	\$43,640,455
	= 0.08%

Debt Commitment Ratio

The Debt Commitment Ratio identifies Council's debt redemption strategy.

The ratio expresses the percentage of rate revenue used to pay interest and redeem debt.

The ratio is expressed as:

Debt Servicing & Redemption Costs	\$171,165
Rate Revenue	\$8,157,404
	=2.10%

Revenue Ratio

The Revenue Ratio identifies Council's dependence on non-rate income.

This is determined by assessing rate revenue as a proportion of the total revenue of Council.

The ratio is expressed as:

Rate Revenue	\$8,157,404
Total Revenue	\$43,640,455
	=18.69%

Debt Exposure Ratio

The Debt Exposure Ratio identifies Council's exposure to debt.

The ratio is expressed as:

Total Indebtedness	\$5,114,361
Total Realisable Assets	\$70,077,531
	= 7.30%

The ratio enables assessment of Council's solvency and exposure to debt.

Total indebtedness refers to the total liabilities of Council. Total liabilities are compared to total realisable assets, which are all Council assets not subject to any restriction and are able to be realised.

For the purpose of the calculation, realisable assets are those assets which can be sold and which are not subject to any restriction on realisation or use.

Working Capital Ratio

The Working Capital Ratio assesses Council's ability to meet current commitments.

The ratio expresses the amount of current financial assets Council has available to meet its current financial liabilities.

The ratio is expressed as:

Current Assets	\$22,349,930
Current Liabilities	\$4,924,263
	= 4.54:1

Adjusted Working Capital Ratio

The Adjusted Working Capital Ratio assesses Council's ability to meet current commitments, where financial liabilities have been reduced to reflect long service leave that is shown as a current financial liability.

The ratio expresses the amount of current financial assets Council has available to meet its current liabilities.

The ratio is expressed as:

Current Assets	\$22,349,930
Current Liabilities – Current Long Service Leave Liability	\$3,418,225
	=6.54:1

RATIO COMPARISON

Ratio	2012/13	2011/12
Debt Servicing Ratio	0.08%	0.11%
Debt Commitment Ratio	2.10%	2.18%
Revenue Ratio	18.69%	19.91%
Debt Exposure Ratio	7.30%	12.62%
Working Capital Ratio	4.54:1	3.40:1
Adjusted Working Capital Ratio	6.54:1	3.46:1

OUR COUNCIL



Cr Neil Beattie



Cr Colleen Condliffe



Cr Geoff Curnow



Cr Gavan Holt



Cr Cheryl McKinnon

Cr Neil Beattie

Boort Ward

First elected: 2005

Re-elected: 2008 and 2012

Cr Beattie lives at Catumnal, west of Boort, running a dryland and irrigation farm along with a trucking operation.

Cr Beattie is Chairman of Little Lake Boort Management Committee, an active member of the Boort Football Club, Life Member of the North Central Football League, member of the Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management and Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management.

He is a member of the Murray Darling Association, MAV Rail Freight Alliance, Recreation Strategy Implementation Steering Committee and Boort Park Redevelopment Group and inaugural chairman of the Boort Cereal Growers Co-operative.

Cr Colleen Condliffe

Inglewood Ward

Served three previous terms on Council from 2000 to 2008

Re-elected: 2012

Cr Condliffe grew up on the family farm at Salisbury West and was educated in Bendigo.

Her community involvements have included the Breakfast in Schools Program, Country Women's Association and Victorian Farmers Federation.

She has completed the Loddon Murray Leadership Program and was

the first woman elected to Loddon Shire Council.

Cr Condliffe formed the Landcare group at Salisbury West and organised the 1997 Women on Farms Gathering at Bendigo. She was a regional winner of the ABC Rural Woman of the Year award that same year.

Cr Condliffe is currently involved with the sports centre in Inglewood, Bridgewater Inc, Women's Health in Bendigo and rural financial counselling and is secretary of the Inglewood town hall committee, a board member of Inglewood & District Community Bank and vice-chair of the Inglewood Resource Centre.

She is chair of the Kooyoora Women's Network and a member of the transition advisory committee of the Dingee Bush Nursing Centre.

Cr Geoff Curnow

Tarnagulla Ward

First elected: 2008

Re-elected: 2012

Mayor since 2011

Cr Geoff Curnow lives at Laanecoorie and has a background in agricultural production spanning 46 years. Cr Curnow and his wife, Merna, are the third generation to farm their property, producing a variety of grain crops and prime lambs.

Cr Curnow's present community involvement includes roles as Secretary of Laanecoorie Mechanics Institute Hall Reserve Committee, Chairman of the Laanecoorie

Loddon River Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, member of Laanecoorie Branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation, West Marong LandCare Group and Woodstock West CFA and board member of the Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group.

Cr Curnow is also Chair of the Murray River Group of Councils.

Cr Gavan Holt

Wedderburn Ward

First elected: 2003

Re-elected: 2005, 2008 and 2012

Mayor: 2005/2007 and 2009/2011

Cr Holt was born and raised in Wedderburn, where the Holt family has a history of involvement in local government.

Having completed a Commerce degree from the University of Melbourne, for 10 years he taught at various secondary schools across Victoria.

Cr Holt then returned to Wedderburn and is now a businessman with interests in farming, investment and hotels.

Cr Holt's present community involvement includes the Wedderburn Development Association Community Planning Group, Wedderburn & District Harness Racing Club, Donaldson Park Committee of Management, Wedderburn Men's Shed Committee, Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management, Wedderburn Community House Board and Wedderburn Football Club.

He is also involved with the Wedderburn & District Community Bank steering committee, Wedderburn Tourism Committee of Management, Wedderburn Mechanics & Literary Institute Hall Committee of Management and the Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management.

Cr Holt is Council delegate to the Municipal Association of Victoria and a member of the MAV Planning Sub-committee. He is also Council's representative on its internal audit committee.

Cr Cheryl McKinnon

Terrick Ward

First elected: 2012

Cr McKinnon, with her husband, Glenn, operates an irrigation and dryland farming operation based in Pyramid Hill and Terrick Terrick East, comprising beef and lamb production and cropping.

Cr McKinnon has been involved in community work in Pyramid Hill for many years. She was a member of the founding committee of the Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House and worked in education, supporting students with disabilities.

Cr McKinnon's current community involvements include the Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House, Pyramid Hill Historical Society, Pyramid Hill Progress Association, Pyramid-Raywood-Mitiamo VFF Branch Secretary, Chair of the Loddon Shire Nature Tourism Advisory Committee and a seat on the board of the Goldfields Regional Library Corporation.

Representing the community

Council meetings

Council holds its meetings on the fourth Monday of the month (with the exception of December, which is normally held on the second Monday of the month).

Council meetings commence at 3.30pm, with a Council Forum held prior to the meeting.

Council holds other Council Forums throughout the year when required.

Councillor representation on committees

Councillors provided representation on the following committees:

Cr Neil Beattie

- Boort Park Committee of Management
- Murray Darling Association
- Rail Freight Alliance
- Recreation Strategy Implementation Steering Committee

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Boort Development Committee of Management
- Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Boort Resource & Information Centre Committee of Management
- Boort Tourism Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Mechanics Hall Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Little Lake Boort Committee of Management
- Yando Public Hall Committee of Management

Cr Colleen Condliffe

- Australia Day Committee
- Calder Highway Improvement Committee
- Loddon Healthy Minds Network

- Loddon Youth Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria Environment Advisory Group
- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Bridgewater Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee of Management
- Campbells Forest Hall Committee of Management
- Inglewood Community Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Lions Community Elderly Persons Units Committee of Management
- Inglewood Riding Club Committee of Management
- Inglewood Town Hall Committee of Management

Cr Geoff Curnow

- Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group
- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee
- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
- Murray River Group of Councils

Section 86 Committee of Management

- Kingower Development & Tourism Committee of Management

Cr Gavan Holt

- Audit Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Donaldson Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Mechanics & Literary Institute Hall Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Tourism Committee of Management

OUR COUNCIL

Cr Cheryl McKinnon

- Nature Tourism Advisory Team
- North Central Goldfields Regional Library

Section 86 Committees of Management

- Dingee Progress Association Committee of Management
- East Loddon Community Centre Committee of Management
- Mitiamo Municipal Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool Committee of Management
- Serpentine Bowls & Tennis Pavilion & Reserve Committee of Management

Councillor attendances

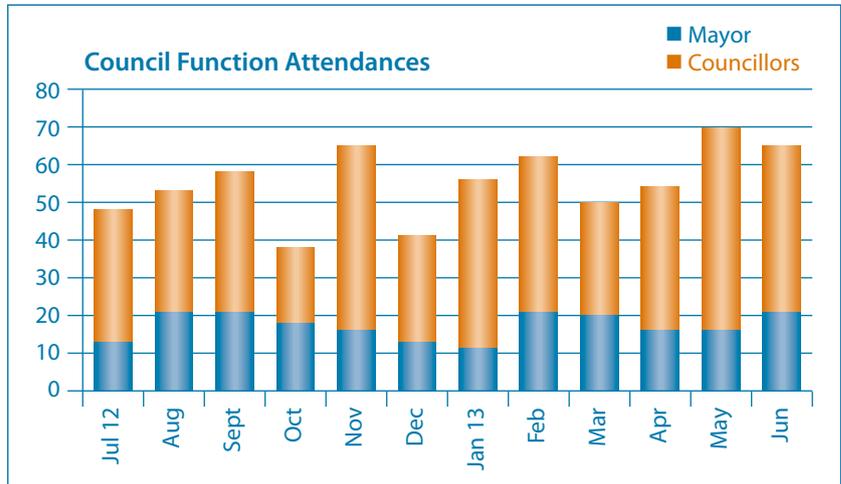
During the year, the Mayor and Councillors attended various functions on behalf of the Loddon Shire.

Some of the functions related to their representation on the committees listed, while others

arose from invitations by community groups, local government bodies, politicians, etc.

The following graph shows their attendances by month.

In total, the Mayor attended 207 functions while the other Councillors attended 453.



Council Wards



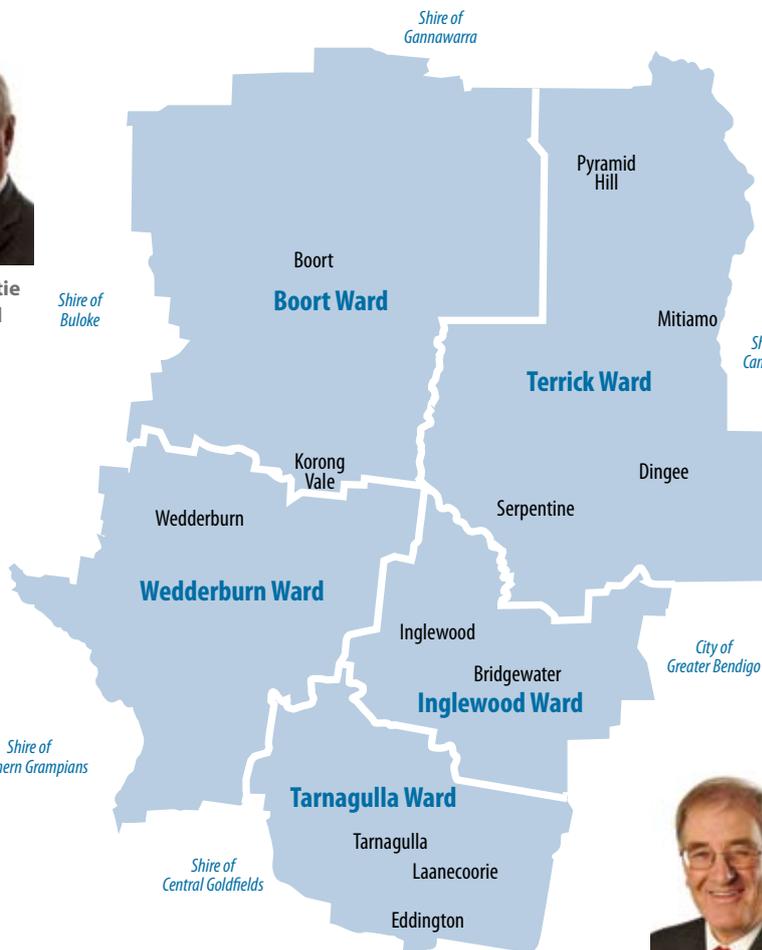
Cr Neil Beattie
Boort Ward

Shire of Buloke



Cr Gavan Holt
Wedderburn Ward

Shire of Northern Grampians



Cr Cheryl McKinnon
Terrick Ward



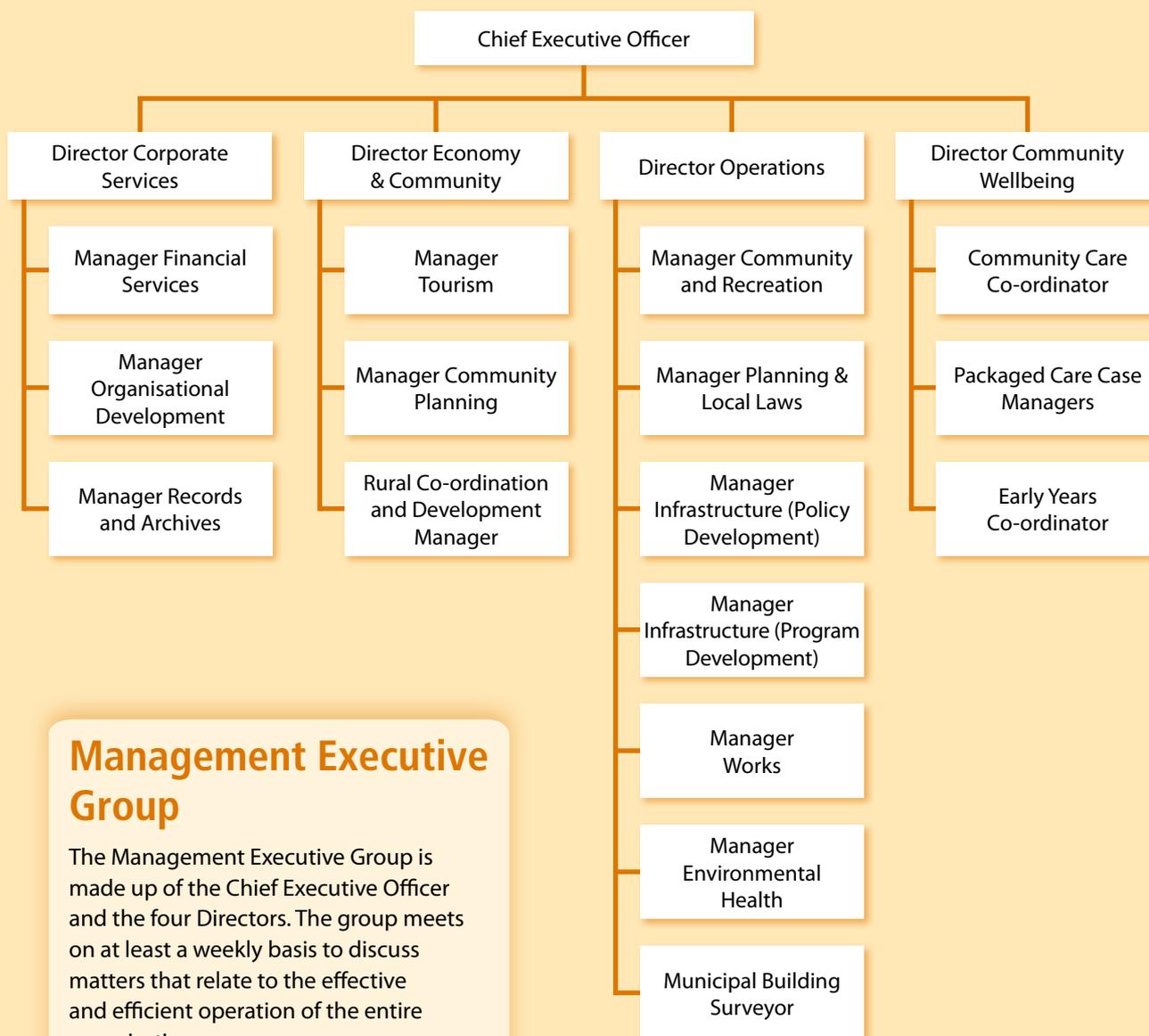
Cr Colleen Condliffe
Inglewood Ward



Cr Geoff Curnow
Tarnagulla Ward

Shire of Mount Alexander

Organisation Structure



Management Executive Group

The Management Executive Group is made up of the Chief Executive Officer and the four Directors. The group meets on at least a weekly basis to discuss matters that relate to the effective and efficient operation of the entire organisation.

Chief Executive Officer

John McLinden

John McLinden was appointed Shire Engineer of the former Shire of East Loddon in 1993, having previously held engineering positions at the Shire of Rosedale, City of Broadmeadows and Shire of Colac.

After local government amalgamations in 1995, John served as Director Technical Services and, later, Director Operations for Loddon Shire before taking up the post of Chief Executive Officer in December 2005.

John has extensive experience in local government, with a particular

focus on managing the growth of rural communities through challenging economic and climatic conditions.

He has a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree, a Graduate Diploma in Municipal Engineering and Management and a Masters of Business Administration.

As Chief Executive Officer, John's role includes prescribed duties in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, providing leadership to the Council, strategic planning, promoting external relationships and managing Council operations.

Director Corporate Services

Jude Holt

Jude Holt was appointed Director Corporate Services in October 2007 after serving as Manager Financial Services for the Shire since local government amalgamations in 1995.

Before this, Jude held administrative positions with the former Shire of Korong and in private enterprise and was a trainee accountant in public practice for a number of years.

She has extensive experience in local government, with a particular emphasis on financial management and administration. Jude has

OUR ORGANISATION

a Bachelor of Business degree majoring in accounting and is a graduate of the Company Directors' Course.

As Director Corporate Services, Jude's role includes financial management, human resource management, occupational health and safety, risk management, records management, information technology, valuations and rating and customer service.

Director Economy and Community

Bryan McEwan

After a restructure of Council's operations, Bryan McEwan was appointed Director Economy and Community in February 2008.

Prior to this, Bryan worked as Industry Investment Manager with the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (Regional Development Victoria).

He has also held management and technical positions in the chemical and food processing industries and worked with the former Soil Conservation Authority.

Bryan has a mix of experience in both private and public sectors, with a particular focus on regional

economic development, quality management and manufacturing. Bryan has a Bachelor of Science degree with associated qualifications in Business and Environmental Management.

As Director Economy and Community, Bryan has a direct role in economic development in the Shire, as well as promoting tourism and community planning.

Director Operations

Ian McLauchlan

Ian was appointed Director Operations in March 2011 and has been with Loddon Shire since January 2008, originally serving as Manager of Infrastructure Program Development.

Before starting work with Loddon Shire, Ian held a number of engineering positions in both local government and private enterprise, as well as serving as an officer in the Royal Australian Air Force.

Ian has more than 11 years' experience in the areas of asset management, project management, contract administration, infrastructure maintenance, policy and strategy development, civil construction and waste management.

He has a degree in Environmental Engineering, majoring in land and water management, and has also done post-graduate studies in project management, contract administration, waste and wastewater treatment and communications.

As Director Operations, Ian is responsible for the management and ongoing delivery of a wide range of Council services, including infrastructure policy and program development, works and maintenance, strategic and statutory planning, statutory building control, environmental and public health, local laws policy and compliance, contract management, climate change adaptation, recreation services, grant scheme administration, engineering and youth services.

Director Community Wellbeing

Wendy Gladman

Wendy Gladman has been employed with Loddon Shire for 17 years in the community services sector.

She took up the role of Manager Community Services in January 2010 and became Acting Director Community Wellbeing in August 2012.

Wendy's subsequent appointment as Director Community Wellbeing was confirmed in May 2013 and she assumed the post officially on 1 July.

Wendy oversees the management of the maternal and child health and immunisation programs, the Loddon Kindergartens Cluster, aged and disability services, the Home & Community Care (HACC) program, the Packaged Care program, Municipal Emergency Recovery and the Loddon Healthy Minds Network.



Management Executive Group – L-R: Ian McLauchlan, Jude Holt, Bryan McEwan, Wendy Gladman and John McLinden.

Management team

**Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager,
Brian Hinneberg**

Brian Hinneberg joined Council in March 2011 as Flood Recovery Manager, charged with helping the Shire recover from the effects of the severe floods of the previous summer.

He brought with him extensive experience with the Victorian Government in economic and regional development.

In March 2012, Brian took up a new role as Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager. His primary focus continued to be on flood recovery, including helping with farm-specific issues, keeping in touch with water authorities, primary industry representatives and businesses and facilitating outreach services to farmers, farm families and rural small businesses.

Corporate Services Directorate

**Manager Financial Services,
James Rendell**

James Rendell commenced with Council in November 2011 after a career stretching over more than 30 years in both the Victorian Public Service and local government.

James came to Council after working in local government in Tasmania for the past three years and in Western Australia for almost eight years before that.

His role involves overseeing the preparation of the budget, financial statements, monthly financial reporting to Council, reporting to

various government departments, payment of suppliers and employees, customer service and rates preparation.

**Manager Organisational Development,
Carol Canfield**

Carol Canfield commenced with Council in September 2007 after a long career with the City of Greater Bendigo and Shire of East Loddon. Carol has held positions in payroll, risk management, various administration roles and as Assistant Shire Secretary.

Carol's role includes human resource management, risk management, staff training, occupational health and safety, staff health and wellbeing and insurance. She was instrumental in managing the passage of Council's latest Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

**Manager Records & Archives,
Lisa Poulier**

Lisa started with Council in April 2007 as Manager, Local Laws & Records, after holding positions with Health and Community Services, Parliament of Victoria, Queensland State Archives, State Records NSW and the Shire of Campaspe. From 2008-2010, Lisa also worked part-time helping to establish the Bendigo Regional Archives Centre.

Lisa has extensive experience and formal qualifications in records management and archives. She takes care of the records management function for Council, is undertaking a large project of archiving Council's historic records and manages privacy and Freedom of Information legislation.

Economy & Community Directorate

**Manager Community Planning,
Tim Jenkyn**

Tim Jenkyn commenced with Council in 2006 as Drought and Environment Officer. Prior to that, Tim ran his own contract land management and landscaping business.

He has worked on various community projects with diverse sections of the community and for a range of regional authorities. Tim has worked in many industries, including horticulture, forestry, construction, hospitality, publishing, youth education and indigenous and disability services.

Early in 2008, Tim was appointed Manager Community Planning. The role involves community engagement, project development, managing the Community Planning program and delivering projects.

**Manager Tourism,
Robyn Vella**

Robyn Vella started work with Council in 2000 assisting the Tourism Manager on a part-time basis.

In 2003, she went full-time as a tourism co-ordinator specialising in coach tours before rising to the role of Tourism Manager.

Robyn's aim is to promote Loddon as a great place to visit, to enhance economic activity by encouraging visitors to stay and spend locally, to build local pride in our communities and to create a healthy and diverse tourism industry.



Brian Hinneberg.



James Rendell.



Carol Canfield.



Lisa Poulier.



Tim Jenkyn.



Robyn Vella.

OUR ORGANISATION



Allan Stobaus.



Teresa Arnup.



Terry Watson.



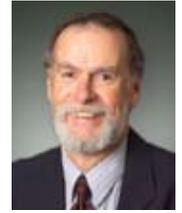
David Fry.



Steven Phillips.



Tyson Sutton.



David Turner.

Operations Directorate

Manager Community & Recreation,

Allan Stobaus

Allan Stobaus was appointed as Loddon's Manager of Community & Recreation in September 2001 following five years in a similar role at Bruce Rock Shire in Western Australia.

Allan is responsible for the management of Council's grant schemes and swimming pools, strategic planning for community facilities, project management of capital works projects and youth development.

Manager Environmental Health,

Teresa Arnup

Teresa Arnup commenced with Council in November 2008. She has more than 18 years' experience as an Environmental Health Officer.

Teresa's role in Council includes monitoring of premises registered under the Food Act, Public Health and Wellbeing Act and Residential Tenancies Act. Teresa also manages the diabetic syringe program and the issuing of septic tank permits.

Manager Infrastructure Policy & Strategy,

Terry Watson

Terry Watson was appointed as Manager Infrastructure (formerly known as Manager Assets) after local government amalgamations in 1995. He was previously employed by the Shire of East Loddon and Shire of Bet Bet as Assistant Shire Engineer.

Terry has a Diploma of Civil Engineering and, in his current role, is responsible for developing and maintaining policies, procedures

and strategies for the provision of all infrastructure assets of the Council and developing management plans and registers for Council's assets.

Manager Infrastructure Program Development,

David Fry

David Fry commenced with Council in March 1991 as Superintendent of Works, after more than 10 years' experience working with earthmoving and civil contractors in Melbourne. In 1998, David was appointed to the role of Manager of Works.

In 2011, David was appointed as Manager of Infrastructure Program Development. This role involves the development of Council's annual infrastructure works program, Council's waste management program, building management and maintenance program, engineering survey and design as well as the management of all infrastructure assets including roads, bridges and drainage.

Manager Works,

Steven Phillips

Steven Phillips joined Loddon Shire in 2009 as the Assistant Works Manager following seven years with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, where he worked in forestry and fire management.

In 2011, Steven was appointed to the position of Manager Works, where he is primarily responsible for Council's maintenance and construction activities on roads, streets, bridges, footpaths and parks and gardens. This role also includes responsibilities for Council's vehicle and fleet management and VicRoads maintenance contracts. He also

acts as the Municipal Emergency Resources Officer during an emergency.

Manager Planning & Local Laws,

Tyson Sutton

Tyson Sutton joined Council in November 2007 after working in strategic and statutory planning roles with the City of Greater Bendigo and private industry.

Tyson manages the town planning and local laws responsibilities of Council, including development assessment, land use strategies, enforcement of the planning scheme, enforcement and administration of local laws and animal management.

Municipal Building Surveyor,

David Turner

David Turner started with Council in June 2005 after working as Municipal Building Surveyor at the City of Greater Bendigo. David has well over 35 years' experience in the building industry, with more than 20 years in local government.

David's role in Council includes issuing building permits, on-site inspections, working with owners, builders and contractors, assisting people to maintain applicable standards with existing buildings, administering the provisions of the Building Act 1993 and the Building Regulations 2006 on places of public entertainment, resolving issues with works conducted without Council approvals, responding to solicitors' enquiries for property transfers, responding to applications to vary the regulations, resolving lapsed or expired building permits and receiving building permits issued by private building surveyors.

Our Staff

Staff recruitment & retention

Staff health & wellbeing

Council is committed to looking after the health and wellbeing of all staff, although it is recognised that Council cannot address any staff member's individual health and wellbeing needs without the co-operation of that person.

Council provides a healthy workplace by:

- Developing, in consultation with staff, workplace-specific programs to address lifestyle, health, fitness and safety issues
- Encouraging staff wellness and proactively managing risk of illness
- Encouraging staff to take periodic annual leave (where relevant) to maintain a positive balance between work life, family and friends
- Actively promoting exercise, healthy eating and a smoke-free environment to improve or maintain staff members' personal wellbeing

- Providing confidential assistance and counselling services that benefit all staff
- Providing targeted health and wellbeing programs.

Programs offered to all staff in 2012/2013 included:

- WorkSafe health assessments – 68 employees
- Flu vaccinations – 61 employees

Employee Assistance Program

Council offers a free confidential Employee Assistance Program for staff who are experiencing difficulties in their personal or professional lives.

Car pooling

Council has a car pooling program for staff travelling to the Wedderburn office from Bendigo.

Managers are rostered to drive their car on specific days. Staff are picked up from a central point and dropped back to that point at the end of the day.

The latest revision of this policy was approved by the Management Executive Group in May.

Over the course of the year, four staff members have taken advantage of the program.

Staff development

Staff training program

Council is committed to providing staff with access to staff training and development opportunities that will enable continuous learning and career growth in line with individual aspirations and Council's goals.

At the annual staff development reviews, employees identify training they would like to undertake in the following year. Council also provides training that is required for legislative purposes and to keep qualifications current.

During the year, Council staff undertook training courses in the following areas:

- Occupational Health and Safety
- First Aid & CPR
- Computer Applications
- Competency
- Compliance



Pictured after receiving their achievement awards at the 2012 all-staff Christmas lunch are (back row, from left) Shaun Smith, Colin McClelland, Lyn Jenzen, Michelle Hargreaves, Janine Jackson, Julie Ritchie and Cindy Phelps. In front are, from left, Daniel Lloyd, Ossie Costello, Shane Maxwell, Sara Nesbit, Chris Mann, Luke Selby and Ron Harbridge.

OUR ORGANISATION



The all-staff meeting at Serpentine in March 2013 provided the opportunity for a team photo.

Study assistance policy

Council has a Study Assistance Policy that is available to permanent employees with 12 months' service.

Assistance is provided in the form of subsidies for course fees, examination and assignment leave and some leave for attending classes.

During the year, two employees accessed this policy while undertaking further study.

Traineeships

Council supports staff who are prepared to undertake traineeships in their field.

The following staff completed their traineeships during the year.

- Travis Jackson – Certificate IV in Statutory Compliance
- Tony Gibbins – Certificate IV in Statutory Compliance
- Reece Carroll – Diploma of Management & Human Resources
- David Shay – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works
- Glenn Wright – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works
- Bob Montebello – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works

- Mark Minogue – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works
- Ron Kuno – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works
- Ron Harbridge – Certificate III in Local Government Works
- Alan Bock – Certificate III in Local Government Works
- Anthony Benaim – Certificate III in Local Government Works
- Steven Formosa – Certificate III in Local Government Works
- Steven Cimesa – Certificate III in Local Government Works
- Trudi Van de Wetering – Diploma of Children Services
- Heather Christie – Diploma of Record Keeping
- Lorraine Jackson – Certificate IV in Bookkeeping/Accounting
- Darren Schultz – Certificate IV in Asset Maintenance (Waste Management)

The following staff are either continuing a traineeship commenced earlier or have commenced a traineeship.

- Linda Canfield – Diploma of Management for Community Services

- Janine Jackson – Diploma of Management
- Peter Ramsdale – Certificate III in Landscape Construction
- Shaun Smith – Certificate III in Landscape Construction
- Vaughan Herrick – Certificate III in Landscape Construction
- Glenn Williams – Certificate III in Automotive (Heavy Vehicles)
- Dani Kline – Certificate IV Frontline Management and Certificate IV in Government
- Lyn Don – Certificate IV Frontline Management
- Michelle Hargreaves – Certificate IV Frontline Management
- Julie Ritchie – Certificate IV Frontline Management
- Christine Coombes – Certificate IV Frontline Management

The following staff completed the following qualifications during the year.

- Tony Bellenger – Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation
- Gary Zanker – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works
- Jude Holt – Company Directors Course

- Louise Bewley – Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)

Council's support is provided in time to attend required classes and in financial assistance.

Staff scholarship program

Council has a staff scholarship program aimed at reducing the financial burden of undertaking university education for students and providing relevant work experience in their chosen career in a local government setting.

Council had no staff studying under this program in 2012/2013.

Work experience program

Secondary school students

Council is an active supporter of the work experience program that operates in the school system and often hosts students from Years 10, 11 and 12.

During the year, Council hosted four students – Tarryn Smith (Catholic College, Bendigo) went to Inglewood Pre-school, Alexandra MacDonald (from Wandong) worked at both the Inglewood and Wedderburn Pre-schools, Brittany Martin (Wedderburn College) was in the mechanics' workshop at Wedderburn depot and Jaycinta Forster (Pyramid Hill College) went to Pyramid Hill Pre-school.

School-based Apprenticeships

Over the years, Council has hosted many students under School-based Apprenticeships. This program provides a learning environment in the workplace while students remain at school.

Council currently has one school-based apprentice, Troy Springthorpe, of Wedderburn, working in the engineering department.

Troy is doing Certificate III in Engineering – Technician, with his term set to end on 23 December 2013.



Council staff member Ron Harbridge completed his Certificate III in Local Government Works during the year.

Corey Bathis was employed as part of the flood recovery program as an apprentice mechanic and is currently in his second year.

Communicating with staff

Staff newsletter

A staff newsletter is distributed with the fortnightly pay slips. The newsletter includes items of interest, job applications, coming events and personal milestones by staff.

Intranet

Council has an intranet site that is used to communicate information. Staff located at the Wedderburn and Serpentine Offices, Boort, Newbridge, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn depots, plus some remote workers in the Community Services Department, have access to the intranet.

All-staff meetings

Council holds an all-staff meeting in March and September. These meetings provide staff with information about current events, enable presentations by external groups, enable training for the whole staff, recognise staff achievements, both personal and professional, and give staff the opportunity to ask questions of the executive.

All-staff Christmas lunch

Each year, Council hosts an all-staff Christmas lunch in the Shire. The lunch provides staff with an opportunity for informal interaction with their colleagues, managers and Councillors and provides Council with the opportunity to thank staff for their efforts throughout the year.

The 2012 lunch was held at the Serpentine Memorial Hall.

Staff achievements

Staff recognition

The following staff members received recognition of excellence at the 2012 Christmas function:

- Daniel Lloyd – Assistant Works Manager
- Oswald Costello – Works Co-ordinator, Flood Recovery
- Shane Maxwell – Team Leader, Parks and Gardens
- Lyn Jenzen – Home Carer
- Julie Ritchie – Revenue Collector
- Michelle Hargreaves – Administration Officer, Corporate Services
- Janine Jackson – Human Resources Officer/Payroll Supervisor



Maternal and Child Health Nurse Cindy Phelps received a recognition of excellence award at the 2012 Christmas function.

- Sara Nesbit – Database Project Officer
- Chris Mann – Pre-school Teacher, Pyramid Hill
- Shirley Ervin – Pre-school Assistant, Pyramid Hill
- Sally Maxted – Pre-school Assistant, Pyramid Hill
- Cindy Phelps – Maternal Child Health Nurse
- Ron Harbridge – Grader Operator, Flood Recovery
- Anthony Webb – Tractor Driver
- Luke Selby – Tractor Driver, Flood Recovery
- Shaun Smith – Townscape Serviceman
- Colin McClelland – Backhoe Operator

Individual achievements

Certificates of Recognition

At the all-staff Christmas lunch held each year, staff who have reached service periods of 10, 20, 30 and 40 years are presented with Certificates of Recognition.

At the December 2012 lunch held at Serpentine, the following certificates were presented:

40 Years of Service

- Laurence Jardine – Grader Driver
- Harold Greenwood – Grader Driver
- Alan Jackson – Team Leader, Wedderburn Depot

20 Years of Service

- Travis Jackson – Local Laws/ Fire Prevention Officer
- Carol Ritchie – Cleaner

10 Years of Service

- Julianne Mills – Home Carer
- Daniel Lloyd – Assistant Works Manager
- Lyn Don – Payroll Officer
- Karen White – Home Carer
- Kim Fletcher – Packaged Care Case Manager
- Marjorie Ross – Home Carer
- Brain Gladman – Handyman

LGPro Emerging Leaders Program

This program includes topics of local government in the political context, leading and communicating, community engagement, exposure to local government from the rural and metropolitan perspectives and

maintaining a leading and learning perspective.

It provides participants with exposure to varied environments, quality speakers and the opportunity to interact with local government employees with differing backgrounds from councils of all sizes.

Wendy Gladman graduated from this program in 2013.

Educational achievements

A number of our staff undertake formal training while maintaining their position at Council.

During the year, the following staff members completed courses in their area of work:

Tony Bellenger – Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation

Gary Zanker – Certificate III in Local Government Operational Works

Jude Holt – Company Directors Course

Louise Bewley – Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)

Supporting our staff

Occupational Health & Safety

Council recognises its moral and legal responsibility to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy work environment for employees, contractors, customers and visitors.

This commitment extends to ensuring that the organisation's operations do not place the local community at risk of injury, illness or property damage.

Council continues its commitment to consultation and co-operation between management and employees through Council's Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Committee.

This committee consists of staff and management representatives and meets quarterly, with all areas of the organisation represented.



Ten Council staff achieved their Certificate III in Civil Construction (Operational Works) during the year. They are, from left, Tony Benaim, Ron Kuno, Mark Minogue, Glenn Wright, Garry Zanker, Ron Harbridge, Bob Montebello, Alan Bock, David Shay and Steven Formosa.

All OH&S obligations continue to be met in a systematic, proactive and consultative manner.

Policies and procedures continue to be developed or reviewed to reflect new legislative requirements.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Council supports access and equity for all employees and recognises diversity as a valuable strength that will create benefits for employees and the community.

Council's Equal Opportunity Policy ensures that any potential breach is resolved impartially and fairly.

Council regularly reviews its policies, procedures and practices to ensure equity and transparency for all staff.

Risk management

Council is committed to proactive risk management and continues to develop its risk management framework and strategy to ensure it continues to prevent or minimise the chance of something happening that will have an adverse impact on Council objectives.

Council is moving to a comprehensive system of incident reporting and management, risk identification, assessment and management and legislative compliance.

An important element of this system is Advent Manager, an automated incident, risk and compliance software tool.

This software enables the breakdown of risk and compliance requirements into simple tasks, which can then be assigned for action.

Simple, yet comprehensive, reports can be run in minutes, giving a clear snapshot of how Council is tracking against its desired governance outcomes.

The compliance module is regularly updated as legislation changes and ensures Loddon Shire and its practices remain current.

Staff analysis

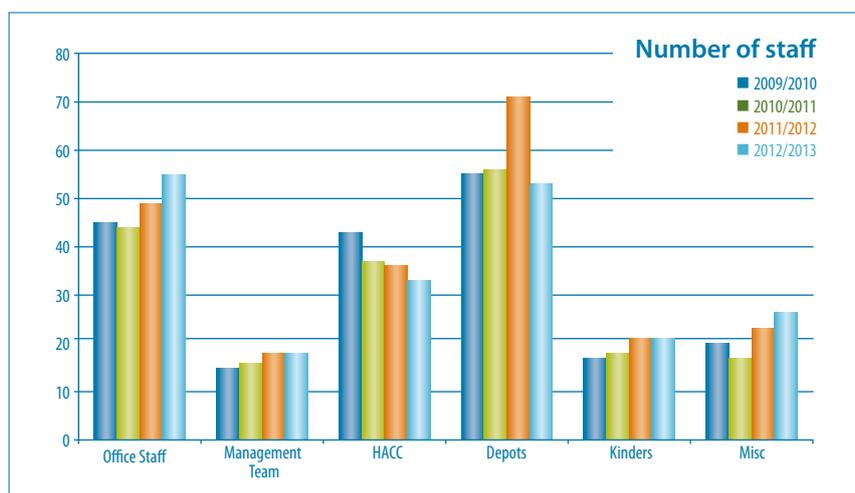
Number

Council has 206 staff in total, with an effective full-time equivalent of 144.

Most of our staff work from depots, in the offices or as home carers.

Other areas where Council employs staff are in the management team, pre-schools, recycling stations, school crossings and in maternal and child health centres.

The number of staff has dropped from 218 to 206 this year due to the completion of the flood recovery program, which resulted in the departure of the fixed-term employees who undertook those restoration works.



OUR ORGANISATION

Status

Council has 94 full-time, 69 part-time and 43 casual employees.

Gender

Of total staff numbers, 44% are male and 56% female.

In 2011/2012, 51% were male and 49% female – once again, the reason for the decrease in the number of males is due to the completion of the flood recovery program.

The increase in the number of females employed is due to the recruitment of more casual staff such as home carers, pre-school teachers or assistants and administration staff.

These positions have been filled predominantly with female staff.

Council has four depots, all male. Pre-schools are all-female staff. Other worksites have a mix of female and male staff.

Home care and office staff have a greater prevalence of females, while the management team has a greater prevalence of males.

Age

Council's age demographic continues to show a strong representation of staff over 35 years of age.

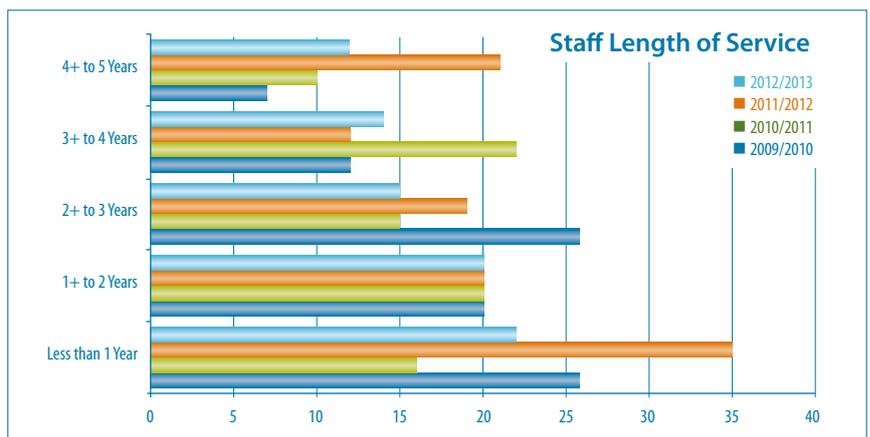
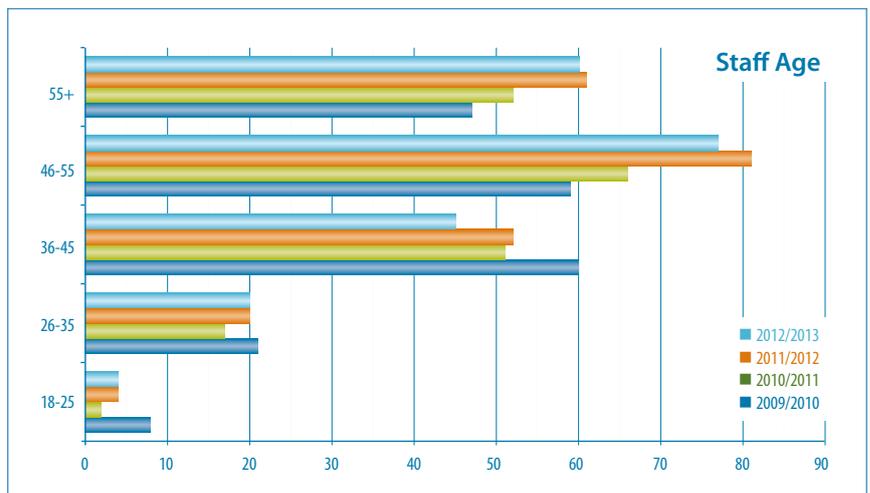
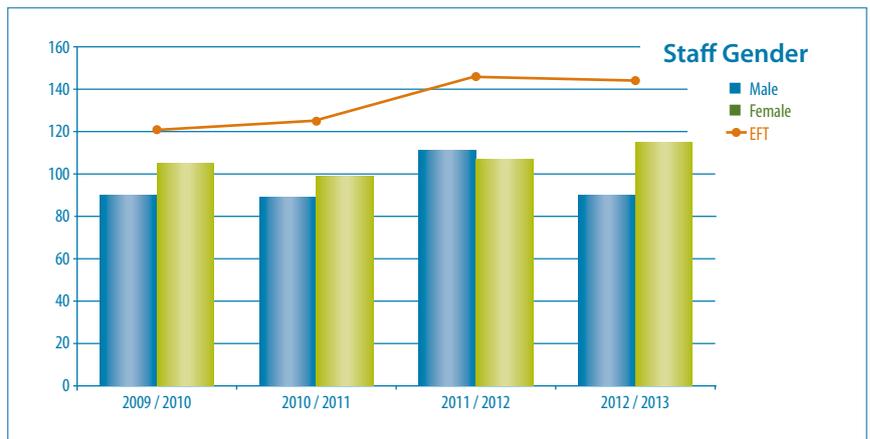
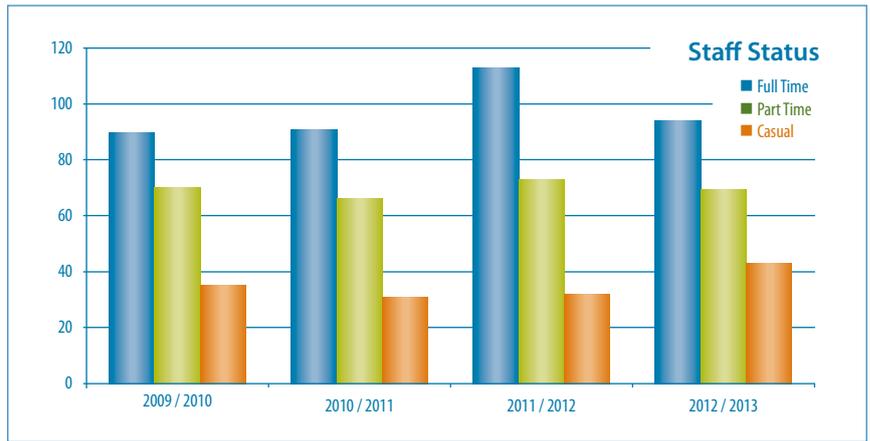
This will provide challenges for workforce planning in the future, particularly due to the high number of staff in the 55+ age bracket.

The number of staff in the over 46 bracket declined this year due to the completion of the flood recovery program.

Length of service

Some 40% of staff have been employed for less than five years.

Of those employed less than five years, 50% have been employed for less than two years and 50% between two and five years.



Staff representation on committees

Bellenger, Tony

- Central Victorian Tracks 'n' Trails Working Group
- Inglewood Reservoir Committee of Management
- Loddon Mallee Sport Assembly (Sports Focus)
- Recreation Strategy Steering Committee
- Regional Youth Affairs Networks

Campbell, Duncan

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Regional Finance Forum

Canfield, Carol

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health & Safety Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- North Central Local Learning & Employment Network

Christie, Heather

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Coombes, Christine

- Loddon Bendigo Rural Women's Network
- School Councils School Community Reference Group for the North-Central Trade Training Centre

Devereaux, Sue

- Central Victorian Community Road Safety Council
- East Loddon Community Bus Committee
- L2P Steering Committee
- Transport Connections Program Executive Committee

Foster, John

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Fry, David

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Gibbins, Carol

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Continuous Improvement Framework Committee
- Diabetes in Loddon Action Group
- Loddon Aged & Disability Services Network
- Loddon Mallee Government Aged & Disability Consortium
- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Group
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Gibbins, Tony

- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Gladman, Wendy

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Continuous Improvement Framework Committee

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Board
- Early Years Professional Network
- Loddon Aged & Disability Services Network
- Loddon Campaspe Family Violence Advisory Committee
- Loddon Healthy Minds Network
- Loddon Mallee Government Aged & Disability Consortium
- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Committee
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Regional Relief and Recovery Planning Committee (Southern Region)

Hargreaves, Ian

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Hinneberg, Brian

- Agrifood Skills Australia Interim Regional Steering Committee
- Department of Human Services Regional Recovery Committee
- Innovative Farming Implementation Plan Project Co-ordination Committee
- Loddon Valley Water Services Committee (ex officio)

Holt, Jude

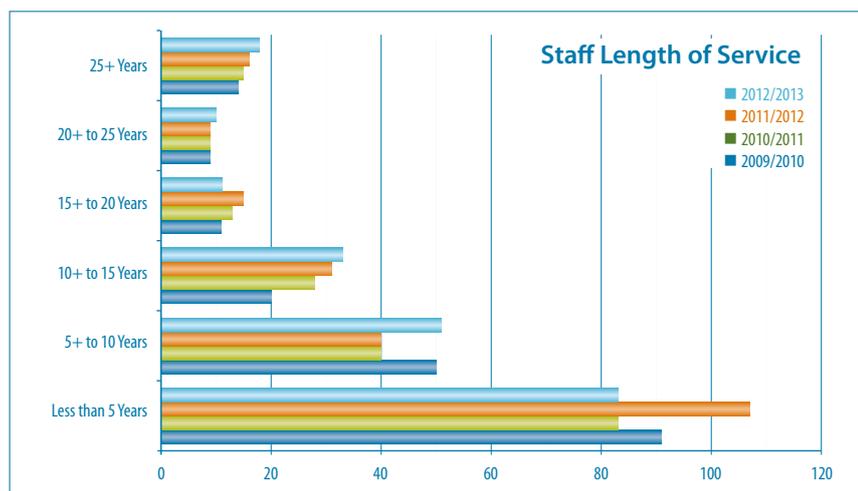
- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership Finance Committee
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Audit Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria Fire Services Levy Working Group
- Regional Procurement Cluster

Isbister, Kim

- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Committee
- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Plan Committee
- Regional Emergency Management Plan Committee

Jackson, Travis

- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee



OUR ORGANISATION



Loddon Shire Tourism Manager Robyn Vella (fourth from left) was one of the participants in a Web Marketing Workshop she helped organise for Wedderburn in July 2012.

Jenkyn, Tim

- Central Victorian Tracks 'n' Trails Working Group
- Inglewood Town Hall Hub Project Working Group
- Loddon Mallee Community Planners' Network
- Loddon Shire Community Planning Committees
- Operation Next Gen Steering Committee
- Transformative Towns Steering Committee
- Transport Connections Program Executive Committee

Last, Alan

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Lloyd, Daniel

- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Committee
- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Plan Committee
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health & Safety Committee

Lloyd, Helen

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

McDonald, Brian

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

McEwan, Bryan

- Central Victorian Agribusiness Forum
- Jones Eucalyptus Distillery Site Committee of Management
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Northern Poultry Cluster

McLauchlan, Ian

- GM-W Connections Project (NVIRP) Agency Liaison Group
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

McLinden, John

- Loddon Campaspe Councils
- Loddon Murray Regional Growth Plan Steering Committee
- Loddon Murray Regional Managers Forum
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Audit Committee

- Loddon Shire Centenary of ANZAC Committee
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria Innovation Committee
- Murray River Group of Councils
- North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation Board
- Rural Councils Victoria

Molenaar, Nico

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Phillips, Steven

- Loddon Municipal Emergency Management Committee
- Loddon Municipal Fire Management Plan Committee
- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Poulier, Lisa

- Bendigo Heritage Representatives' Group
- Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia (RIMPA) – Local Government Chapter

Rendell, James

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Regional Finance Forum

Schultz, Darren

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group

Seppings, Jeff

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Shay, David

- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee

Stobaus, Allan

- Inglewood Reservoir Committee of Management
- Loddon Mallee Sport Assembly (Sports Focus)
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Northern Loddon Mallee Youth Partnerships Committee
- Recreation Strategy Steering Committee

Sutton, Tyson

- Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan Technical Advisory Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee
- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Thomas, Sue

- Diabetes in Loddon Action Group
- Early Years Professional Network
- Loddon Mallee Region Kindergarten Cluster Managers
- Loddon Shire Occupational Health & Safety Committee

- Maternal & Child Health Regional Co-ordinators' Network
- Regional Kindergarten Cluster

Vella, Robyn

- Bendigo Regional Tourism Board
- Goldfields Tourism
- Loddon Southern Region Development & Tourism Committee of Management
- Nature Tourism Advisory Team
- Nature Tourism Festival Working Group
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management

Watson, Terry

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Risk Management Committee

Williams, Craig

- Loddon Shire Plant Replacement Committee

Wingfield, Deanne

- Loddon Shire Asset Management Working Group
- Loddon Shire Consultative Committee
- Regional Finance Forum
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management

OUR SERVICES

Council provides a diverse range of services to its community.

Corporate Services

- **Council administration**, including customer service and administrative support, records management, municipal building and equipment provision.
- **Council committees**, including administrative support for Section 86 committees in managing compliance with the Local Government Act 1989.
- **Financial management**, including preparation and management of the Council budget, preparation of financial statements and government statistical returns, collection of various revenue sources and payment of employees and suppliers.
- **Mobile library service** provided throughout the Shire.
- **Rating and valuations**, including management of valuations of

properties in the Shire, contract management relating to the revaluation process and raising annual rates and charges.

- **Staff management**, including recruitment, development, a well-being program and occupational health and safety.

Economy and Community

- **Community planning for communities across Loddon Shire**, including building Loddon communities through facilitation, logistical and financial means to improve the environmental aesthetic of communities and developing key community assets; supporting, managing and assisting communities to realise strengths and opportunities and to determine pathways for development; and facilitating novel approaches and solutions to local issues.

- **Economic development**, including support to new and existing businesses through direct facilitation, development of networking opportunities, provision of information, leadership development, promotion and marketing of opportunities within the Shire; referral to internal and external agencies to encourage access to Shire, state and federal development programs.
- **Industrial development**, including providing industry with access to infrastructure in developed and zoned industrial land which is appropriately located and priced to encourage the sustainable growth of industry.
- **Loddon Discovery Tours**, including assistance to the Loddon tourism industry, including public speaking, marketing and promotion of group tours, consulting, business liaison, tour bookings, project management and co-ordination, itinerary design, administrative and logistical support, program development to improve customer service, business development presentation and financial support for promotion.
- **Tourism development services**, including facilitation of strategic projects, assistance to small business, development of marketing and promotional material, assistance with advertising, direct financial support of key projects, provision and maintenance of tourism promotional signage and advice to new and existing tourism businesses, fostering development of tourism linkages throughout the region and encouraging connectivity between regional communities and key tourism bodies such as Tourism Victoria, Tourism Alliance, Goldfields Committee and Bendigo Tourism; and offer administrative support to the Loddon Visitor Information Centre.



Solar panels were erected on seven community halls during the year, including Newbridge (above), as a way of using power more sustainably.

Community Wellbeing

- **Aged services**, including home and respite care, property maintenance, senior citizens' centres, elderly persons' units and planned activity groups.
- **Early years services**, including maternal and child health, immunisations and cluster management of pre-schools.
- **Loddon Healthy Minds Network**, including meetings and activities designed to boost mental health awareness and personal support for residents of Loddon Shire.
- **Recovery**, including working with Council's emergency management team to deliver initial relief measures, then aid in ongoing recovery work; also includes response to single incidents of personal trauma.

Council's HACC services and immunisation programs are funded through the Department of Health, while our kindergarten and maternal and child health work receive funding from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Operations

- **Access programs**, including disability access and Transport Connections projects to improve accessibility in and around the Shire.
- **Building surveyor services**, including building permit and occupancy approvals and ensuring that development within Loddon Shire complies with the Building Act and relevant building regulation and standards.
- **Community grants scheme**, including the administration of the Community Grants Scheme which provides local community groups with financial support to deliver projects, programs or initiatives
- **Environmental health services**, including septic tank and waste water management approvals; food safety inspections and certification; monitoring of tobacco and alcohol sales, compliance with the Health Act and Environment Protection Act and their enforcement.
- **Environmental management services**, including weed management on Council property and development and implementation of Loddon's response to climate change.
- **Infrastructure management**, including long-term asset management planning for roads, buildings, recreational facilities, pools, parks, waste facilities and bridges; development and delivery of annual infrastructure projects and programs; contract administration; survey and design and digital mapping.
- **Local laws services**, including stock and domestic animal management permits; management of unsightly premises; roadside bushfire management works and local laws enforcement and compliance.



The maintenance and improvement of Council's five swimming pools falls under the control of the Operations directorate.

which improve the lives of Loddon residents.

- **Recreation services**, including financial and administrative support to sporting clubs, management of Council's swimming pools, applications for government grants and assistance with long-term strategies for recreation facilities.
- **Town planning services**, including planning permit and subdivision approvals, planning scheme compliance and enforcement, changes to the planning scheme and protection of significant heritage, cultural and environmental assets within the Shire.
- **Works delivery**, including maintenance and construction of roads, bridges, road reserves, footpaths, parks, gardens, rest areas, toilet facilities, playgrounds, buildings and pools; depot, plant and fleet maintenance and management; response to infrastructure-related customer requests; and waste management.
- **Youth support services**, including facilitating youth events, financial support for youth-related initiatives and long-term planning for youth development and retention.

Flood Restoration Program

The close of the financial year signalled the end of a remarkable period in the history of Loddon Shire, with Council's mammoth two-year flood restoration program finally completed.

The unimaginable task of rebuilding roads and town infrastructure after the floods of 2010/2011 was only made possible by generous grants provided under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, a joint federal/state agreement delivered through the Department of Treasury and Finance.

In total, Council spent around \$39 million in 27 months, repairing and rebuilding road, bridge, footpath and drainage networks and restoring a vast number of key community assets.

Of that amount, roughly \$1.2 million went towards clean-up and flood response, \$32 million to roadworks, \$1.4 million to administration and contract management costs and around \$6 million to repairing and replacing community infrastructure.

To achieve its highly ambitious program, Council boosted its outdoor plant and equipment resources with the purchase of additional graders, tractors and trucks worth about \$2.9 million.



Guest speaker Kaz Cooke (centre) is flanked by (from left) Lesley Addlem, Carol Canfield, Val Bissett and Rhonda Weeks at the Serpentine dinner evening.

It also hired 31 new staff for the two-year period and boosted its use of contractors.

Despite its daunting scale, Council's flood recovery program came in under budget and on time, delivering the equivalent of 10 years' worth of work in two.

During that time, there were 1774 individual road repair jobs

completed – more than 380km of roads graded, gravel re-sheeting totalled 563km, shoulder re-sheeting took place on 74km of roads and sealed road repairs 23km.

Repairs were also completed in 13 projects covering township streets, 91 bridges and culverts were reconstructed and 110 floodways fixed.



Besides the physical infrastructure, priority was given to business recovery, the natural environment and the community's psycho-social health.

Council's Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager, Brian Hinneberg, carried through with the last of his obligations under his previous role as Flood Recovery Manager.

Mr Hinneberg brought delegations of potential buyers to the Shire, facilitated meetings with agribusiness investment companies and peak agricultural organisations and set up a visitation program for agribusiness employers.

He supported a successful Men's Health night in Boort and organised a series of Loddon Business Workshops to assist flood-affected business in the southern part of the Shire. Those workshops were presented by the North Central Rural Financial Counselling Service with funding provided by the Australian Government.

The natural environment also received due attention, with public parks and reserves, weed control and farming assistance high on the agenda.

Walking trails at three popular reserves – at Bridgewater, Laanecoorie and Pyramid Hill – received major upgrades after all suffered extensive damage during the floods.

Equipped with funding from the then Department of Sustainability

and Environment, Council oversaw works including improved design, reinstatement of walking trails and seats, removing timber and rubbish, weed control and tree planting, street furniture and drainage and fencing repairs.

Other examples of flood recovery-funded projects were contributions to renewing facilities at Borella Park in Korong Vale, the installation of a heritage-style streetlight at Eddington, various fencing and weed control works in river locations, landscaping improvements at Bridgewater and land stabilisation efforts at Newbridge.

Council also supported community events, counselling and welfare services across the Shire.

A notable example was a light-hearted women's night out in March, thanks to funding from the Floods Community Recovery Fund set up by the state and federal governments.

A dinner was organised at the Serpentine Hall for flood-affected

farming women, followed by a workshop with the Bendigo Laughter Group and input from two guest speakers – author and cartoonist Kaz Cooke and life coach Robyn Bull.

The 132 women present enjoyed a night of laughter, interaction with their neighbours and some thoughtful reflections on the experiences they'd shared.

Council would wish to place on record its deep gratitude for the generous financial help and expertise offered by both the Australian and Victorian governments over the past two years.

Without this assistance, the Shire would not have seen the level of recovery it now enjoys, the number of projects completed or the community infrastructure rebuilt.

Thanks are also due to the Shire's residents for their support and patience as this massive program has been rolled out.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Council's new three-year Municipal Fire Management Plan was opened for public comment in July, with copies available at Shire offices and online and four public meetings held. The new plan was hammered out in partnership with the Country Fire Authority, the then Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria Police and other agencies and community groups.

Former VFL footballer Peter "Crackers" Keenan was special guest at a "Men's Night Out" in Boort in July, organised by Boort-based support worker Marg van Veen. Loddon Shire backed the event with money channelled through its Healthy Minds Network and Council's Transport Connections program paid for buses.

Loddon Healthy Minds Network hosted a lunch at the Newbridge Hotel with guest speaker Francis McCormick, a psychiatric nurse and family therapist with more than 25 years' experience in public mental health and general practice settings.

Loddon Shire co-ordinated and hosted two workshops in July to help local businesses boost their returns from tourism. The first was a two-part information session on a new regional television promotion, while the second focused on digital marketing.

Council announced its intention to spend more than \$4.9 million of ratepayer funds over the next 12 months on the Shire's roads, footpaths, kerbs and bridges.

The 2012/2013 infrastructure works program – which runs on top of the Shire's \$33 million flood recovery works budget – will be paid for by a contribution of more than \$2.2 million from Council funds, with the rest coming from federal and state grants.



Tarnagulla saw the official unveiling of its new community centre and reinvigorated streetscape. The \$720,000 project, funded by all three levels of government, also included new walking tracks, historic plaques, heritage seating and landscaping in sympathy with the town's bush surrounds.

As part of its budget process for 2012/2013, Council lifted its commitment to the Community Planning program. It approved 54 potential projects and an allocation of \$471,100 for a range of works across all wards.

Council handed out almost \$200,000 to 46 sporting and community groups under its latest Community Grants Scheme distribution. Council doubled both the amount of money available and the rate of its contribution (to \$2 for each dollar raised) and lifted the ceiling for individual grants from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Council fixed its increase in rates at 5.5 per cent for the new financial year, contributing 14 per cent of its total budgeted income when other charges are included.

Loddon Shire took part in the third biennial conference of the Murray River Group of Councils, held at the Rich River Golf Club Resort. Speakers included Senator Bridget McKenzie, Deputy Premier of Victoria Peter

Ryan, Victorian Farmers Federation president Peter Tuohey and celebrity chef Stefano di Pieri. Loddon Shire is one of six members of the MRGC, alongside the Gannawarra, Moira and Campaspe Shires and Mildura and Swan Hill Rural City Councils.

Council put its draft budget for 2012/2013 on show in July for public comment, before its formal adoption at a special meeting of Council on 27 July. The budget increased spending during 2012 on flood-damaged roads by \$8 million to a total of \$19 million, allocated \$1.4 million to township street improvements and boosted funding for Community Planning to \$850,000.

Council hosted a day-long Web Marketing Workshop in July run by SwitchedOnTourism, a Melbourne-based digital marketing services company, at Wedderburn Hub.

Council opened applications for places in the three and four-year-old programs at its five kindergartens in July. The new structure of 15 hours of kindergarten a week was to come into effect in 2013.

Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow chaired a meeting in the Council offices at Wedderburn to discuss possible ways in which the Shire could participate in the centenary of Anzac Day in 2015. Representatives from a range of community organisations attended.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Councillors held a briefing session with representatives of NBN Co, the federal government-owned company charged with the rollout of the proposed national broadband network, about the shape of the service in Loddon Shire.

Council appointed Andrew Bainbridge as senior project engineer for the \$3.4 million redevelopment of the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park.



A one-off briefing session at Inglewood in August gave potential candidates in October's municipal elections a chance to learn about the roles and responsibilities of councillors. The session, hosted by the Municipal Association of Victoria, was the only one of its kind in Loddon Shire.

Wendy Gladman, formerly Manager Community Services, took up the reins as Acting Director Community Wellbeing on 20 August, working out of both the Wedderburn and Serpentine offices. Wendy joined the Shire 17 years ago in the Aged and Disability sector and was appointed

Manager Community Services in January 2010. Her latest role sees her overseeing the Shire's community services, Healthy Minds Network, aged care, immunisation programs, pre-schools, maternal and child health.

A new community singing group got together in Boort in August, known as the Boort Babblers. Backed by flood recovery workers, the group set to work under singing coach Jane Thompson.

Loddon Shire backed a bold new pilot project aimed at encouraging young entrepreneurs to stay and work in country Victoria. Known as "Operation Next Gen", the project received \$30,000 in seed funding through the State Government's "Putting Locals First" Program.

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh announced a grant of \$400,000 towards the redevelopment of the Wedderburn Community Centre.

The funding, part of the Victorian Government's "Putting Locals First" program, added to the \$851,450 already allocated to the project from Round Two of the Regional Development Australia Fund.

Football fans enjoyed a treat in August when Council facilitated the

first-ever "Welcome Round", thanks to a one-off state government grant. Patrons received free entry, all football and netball clubs in the Shire were given a cash boost and Council had special match footballs designed to commemorate the occasion.

Council added three more sites to its list of Neighbourhood Safer Places in the event of major bushfires in the Shire. The sites were at Bridgewater, Inglewood and Wedderburn. That brought the number of approved NSPs in the Shire to six, with others at Boort, Pyramid Hill and Serpentine.



The annual *Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring* festival opened on 1 September, featuring the popular Kooyoora Wildflower Show, bushwalking, tree planting, bird watching, photography, canoeing and bike riding. This year also saw a wetlands coach tour, a collection of orchid photographs, a family day on the Loddon River and an open weekend at Terrick Terrick National Park.



Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Council moved its meeting venue for two months while the Serpentine office became a temporary base for the conduct of the municipal elections. In September, Councillors met in Boort and, in October, at Tarnagulla.

The historic Inglewood Town Hall opened its doors for a community day in September aimed at showcasing the grand old building and airing concept plans for the proposed new community hub on the site.

The second Farm Diversification Expo at the Campbells Forest Hall was a free event in September organised by the Loddon Bendigo Rural Women's Network, with funding provided by Loddon Shire and the City of Greater Bendigo.

Council supported the arrival of the "Ignition" program in the Shire, aimed at helping young people aged 16-plus learn the necessary skills to get their learners' permits. The Shire,



through the Transport Connections Program, arranged courses in Wedderburn in September and Pyramid Hill in October.

Jolie Middleton joined Council as Rural Access worker, helping people with a disability feel more a part of community life. Her position covers both the City of Greater Bendigo and Loddon Shire and she divides her time between the two.



The Loddon Healthy Minds Network held its first-ever art competition in Boort and Wedderburn in October with a display of student artworks reflecting the message of mental health and wellbeing. Funding for the project was provided through the Floods Community Recovery Fund, jointly sponsored by the Australian and Victorian governments.

Victorian Seniors Week in Loddon Shire saw local residents enjoy their annual gala day at Serpentine Hall and a "Senior Masterchef" day at Inglewood.

Three schools in Loddon Shire hosted a Sunshine Breakfast in October to mark Mental Health Week. The breakfasts, an initiative of the Loddon Healthy Minds Network, took place at Boort, Wedderburn and East Loddon P-12 College.

A free workshop aimed at helping older people stay mobile for longer ran in Pyramid Hill with Council support. The day was organised by the Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House and Loddon Shire's Transport Connections program.

Magician and ventriloquist Alan Sloggett showed his audience a trick or three when the veteran showman performed in Pyramid Hill. Alan was the star attraction of "Vaudeville in Loddon", a one-hour show hosted by Pyramid Hill Pre-School at Pyramid



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Hill College. In the audience were four-year-olds and their parents from the combined five pre-schools in the Loddon Kindergarten Cluster, invited as part of Children's Week 2012 celebrations.

A new initiative from the Shire's Tourism Department saw our local towns feature in a lengthy series of television ads screening during the spring. The ads were filmed in Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn and appeared on WIN-TV during October.



Twenty-eight music students from Boort, Wedderburn and Pyramid Hill Secondary Colleges produced a CD of their own music during the year under the Council-supported Kool Skools program. They showcased their talents at a concert in Boort in October – and launched their CD, *Along These Lines*, at the same time.

Ten Boort residents put up their hands to take part in "Operation Next Gen", a pilot project aimed at encouraging young entrepreneurs in rural areas. The group joined 10 others from Birchip and 10 more from Cohuna.



The latest Official Visitor Guide for Loddon Shire was launched at a function at the Blue Eucy Museum in Inglewood. The full-colour, 54-page booklet is expected to be revised in 2014.



Loddon Shire's Tourism Department hosted the first-ever Loddon Valley Tourism Expo – tagged "A Valley of Delights" – in Melbourne in November. The expo featured two formal presentations on the region, followed by questions and light refreshments.

Council inspections of private properties in the Shire for fire risks began in early November, with every town in the municipality to be visited.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

A new access platform for disabled water-skiers and canoeists was officially opened at Bridgewater in November. The \$110,000 Bridgewater Water Sports Platform project was funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments and the Loddon Shire.

Loddon Shire offered a "first" for country Victoria with a training opportunity aimed at helping people become more skilled and confident when using public transport. Part of Council's Transport Connections program, the free two-day course looked at such topics as journey planning, buying tickets, safety and access issues, getting around Melbourne and Bendigo, how to read signs at bus and tram stops and public transport etiquette.

Council offered local residents sitting on community-based committees of management free tickets to the 2012 Board Builder Conference in Moonee Valley in November. The funding covered conference and transport costs.

The five swimming pools managed by Loddon Shire opened for the summer in November – several with fresh paintwork and new retractable pool blankets.

Brydie Lanyon, of Boort, appeared as the sole representative of Loddon Shire at the Victorian Kool Skools

Awards Night in Thornbury. Council has been among Brydie's active supporters, with a grant of \$1200 towards her first recording and the provision of a bus to take 18 Boort students to Melbourne to see her perform.

One million used farm chemical containers, 530kg of old batteries, 719 tonnes of scrap metal, 7,800 litres of waste oil and 820 fluorescent tubes – they were the savings documented in the 2011/2012 Annual Report of the Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group released in November. Loddon is one of five member Councils and Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow is deputy chairperson of the group.

Thirty-six volunteers from the Loddon Visitor Information Centre in Wedderburn were treated to a "thank you" dinner in late November at Inglewood's Empire State Hotel.



The streets of Inglewood were buzzing when the "Inglewood Alive: Come See Us Now" festival ran in early December. The day featured stalls, children's amusements, historic walks, live music and antiques. The working group sorting out the details comprised representatives

from town businesses, the Lions Club, Loddon Shire, CFA, schools, the Inglewood Development and Tourism Committee and the local community.

A meeting in Bridgewater in December led by Shire Tourism Manager Robyn Vella sought to gather ideas for a town festival in 2013. The desire was to show outsiders how well the town had recovered from the 2011 floods.

Around 120 members of senior citizens' clubs around Loddon Shire met in Serpentine for their Seniors' Christmas lunch.

The Wedderburn Harness Racing Club hosted "Back to the Burn" in mid-December with rich race prizes, live music, children's activities, fireworks and a novelty event for local sporting clubs. Loddon Shire backed the event with a grant for marketing and promotion.

Council undertook a review of its Aged and Disability Strategic Plan in December, with a public meeting held at the Council Chambers in Serpentine.

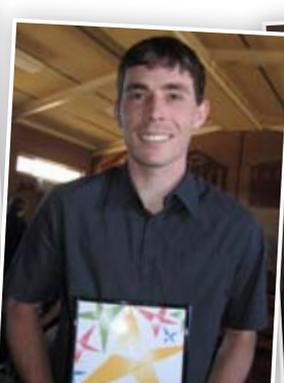
Council opened the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park site for free summer camping before building works got under way on the planned new \$3.4 million park in February.



Brydie Lanyon



Boort's MU students 2012



Australia Day Award recipients Kevin Sutton, Nick Marlow and Noel Hercus

Council organised an aged and disability services survey in December, with one public meeting and a public survey which could be filled out online or on paper. The aim was to create a revised Aged and Disability Strategic Plan with the help of consultant Effective Change, from Melbourne.

Six young people from Boort swapped schoolbags for tram tickets when they spent three days in Melbourne. The Boort District School students, accompanied by teacher Brooke Chamberlain, were taking part in the second round of an exchange program with students from The University of Melbourne originally devised by Loddon Shire Tourism manager Robyn Vella.

Seven community halls in Loddon Shire wiped out their electricity bills with a joint \$44,000 project to install 90 solar panels between them. Completed under the Shire's Community Planning Program, it's the first time a group of hall committees has come together for a development of this type. Those involved were Arnold, Laanecoorie, Woodstock, Eddington, Bridgewater and Newbridge, plus the Tarnagulla Community Centre.

The Victorian Government backed the Inglewood Town Hall community hub project with a grant of \$30,000 to advance the necessary planning work. The imposing 1883 town hall, distinguished by its memorial clock tower and iconic palm trees, is owned by Loddon Shire and administered by a committee comprising Council and community representatives.

Walking trails at three popular reserves in Loddon Shire were back in action after wide-ranging reconstruction works completed in December. The Bridgewater, Laanecoorie and Pyramid Hill recreation reserves all suffered extensive damage during the floods of January 2011.

Three South Korean visitors received a warm welcome at Boort in December when they visited to investigate potential business and cultural opportunities. The visitors were guests at a reception held at the Boort Resource and Information Centre, hosted by the Boort Development Committee and Loddon Shire.



Loddon Shire took its place as one of four municipalities involved in the Emergency Management Cluster Pilot Project, a plan devised by the Municipal Association of Victoria to produce an improved model of emergency management operations for councils. Others in the group

were the City of Greater Bendigo and the Shires of Campaspe and Mount Alexander.

In January, Loddon Shire received state government grants totalling \$73,500 for the three years to the end of 2015 for its ongoing FReeZA youth activities program. The Loddon program is managed by five youth groups across the Shire – at Wedderburn, East Loddon, Pyramid Hill, Boort and Inglewood-Bridgewater – in conjunction with Council recreation officer Tony Bellenger.

Boort's Kevin Sutton was one of 14 recipients honoured in Loddon Shire when the municipality's 2013 Australia Day Awards were announced. Mr Sutton was named Citizen of the Year, while the award for Young Citizen of the Year was shared between Tyler Nelson and Nick Marlow.

Loddon Shire's infant immunisation program fired up again in January, with sessions planned for Serpentine, Pyramid Hill and Boort. The other three towns on the circuit – Dingee, Inglewood and Wedderburn – had their first visits for 2013 a month later.

Carol Gibbins joined Council in January as Community Care Co-ordinator, based at Serpentine. Carol, from Powlett Plains, is responsible for managing Council's aged and disability services, which include the HACC program and other home care efforts, senior citizens, Planned Activities Groups

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

and assessment and administration services.

Loddon Shire's five kindergartens opened their doors for 2013 in January, with preparation and planning sessions and interviews with families. Sessions for both three and four-year-olds were made available.



Gold nugget



Three residents of Loddon Shire – Desire Gardiner, Andrew Whatley and Jan Harper – were among 24 participants welcomed into this year's Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program. The Shire has been a long-time supporter of the scheme, offering a \$7000 scholarship to one participant each year, plus in-kind assistance.

Competitors and spectators heading to Loddon Shire on 3 February for the 10th annual Bridgewater Triathlon got more than they bargained for, with a town festival running the same day. Features included market stalls, buskers, wine tastings, water sports demonstrations, a dip at the historic swimming hole and live music.

Loddon Shire was a major sponsor of the 19th annual Dingee Family Festival in February, an event which offered a roast meal and barbecue, children's entertainment, gate and raffle prizes, face painting and music by Gannawarra Shire duo Neville and Kathy Hird.

A chemical drop-off day in Wedderburn this month, tagged "Detox your Home", urged residents to hand over dangerous and unwanted household chemical products. The day was funded by the Victorian landfill levy and



Detox your home



2013 CLLM participants

administered by Sustainability Victoria and Loddon Shire.

Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow and Council's Tourism Manager, Robyn Vella, visited Parliament House in Melbourne in February for the official presentation of a replica of the "Welcome Stranger" nugget to celebrate the adoption of gold as Victoria's new state mineral emblem. The replica is now on display in a glass case in the Premier's Corridor.

Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow welcomed eight new Australian citizens during Council's visit to Pyramid Hill for its February meeting. Frederick and Mary Estrella and Marilyn, Aaron, Allen, Elijah, Julia and Winona Fernandez are all originally from the Philippines and all currently live in Pyramid Hill.



Loddon Shire wound up a \$1.5 million infrastructure improvement program which saw 31 projects completed around the municipality. The building effort was funded under the federal government's Strengthening Basin Communities Program, aimed specifically at climate-proofing sport and recreation facilities in the Shire.

Thirty Grade 5-6 children from four primary schools in Loddon Shire travelled to Melbourne in March to see a Cirque du Soleil show in the Docklands. The cost of the tickets and bus charter was met by Council's youth development fund.

The annual Minelab Detector Jamboree proved highly popular again in March, when hundreds of visitors gathered at Wedderburn's Hard Hill Tourist Reserve to hunt for metal tokens and try gold panning. Sponsored by Loddon Shire and organised by Wedderburn Tourism, the Jamboree is a major attraction on the Shire's tourist calendar.

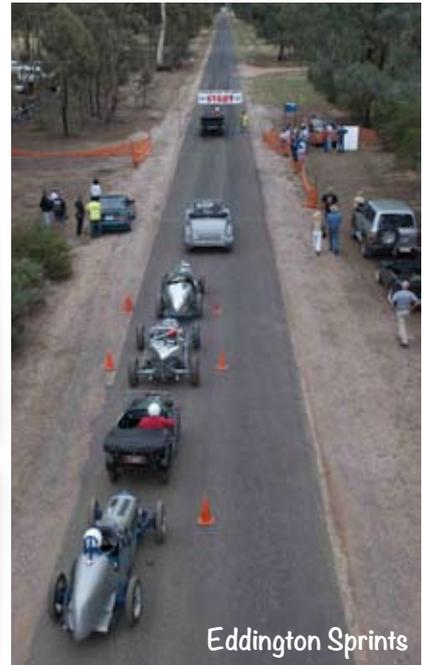
In March, Council invited applications from local sporting



Phone app launch in Wedderburn



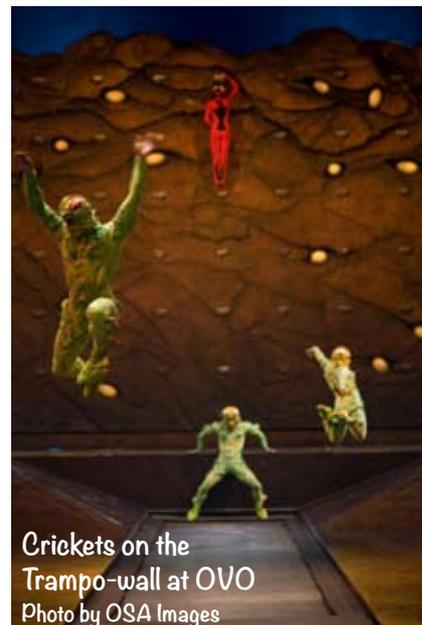
Loddon Discovery Tours visitors



Eddington Sprints



Minelab Wedderburn Jamboree



Crickets on the Trampo-wall at OVO
Photo by OSA Images

and community organisations to put their hands up for a share of Loddon Shire's annual allocation to its Community Grants Scheme. Over the past 13 years, Council has invested more than \$1.2 million in 564 projects worth, in total, \$4.5 million.

That same month, Council opened applications for its Community Planning Program for 2013/2014, with a \$750,000 pool available. Operating on a partnership basis, the program allocated \$50,000 to each of the Shire's five wards for local projects.

Loddon Shire residents with opinions on how Council could encourage more environmentally sustainable initiatives in local communities were invited to have their say in March and April. Senior staff began the process of shaping Council's Sustainability Strategy for 2013/2018.

Competitors in the annual Eddington Sprints were delighted to find they were driving on a

newly resurfaced track – courtesy of Loddon Shire. Council contractors laid 440m of new asphalt in January, covering the full course in time for this year's historic car racing event.

Loddon Shire Council, in partnership with the Laanecoorie community, released draft plans for public comment relating to a proposed redevelopment at the Laanecoorie foreshore reserve. The draft plans were a result of 12 months of discussions between local residents, Council and government authorities, with plans aimed at returning the area to recreational community use shared with controlled camping access.

Council was a sponsor of the 2013 Future Farming Expo, held at the Yarrowalla Hall in March. Hosted by the North Central Catchment Management Authority, the free event featured a range of expert speakers and practical demonstrations covering such topics as weather, beneficial insects, soil pit demonstrations, carbon farming and edible shrubs.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Expo Award

The first of this season's Loddon Discovery Tours got under way with lunch at the Newbridge Hotel in March. On board were 36 members of the Combined Probus Club of Monash, on the first leg of their five-day tour of the municipality assisted by Shire Tourism Manager Robyn Vella and regular Loddon Ambassadors Roberta Foster, Paul Haw, Bradley Haw and Kevin Poyser.

Boort Trotting Club held its latest Cups meeting at Boort on St Patrick's Day. Sponsored by the Victorian Government and Loddon Shire, among others, the meeting included Fashions on the Field, a leprechaun toss, yabby racing and pony trots alongside the eight-race program.

Loddon Shire threw itself further into the digital world this month with the unveiling of its new tourism app for smartphones and tablets. The move was the next step forward from the posting of the latest Loddon Official Visitor Guide as an e-book on the Council's website.



Regional Living Expo



Loddon Shire again supported the Rheola Charity Carnival – the 143rd time this iconic event has operated. The program included woodchop competitions, foot races, clay target shooting, sheep dog trials, vintage tractor pulls and displays of small stationary engines, classic cars and utes.

A major jobs summit held at Boort kick-started a ground-breaking new economic and employment effort in the Loddon-Mallee region known as the Agrifood National Regional Initiatives. Summit host Agrifood Skills Australia aims to work with rural industry, government, education and training providers to meet the skills and workforce needs of industry.

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh made several visits to Loddon Shire this month to announce welcome state government funding for streetscape improvements and new netball courts in Pyramid Hill, an upgrade for the Boort Caravan Park and the redevelopment of the Serpentine sports pavilion.

Council threw its support behind "Grow Your Business", an eight to 10-week intensive course organised by Bendigo Tourism for business owners. The program, which boasts more than 45 graduates, is sponsored by the Victorian Government.

Loddon Shire's Rural Access officer, Jolie Middleton, invited community members to help her work towards her aim of producing an *Accessible Accommodation Guide* for distribution across the Shire. The intention is to give people with disabilities greater access to the Shire's accommodation venues.

A major revamp of Council's Boort landfill site was completed in April, resulting in a facility almost triple the size. Now 108,000 square metres in size after extensive earthmoving and



Boort tip work



MU Group

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

re-fencing work, the site is expected to last an extra 10 years.

Producers from Loddon Shire, supported by Council, were among the exhibitors at the inaugural Loddon River Celebration Event, hosted by the North Central Catchment Management Authority at Newbridge in 19 April and Kerang the following month.

Mayors and senior executives from six municipalities gathered in Wedderburn on 4 April when Loddon Shire hosted a meeting of the Murray River Group of Councils. Items up for discussion included the provision of natural gas to the Murray River region, a progress report on the Bridgewater Caravan Park redevelopment, advocacy issues and the Murray Darling Association national conference planned for 2015.

A group of students from The University of Melbourne experienced a taste of rural life when they took part in the latest round of an exchange program originally devised by Shire Tourism Manager Robyn Vella in the wake of the 2011 floods. The students toured well-known local attractions and enjoyed the hospitality of local families.

Loddon Shire has improved its communications with residents and visitors by establishing itself as a National Relay Service-friendly organisation. This involved training for customer service staff and adding NRS numbers to its website and printed material.

Council's effort for the second annual Regional Victoria Living Expo in Melbourne this month was amply rewarded, with the award for Best Council Stand and a heavy demand for its literature and giveaways. With 15 per cent more visitors than last year's inaugural event, the expo was hailed a huge success – official attendance figures show almost 9,500 people attended.



The official opening of the new multi-purpose pavilion at Newbridge on 5 May was a triumphant day for the local community. Leading the formalities were Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty, Loddon Shire Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow, football club president Ron Trimble and Council chief executive officer John McLinden. MLC for Northern Victoria Region Damian Drum was also there.

The Wedderburn Community House hosted a Mental Health First Aid course in May to help people respond more effectively when dealing with others suffering mental illness or mental health problems. The course was free, thanks to sponsorship from the Loddon Healthy Minds Network.

Wedderburn Community House held its first-ever Open Day linked in with Neighbourhood House Week on 10 May. The centre offered food, produce and plant stalls, gold

detector demonstrations, music from local students, free Devonshire teas, a raffle and lucky draw prize.

Operators of small businesses in Loddon Shire were invited to sign up for a series of three workshops, in Inglewood starting in May, led by Rural Financial Counsellor Colin O'Brien. Supported by Loddon Shire, these free sessions aimed to provide practical and relevant information which would benefit those businesses.

This year's Loddon Powercor Excellence Awards were held in late May at the Eddington hall, with organic farmer Neil Druce and musician Mike Brady as special guests.

Council's Rural Access officer, Jolie Middleton, convened two presentations in Serpentine in May to explain the benefits to local businesses of the Victorian Companion Card. These cards are issued to people with a disability who need a helper if they want to attend an event or venue.

Loddon Shire laid down a clear statement of its aims and priorities for the future with the release of its draft Council Plan 2013/2017. The draft identified seven strategic platforms to which Council will devote its energies and resources over the next four years. These included supporting its townships, advocating for the Shire's agrifood sector, boosting business and local employment options and engaging with youth.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Solar panels



Kayaks



Campbells Forest Hall

Council released its draft budget for 2013/2014 for public comment in May. The documents showed Council expected to receive \$1 million from the state government for local road infrastructure and spend over \$1 million on township street improvement and streetscapes. It proposed a capital works program

of \$8.42 million and full funding of Council's ongoing commitment to community planning of \$750,000.

Plans for the fourth Naturally Loddon Festival were released this month, revealing fresh events and a longer running time. Five weeks last year, the 2013 festival now spans eight weeks, from 30 August to 27 October. New inclusions this year

are overnight and day canoe trips, a revived Blue Eucy Heritage Festival, a New Age market day and the annual meeting of the Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria.

In May, Council launched into a far-reaching program of maintenance works at the five swimming pools it owns across the Shire. All up, Council planned to spend more than \$142,000 from its recreation budget to make improvements to the pools and grounds.

Council announced plans to develop a new Loddon Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2013/2017. This plan was looking to identify local policies and actions which would protect and promote public health and wellbeing for Shire residents.

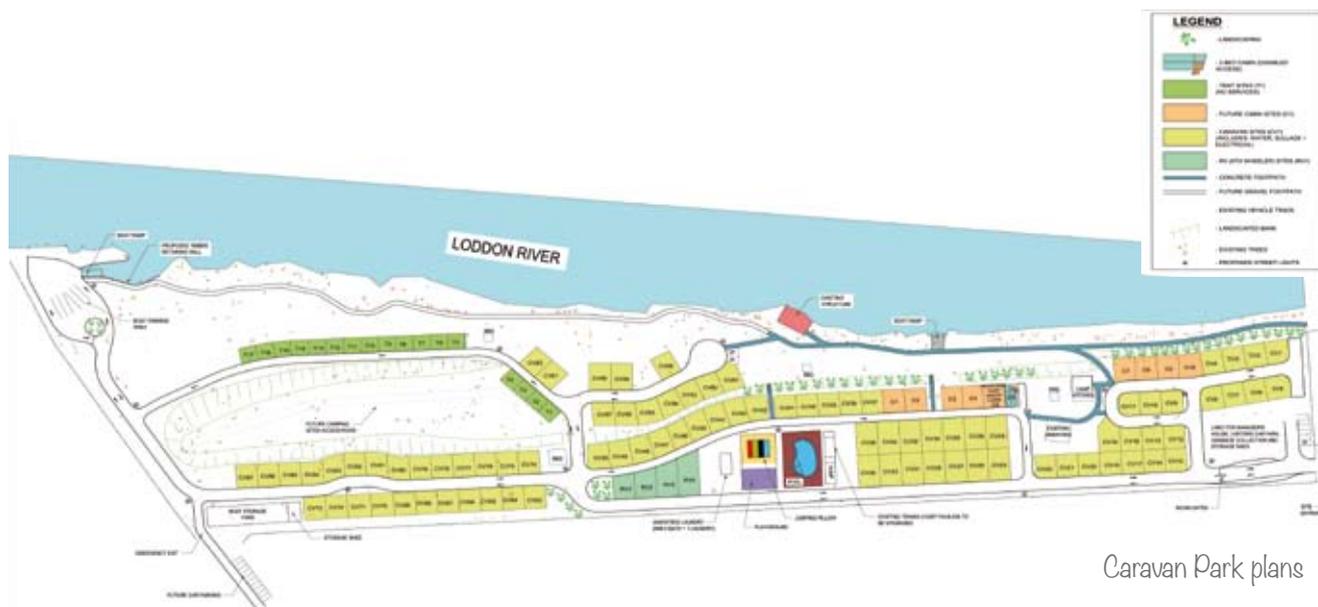
A free barbecue and information session at Newbridge on 11 May celebrated the completion of a remarkable project, in which seven public halls in Loddon Shire wiped out their electricity bills with a



Volunteers' morning tea



Canoes



Caravan Park plans

joint effort to install 90 solar panels between them. Carried out under the Shire's Community Planning Program, it was the first time a group of hall committees had come together for a development of this type.

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh visited Inglewood and Wedderburn to announce funding of \$400,000 for the Inglewood town hall and community hub, \$198,000 to help create the new Inglewood industrial estate and \$500,000 towards the Wedderburn streetscape improvement.

Council recognised the efforts of its helpers during National Volunteer Week. Council sponsored morning or afternoon tea for invited residents in Boort, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn.

At its meeting in late May, Council approved the winning tenders for two major infrastructure projects in the Shire – the Bridgewater Caravan Park and Wedderburn Community Centre redevelopments. Construction began on both projects in June, with completion of both expected by Christmas.

In another "first" for Loddon Shire, Council released its latest digital marketing tool in May – a tourism e-newsletter. The initiative fulfilled another of the specified actions

in Council's Tourism Strategy 2011/2016.

Council voted in May to back the campaign by the Municipal Association of Victoria to urge a "yes" vote in the 2013 referendum to propose including local government in the Australian Constitution. Councillors approved a voluntary contribution of \$6,724 to the MAV effort and agreed to participate in the campaign at the local level.

A \$15,000 grant from Council's Community Planning resources helped put a new roof and guttering system on the Campbell's Forest Hall. The money was augmented with a contribution of \$7500 from the committee.

More than 100 enthusiasts converged on Wedderburn's Jacka Park on 25 May for the Shire's second free geocaching event and barbecue. Last year's inaugural geocaching day attracted participants from across Victoria and interstate.

Loddon Shire's "Club 5 to 8" – a social activity provided through Council's HACC-funded Planned Activity Program – took 35 travellers on a trip to Broken Hill in May for a tour which included visits to Wentworth Gaol, the Daydream Mine in Silverton, the iconic Silverton Hotel, the world's largest acrylic painting on canvas and the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Loddon Shire staff celebrated the completion of Council's massive two-year flood restoration program in late May with a barbecue get-together at the Wedderburn depot. All up, Council spent around \$39 million in 27 months - \$33 million of that on roadworks and \$6 million on repairing and replacing community infrastructure.

Council moved in May to confirm Wendy Gladman (right) as Loddon Shire's new Director Community Wellbeing after a nine-month



establishment period for the new portfolio. Wendy began acting in the position on 20 August 2012 with the brief to establish and "road-test" the new role.

Dingee Pre-School became the second of the Shire's five kindergartens to pass the National Quality Framework assessment process. Pyramid Hill was the first through when notification from the department arrived last year.

Staff of the North Central Catchment Management Authority organised their inaugural Loddon River Celebration Event for Newbridge in April and Kerang in May. Council's

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Tourism Department co-ordinated displays at both venues showcasing samples of fine local food and wine.



In June, Council started work on a year-long project investigating the effectiveness of septic systems across the Shire. Council officers set out to visit all properties in un-sewered towns and hamlets and those located within 500m of the Loddon River and its tributaries to assess their septic systems.

Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow, Cr Gavan Holt, Chief Executive Officer John McLinden and Executive Assistant Lynne Habner travelled to Canberra in June for the 2013 National General Assembly of Local Government. The four-day conference included speeches from senior political figures, academics and social commentators, panel discussions, award presentations and meetings with MPs from all sides of politics.

In June, Council released two new tourist brochures designed to help visitors and locals alike to see more of the Shire. The Boort Wetlands/ Farm Gate Tours self-drive brochure was produced jointly by the Boort Tourism Group and Council's Tourism Department. The second publication was Council's Calendar of Events brochure for 2013/2014 – the third time the guide has appeared.

Former AFL champion Shane Crawford stopped in Durham Ox this month during his epic 22-day cycling marathon from Melbourne to Perth. They were welcomed with a sausage sizzle and the presentation of a \$1000 cheque from Loddon Shire Council. He was riding 3,600km across the country to raise funds and awareness for Breast Cancer Network Australia.

A free tour of some of the Shire's varied tourist destinations proved a weekend treat in June for 20 volunteers involved with the Loddon Visitor Information Centre. Stops on the tour included Inglewood's Eucalyptus Museum and Red Door Gallery, Newbridge recreation reserve and Newbridge General Store, Tarnagulla's Community Centre and Commercial St shops, Laanecoorie Lakeside Park and Mulwarrie Studios in Bridgewater.

A state government-sponsored survey showed residents of Loddon Shire were generally happy with the level of service provided by Council – even more so than last year. Loddon Shire recorded an overall performance index score of 68 – an increase of one point over last year. This was significantly higher than both the statewide average of 60 and the average index score for small rural shires of 59.

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh visited Pyramid Hill on 8 June to present a grant of \$6,978 to the

Pyramid Hill Historical Society. He then moved on to Calivil to officially open the community's two new multi-use courts. Later in the day, he travelled to Boort for a \$200,000 funding announcement related to redevelopment proposals for the sports pavilion at Boort Park.

Council strengthened its hand in the federal government's Agrifood Skills Australia National Regional Initiative with the appointment of Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager Brian Hinneberg to the local steering group. Brian's new post was confirmed during the Council meeting held at Newbridge in June.

Council adopted the new Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013/2016 at its meeting in June.

Council allocated \$2,500 from its youth development budget towards the costs associated with the MATES program operating at the Wedderburn and Pyramid Hill Colleges. This scheme links young people with adult mentors and encourages positive relationships and outcomes.

At its June meeting, Council allocated grants totalling almost \$197,650 under its annual Community Grants Scheme and a further \$10,400 towards its Events Sponsorship arrangements.



Newbridge Pavilion rebuilt



Victorian Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty and MLC for Northern Victoria Region Damian Drum were on hand to help open the rebuilt Newbridge multi-use pavilion in May.

The official opening of the new multi-purpose pavilion at Newbridge on 5 May was a day of genuine triumph for the local community.

The short ceremony highlighted the combined efforts of government, Council and the people of Newbridge in rebuilding the facilities they lost during the flood devastation of two years ago.

Leading the formalities were Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty, Loddon Shire Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow, football club president Ron Trimble and Council chief executive officer John McLinden.

MLC for Northern Victoria Region Damian Drum was also present.

The January 2011 floods were the biggest on record for Newbridge, with water levels reaching about three metres higher than anything previously recorded.

Damage at the Newbridge recreation reserve was severe, heavily impacting on the tennis, netball, football, cricket and camping facilities. The main football

and netball clubrooms were so badly damaged they were unusable.

A steering committee was quickly formed, representing the recreation reserve, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (formally DSE) and Loddon Shire staff and Councillors, to begin the rebuilding process.

In June 2011, the state government, through its Flood Recovery for Community Infrastructure Fund, approved funding of \$1,461,193 to upgrade power supply to the reserve, demolish the remains of the existing building and construct a new facility on the site.

A further \$814,426 was allocated from that same fund to repair and rebuild other infrastructure, including the tennis clubhouse, football ground, scoreboard, roads and fencing.

Council provided \$100,000 from its Community Planning budget and a

further \$453,000 from its insurance claim over the facilities, as well as contributing significantly to project management.

The Newbridge Football Netball Club, in conjunction with the reserve's committee of management and local residents, put in countless hours cleaning up the site and establishing temporary facilities to enable training to take place.

The Newbridge community's input involved a total cash contribution of almost \$170,000 in cash and in-kind labour and materials valued at more than \$175,000.

This in-kind contribution included tradespeople offering their services, general labouring and generous donations of materials and machinery.

The new pavilion provides football, netball and umpires' change rooms, a function area, commercial kitchen, toilet facilities, office space and first aid areas.

Powercor Excellence Awards

Loddon Shire staff and guests mixed business with pleasure at Eddington on 30 May 2013 with the staging of the biennial Loddon Powercor Excellence Awards.

This function, the premier event on Council's social calendar, recognises and rewards the high levels of professionalism and quality of service that exist among businesses and individuals within the Shire.

As well as saluting this year's award winners, dinner guests heard from visiting speakers Neil Druce, owner of the highly popular Junee Licorice and Chocolate Factory, and musician Mike Brady.

In 1998, Mr Druce looked to value-add to his family farm's organic wheat by milling flour.

Looking for a niche product, he settled on licorice and bought and restored an old flour mill, a local landmark in Junee.

The Junee Licorice and Chocolate Factory produces a growing range of organic confectionaries, operates a gift shop and restaurant and attracts more than 100,000 visitors each year.

Mike Brady, one of Victoria's most iconic musical performers, is best

known for writing some of the biggest-selling musical anthems ever recorded in praise of Australian sport – *Up There Cazaly*, *One Day in September* and *That's What I Like About Football*.

Winners announced on the night were Wedderburn's Maddison Holt (Young Achiever), the Bridgewater FNC Triathlon (Major Event Award), Inglewood Eucalyptus Distillery Museum (Best Tourism Operator) and Dingee dairy farmers Peter and Donna Sexton (Agriculture and Primary Industries Award).

Inglewood antiques dealer Fusspots won Best Small Business, Pyramid Hill's Victoria Hotel took out the Food, Wine and Hospitality Award, while Natalie Rodwell, of Inglewood's Champions IGA, was named Employee of the Year.

The final prize of the night was the coveted Business of the Year Award, this year snared by Peter and Donna Sexton.



Powercor Award winners were, from top, Catherine and Barry Norman, of Fusspots, Maddison Holt, Natalie Rodwell and Peter and Donna Sexton, with their daughters, Rebecca and Tessa.



One for the record books

Loddon Shire's Lisa Poulier (third from left) and Director Corporate Services Jude Holt (right) pictured at the presentation of the Sir Rupert Hamer Awards in Melbourne in May. At left are historical society members Pam and Robert Plant.

Loddon Shire scored a major triumph in May at the prestigious Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Awards in Melbourne.

Records and Archives Manager Lisa Poulier won the Community Archives category with her recently completed project to digitise records of local young men from the former East Loddon Shire who served in the fighting forces of World War I.

Lisa's work was a huge boost to the East Loddon Historical Society, which is seeking to unearth the long-lost stories behind the names in time for the centenary of Anzac Day in 2015.

This project was the first time a historical society within the Shire

had been provided with such a degree of access to Council records.

The Sir Rupert Hamer Awards recognise achievements in good records management practice within Victorian government agencies and local community archives.

Lisa was presented with Council's award at a formal function at Parliament House.

She was accompanied by Director Corporate Services Jude Holt and historical society members Pam and Robert Plant.

Regional Living Expo

Council can look back on its participation in the 2013 Regional Victoria Living Expo in Melbourne with a great deal of satisfaction.



Victorian Premier Denis Naphthine congratulates Council staff members Carol Canfield, Helen Tonkin and Christine Coombes on their expo success.



Council CEO Executive Assistant Lynne Habner was a willing volunteer at the Regional Victoria Living Expo in Melbourne in April.

The big thrill was the announcement by Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional and Rural Development Peter Ryan that Loddon Shire had won the award for Best Council Stand at the event.

It was a big field to beat, with all of Victoria's 48 municipalities taking part in the three-day expo held in April.

Six Council staff volunteered to man the site over the weekend, exhausting their supplies of printed material and promotional DVDs as they dealt with visitors' questions about house prices, work and education options, lifestyle factors and more.

With 15 per cent more patrons than last year's inaugural event, the expo has been hailed a huge success – official figures show almost 9,500 people attended.

Alongside the council and exhibitor stands, a full cultural and entertainment program included the Victoria Police Band, the Alexandra and Euroa Combined Concert Band, the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Aboriginal singer Kutcha Edwards, Ballarat performance group Existdance and African musician Monga Mukasa.

A packed seminar program explored subjects ranging from rural education and career options, housing and setting up in business to how to fit into a country community.

A Sport Precinct shone the spotlight on football, cricket and netball opportunities in rural Victoria, while an Interactive Zone was a winner with the kids, with the chance to build an eco-cubby, performances from Polyglot Theatre, a "live mural" from Mildura, face painting and roving entertainers.

As a member of the Murray River Group of Councils, the Shire also took part in a special promotion offering a \$4000 houseboat holiday on the Murray River as the prize.

The name of the delighted winner, Elsa Giansiracusa, was drawn at the Council's Wedderburn office in the days following the expo.

Agrifood Initiative rolls out

Greater collaboration across shires and industries to provide continuity of work and grow the permanent workforce was one of the major directions to come out of last April's Loddon Mallee Job Summit.

The Summit, held at Boort, attracted more than 100 participants, representing a wide cross-section of the region including agricultural employers, service providers and educators, community leaders and government representatives.

They were there to look for solutions to the issues of attracting and retaining workers and increasing regional profitability.

The Loddon Mallee Job Summit was the starting point for a bold new national program, Agrifood National Regional Initiatives, a project of Agrifood Skills Australia.

Speakers included farmer and Birchip Cropping Group chair Caroline Welsh, Laucke Flour Milling manager Roger Laubsch, Longerenong College manager John

Goldsmith and Kilter Pty Ltd director and general manager Shawn Butters.

The Agrifood initiative was rolled out across four regions during the year – the Loddon Mallee, the Western Downs in Queensland, the Warren-Blackwood electoral district in south-west Western Australia and Eyre Peninsula in South Australia.

The Victorian Government nominated the Loddon Mallee region as its choice for the Agrifood pilot project, specifically covering the Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra Shires.

Agrifood NRI was based on a highly successful three-year pilot project called "Make it Work", which ran around Narrabri in northern New South Wales.

This experiment achieved a 3% gain in annual productivity and a 30% net reduction in workers leaving the region.

Almost \$1 million was made available by the Commonwealth to help employers build the right mix of skills and knowledge in their workforce, to enable workers to productively remain in the region and to strengthen local communities.

A Regional Steering Committee made up of employers, community leaders and service providers was established after the Job Summit to start working on a series of strategies to move the region's jobs and skills challenges forward.

Council nominated Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager Brian Hinneberg for a position on the steering group and his appointment was ratified by Council in June.

Mr Hinneberg had been working with the interim steering committee to bring this project into being and took a leading role at the Boort Summit.



Top: Speakers at the Loddon Mallee Job Summit were, from left, Sea Lake farmer Grant Alday, Laucke Flour Milling manager Roger Laubsch, St Arnaud farmer Barry Batters and farmer and Birchip Cropping Group chair Caroline Welsh.

Above: Participants at the Boort Jobs Summit last April are welcomed by Loddon Shire Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow.

Community Services

Home and Community Care (HACC) Services

The Community Care Department underwent accreditation in April 2013, assessed against three standards that include 18 expected outcomes.

Performance against the expected outcomes within each standard is rated as either met or not met.

Two assessors spent one full day at the Serpentine office and met with staff from within the management, administration and service delivery teams.

They reviewed policy, procedure and documentation and examined feedback from a service user survey.

The quality review determined that Council's HACC program met 14 of the 18 outcomes in the Community Care Common Standards.

Council's Community Care department has a continuous improvement cycle that will ensure that each of the improvement opportunities identified from accreditation will be implemented over the next three years.

Packaged Care Program

Council participates in a consortium of the 10 local government areas in

the Loddon Mallee Region to deliver the Packaged Care Program.

For Loddon Shire, this represents 17 Community Aged Care Packages (CACP), two Extended Aged Care in the Home packages (EACH) and two Extended Aged Care in the Home – dementia-specific packages (EACH-D).

Two assessors visited each of the 10 councils in the consortium arrangement and reviewed documentation, interviewed management, case managers and service delivery staff and met with service recipients.

Each of the 10 local government areas are assessed based on the Community Care Common Standards.

Following the assessments, it was determined that every agency met all of the 18 outcomes, an outstanding overall result.

Magic to watch

Magician and ventriloquist Alan Sloggett showed his young audience a trick or three when the veteran showman performed in Pyramid Hill in "Vaudeville in Loddon", a one-hour show hosted by Pyramid Hill Pre-School at Pyramid Hill College last October.

Alan performed for four-year-olds and their parents from the combined five pre-schools in the Loddon Kindergarten Cluster as part of Children's Week 2012.

The event was made possible by a \$500 grant from the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

A healthy breakfast

Three schools in Loddon Shire hosted a Sunshine Breakfast in October to mark Mental Health Week in Victoria.

The breakfasts are an initiative of the Loddon Healthy Minds Network, aimed at focusing the thoughts of young people on issues of mental wellness and the resources that are available if needed.

The schools involved were East Loddon, Wedderburn and Boort.

Funding for the breakfasts came through the Floods Community Recovery Fund, backed by the Australian and Victorian governments.

The Loddon Healthy Minds Network was formed in 2007 to actively pursue mental health issues as they related to residents of the Loddon Shire.



Community Wellbeing administrator Stacey Williamson, Director Community Wellbeing Wendy Gladman and Loddon Healthy Minds chairperson Cr Colleen Condliffe unveiled the new LHMN banner late last year.



Boort student Jessica Pay receives a prize from Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow for her entry in the inaugural Loddon Healthy Minds Network art show last October.

Artfully done

Painting something you can't see was the challenge offered to secondary schools in Loddon Shire last year when the Loddon Healthy Minds Network announced it was staging its first-ever art competition.

The aim of the exercise was to put on a show of artworks reflecting the message of mental health and wellbeing.

Funding for the project was provided through the Floods Community Recovery Fund, jointly sponsored by the Australian and Victorian governments.

Teachers and students from Boort District School and Wedderburn College took up the opportunity and the results went on display at two four-day exhibitions in those towns.

Several prizes were on offer for the young artists, including a painting easel donated by local artist John Burge.

Wendy steps up

Council confirmed the creation of a new directorate early in 2013 with the appointment of Wendy Gladman as the Shire's new Director Community Wellbeing.

Wendy moved into the position after a nine-month establishment period for the new portfolio.

Previously, the responsibility for health and wellbeing services within the municipality lay with Director Corporate Services Jude Holt, but this area of Council's work was considered important enough to warrant its own directorate.

Records digitised

Parents wanting copies of their children's immunisation records from Loddon Shire had to wait a while earlier this year when Council's paper records were sent to Melbourne to be digitised and archived.

The project was expected to take up to four months to complete.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RECREATION FACTS AND FIGURES

	2012/2013	2011/2012
Aged and Disability Services		
Meals on Wheels		
• Meals delivered	9,001	11,014
• Number of recipients	214	247
Home Care		
• Hours delivered	8,327	8,460
• Number of recipients	320	336
Home/garden maintenance		
• Hours of property maintenance	829	734
• Number of recipients	179	158
Personal Care		
• Hours of personal care	2,434	2,502
• Number of recipients	75	68
Respite Care		
• Hours of respite care	1,223	1,331
• Number of recipients	23	26
Planned Activity Groups		
• Hours of activities provided	5,302	5,930
• Number of recipients	95	110
Aged and Disability Assessment team		
• Number visited (new and existing service recipients)	518	493
• Percentage of existing clients visited at least once during the year	93.50%	93.37%
• Hours of service delivered by the Aged & Disability direct care staff to residents of Loddon Shire	18,115	18,957
Children & Family Services		
• Births	75	65
• Immunisation program (vaccines administered)	578	416
• Kindergarten enrolments 4 yr old	61	78
• Kindergarten enrolments 3 yr old	50	41
Local Laws/Animal Control		
Dogs registered	2348	2194
Cats registered	444	419
Local laws permits issued	46	41
Permits to burn issued	3	10
Youth Services		
FReeZA events		
• Number of events	11	11
• Attendance	1,714	1,778

HIGHLIGHTS

The consequence was that people needed to wait for up to four weeks to retrieve information on individual children.

Centres get the tick

Earlier this year, Dingee Pre-School became the second of the Shire's five kindergartens to pass a searching test of quality set in train last year by the Commonwealth.

The National Quality Framework assessment process applies to most long day care, family day care, pre-school (or kindergarten) and outside school hours care services in Australia.

Its aim is to set a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services, measured under seven key areas.

Pyramid Hill was the first through when notification from the department arrived last year.

When Dingee Pre-School undertook the process, two assessors spent two days on-site looking at such operational aspects as regulatory requirements, programming, child safety, parent and child interactions, staff professional interactions and the role of the Shire in the centre's management.

Pyramid Hill and Dingee Pre-Schools both received the outstanding assessment of "Meeting Quality Standards", with both also recorded as exceeding those standards in the area of collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

As at 30 June, Boort, Wedderburn and Inglewood kindergartens were also involved in the process.

Carol joins the team

Carol Gibbins started full-time work with Loddon Shire in January as its new Community Care Co-ordinator, based at the Serpentine office.

Carol is responsible for managing Council's aged and disability services, which include the HACC program and other home care

efforts, senior citizens, Planned Activities Groups and assessment and administration services.

Carol trained as a radiographer and previously worked in health promotion for Breast Screen Victoria and at St John of God Hospital in Bendigo.

Corporate Services

Records and archives

Minutes moved

The Council Minutes of the former Shire of East Loddon were transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria in May – the third time such a transfer has taken place.

This means that the following groups (or series) or records are now located at North Melbourne:

East Loddon rate books, 1864-1953, rate cards, 1954-1985, minute books from 1870-1992 and indexes to East Loddon minute books from 1870-1993.

Korong rate books from 1867-1938 are also there.

Research requests

The number of research requests from individuals or organisations has increased rapidly over the past few years, particularly from historical societies within the Shire.

Overall, numbers have shot up from three in 2007 to 38 in 2012.

The kinds of information requested include cataloguing and conservation assistance, hall plans, photos, notable historical figures, cemetery records, stories from our

towns, Serpentine's first official air race and the cordial factory in Bridgewater and Boort in the 1880s.

Family researchers will also get in touch to find out more about their ancestors.

Digitisation work pushes on

Over the past two years, a number of Council records have been microfilmed and digitised for ease of storage and conservation purposes.

These include minute books from East Loddon and Korong, the East Loddon Soldiers Medals and Memorials Register, Korong Heritage Study and Bet Bet Heritage Study.

Central Goldfields Shire loaned Council the original text of the Bet Bet Study and the Dunolly Museum loaned Council the original photographs.

Both these organisations will receive an electronic copy of the study on its completion.

The Shire also has a number of 19th and 20th Century councillors' photographs currently undergoing conservation work before being digitised.

Next financial year will see the full restoration of the magnificent 1880s illuminated address to Cr Coutts, framed with original photographs of the councillors of the period.

Office systems

New databases

One of the year's innovations has been the development of a database to manage recruitment, training and other functions.

GOOD MANAGEMENT FACTS AND FIGURES

	2012/2013	2011/2012
Customer Service		
Incoming calls received through the front counter	23,233	21,750
Land Information Certificates issued	429	385
Rates		
Rates notices issued	7,607	7,652

Staff members Janine Jackson and Sara Nesbit created a database that not only holds training and recruitment records, but every aspect of human resources.

The concept has introduced major efficiencies for Council, alongside other notable developments in a Name and Address Register for local community organisations and a Plant and Equipment database for the whole Shire.

Sara has also created a database for managing suppliers which has made it easy for staff in the office to check whether contractors have satisfied all requirements of Council and can be used.

Council earns high praise

Council's public and professional liability insurance policy is placed with Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Insurance.

Every two years, Council undergoes an MAV Liability Audit, with the aim of identifying opportunities for Council to improve on its management of potential incidents that may give rise to a liability claim.

The most recent audit focused on organisational risk management, reactive risk management, proactive inspections of Council assets, written agreements, building services, town planning and food services.

Each audit cycle, the best performers are announced and Council earned top marks.

Loddon Shire received:

- Joint highest score in the north-west region for swimming pools - 100%
- Joint highest score in the north-west region for food safety - 100%
- Joint highest score in the north-west region for reactive risk management - 100%.

Won on Merit

In 2012/2013, Council embarked on a focus of improving its customer service and client relations management.

Council has purchased Merit software, a stand-alone electronic CRM system that has been adapted to integrate fully with existing software, especially with Council's rating and property management systems.

The improvement has been undertaken by seconding internal staff for a fixed term to help roll out various activities to all service areas.

Launching the plan involved 200 activities, upon which responsible managers and officers were asked to complete a workflow questionnaire which was replicated in the software.

Training of all staff will be undertaken and this will be completed by June 2014.

All the activities of client service, both internal and external, will be tracked and the performance of customer service will, for the first time, be able to be reported.

Financial planning

Taking the long view

In 2012/2013, Council adopted its inaugural Long-Term Financial Plan for the period 2013/2023.

This planning was difficult in that flood impacts caused extreme volatility in trend lines and, where possible, had to be excluded.

The plan establishes financial comparatives from 2008/2009 up to 2022/2023 - a 15-year timeframe.

The Local Government Act 1989 states that one of Council's roles is to maintain the viability of Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner (Sections 3C (2) (a) and 3D (2) (c)).

By preparing the Long-Term Financial Plan, Council will be able to see and determine whether service levels and community expectations are able to be funded. The result may require a shift in expectations and/or service levels in some areas of Council's business.

The Long-Term Financial Plan outlines various levels of sustainability as provided below:

- Critical short-term sustainability (working capital, cash liquidity and debt levels)
- Medium-term sustainability (operating surplus achieved net of abnormal items and capital funding)
- Long-term sustainability (spending more on asset renewal than consumption and meeting community service needs).

The plan is designed to absorb financial shocks and to eliminate volatility in rate rises.

It is a dynamic plan and will be updated on a rolling basis as the years progress.

Economy and Community

Tourism

Visitor Guide launched

Sixty people filled Inglewood's Blue Eucy Museum in late October 2012 for the launch of the latest edition of the Loddon Valley Official Visitor Guide.

The full-colour, 54-page booklet details the region's natural attractions, water sports options, gold rush heritage, wineries and artistic life, as well as advising tourists about the varied points of interest in different parts of the Shire.

The publication is available online, at Loddon Shire Offices, the Loddon Visitor Information Centre, tourist information stands and regional visitor centres in neighbouring shires.

Later in the year, the Visitor Guide went online as an e-book, accessible through the Loddon Shire website.

TOURISM FACTS AND FIGURES

	2012/2013
Loddon Visitor Information Centre	
• Walk-in visitors	5508
• Telephone enquiries	1501
• Email enquiries	906
Loddon Discovery Tours	
• Co-ordinated 12-day tours	378
• 24 days of extended tours	143
• Money spent on Loddon souvenirs	\$8656
Guest speaking appearances	26

New app shows the way

Loddon Shire unveiled its new tourism app for smartphones and tablets at a function in Wedderburn in March 2013.

Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow officiated at the launch, alongside Director Economy and Community Bryan McEwan and Tourism Manager Robyn Vella.

The move was the next step forward from the posting of the latest Loddon Official Visitor Guide as an e-book on the Council's website.

Festivals light up towns

Two of the Shire's southern towns staged highly successful festivals during the year, in an effort to showcase their energy and vitality.

The "Inglewood Alive: Look At Us Now" celebration in December 2012 featured heritage walks, craft and produce stalls, buskers, food and wine tasting, classic cars and motorbikes, bands, a jumping castle, rock and roll and line dancing.

The Blue Eucy Museum and local Aurora Masonic Lodge were open and the primary school ran a Christmas decorations competition.



Tourism in Loddon Shire is firmly rooted in the area's natural attractions.



Volunteer Cathie Haw helped man a stall at the Shire's first tourist expo in Melbourne last November.

The event was organised by a community working group involving local businesses, Loddon Shire, the Lions Club, CFA, Inglewood Primary School and the Inglewood Development and Tourism Committee.

Funding of \$5,000 for the event was provided through the Floods Community Recovery Fund, administered by the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development.

Bridgewater's turn came in February, when the town added to its annual triathlon and duathlon with an all-day town festival.

Features included market stalls, buskers, wine tastings, water ski demonstrations, classic vehicles, face painting, skydivers, a church service, live music and a historical walk.

Student exchange program

Six young people from Boort swapped schoolbags for tram tickets last December when they spent three days in Melbourne exploring city life.

The Boort District School students, accompanied by teacher Brooke Chamberlain, were taking part in the second round of an exchange program with students from The University of Melbourne originally devised by Loddon Shire Tourism manager Robyn Vella.

The itinerary included rock climbing, ice skating, eating out in China Town and visits to Old Melbourne Gaol, Harbour Town, Queen Victoria Market, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Eureka Tower and a 3D movie.

The return visit took place in early April, when the city students came to Boort for three days.

Highlights included a barbecue and bonfire, visits to Simply Tomatoes, the Piccoli sculpture garden, Salute Oliva and Lake Marmal Wines, plus tours of Boort District Health and Inglewood's Blue Eucy Museum.

City expo a first

Loddon Shire Tourism staged the municipality's first-ever tourist expo in Melbourne in November.

The Loddon Valley Tourism Expo took place in Mount Waverley, with about 100 people walking through the doors to browse the tourist information and displays and sample local produce.

Shire Tourism Manager Robyn Vella made two formal presentations on the region, followed by questions and light refreshments.

Jamboree a hit

Visitors to Wedderburn last March had the chance to hunt for bargains as well as the usual prized metal tokens when the annual Minelab Detector Jamboree got under way.

The family-friendly event, held at Hard Hill Tourist Reserve, is organised each year by Wedderburn Tourism Inc.

Sponsored by Loddon Shire, among others, the Jamboree has proven a major attraction on the Shire's tourist calendar, with upwards of 2000 people gathering in Wedderburn each year to join in the fun.

Two innovations this year were the Junior Detector Token Hunt, aimed at young people 16 years and under, and a carnival and country fair on the Saturday in Jacka Park.

Other features of the weekend included a number of garage sales around town on the Saturday, gold panning for juniors, detector demonstrations for beginners, live entertainment and children's activities.

Naturally Loddon – A Wonderland in Spring Festival

The third annual Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring Festival drew hundreds of visitors into the Shire to enjoy the many activities on offer.

The festival is designed for all ages and incorporates the popular annual Kooyoora Wildflower Show, bushwalking, tree planting, bird watching, photography, canoeing and bike riding.

The 2012 program featured a wetlands coach tour, a collection of orchid photographs, a family day on the Loddon River and an open weekend at Terrick Terrick National Park.

Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring is organised each year by a working group which includes such agencies as the North Central Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, local Landcare groups and environmental networks,

various government departments and community organisations.

Last year, a digital SLR photography workshop was organised by Mulwarrie Studios in Bridgewater, covering the basics of using cameras, processing and printing and tips for better photographs.

A Boort Wetlands coach tour visited Lake Leaghur, Lake Lyndger, Yando Swamp, Lake Boort and Woolshed Swamp.

Events calendar out

Council's events calendar for 2013/2014 was released in May, listing all major community events in the area from July through to June, with concise summaries of what's planned, plus organisers' contact details.

Council printed 2000 copies of the latest brochure and distributed them widely throughout the Shire, as well as sending them to visitor information centres in such locations as Bendigo, Swan Hill, Echuca and Maryborough.

Community Planning

Switching on to solar power

Seven community halls in Loddon Shire wiped out their electricity bills last year with a joint \$44,000 project to install 90 solar panels between them.

Completed under the Shire's Community Planning Program, it's the first time a group of hall committees has come together for a development of this type.

Not only do they no longer pay for power, but the committees can confidently look forward to cost savings which can contribute to their running and maintenance costs and support other projects in the future.

The halls involved are in Arnold, Laanecoorie, Woodstock, Eddington, Bridgewater and Newbridge, plus the Tarnagulla Community Centre.



The Tarnagulla Community Centre was one of seven public halls across the Shire to gain solar panels last year.

Operation Next Gen

Loddon Shire threw its weight behind a bold new pilot project aimed at encouraging young entrepreneurs to stay and work in country Victoria.

Known as "Operation Next Gen", the project received \$30,000 in seed funding through the State Government's "Putting Locals First" Program.

Partners in the planning were Community Leadership Loddon Murray, the Buloke, Gannawarra and Loddon Shire Councils, the North Central Local Learning and Employment Network and Youth Connections.

The hope was to see small rural towns become more entrepreneurial and to foster a positive environment to create a wider range of career paths for young people in rural areas.

Pilot towns chosen for the 10-month project were Boort, Birchip and Cohuna.

Walking trails reopened

Walking trails at three popular reserves in Loddon Shire were brought back into action last year after wide-ranging reconstruction works.

The Bridgewater, Laanecoorie and Pyramid Hill recreation reserves all suffered extensive damage during the floods of January 2011.



The restored walking trail at Laanecoorie.

Council undertook the huge repair job after state government funding was granted through the former Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Works undertaken included improved design, reinstatement of walking trails and seats, removing timber and rubbish, weed control and tree planting, street furniture and drainage and fencing repairs.

Business development

Boosting business

Rural Co-ordination and Development Manager Brian Hinneberg was involved in ongoing strategic efforts to stimulate business activity in Loddon Shire during the year.

Brian carried out this work while simultaneously finalising his prior commitments as Flood Recovery Manager.

His economic development role saw him engaging with farmers, agribusiness leaders, government departments, delegations of visiting business people, potential investors, peak agricultural organisations, local business owners and other local authorities.

He promoted Loddon Valley produce at an international buyers' day, brought delegations of potential buyers to the Shire, facilitated contacts between potential business interests, met with agribusiness

investment companies and initiated a visitation program for agribusiness employers.

A notable success was hosting a Korean hay-buying delegation, which resulted in two containers of local product leaving in May for Korea.

He was also instrumental in establishing the AgriFood Skill Australia initiative in Loddon Shire and helped organise its first Job Summit in Boort.

AgriFood initiative begins

A major jobs summit held in Boort in April was the set-piece event to kick-start a ground-breaking new economic and employment effort, the AgriFood National Regional Initiative.

The summit was convened by AgriFood Skills Australia, whose main role is to work with rural industry, government, education and training providers to meet the skills and workforce needs of industry.

An Australian "first", AgriFood NRI aims to confront the ingrained employment and job retention problems endemic to regional communities.

The initiative was rolled out across four regions – the Loddon Mallee (encompassing the Loddon, Buloke and Gannawarra Shires), the Western Downs in Queensland, the Warren-Blackwood electoral district in south-



Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow addresses the Agrifoods Jobs Summit in Boort, part of the Agrifoods initiative rolled out in Loddon Shire during the year.

west Western Australia and Eyre Peninsula in South Australia.

The Commonwealth Government made available almost \$1 million to help employers build the right mix of skills and knowledge in their workforce and to enable workers to productively remain in the region.

In late June, Council lifted its stake in the Agrifood initiative with the appointment of Brian Hinneberg to the local steering group.

Farming Expo

More than 150 people attended the 2013 Future Farming Expo held in March at the Yarrowalla Hall.

Hosted by the North Central Catchment Management Authority and sponsored by Loddon Shire, the free event featured a range of expert speakers and practical demonstrations covering such topics as weather, beneficial insects, soil pit demonstrations, carbon farming and edible shrubs.

Other topics canvassed included seasonal climate drivers, accessing global markets, biochar, succession planning and holistic grazing management.

Loddon Shire backed the event with a \$1000 sponsorship, as well as organisational assistance and a leading role on the day from Brian Hinneberg.

Help for owners

In mid-2013, operators of small businesses in Loddon Shire were invited to sign up for a series of three workshops, funded by AusIndustry and run by the Rural Financial Counselling Service (North-Central Victoria).

The free sessions aimed to provide practical and relevant information which would benefit those businesses.

Loddon Shire sponsored the course, directed its promotion, arranged the participants, co-ordinated the activities and paid for venue hire and food.



An artist's impression of how the new manager's residence and office will look at the rebuilt Bridgewater Caravan Park.

The sessions were led by Rural Financial Counsellor Colin O'Brien, who has 35 years' experience in small business.

Confidential one-on-one business advice was also available at any time during the program.

Broad themes to be covered were profit goals, business objectives and cash flow and marketing.

The workshops were held at Inglewood's Royal Hotel in May and June, with a third to follow in August 2013.

Major projects

Bridgewater Caravan Park and Wedderburn Community Centre

Millions of dollars in government grants will be poured into two much-anticipated infrastructure projects in Loddon Shire in the second half of 2013 as work proceeds in earnest at the Bridgewater Caravan Park and Wedderburn Community Centre.

Construction began on both redevelopments in June, after Council chose the winning tenders at its meeting in late May.

Work is continuing on the installation of services at Bridgewater including sewerage, electricity, water, fire service, irrigation, road works, kerbing and paths.

Other activities, such as the design of the manager's residence, camp

kitchen and amenities building, are also well advanced.

Council hopes to have a working park by the end of December 2013.

The value of the current contract is a little over \$1.2 million.

Meanwhile, contractors also started work on the \$1.75 million redevelopment at the Wedderburn Community Centre in June.

When complete, the project will create a community hub and enhanced maternal and child health, tourism and neighbourhood house facilities.

The contractors' brief is to build new consulting rooms from which the Inglewood Health Service will operate, a new tourism office, two interview rooms for visiting services, two improved multi-purpose rooms, new toilet facilities and two new meeting rooms.

The new building will be fully accessible to all.

Operations

Flood recovery

The extraordinary amount of road and infrastructure works completed over the past two years has been achieved thanks to the rich generosity of the Victorian and federal governments.

The total funds given to Loddon Shire from both governments under

the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements amounted to \$33,157,372. This figure includes the initial response and clean-up works, plus the administration costs associated with delivering the flood restoration program.

The details of this work are published earlier in this Annual Report, but the net effect has been an enormous boost to the travelling comfort of residents.

As at 30 June 2013, all programmed works bar one had been completed – that one hold-up being a road at Barraport which was still under water.

During that time, there were 1774 individual road repair jobs completed – more than 433km of roads graded, gravel re-sheeting totalled 563km, shoulder re-sheeting took place on 93km of roads and sealed road repairs 23km.

Repairs were also completed in 13 projects covering township streets, 91 bridges and culverts were reconstructed and 110 floodways fixed.

Capital works

Further to the delivery of Council flood restoration program, Council has also maintained its effort in the delivery of its annual capital works programs and road maintenance obligations.

Specific projects worth noting which have been delivered this financial year include a 1.14km rehabilitation of the Pyramid Hill-Yarraberb Road, at a cost of \$260,000, and a 2.3km rehabilitation of the Dingee-Rochester Road under a combination of flood recovery and capital works funding totalling \$550,000.

The Wilkinsons Swamp Road was another project funded through flood recovery grants – a 2.3km rehabilitation which cost \$410,000.

Roads to Recovery program

The Federal Government continues to provide support to Council

ENVIRONMENT FACTS AND FIGURES

	2012/2013	2011/2012
Health Services		
Registered food premises	158	139
Registered health premises	12	15
Registered caravan parks	6	6
Food and water samples taken	35	20
Septic tank permits issued	45	20
Planning and Building Services		
Planning permits issued	120	168
Building permits issued	117 <i>(13 for new dwellings)</i>	229 <i>(23 for new dwellings)</i>
Waste management and recycling		
Garbage collected (tonnes)	2,869	2,483
Recycling collected (tonnes)	2902	627

through the administration of the Roads to Recovery program.

The current funding round of this program will provide Council with about \$8.1 million towards the maintenance and renewal of local roads and is a key funding component of Council's capital works program.

During 2012/2013, Council allocated about \$1.8 million of this funding towards works on roads. It should be noted that 2013/2014 will see the final year of the current program.

Municipal boundary signage

Council continues to implement its program of replacing obsolete boundary and municipal signage through the Shire.

Following on from the previous replacement of township entrance signage and boundary signage on arterial or main roads, the 2012/2013 allocation to this project provided for the installation of additional boundary entrance signs on local roads.

Future allocations to this project will see the ongoing upgrade of other municipal signage, including locality signage.

Roads to Market program

Council has recently completed a major upgrade project along the Bridgewater-Raywood Road which saw the widening of the single lane seal between the Pyramid-Yarraberb Road and the Shire boundary.

The structure across Myers Creek was also replaced with a dual carriageway structure which, combined with the above pavement works, has dramatically improved the safety of this road given the number of B-doubles and commercial trucks using it.

More than \$1.1 million has been spent on the upgrade of this section of road, with nearly a third of the funding – about \$350,000 – provided through the State Government's Roads to Market program.

Asset management

Public hall hierarchies

Council's Building Asset Management Plan (BAMP) attempts to ensure that the funds available for building works are used to gain the most community benefit for local buildings with demonstrated use.

The BAMP established three levels of hierarchy for public halls and allocated level one hierarchy to five major halls.

The allocation of hierarchy for the remaining halls was to be established based on hall usage.

For the past 18 months, public hall usage statistics have been collected and collated and, based on their levels of use, hall hierarchies have been allocated for level one and level two halls.

At its November 2012 meeting, Council adopted the levels one and two hierarchies for individual halls.

Hierarchies are used to set standards for halls and to set the extent of funding the Shire will contribute to capital works on those buildings.

Road Management Plan review

In March 2013, public opinion was sought on the Shire's management of its roads by advertising and running a workshop for invited members of the public.

Council adopted a report on the

review of its Road Management Plan presented at its June meeting.

As a consequence, revision of the Road Management Plan will now progress, including the revision of:

- Defect intervention standards
- Defect repair response times
- Standards for maintenance of minor gravel roads
- The RMP will generally be simplified to enable ease of use and understanding.

The revision of the plan is expected to be completed by December 2013.

Recreation

Drought-proofing strategy

In December 2009, Council received \$184,046 from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities under the Strengthening Basin Communities program for the introduction of drought-proofing and water-saving initiatives across 28 recreational venues within the Shire.

Development of these master plans subsequently helped Loddon Shire secure a further \$754,068 under this program for their implementation.

In addition to this further funding, Loddon Shire committed another \$495,000, with many local sporting clubs also providing significant in-kind and financial contributions.

From 1 June 2011 to 1 March 2013, around \$1.5 million was invested in various projects to improve water security and efficiency and long-term drought resilience.

The project has resulted in more efficient water use and a reduction of at least 15% in potable water usage at the nominated 11 recreation reserves in Loddon Shire.

It has also enabled Council to improve stormwater capture and reuse opportunities, install numerous synthetic/hard court surfaces, plant drought-tolerant grasses, fit water-efficient appliances at recreation reserves, install tanks and irrigation networks and buy pool blankets for three of Council's public swimming pools.

Youth services

Council invests up to \$24,000 a year into its youth services, with funding sourced from state government and its own reserves.

The FreeZA youth initiative from the Victorian Government introduces a busy round of activities for young people in Loddon.

Committees of teenagers in several towns liaise with Council's Recreation Officer, Tony Bellenger, to organise events of their choosing.

This year, there have been four FreeZA discos, a Battle of the Bands competition, art projects at the Inglewood and Pyramid Hill

ROADS FACTS AND FIGURES

Kilometres of highway	209
Kilometres of main roads	394
Kilometres of formed roads	977
Kilometres of gravel collector roads	256
Kilometres of sealed local roads	123
Kilometres of sealed collector roads	796
Gravel local roads	
Kilometres of access roads	1,114
Kilometres of minor roads	1,186
Kilometres of unformed roads	262



The Korong Vale hall is just one of the properties covered under Council's Building Asset Management Plan.



Calivil gained two new multi-use courts during the year, thanks to the combined contributions of government, Council and the local community.

swimming pools, chair making, a Country Careers Day at Charlton, pool parties, the annual Dingee Talent Quest and movie nights.

The Kool Skools program this year saw 34 students from Boort, Wedderburn and Pyramid Hill travel to Melbourne to record their music and produce their own CD.

Council has also financially supported the Loddon Youth Expo and the MATES mentoring program at Wedderburn College.

Later in the year, Council paid for 40 sheets of blue board for students to use to construct a series of beach huts, paint them and hang them at Council's swimming pools in Boort, Wedderburn and Pyramid Hill.

Neither have younger children been forgotten, with a trip to Melbourne in March to see the circus.

Thirty Grade 5-6 children from four primary schools in Loddon Shire were taken to see a performance by the world-renowned Cirque du Soleil of its show, *Ovo*.

The children came from St Mary's School in Inglewood and the Tarnagulla, Bridgewater and Inglewood primary schools.

Netball courts upgraded

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh visited Serpentine early in 2013 to formally open the brand-new netball

courts at Serpentine – the result of a \$150,000 project sparked by a Shire-wide Council audit of such facilities in 2008.

Work at Serpentine started last November as part of Council's overall netball courts strategy, developed after Netball Victoria expressed concerns over the state of the courts at Mitiamo.

There are 17 netball courts in use across the Shire and all were thoroughly checked for safety and compliance issues.

As a result, hand-in-hand with local communities, Council installed 12 new courts around the municipality and helped bring others up to the standards required by Netball Victoria.

While at Serpentine, Mr Walsh announced further government funding of \$304,870 to go towards major refurbishment of the ground's sports pavilion.

Pools improved

During the autumn, Council launched into a far-reaching program of maintenance works at the five swimming pools it owns across the Shire.

All up, Council spent more than \$142,000 from its recreation budget to make improvements to the pools once they were emptied for the winter.

At Pyramid Hill, piping upgrades were done and new leaf grates fitted, with painting to come later in the year.

At Inglewood, a new shed was built to house the pumps and filters, involving new concreting, electrical and plumbing work, including the installation of underground power.

At Boort, a new circulation system made the two smaller pools independent of the main one, with new fencing around the pumphouse and a toilet upgrade also planned. The pool shell will also be repainted when the weather warms up.

Mitiamo pool received a new filter, pump and pipeworks, plus a leaf trap to reduce contamination.

Calivil courts opened

Member for Swan Hill Peter Walsh officially opened Calivil's two new multi-use courts in June.

The new plexi-pave netball/tennis courts sit behind the old asphalt courts, which are in poor condition with problems such as pooling water and cracking.

Funding for the \$172,147 project came from Sport and Recreation Victoria (\$60,000), the Australian Government's Strengthening Basin Communities program (\$85,750), Loddon Shire's Community Planning resources (\$5,000) and the Calivil community itself (\$21,397).

There was also a further input of \$35,500 worth of contributed labour through the Calivil Football-Netball Club, Calivil recreation reserve and Loddon Shire.

REPORTING TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

Council adopted the Council Plan 2010/2014 on 28 February 2011.

In 2013, Council engaged a facilitator to work with Councillors, senior officers and members of the community to assist in preparing the 2013/2017 Council Plan.

The ideas and philosophies contributed by those involved led to a restatement of Council's vision, mission and strategic platforms and an identification of Council's core business, all of which were included into the document.

The Council Plan presently in place identifies eight areas for specific focus for the Loddon Shire Council over the current period. They are:

1. Advocacy
2. Economic development
3. Land use planning
4. Asset management
5. Township amenity and beautification
6. Social connections
7. Community engagement
8. Organisational development.

As both the 2010/2014 and 2009/2013 Council Plans were in play this financial year, focus areas under both blueprints have been included in this report.

Areas for Focus

The following outlines Council's achievements throughout the year under the Areas for Focus.

Focus – Advocacy

Build and maintain strategic relationships

Council continues to enjoy good relationships with the state government and Opposition parties. Council has hosted a number of meetings with government ministers and shadow ministers on local issues during the past year. Local state and federal MPs are invited to all opening ceremonies and Council has enjoyed

good support, especially from our state members.

Council continues to invest in maintaining productive relationships with a number of agencies within the region. Along with the Gannawarra and Campaspe Shires, Loddon is in a joint arrangement with the North Central Catchment Management Authority looking at future possibilities for irrigation development.

Council has a firm relationship with the City of Greater Bendigo, with council officers enjoying strong professional relationships with a number of their counterparts in that organisation. The CEO also commits to a series of regular meetings with the CEO of Coliban Water, where issues of mutual interest are discussed.

Council staff attend a series of scheduled meetings with VicRoads each year.

Increase the strength of our voice

Council maintains strong and active membership in the Murray River Group of Councils and the Loddon Campaspe Councils. The Mayor and CEO attend all meetings and annually host at least one meeting of each group within the municipality. Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow is current chair of the MRGC.

Council uses its membership of the Municipal Association of Victoria to advocate and lobby for issues of importance to the Loddon community and continues to engage with federal and state governments.

Council continues its relationship with Regional Development Australia and enjoys the benefits of having a Councillor appointed to the local RDA committee. Council also maintains its membership of the Rail Alliance.

Ensure a strategic approach to advocacy

Council's approach to advocacy in 2012/2013 continued to be

strongly focused on the needs of our community in its steady recovery from the floods of January 2011.

Council was again represented at the Australian Local Government Association conference in Canberra in June 2013 to lobby federal members on a number of issues.

Focus – Economic Development

Encourage an excellent customer service culture in Loddon's businesses

During 2012/2013, we commenced implementation of a customer relationship management system that will log all customer enquiries and manage them through to the end of task. This will provide us with an understanding of the types of enquiries coming into Council, so we can target this information for inclusion on our new website, which will be implemented during 2013/2014.

Council continues to offer periodic training programs for local small business owners.

Council continues to support a culture of excellence in customer service within its own organisation and continually strives to improve the service it provides to its community.

This effort has resulted in a very pleasing Community Satisfaction Survey outcome, with local residents rating our customer service at 72 compared with a state average of 70.

Create economic opportunities in Loddon

During the life of this Plan, Council has invested strongly in initiatives contained within the Tourism Plan and the Nature Tourism Strategy. The floods of 2011 have provided Council with significant funding with which to overhaul the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and Council has also allocated funds towards upgrades at other caravan parks within the municipality.

REPORTING TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

Council has sought to capitalise on rural living opportunities through the completion of a Rural Zones Review which seeks to rezone significant tracts of land to rural living – particularly in the south-west of the Shire.

Support current businesses to thrive and grow

Council is involved in a number of initiatives to encourage business growth and increase demand for local goods and services:

- Participation in the 2013 Regional Victoria Living Expo to attract new residents and businesses
- Continue to work with Loddon's businesses to encourage development and growth
- Work with the Federal Government's Agrifoods initiative to boost the work skills of employees and foster business growth.

Focus – Land Use Planning

Ensure that Council's regulatory regime promotes growth

Council completed a Rural Zones Review in 2012 and is currently implementing the recommendations of that review. The recommendations of the Rural Living Review had largely been rolled up into the Rural Zones Review.

Consequently, Council is attempting to initiate a planning scheme amendment to rezone significant parcels of land within the south and south-west of the municipality to Rural Living and Rural Activity Zones, along with smaller amounts of Rural Conservation Zone.

Ensure that critical infrastructure is developed

Council's efforts in working with regional infrastructure providers is seeing some improvement in the provision of infrastructure to our community.

Respond to the opportunities that development pressure in Bendigo creates

Council has begun work to rezone land to Low-Density Residential within the Bridgewater township.

Council continues to have a strong expectation that the townships of Bridgewater, Inglewood and eventually Newbridge will see strong population growth due to their close proximity to Bendigo.

Focus – Asset Management

Manage Council's current asset base

Council adopted a long-term financial plan during the year which incorporated financial commitments identified in each of the asset management plans.

As part of the annual community planning development process, consideration is being given to requirements specified within various asset management strategies such as Council's Building, Road and Asset Management Plans.

This has assisted Council in ensuring that community planning projects put forward are consistent with Council's strategic asset management principles.

Loddon Shire has been extremely successful in securing funding to support asset renewal and maintenance activities throughout both its rural and urban areas. In addition to regular funding provided for the maintenance and renewal of local road infrastructure through the Roads to Recovery Program and Victorian Grants Commission, the introduction of the State Government's \$1 million local roads and bridges program has greatly assisted Council in addressing its asset renewal gap.

Numerous project-specific grants have also been obtained for both local roads and buildings. Council

continues to receive funding through such programs as the Victorian Sustainability Accord, Local Roads to Markets Program, Regional Development Australia Fund and Regional Growth Fund.

Introduce whole-of-life costings for new assets

The Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy have been rewritten and re-structured using templates produced by the Regional Asset Management Services group to meet the requirements for core maturity in asset management.

Appendices to the strategy now include an action plan and assessment of Council's current asset management maturity asset management responsibility matrix. Improvement actions in the action plan have been developed using various sources including the NAMAf assessment referred to above, various asset management plans, the previous MAV Step Asset Management Program and internal audit actions.

The Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy will be reviewed every four years. The action plan and the asset management core maturity matrix will be reviewed annually.

Improve delivery of work processes

Council continues to maintain extensive construction and maintenance resources and equipment within its internal works department and delivers numerous capital works and maintenance projects throughout the Shire each year.

Monitoring of Council's operations to identify potential opportunities to bring external works or services in-house continues, with a number of potential initiatives being explored.



The Medical Companions service in Melbourne was one of the programs supported through Council under the state government's Transport Connections scheme.

Focus – Township Amenity and Beautification

Improve the visual appearance of our townships

Council is committed to improving the visual appearance of streetscapes in our major towns.

Council has provided funding for the design of streetscape works for Wedderburn and has indicated that it intends to roll a significant streetscape enhancement program out through many of Council's major townships.

Council adopted a Small Towns Policy in 2012 and is reviewing the ways that community planning groups develop their long-term plans.

Facilitate better services for our community

Council is continuing to work with its communities and appropriate agencies to enable better access to essential services to townships across the Shire, including the National Broadband Network and mobile phone coverage.

Council is continuing to work with Coliban Water on the construction of a sewer network in Newbridge.

Focus – Social Connections

Maintain and continually improve infrastructure to underpin social connections

Extensive works have been completed along the Loddon River at Bridgewater to improve pedestrian facilities and access to not only the river, but key tourism infrastructure such as the planned new caravan park, fishing platform and swimming hole.

Council has completed a review of its Public Halls and Recreation Reserves Allocation Program and has renewed its commitment to support these public facilities.

This renewed commitment was signed off following Council's receipt of a report of usage of all of Council's public halls throughout the municipality.

Encourage social networks to thrive

Council's 2012/2013 Community Grants program saw the allocation of \$197,600 towards 38 projects throughout the Shire.

This funding makes a significant contribution to development of social interaction and networking

throughout the Shire by supporting local community groups, sporting clubs and committees to upgrade facilities or provide improved services and information.

A number of youth events were conducted during 2012/2013 through funding provided by FreeZa. Events such as underage discos in Wedderburn and Boort, as well as continuation of the Kool Skools music program, have received great support and patronage and continue to facilitate engagement with youth within the Shire in a supportive and safe environment.

Reduce barriers to social participation

During 2012/2013, Council continued to work in partnership with the Department of Transport to support the Transport Connections Program with the employment of a part-time Transport Connections Co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator continued Council's support of such significant projects as the Loddon L2P program, which assists young people to complete their 120 hours of driving experience, and the introduction of a Loddon transport brochure and smartphone app.

REPORTING TO THE COUNCIL PLAN



This year's participants in the Council-supported Community Leadership Loddon Murray program were pictured taking a break during a visit to Boort.

The Regional Victoria Living Expo has assisted in the creation of Welcome Packs to both promote the Shire and assist potential residents in knowing more about our part of the region, our communities and townships.

Council has also been involved in the Improving Liveability for Older People project, which included consulting with older community members about strategies that Council can put in place to support them.

Council has supported social inclusion with the appointment of a Rural Access Officer in a part-time role. Jolie Middleton (right) has succeeded in sharpening Council's focus on disability access issues.



Encourage widespread community participation

Council remains a faithful supporter of the Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program. Council generally sponsors at least one participant a year.

Council continues to deliver numerous projects or initiatives

identified within its Recreation Strategy. Of specific note are the extensive benefits provided to numerous sporting clubs and facilities throughout the Shire with the completion of the 2011/2013 Drought Proofing Program.

Developing the Loddon Healthy Minds Network

Council has set out to improve the effectiveness of the Loddon Health Minds Network by developing a four-year strategic plan.

In 2012/2013, a number of achievements have been seen.

Efforts to increase the branding and awareness of the network have been boosted by the introduction of Healthy Minds banners and letterhead and network meetings have been held in Newbridge, Inglewood, Serpentine, Pyramid Hill, Bridgewater and Tarnagulla.

The inaugural LHMN art show was conducted in October 2012 with entries received from Boort and Wedderburn secondary colleges.

Sunshine Breakfasts were also held at Wedderburn, Boort and East Loddon schools during Mental Health Week in October 2012.

After spelling out an intention to lift the level of community representation in the network, two new community representatives were invited to join the Loddon Healthy Minds Network in Bev McNaughton and Greg Deimos.

The agency membership of the network also expanded to include Headspace and the Wedderburn Community House.

Continue Council's support for senior citizens by implementing Council's Active Ageing Strategy

The renewal of Council's active ageing plan was required in the 2012/2013 year.

Our active ageing and positive ageing plans will be incorporated into a wider Community Care Strategy.

Consultation for the new strategy was conducted at the end of 2012 and a draft strategy is currently being formulated for presentation to council in 2013/2014.

Council's Club 5 to 8 was a part of our previous active ageing strategy and this continues to offer a supported social network of outings

and trips for residents and ratepayers of the Loddon Shire aged over 50 years.

In 2012/2013, trips were organised to *Annie the Musical* in Melbourne, Sovereign Hill at Ballarat, Phillip Island, Echuca, Australia's Biggest Garden Show in Melbourne, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, Broken Hill and an overnight sightseeing trip to Melbourne.

Focus – Community Engagement

Assist our community to be fully informed of current issues

Council selected a provider for a new website following a request for tender process. The development of the website began during 2012/2013 with implementation expected by the end of the 2013 calendar year. Training of staff will be undertaken in August 2013 in preparation for the change.

Council has published its quarterly *Loddon Bulletin* during the year, which serves as an effective information tool for residents. Council employs a part-time media officer who drives the production of this publication and other Council communications.

Provide opportunities for our community to hold conversations with Council

Individual councillors continue to engage with their communities in appropriate ways, depending on the needs of individual constituents and community groups.

Improve Council feedback to the community

Council has maintained support for a quality Mayoral Column every week. Council is aware that the community values the information provided by the Mayor in this way.

The quality of Council's Annual Report continues to improve. Information contained within

the Report is comprehensive and provides the reader with a clear understanding of the activities of this municipality.

Councillors and the CEO continue to hold regular interviews with local radio and with the *Bendigo Advertiser* and *Loddon Times* so that important community issues are given local coverage.

Council has undertaken a number of community infrastructure projects during the life of this Plan and each of these is celebrated at an opening ceremony where community members are acknowledged. A notable example was the opening of the rebuilt Newbridge sports pavilion in May 2013.

Focus – Organisational Development

An organisational culture that demands excellence

An internal communication procedure was developed during 2012/2013 to address any gaps in communication between the various levels of council staff. It was adopted by the Management Executive Group on 2 July 2013.

Council has recently invested heavily in a leadership program for its senior managers. The lessons from this leadership program will be shared with all staff in the organisation.

Council continues to invest heavily in staff training and the promotion of organisational values through the Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct.

Invest in systems and technology to improve services to the community

Council's audit program is developed annually by the audit committee in conjunction with recommendations from management and the internal auditor about current and emerging risks.

Council's risk management software is being used extensively to record risks identified through the internal

audit program, risk management meetings, occupational health and safety meetings, management and leadership group meetings and reported incidents.

Invest in staff development

Council commenced the DISC management and leadership training program in May 2012 for all managers and some supervisors, which continued through 2012/2013 for the entire group. There was further training in effective communication offered to a smaller group of managers later in the year.

Managers are encouraged to network with their peers and attend professional development meetings and/or conferences which also provide this opportunity.

The finance team attends the Local Government Finance Professionals technical meetings and annual conference each year to ensure that its members are provided with up-to-date and relevant information about changes to accounting standards, expectations of the Auditor-General and other activities in the industry.

Customer service training was facilitated by the Tourism Department for businesses in the Shire. Some of Council's customer service staff attended this training.

Training in the use of compliance software has been undertaken by key personnel and they are progressively training staff in the use of the system.

Managers are encouraged to network with peers, normally through conferences facilitated by peak bodies such as the Local Government Finance Professionals, Local Government Professionals and Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia.

Audit Committee

Membership

Council's audit committee is an advisory committee comprising five members – one Councillor and four external independent persons. The current membership consists of:

Councillor:

- Cr Gavan Holt

Independent external persons:

- Mr Ken Belfrage (Chair)
- Mr Rodney Baker
- Mrs Jo Haw
- Mr David Peterson

Cr Holt was reappointed to the committee at the Statutory Meeting of Council held on 9 November 2012.

Mr Belfrage was recommended as Chair of the committee for a term of 12 months at the meeting held on 16 May 2013 and Council endorsed that recommendation at the Ordinary Meeting held on 27 May 2013.

Mr Peterson's term ended in April 2013 and he was reappointed to the committee until 30 April 2017.

Meetings

Meetings were held in August, November, February and May.

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services attended the meetings in an advisory capacity.

Audit program

The audit program, which was originally developed following a risk profiling exercise for Council facilitated by HLB Mann Judd, Council's internal audit firm, and involving a number of key staff from Council's various business units, was endorsed unchanged by the committee in May 2013.

The audit program identifies reviews to be undertaken, but recognises there is scope to change priorities should the committee deem this necessary.

Audit reviews

Reviews were undertaken in the following areas:

- Town planning advice
- Reliance of grants
- IT network security
- Section 86 committees.

During the year, the committee also regularly assessed outstanding audit recommendations from audit reports. At the start of the financial year, there were 20 actions to be completed.

With the addition of 32 actions from the audit reviews, plus two actions from the Management Letter for the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2012, there were 54 actions active throughout the year.

At the end of the financial year, 30 actions remained outstanding.

Along with the audits, during the year the committee addressed the following items:

- A review of the 2011/2012 Financial, Standard and Performance Statements
- Review of monthly Finance Reports
- A survey by committee members to assess the performance and effectiveness of the committee
- A review of the audit program and adoption of program for next year
- Quarterly updates in relation to fraud and any major law suits
- Quarterly updates in relation to risk management and reports about insurance audits undertaken during the year
- A review of the Audit Committee Charter
- A review of the End of Financial Year Audit Strategy for 30 June 2013
- A review of the draft budget for 2013/2014.

Memberships

During the financial year, Council was a member of the following organisations:

- Agribusiness Association of Australia
- Australian Performing Rights Association
- Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group
- Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia
- Keep Australia Beautiful (Victoria)
- LG Pro
- Local Government Finance Professionals
- Maddocks
- Municipal Association of Victoria Rural Councils
- Municipal Works Officers Association
- Planning Institute Australia
- Rail Freight Development Alliance
- Revenue Management Association
- SAI Global Ltd
- Thompson Reuters Pty Ltd

Freedom of Information Act 1982

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Act) provides the community with right of access to documents of Council.

Applicants are entitled to access documents unless they are exempt documents, which are listed in Part IV of the Act. These include:

- Internal working documents of Council
- Law enforcement documents

- Documents affecting legal proceedings
- Documents affecting personal privacy
- Documents relating to trade secrets
- Documents containing material obtained in confidence.

Section 38A of the Act specifies Council documents that are exempt under the Act.

Requesting a document

Under Section 17 of the Act, requests must be in writing, must provide enough information for Council to reasonably identify the document and must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

Designated officer

The name and designation of the officer with authority to make a decision in relation to a request is:

Mrs Jude Holt

Director Corporate Services & Freedom of Information Officer
Telephone: (03) 5494 1200
Email: jholt@loddon.vic.gov.au

Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 and Protected Disclosure Act 2012

The Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 was repealed on 10 February 2013, with the introduction of the Protected Disclosure Act 2012.

The objective of the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 (the Act) was to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies and establish a system for matters to be investigated.

The Protected Disclosure Act 2012 continues the objectives of the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 and provides new mechanisms for making disclosures about improper conduct within the public sector.

Reporting the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

Under Section 104 of the Act, Council must prepare a report on the operation of the Act for the financial year. For the period 1 July 2012 to 9 February 2013:

- Council used the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 Ombudsman's Guidelines in procedural matters relating to the Act.
- No disclosures were made to Council.
- No disclosures were referred by Council to the Ombudsman for determination as to whether they were public interest disclosures.
- No disclosed matters were referred to Council by the Ombudsman.
- No disclosed matters were referred by Council to the Ombudsman to investigate.
- No investigations of disclosed matters were taken over by the Ombudsman from Council.
- No requests under Section 74 of the Act were made to the Ombudsman to investigate disclosed matters.
- No disclosed matters for investigation were declined by Council.
- No disclosed matters were substantiated on investigation
- No recommendations of the Ombudsman under this Act relate to Council.

Reporting the Protected Disclosure Act 2012

Under Section 70 of the Act, Council must prepare a report on the operation of the Act for the financial year. For the period 10 February 2013 to 30 June 2013:

- Council used the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Victoria (IBAC) guidelines for making and

handling protected disclosures in matters relating to the Act

- No disclosures were notified to IBAC under section 21(2) of the Act.

Protected Disclosure Co-ordinator

The IBAC Guidelines require a public office to have a Protected Disclosure Co-ordinator, who will have a central role in managing protected disclosures.

The name and designation of Council's officer to whom Protected Disclosure Act matters are referred is:

Mrs Jude Holt

Director Corporate Services & Freedom of Information Officer
Telephone: (03) 5494 1200
Email: jholt@loddon.vic.gov.au

A full copy of IBAC's Guidelines can be found at:
<http://www.ibac.vic.gov.au/resources/protected-disclosures>

Information Privacy Act 2000

The objectives of the Information Privacy Act 2000 (the Act) are to balance the protection of an individual's personal information with public access to personal information and to promote responsible and transparent handling of personal information in the public sector.

Council is committed to the principles of the Information Privacy Act 2000 and to protecting an individual's right to privacy.

For the year 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, there were no breaches of the Act by Council.

Best Value

Under the Local Government Act 1989, Council must comply with the Best Value Principles and must report annually to the community



Cr Gavan Holt speaks during the Australia Day ceremony at Wedderburn, before introducing Australia Day Ambassador Matthew Albert.



Cooking expert Christina Yeow was one of the presenters at The Loddon Bendigo Rural Women's Network's second Farm Diversification Expo at Campbell's Forest Hall.

on what it has done to ensure that it has given effect to the Best Value Principles.

Section 208B(a):

Quality and Cost Standards

The services delivered to the Loddon community are provided through a range of methods. Council has a strong preference for delivering service by using its own resources, including its own labour, plant and equipment.

This strategy provides Council with the opportunity to maximise control over its service delivery and the quality and cost standards of the products and services it delivers and, above all, ensures that Council is able to maximise local content and local employment engaged in the delivery of our services.

In early 2011, Council reaffirmed this commitment and chose to drastically increase the size of its workforce and its road construction capability by bringing three years' worth of plant replacement purchases forward to respond to the January 2011 floods.

In order to accelerate the reconstruction program, Council found it necessary to engage more contractors to deliver some works. Council has made this choice so that it is able to balance the desire for local control, local employment and local input against the need

for the speedy delivery of a flood reconstruction program.

This strategy has proven to be successful, with Council completing the delivery of its roads and flood reconstruction program in June 2013.

Section 208B(b):

Responsiveness

Council strives to ensure that services are responsive to the needs of the Loddon community.

Council's focus during 2012/2013 has moved through the course of that financial year to more of a long-term recovery model. Council has been focused on re-establishing the community services and infrastructure necessary for the ongoing support of our community.

Section 208B(c):

Accessibility

Council receives regular feedback about the accessibility of its services. More and more, we find our community expects to be able to access services provided by Council in a number of different ways.

We find that some people prefer to access information online, while others are unable to do so through lack of home computing or internet capabilities. Some individuals require information to be provided in hard copy, while others simply wish to receive verbal advice.

Council continues to look for ways to improve the dissemination of information, access to services and the accessibility of our staff to the Loddon community.

In attempting to support the delivery of services through a number of different media, Council is constantly mindful of the cost pressures that operating multiple delivery platforms causes.

Council's investment in its Rural Access program continues to improve the accessibility of our services and other services provided by the private sector.

Section 208B(d):

Continuous improvement

The increasing resource base of this organisation in response to the January 2011 floods has provided Council with a number of opportunities for improvement. The skills and expertise of staff who were brought in on a short-term basis to assist with the flood recovery program provided Council with an opportunity to upgrade its current processes.

Council has taken every opportunity to exploit these learning opportunities.

Council has also undertaken extensive work in reviewing the delegations provided by this organisation to its staff and continues to refine the delegations

provided to committees established under Section 86 of the Local Government Act.

The review of Council's delegations was completed in March 2013.

Section 208B(e):

Regular communication

Council has found that successful communication with the community requires significant effort and a diversity of approach. A great many people in our community value the weekly Mayoral Column as a source of information and, similarly, look forward to Council's quarterly *Loddon Bulletin*.

In 2012/2013, Council continued its investment in media resources and the Shire has been able to engage suitably qualified and experienced staff to assist with the crafting of our messages to the community.

This investment has led to a better uptake of information provided by Council and has promoted a stronger engagement by our community on local issues. Where possible, Council has maintained its regular consultation processes, including attendance at community meetings – in particular, attending development association and community planning meetings – and supported the various committees of management that operate throughout the municipality.

Section 208B(f):

Regular reporting

Council continues to report on its activities to the Loddon community through various avenues. Council clearly uses its Annual Report as a formal reporting technique, but also provides regular updates to our community through the quarterly *Loddon Bulletin*, the weekly Mayoral Columns which are circulated to a wide range of media outlets and through media releases which are commonly picked up by the press circulating throughout Loddon.

Council also uses the vast number of community newsletters to get information out to specific parts of the municipality.

Carers Recognition Act 2012

The Carers Recognition Act 2012 defines every council in Victoria as a "public service care agency" and therefore a "care support organisation".

As a consequence, councils are required to comply with the Act and to report on this in their annual reports from 2012/2013 and thereafter.

This reporting requirement impacts across a wide range of Council activities, including human resources, HACCC, aged and disability services, leisure and recreation, community services and family and children's services.

Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the Act.

Council has promoted the principles of the Act to people in care relationships who receive Council services, to people in care relationships and to the wider community by distributing printed material through relevant Council services, displaying posters at Council community venues and providing information to organisations represented in Council/community networks.

Council has also taken all practicable measures to ensure staff, Council agents and volunteers working for us are informed about the principles and obligations of the Act by including information on the care relationship in Council induction and training programs for staff working in Home and Community Care and disability services.

Council has also done all it can to review and modify policies, procedures and supports to include recognition of the carer relationship.

Committees appointed by Council

Under Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council may establish special committees comprising Councillors, Council staff and other persons.

By instrument of delegation, Council may delegate any of its functions, duties or powers to a special committee, although there are certain functions that cannot be delegated and these are listed under the Act.

Council's current list of Section 86 committees of management include:

- Boort Aerodrome Committee of Management
- Boort Development Committee of Management.
- Boort Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Boort Resource Information Centre Committee of Management
- Boort Tourism Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee of Management
- Campbell's Forest Hall Committee of Management
- Dingee Progress Association Committee of Management
- Donaldson Park Committee of Management
- East Loddon Community Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Community Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Lions Community Elderly Persons Units Committee of Management
- Inglewood Riding Club Committee of Management

- Inglewood Town Hall Committee of Management
- Jones Eucalyptus Distillery Site Committee of Management
- Kingower Development and Tourism Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Mechanics Hall Committee of Management
- Korong Vale Sports Centre Committee of Management
- Little Lake Boort Committee of Management
- Loddon Southern Tourism & Development Committee of Management
- Mitiamo Municipal Recreation Reserve Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Swimming Pool Committee of Management
- Serpentine Bowls and Tennis Pavilion and Reserve Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Community Centre Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Engine Park Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Mechanics & Literary Institute Committee of Management

- Wedderburn Tourism Committee of Management
- Yando Public Hall Committee of Management

During the year, the following Committees of Management were disbanded:

- Boort Pre-School Committee of Management
- Dingee Pre-School Committee of Management
- East Loddon Bus Committee of Management
- Eddington Community Centre Committee of Management
- Inglewood Pre-School Committee of Management
- Pyramid Hill Pre-School Committee of Management
- Wedderburn Pre-School Committee of Management

Information to be made available to the public

Under various sections of the Local Government Act 1989, specific information is to be made available to the public. Council must make available for public inspection documents containing the following prescribed matters –

- a) Details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor, Lord Mayor (if any) and Councillors under section 74 or 74A of the Act;
- b) The total annual remuneration for all senior officers in respect of the current financial year and the previous financial year, set out in a list that states –
 - (i) Ranges of remuneration of senior officers, where the difference between the lower amount and the higher amount in each range must not exceed \$10,000; and
 - (ii) The number of senior officers whose total annual remuneration falls within the ranges referred to in sub-paragraph (i);
- c) Details of overseas or interstate travel (with the exception of interstate travel by land for less than three days) undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months, including the names of the Councillors or members of Council staff and the date, destination, purpose and total cost to Council of the overseas or interstate travel, including accommodation costs;
- d) Names of Council officers who were required to submit a return of interest during the financial year and the dates those returns were submitted;
- e) Names of Councillors who submitted returns of interest during the financial year and the dates those returns were submitted;
- f) Agendas for, and minutes of, ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months kept under section 93 of the Act, except if the minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act;
- g) A list of all special committees established by Council and



Marilyn Lanyon, from Simply Tomatoes and Aussie Wool Quilts at Boort, is a key supporter of the Council-run Loddon Discovery Tours.



The Bridgewater Ski Platform on the Loddon River, opened in November 2012, has proved a boon for disabled water ski enthusiasts.

- the purpose for which each committee was established;
- h) A list of all special committees established by Council which were abolished or ceased to function during the financial year;
- i) Minutes of meetings of special committees established under section 86 of the Act and held in the previous 12 months, except if the minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act;
- j) A register of delegations kept under sections 87 and 98 of the Act, including the dates on which the last reviews under sections 86(6) and 98(6) of the Act took place;
- k) Submissions received in accordance with section 223 of the Act during the previous 12 months;
- l) Agreements to establish regional libraries under section 196 of the Act;
- m) Details of all property, finance and operating leases involving land, buildings, plant, computer equipment or vehicles entered into by Council as lessor or lessee, including the name of the other party to the lease and the terms and the value of the lease;
- n) A register of authorised officers appointed under section 224 of the Act;
- o) A list of donations and grants made by Council during the financial year, including the names of persons or bodies who have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant;
- p) A list of the names of the organisations of which the Council was a member during the financial year and details of all membership fees and other amounts and services provided during that year to each organisation by the Council;
- q) A list of contracts valued at \$100,000 (or such higher amount as is fixed from time to time under section 186(1) of the Act) or more –
- (i) Which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process; and
 - (ii) Which are not contracts referred to in section 186(5) of the Act.

Local laws

Council has five local laws in operation -

Municipal Government Local Law No.1 of 2007

Facilitates the good government of the Council, regulates and controls meetings and the use of the Council seal.

Streets and Roads Local Law No.2 of 2010

Provides for the management, control and regulation of roads and surrounding properties for the safety and convenience of road users.

Municipal Places Local Law No.3 of 2006

To allow people to enjoy the use of municipal places, control and prevent nuisance behaviour, protect community assets and promote the safe use of recreational facilities.

Environment Local Law No.4 of 2008

Provide a safe and healthy environment by regulating activities that may be dangerous or unsafe and provide services that enhance the quality of life in the municipal district.

Livestock Local Law No.5 of 2005

Provide for the control and welfare of livestock, minimise the spread

of disease, weeds and damage to road reserves in the interests of road safety.

Copies of the local laws are available for inspection and can be purchased at the Council offices during normal business hours, or go to www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Strategic documents adopted

During the year, Council endorsed the following policies, guidelines, strategies and plans –

August

- Municipal Fire Management Plan 2012/2015
- Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan 2012

January

- Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct
- Housing and Industry Marketing Plan 2013/2017

February

- Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013/2015

March

- Strategic Document, Policy and Procedure Framework

April

- Fees and charges for the year 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014

May

- Building Control Policy

June

- Council Plan 2013/2017
- Budget 2013/2014
- 2013/2014 Annual Infrastructure Program
- Domestic Animal Management Plan

Grants

During the 2012/2013 financial year, Council gave grants and funding to the following clubs and community groups:

- Bears Lagoon Tennis Club
- Boort Agricultural & Pastoral Society
- Boort District P-12 College
- Boort Fishing & Sailing Club
- Boort Golf Club
- Boort Historical Society
- Boort Hockey Club
- Boort Newsletter
- Boort Park
- Boort Senior Citizens
- Bridgewater on Loddon Bowling Club
- Bridgewater on Loddon Cricket Club
- Bridgewater on Loddon Golf Club
- Calivil Bowling Club
- Development Committees
- Dingee Bowling Club
- Dingee Progress Association
- Dunolly Field & Game Club
- Friends of Kooyoora
- Inglewood Bowling Club
- Inglewood Community Resource Centre
- Inglewood Historical Society
- Korong Newsletter
- Korong Vale Sports Centre
- Korong (Wedderburn) Historical Society
- League Sponsorship, LVFL
- League Sponsorship, NCFL
- Lifeline
- Mitiamo Netball Club
- Newbridge Public Hall
- Pyramid Hill Bowling Club
- Pyramid Hill Golf Club
- Pyramid Hill Memorial Hall
- Pyramid Hill Mitchell Park
- Pyramid Hill Tennis Club
- Rheola Public Hall
- Serpentine Bowls Club
- Tarnagulla Senior Citizens
- Wedderburn & District Harness Racing Club
- Wedderburn CERT
- Wedderburn Historical Engines & Machinery Society
- Wedderburn Hockey Club
- Wedderburn Lions Club
- Wedderburn Men's Shed
- Wedderburn Tourism Inc.

Youth Development

- Dingee Progress Association Talent Quest
- Loddon Valley Netball Association
- Wedderburn College

Events Sponsorship Scheme

- Boort Golf Club
- Boort Ladies Golf Tournament
- Boort Tennis Club
- Boort Tennis Club Easter Tournament
- Bridgewater on Loddon Bowling Club
- Dingee Bowling Club
- Dingee Progress Association
- Inglewood Bowling Club
- Inglewood Lions
- Inglewood Riding Club
- Jarklin Golf Club
- Korong Vale Bowling Club
- Loddon Arts Group
- Loddon Southern Tourism & Development
- Nature Tourism
- Pyramid Hill Bowls
- Rheola Charity Carnival
- Serpentine Bowling Club
- Wedderburn & District Harness Racing Club
- Wedderburn Band Cricket Club Loddon Sixes
- Wedderburn Golf Club
- Wedderburn Golf Club Tournament
- Wedderburn Junior Hockey Tournament
- Wedderburn Tourism Detector Jamboree

Municipal Offices

Wedderburn

41 High Street, Wedderburn, 3518
 Local Call: 1300 365 200
 Phone: (03) 5494 1200
 Fax: (03) 5494 3003

Serpentine

37 Peppercorn Way, Serpentine, 3517
 Phone: (03) 5437 7999
 Fax: (03) 5437 8407

Office hours: 8.15am to 4.45pm
 Monday to Friday
 (except public holidays)

Internet www.loddon.vic.gov.au
 Email: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au

National Relay Service

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service

- TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for (03) 5494 1200
- Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727, then ask for (03) 5494 1200
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS, then ask for (03) 5494 1200

Municipal Library

North Central Goldfields Regional Library Corporation

HQ 259 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo, 3550

(Temporary address until January 2014: 202 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo)

Telephone: (03) 5449 2790
 Email: mobile@ncgrl.vic.gov.au

Mobile Library timetable

Monday

Dingee 9.45am-10.15am
 Mitiamo 10.30am-11.15am

Tuesday

Bridgewater 9.00am-10.00am
 Inglewood 10.30am-12.30pm
 Wedderburn 2.00pm-4.30pm

Wednesday

Korong Vale 9.30am-10.30am
 Boort 11.00am-1.00pm

Thursday

Newbridge 9.00am-9.30am
 Tarnagulla 10.00am-10.30am
 Moliagull 11.00am-11.30am

Maternal & Child Health Centres

Boort Maternal & Child Health Centre

King Street, Boort, 3537
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5455 2192
 Thursday 9.00am-4.00pm

Dingee Maternal & Child Health Centre

King Street, Dingee, 3571
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5436 8274
 Monday *weeks 1 & 3* 9.00am-4.00pm

Inglewood Maternal & Child Health Centre

Grant Street, Inglewood, 3517
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5438 3192
 Tuesday 9.00am-4.00pm

Pyramid Hill Maternal & Child Health Centre

Victoria Street, Pyramid Hill, 3575
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5455 7065
 Monday *weeks 2 & 4* 9.00am-4.00pm

Serpentine Maternal & Child Health Centre

Chapel Street, Serpentine, 3517
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5437 7906
 Wednesday *weeks 1 & 3* 9.00am-4.00pm

Wedderburn Community Centre

Wilson Street, Wedderburn
 Mobile: 0409 166 891
 Phone: (03) 5494 3490
 Wednesday *weeks 2 & 4* 9.00am-3.30pm

Municipal Tips and Hours of Operation

Boort Landfill, off Boort-Quambatook Road

Tuesday 8.00am-noon
 Sunday 1.00pm-5.00pm

Dingee Transfer Station, Lawry's Road

1st April – 30th September
 Third Sunday, 10.00am-2.00pm
 1st October – 31st March
 First Wednesday, 8.00am-noon
 Third Sunday, 10.00am-2.00pm

Inglewood Landfill, off Inglewood-Salisbury Road

Wednesday 8.00am-noon
 Saturday 8.00am-noon

Newbridge Landfill, off Newbridge-Tarnagulla Road

Wednesday 1.00pm-5.00pm
 Sunday 1.00pm-5.00pm

Pyramid Hill Landfill, off Cemetery Road

Tuesday 1.00pm-5.00pm
 Sunday 8.00am-noon

Wedderburn Transfer Station, off Godfrey Street

Thursday 8.00am-noon
 Sunday 8.00am-noon

Kindergartens

*All pre-school hours are from 8.45am-1.45pm

Boort Pre-School

Godfrey Street, Boort, 3537
 Telephone: (03) 5455 2292
 Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
 Three-year-old group
 Fridays 9.00am-11.00am

Dingee Pre-School

Dingee-Serpentine Road, Dingee, 3571
 Telephone: (03) 5436 8401
 Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
 Three-year-old group
 Tuesday 10.00am-12.30pm

Inglewood Kindergarten

75 Grant Street, Inglewood, 3517
 Telephone: (03) 5438 3533
 Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

Pyramid Hill Pre-School

67 Kelly Street, Pyramid Hill, 3575
 Telephone: (03) 5455 7230
 Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
 Three-year-old group
 Tuesday 8.45am-1.45pm

Wedderburn Kindergarten

Ridge Street, Wedderburn, 3518
 Telephone: (03) 5494 3183
 Mobile 0458 943 183
 Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
 Three-year-old group
 Wednesday 8.45am-11.15am



Postal Address

PO Box 21 Wedderburn Vic 3518

Telephone

(03) 5494 1200

Fax

(03) 5494 3003

Email

loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au

Website

www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Municipal Office

37 - 41 High Street Wedderburn Vic 3518

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8.15am - 4.45pm