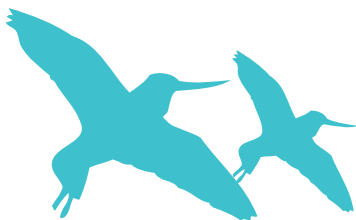


JULY 2023

Sorell Community News

community coast country

www.sorell.tas.gov.au



Community Grants Program

Through our Community Grants Program Individual Achievement funding we recently provided \$250 to local resident Rueben Wherrett who was selected in the Australian Youth Beekeeping Team, to attend the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers in Slovenia.



The International Meeting of Young Beekeepers is the largest annual gathering of its kind worldwide, and is a five day event. As part of the Australian Team, Rueben will test his knowledge and skills alongside around 120 teenagers aged 12 to 18 from 40 countries.

Rueben says "I got into beekeeping when I was nine. I was given a small bee hive that one of my neighbours had sitting in his paddock unchecked for years. I have now got six hives and get 80 to 150kg of honey a year, which I sell under the name 'Reubees Honey' along with beeswax products (lip balm and moisturiser). In February I heard about the Australian Meeting of Young Beekeepers, hosted by The Tasmanian Junior Beekeepers in Richmond, where I competed in the 14-stage, two day competition. I came first and was selected to represent Australia at the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers. I am looking forward to meeting other young beekeepers from around the world and seeing Europe for the first time."

The Individual Achievement Program aims to encourage and celebrate individuals who have achieved outstanding results in their chosen field by providing funds to residents who have qualified or been selected by a peak body to represent their state or nation.

Congratulations Rueben! We hope you have a wonderful trip and enjoy the experience.

A CFLC is coming to Sorell School in 2024!

Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLC) are welcoming places designed to support all families with children from pregnancy to 5 years of age.

Our vision is to be "A strong, safe community learning and thriving together".

The CFLC will be at Sorell School and offer free access to several core services and visiting services that support children and families including CHaPS, a Social Worker, Speech and Language Pathologist, Psychologist, Early Intervention Services and specialist support from allied health services.

With convenient off-street parking, it will provide an inviting play space for families, consultation areas, training rooms for group activities and kitchen and dining facilities. The outdoor area allows children to play, explore and learn in a safe and natural environment. The CFLC will be open Monday – Friday, becoming a "home away from home" for all families in the South East.

Naming our Centre

We would like a name that reflects our vision and our communities. Suggestions may include reference to aspects of history, geography, or flora and fauna of our region. The possibilities are many but we want your suggestions.

Submit your suggestions through a Direct Message on our Facebook page – **Sorell Child and Family Learning Centre**, or by texting Kim Overgaaauw, the Centre Leader, on 0467 316 513.

Thank you for helping us name your centre!





Mayor's Message



The Future of Local Government Review is ramping up as we continue to work through this important staged process.

The latest development has seen the Local Government Board release a series of Information Packs, in line with the nine Community Catchments identified in the Stage 2 Interim Report. These information Packs outline a range of ideas and scenarios to help us have a conversation about what Local Government reform might look like.

Sorell Council are included in two community catchment areas – the South East and the Eastern Shore. The South East catchment area includes Sorell, Tasman and Glamorgan Spring Bay Councils, whilst the Eastern Shore catchment includes Sorell, Brighton, Clarence and Tasman Councils. Within each of these catchments there are different potential scenarios outlined.

We have commenced discussions with our neighbouring Councils in our community catchment areas to work through potential future Council structures to ensure the best long term sustainability for our region. The board has invited Councils to consult, discuss and even suggest different alternatives for each scenario.

I believe this current review is our opportunity to apply our vision for the future.

Many people believe the present Local Government model doesn't reflect modern day needs and requirements of communities. I personally believe that the present model is unsustainable for many small to medium Councils. I will continue to advocate for change that will ensure the short and long term financial viability and sustainability of Local Government. We must have a rate base that can fund our future sustainability, and at present we do not have that.

Reform that will deliver regional benefits is vital. We need to look at the bigger picture of our role within the region and current Council boundaries. A larger regional Council will provide us with strength of numbers and greater lobbying power to source funding for community and infrastructure projects, as well as a far greater capacity to service our community in a sustainable way.

Because of this, for the last ten years we've been working collaboratively with our neighbouring Councils to promote the shared interests of the region.

Sorell has been working with them under the SERDA (South East Regional Development Association) banner to lobby for greater funding and investment to be directed towards infrastructure of regional significance and service needs of the south east region. We've focused on evidence based approaches to our regions needs and it has paid off.

Your say is important, so embrace the chance to help shape how you want our community to look in the future. I encourage you to get involved and have your say on this important issue – head to the reform website at www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au.

The development of our budget for 2023-2024 was a challenging process as always. I appreciate the time staff, management and Councillors put in to working towards keeping Council operating in a financially sustainable way both at present and long term. Council's disciplined and strategic financial management practices are guided by the Financial Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Plan. These important documents inform what level of funding is required to meet our required levels of service to our community.

Council has worked consistently and conscientiously to ensure we are operating within our means. I will continue to ensure we are effective and responsible in the use of rate payer's funds.

Highlights of this year's budget include investment of \$6.7 million for upgrade and renewal of roads, \$1.245 million for upgrade and renewal of footpaths and kerb and construction of the BMX facility at South East Sports Complex. You can read more about our capital works program in this newsletter.

We continue to face challenging times, and with an unknown outcome in the local Government reform space, we will continue to work responsibly and collaboratively with our community to create a positive future for the next generations.

As always, I am available anytime to discuss any issues of concern with members of our community. I can be contacted on **0408 023 302** or kerry.vincent@sorell.tas.gov.au.

Mayor Kerry Vincent



Australia Day Awards

The Australia Day Awards for 2023 were presented at the South East Stadium in January.

The Australia Day Awards recognise those individuals and groups in our community who make a significant contribution or achieve something special.

The recipients for 2023 were:

Citizen of the Year

Craig Boyd and Jess Ffrost-Boyd

Young Citizen of the Year

Jordon King and Joshua Coates

Community Group of the Year

Okines Community House Bike Repair Shed

Community Event of the Year

Midway Point Neighbourhood House's Garden Twilight Market

Sincere congratulations to these individuals and groups for the outstanding contribution they make to our community.



Budget and Rates Info

Council recently approved the 2023-2024 annual plan and budget with a rate rise of 6.99%.

The total rates revenue required each year is determined through our Long Term Financial Plan and what it costs us to deliver our services to the community and maintain our infrastructure. We have worked diligently to keep rate rises to a minimum over the past five years and transparently address our short, medium and longer term financial obligations. Our operating and capital costs, however, have risen significantly over the past twelve months principally due to inflationary increases in the supply of materials and services. The rate rise reflects what is required for us to continue to operate sustainably.

The rate rise applies to the total amount of rate revenue required and is generated by the fixed charge and variable rate based on the assessed annual value (AAV). The rate rise of 6.99% of total rate revenue is spread across approx. 9,900 properties and is an average increase. From an individual property perspective, some will be higher than the 6.99% increase and some less depending on each property's AAV. And further, if any movement in the AAV has resulted from the application of an adjustment factor by the Office of the Valuer General.

Capital Works

Our capital budget for 2023-2024 provides funding for essential services, maintenance of existing assets and new infrastructure growth. This budget commits \$18.037 million for capital works projects, including carry-over projects from the 2022-2023 financial year, and sees funding for the following:

\$6.7 million for upgrade and renewal of roads

\$1.245 million for upgrade and renewal of footpaths and kerb

\$2.884 million for upgrade and renewal of stormwater infrastructure

\$700k for replacement of plant and equipment

\$2.563 million for walkways, streetscaping, parks and reserves renewals and upgrades

\$3.582 million for building works and facilities

\$165k for renewal of IT infrastructure

\$125k for preliminary works for 2024-2025 capital projects

Specific projects we will be undertaking this financial year include:

- Sealing a section of Nugent Road
- Widening a section of Wiggins Road
- Continuation of Streetscape works in Sorell
- Construction of the BMX facility at South East Sports Complex
- Upgrade of Stormwater outfalls in the Southern Beaches
- Construction of the South East Jobs Hub
- Walkways in Miena Park and Shark Point Road
- Further upgrade works on the Sorell Railway Carriage Shed to enable it to be used for community activities

A full list of our Capital Works projects can be found on our website.

Payment of Rates and Charges

Rates, if paid in full, are due by 13 September 2023. Alternatively, they can be paid by way of four equal instalments as outlined on your Rates Notice. Direct debit options are also available. Rates can be paid online through Council's Website, over the phone, in person at the Council Offices or Australia Post outlets, or via BPAY through your preferred financial institutions online banking system. Full details are included on your Rates Notice.



Harry Griffith from Hobart Chargers in action versus Ringwood Hawks (Photo courtesy of Rod Turton)

South East Stadium

The South East Stadium has been open for six months now. During this time we've hosted a range of big games, including a Hobart Chargers NBL1 match and all of SENA Sun's TNL home games.

The grassroots South East Basketball Association is running their junior program and working towards getting a seniors social competition off the ground.

The stadium is available to hire for a range of corporate and community uses. We welcome bookings for community events that can utilise the function room, meeting room and two basketball/netball courts. Please direct enquiries to Council on 6269 0020 or email Council.Facilities@sorell.tas.gov.au.

We will soon be undertaking a survey to find out your thoughts about your visit to the stadium and what other events and activities you would like to attend there. The survey will run until late July and can be accessed on our website. Head to our homepage for the survey link and have your say!

Community Conversations



Our series of Community Conversations are back! Please join us for an informal chat with the Mayor, Councillors and General Manager about what's happening in your local community.

Updates on local community projects of interest will be provided, including consultation around the relocation of the Fenton Street playground in Midway Point to Hoffman Street, adjacent to the Midway Point Neighbourhood House.

All community members are welcome to attend.

Primrose Sands

Thursday 27 July at 6.00pm
Primrose Sands Community Centre

Midway Point

Thursday 31 August at 6.00pm
Midway Point Community Hall

Natural Resource Management Update

Blue Lagoon Management Plan

The 5 year Blue Lagoon Management Plan (BLMP) has been developed with the aim of conserving biodiversity, cultural heritage and social values – while addressing environmental challenges. It sets out a range of priorities and corresponding measures for:

- Protection from invasive weeds
- Managing water levels in the lagoon
- Controlling outflow from weather variations, and
- Minimising impacts on private assets and natural biodiversity (e.g during times of heavy rainfall).



Featherop (*Pennisetum villosum*)

The BLMP sets out to deliver a proactive and balanced management plan that benefits both the environment and the community. Head to our website for the latest update on the consultation process for the development of the plan - www.sorell.tas.gov.au/have-your-say/

Cat Management Trial

We are collaborating with TassieCat, Ten Lives and the Midway Point community to gather information on responsible cat ownership in the local area. Getting community involved to discuss what the issues are and share ideas on how to improve the welfare of local cats will help us protect native wildlife and reduce the nuisance caused by roaming, stray and feral cats. You can access the survey via www.tassiecat.com.au/midway-point-survey

Weed Removal Programs

Council continues to work with our community to take action on weeds. We've secured grant funding from the State Government's Weed Action Fund to work with landowners towards elimination of weeds including Paterson's Curse, Featherop, Mirror Bush, Chilean Needle Grass, Gorse and Serrated Tussock. These weeds are rapidly gaining ground in our coastal ecosystem and, if left uncontrolled, are likely to be very problematic. We want to work with the community to help control and ultimately, eradicate these weeds. If you recognise any of these in your garden, please replace with other evergreen local plants. If you see them on Council land, notify us on our website - www.sorell.tas.gov.au/weed-observation-form/

Coastal Estuary Risk Mitigation Program

We secured \$1.8 million in funding from the Federal Government to improve coastal living in the Southern Beaches region by safeguarding erosion prone dunes, remediating already eroded dunes and by providing safe stormwater services. The project will also assist in reducing risks by managing estuarine wetlands which harbors diverse flora and fauna and plays an important role in buffering floods for our coastal communities.

Craigs Hill Bushland Reserve

Did you know that Council owns more than 20 hectares of bushland on Craigs Hill? The area supports threatened vegetation and provides habitat for swift parrots, owls, devils and quolls. We are investigating establishing a public reserve on this site and we need your help! We want to understand our community's priorities for the site so we invite you to join us for a community walk and talk with Council staff to hear about the current issues and the potential opportunities for the site. Head to our website for details on how you can get involved.

Your Councillors

Contact details for our Councillors can be found on our website at www.sorell.tas.gov.au/contact-us



Mayor Kerry Vincent



Deputy Mayor
Charles Wooley



Councillor
Meg Brown



Councillor
Shannon Campbell



Councillor
Janet Gatehouse



Councillor
Melinda Reed



Councillor Marisol Miro
Quesada Le Roux



Councillor
Natham Reynolds



Councillor
Carmel Torenus

Contact Us

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Any feedback about the newsletter is welcomed and can be forwarded to sorell.council@sorell.tas.gov.au

Our Asset Management Program on National Stage

Julie Mann, Council's Manager Infrastructure and Assets, recently presented at the IPWEA (Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia) Asset Management Congress on the Gold Coast.

Julie presented on our Asset Management Program, titled From "What are we going to do today?" to Cloud Scheduling – A Rural Council's Asset Management Transformation.

Around five years ago we began working towards achieving activity based costing for our maintenance activities. To do this we needed to completely redevelop the asset register to digitise our entire planning process for capital and maintenance expenditure. There was a primary focus on training field staff to capture failure types against assets and to creating an asset centric process for tracking and recording our capital expenditure. This contributes to achieving audit compliance, and helps ensure financial ratios are reflected in our Long Term Financial Plan. Julie's presentation highlighted our success in asset management as a leading edge case study to an international audience.