



CUSTOMER FIRST CENTRE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Council is pleased to announce that the Customer First Centre is open in temporary premises to enhance service levels for ratepayers, residents and visitors.

Council's General Manager, Mr Allan Burgess has been involved in the planning of the centre from the time it was just an idea and he is thrilled that it is now open. "Making business transactions as easy as possible for customers is what the Customer First Centre is all about. Instead of having to visit a number of departments to

conduct your business with Council, it has all been centralised in the one area with staff drawn from each area of Council to offer a "one stop shop". The Customer First Centre team are very excited about the opportunity and have undertaken months of training to prepare them for the challenge."

Council's Customer First Manager, Mrs Marg Mottee added that Council staff members have given the project tremendous support and helped develop a system that will make it possible to answer most questions at the customers first point of contact with Council, whether in person or on the phone. We

are so grateful for their support and now ask that our customers help us to take it to the next level by showing patience and understanding if their particular request requires some additional research."

"The Customer First Centre is an exciting new initiative for our Council and we know people using the service will find it an enormous benefit" said Mayor, Councillor Janet Hayes. "The whole idea behind the Customer First Centre is to focus on our customers and make their experience as positive, professional and convenient as possible. Our staff are friendly and dedicated so please support them as they endeavour to "go the extra mile" for you".



Above: The enthusiastic Customer First team is looking forward to building great relationships with Council's customers. Some of the team, pictured here, are happy to make the most of their temporary location on the lower floor of the Council Chambers building at the Civic centre.

Below: Staff in the Customer First team has undergone extensive training in a broad range of Council's services. Peter Hemmings from Macleay Water is pictured here training the team about water meters .



CROCFEST A HUGE SUCCESS!

In mid September, Kempsey hosted Croc Fest®, the first ever on the eastern seaboard. Competition to host the festival had been fierce. Council provided funds and in-kind support for the festival to reinforce how much our community was behind the bid to host the event! The hard work by everyone involved paid off when the event went off without a hitch and was hailed the biggest ever held! Croc Fest® Kempsey was attended by 4,300 young people and 67 schools



from Nambucca Heads to Nowra. Eighty interactive and fun sessions promoted positive and healthy lifestyle messages over the three day festival.

Following this success Council voted at its October meeting to make application to hold the festival here again next year!

Left: Students rehearse on the huge portable stage, which was set up especially for the CrocFest event held at the Verge Street sporting fields.

Customer First Centre IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Location:

**Civic Centre, Elbow Street,
West Kempsey**

Phone number:

6566 3200

Call Centre hours:

**Monday to Friday
8.00am to 5.00pm**

Counter hours:

**Monday to Friday
8.30am to 4.30pm**

Closed Public Holidays & Weekends

*Council's website at
(www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au) is also
available during and outside these times
to find information, make requests and
transact some business*

OUR VALUES - Trust, Co-operation, Service, Innovation and Pride

ROAD FUNDING UPDATE

The issue of finding extra funding for 'Specific Road Maintenance' in Council's budget is still very much on the agenda and to this end Council conducted a workshop on 29 August 2005 and another is yet to be scheduled. The purpose of these workshops is to look at areas within Council's budgets where costs can be saved and the funds reallocated to 'Specific Road Maintenance'.

Thank you to everyone who responded to Council's 'Road Ratings' survey. The results are currently being collated. The first article in our series on Road Maintenance will appear in Council's next community newsletter due out towards the end of January 2006.

RECYCLING PLASTIC OIL CONTAINERS

Kempsey Waste Receptacle & Disposal facility on Crescent Head Road has recycling bins available to accept your used plastic oil containers free of any charge. Most of these containers retain up to 10% of the oil, making them difficult to recycle.

This program is designed to help residents dispose of their 100mls to 10 litres used plastic oil containers in an environmentally friendly way rather than store them at home or dump them inappropriately.

For more information pick up a brochure from the Civic Centre, any Shire Library, or contact Council on 65 663200.

Road Safety Program

Among many other projects, Council's Road Safety Officer, Mark Thompson, has been working on an Aboriginal Licencing Project which is designed to reduce the number of Aboriginals who are injured or die on our roads.

The ongoing program has been attended by 110 participants with 40% regaining their licence, and 15% obtaining their licence for the first time. An added benefit of the program is that 10% of the participants have received direct employment outcomes as a result of their participation.

Website breaks record

Council's website at (www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au) is fast gaining popularity. In the year from October 2004 to September 2005 it received 66,926 hits. The record for the number

IN BRIEF...

of hits in a month was smashed in August 2005 with the site receiving 8,218 in that month alone!

Council's website is full of useful information so if you get the chance please visit it!

Heritage Assistance Fund

Council, together with the NSW Heritage Office has launched the Kempsey Shire Heritage Assistance Fund to help property owners who need financial assistance to maintain heritage items on their property. If you require more information contact Council on 6566 3200.

Caravan Park Cabins

Council has just installed three two bedroom cabins at Crescent Head Caravan Park. The Cabins are quite luxurious with a 4 1/2 star rating. For bookings contact 1800 006600.

NEW GARBAGE TRUCKS NOW IN SERVICE



Council recently acquired two new side-arm loading domestic waste collection trucks, bringing its total fleet to three. It is expected that Council and ratepayers will benefit from this purchase through a more efficient collection service and reduced vehicle maintenance costs.

COMMUNITY LIFE AWARD FOR WEST KEMPSEY COMMUNITY RENEWAL PROJECT



ABOVE: Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, Governor of NSW presented a Community LIFE Award from Suicide Prevention Australia to the West Kempsey Community Renewal Project, which was accepted by Councillor John Bowell and project coordinator, Mrs Mavis Symonds.

The West Kempsey Community Renewal Project has been recognised by Suicide Prevention Australia for its outstanding work in the field of suicide prevention in our local Community.

The 'Community Life Award' was presented to project coordinator, Mrs Mavis Symonds and Councillor John Bowell by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, Governor of New South Wales during a ceremony to mark World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September, 2005 at Government House in Sydney.

The West Kempsey Community Renewal Project runs under the auspices of Kempsey Shire Council with funding from the Department of Health and Ageing and the Department of Housing. Other important partners in its operation are the Durri Aboriginal Medical Service, TAFE/Djigay and the North Coast Area Health Service. Its suicide prevention program, which gained an additional \$59,000 funding earlier this year, is based on workshop programs and activities that meet areas of need identified by the community.

Warm congratulations are due to everyone involved in the program, especially Vincent Cook (coordinator of the Mens Group), Mavis Symonds and all the team at the West Kempsey Community House in Gordon Nixon Avenue.

If you would like to know more about the work of the West Kempsey Community Renewal Project please give Mavis a call on 65 621409.

contacting your Council

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