

Keeping the Shire Connected

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER | APRIL 2021



Get ready Macleay

The Macleay Valley has experienced 19 natural disasters over the past decade in addition to the recent floods.

This rise in emergencies and their impacts demonstrates the importance of being prepared.

The better prepared you are, the safer you will be when disaster strikes. Being prepared also makes it easier to cope in stressful situations and will help you recover more quickly.

Over the next few months, Council will be working with a variety of emergency services and response groups to develop localised emergency plans. These will be tailored to specific townships across the Shire and will direct households to a variety of resources to help you get ready.

Being prepared is everyone's responsibility. Find out how you can start getting ready at KSC.pub/getready

Get Ready for Disasters

KEMPSEY Shire Council 

Five simple steps to prepare for disasters



1. Know your risk



2. Plan now for what you will do



3. Get your home ready



4. Be aware



5. Look out for each other



ksc.pub/getready



To stay up to date with sports club news, events and improvements to our sports facilities, sign up to the new Kempsey Shire Sports & Recreation e-newsletter.

Go to: <http://eepurl.com/hmtrtH>

Message from the General Manager

Critical work in flood times

In three years leading Council I've become all too familiar with the work we do during times of crisis. I'm incredibly proud of the fact that across every area of Council our staff are skilled and 100% committed to keeping services operating and working to make sure the community are informed and safe.

We have already gone through flood events this year and the indicators are that there may be more over Winter. Rest assured in these times our organisation drops everything to provide 24 hour assistance to the community.

Often our crews are working through the night or risk being cut off from their own properties and homes due to changing conditions.

Whether it's road inspections and management of road closures and warning systems, preparing stock refuges, monitoring the stormwater and managing breaks caused by the ground collapse or making sure we've got accurate information going out to the community it is a whole of Council effort during flood times.

Flood gauges on our river and creek network are a critical part of Council's flood management plan. The bushfires caused significant damage to the gauges and Council acknowledges the complex repair process and resulting incomplete network has understandably caused community concern, particularly in the most recent flood event. Unfortunately repairs and upgrades to the flood gauges network across the catchment system is technical work involving multiple agencies and contractors.

Throughout this incredibly wet season we have worked to try and get the repairs done and, in the meantime, provided critical information through Council staff attending where possible and providing manual reads. This is dangerous and challenging work for everyone involved.

The Georges Junction river level gauge has been fully replaced recently in partnership with WaterNSW, repairs have been undertaken at both Toorooka and Wittittrin, both severely damaged by bushfire, and contractors are now looking to solve issues in transferring the data from the units.

Other gauges at Bellbrook, Collombatti, Moparrabah and Sherwood are the key focus of \$90,000 of Drought Communities Program funding that Council has received, and contractors are being engaged to deliver upgrades at these sites.

While the issues with the network of river level gauges have not yet been entirely resolved, and the work has been affected by the flood events themselves, there are urgent steps being undertaken to restore the network.

In any emergency event Council will be working to get out the most accurate information available to our community through Council's website, Facebook and the new Disaster Dashboard linked from the website. I'd encourage everyone to take a moment to find and bookmark these sources.

Craig Milburn
General Manager

Identify your property for emergency services with a free rural number

Could the police, ambulance or fire brigade find your house in the event of an emergency?

As part of their ongoing Recovery efforts, Council is issuing and installing free property numbers to owners of eligible properties located outside the shire's towns and villages who apply through Council's Rural Property Numbering Program.

Residents should go to Council's website to check if their property is eligible via an interactive map and then submit an application.

Council's Recovery Coordinator, Jo McGoldrick, said the simple addition of property numbers which are easily visible from the road could make a difference between saving and losing lives and homes.

"During the Black Summer Bushfires

it became apparent that emergency services, particularly the NSW RFS crews, were having trouble identifying people's properties due to no clear numbers being displayed," she said.

"Currently, rural addresses are made up from all different types of identification and descriptions that assume local knowledge.

"This causes confusion, delays and inconvenience for emergency services and the delivery of goods and services.

A standardised means of locating rural properties with a system that is accurate, easy to understand, and easy to apply, can make all the difference in quickly locating your house or your neighbours' house in an emergency."

Council received funding under the Federal Government's Drought Communities Program to provide and

install the numbers on a large number of properties.

"We're encouraging residents to check their eligibility and apply for a number. The program is free but there are a limited amount of numbers available so get in quick," Ms McGoldrick said.

For more information on the program, to find the interactive map and fill out an application form go to Council's website



Youth Week 2021

Youth Week is an opportunity for people ages 12-24 to express their creativity, attend live events, share ideas or just spend some time connecting with one another while enjoying activities happening across the shire. The activities will run from 16-24 April 2021.

This year's theme is 'Together more than ever!'

Council has compiled a 2021 Youth Week Program that will be both a hardcopy and digital version. The hardcopy will be distributed across the region while the digital copy is available by going to: ksc.pub/youth-week



The Macleay Seniors Festival



The Macleay Seniors Festival will be held from 13-21 April 2021. The festival isn't just about celebrating the contribution that seniors make to our community but also a demonstration of the opportunities available to seniors to increase their enjoyment of life and activities.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty of COVID-19, the Seniors Expo at the Slim Dusty Centre will not take place this year.

However, Council has produced a 2021 Seniors Festival Program, detailing the wide variety of events and activities happening throughout the Macleay. The event program is available in both hardcopy and digital version. The hardcopy will be distributed across the region while the digital copy is available by going to:

ksc.pub/seniors-festival



Community Catchups

One of the many events that was sacrificed last year was Council's program of Community Catch-ups. The Catch-ups will be held across different locations across the Shire. They involve Councillors and senior Council staff engaging with the community through meetings, inspecting sites of interest, answering questions and building relationships.

For more information go to: ksc.pub/catchups

Dog Engagement

Council's online community survey that sought feedback on the dog exercise areas across the Shire wrapped up on 26 March.

Thankyou to everyone who took the time to participate. The resulting plan will be presented at the April Council meeting.

For more information go to: ksc.pub/your-say-dogs

Council's Mobile Customer Service Desk

Whether you want to pay your rates or questions about a project in Crescent Head or the wider shire, head on down to a location near you and it will be just like visiting Council.

In order to increase access to Council's services for residents, Council has embarked on a six-month trial of a mobile Customer Service Desk.

The Mobile Service Centre schedule:

14 April – Kempsey Show

21 April – Sherwood

**28 April – South West Rocks
(Front of the library)**

**5 May – Crescent Head
(across from the Surf Club)**

12 May – Gladstone (in front of the pool)

The hours of operation for the permanent Customer Service Centre on Tozer Street, West Kempsey are 10am and 4:30pm four days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Telephone service hours remain 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday.

56 timber bridges set to be replaced

The list of 56 timber bridges that will be replaced with concrete bridges in the next few years across the shire have been published by Council.

With Council currently the owner of 86 timber bridges and 55 concrete bridges across the shire, the works will replace more than half of the existing timber bridges.

These bridges will be made safer, more durable and able to withstand larger vehicle loads once Council replaces them through \$16 million in funding from the NSW Government's Fixing Country Bridges program.

The full list can be found on Council's website.



Repairing our road network

For all the good that rain brings, it also eats away at our roads.

Each year Kempsey Shire Council repairs thousands of potholes across the shire's 1,250 km road network.

The problem is that the rain falls on much of the shire at the same time, but Council is not equipped to send a team out to all of our 1250km of roads all at once. The repairs take time, longer than the problems take to emerge, and that can lead to bad roads and justifiably unhappy residents.

Council carries out inspections of all road surfaces on a regular basis to determine the priority for improvement and maintenance.

Council has two road crews dedicated to road maintenance and pothole repair makes a up a major part of their role. There are several additional crews that can step

in to help out with pothole repair after major weather events.

Potholes form for a range of reasons but water getting through the road surface is the main one and is why we see more potholes after periods of heavy rain.

If you've got a bad road in your life at the moment, you're not alone. Council crews have been busy patching potholes and welcome the community's assistance in locating road issues that have emerged.

All customer requests that are received are considered, with road repair works prioritised according to the location of the repair within the road, the road's ranking in the roads hierarchy list and potential risk to the community.

To report a pothole on a council road, you can use the Snap Send Solve app, send an email to ksc@kempsey.nsw.gov.au or contact council's Customer Contact Centre on 6566 3200.



What's on at Kempsey Library

Kids programs

Baby Bounce is held every second Friday of the month at 10:30am. Each session provides a half hour of songs, rhymes, stories and movement and is designed to introduce 0 to 3 years old's to the wonderful world of books and libraries.

Please be advised that no Baby Bounce sessions will be held during April and July school holidays.

Session dates:

- Friday 14 May
- Friday 11 June
- Friday 13 August

Storytime sessions are held once a month on a Friday at 10:30am. The sessions include book readings, craft and often a musical activity. The sessions are designed for children aged 3 to 6 years and aim to

develop early literacy skills in a fun and social environment.

Dates are as follows:

- Friday 30 April
- Friday 28 May

For more information contact Kempsey Library on 6566 3210.



Check out our new look!

Council has a new website, so next time you head to www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au let us know what you think!

