

Wentworth Shire Council community newsletter for the interest of residents and visitors



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Cr Tim Elstone

Clearing the way for Wentworth's recovery

The 2022/23 floods and flow-on devastation has had an immeasurable impact to our businesses, tourism, agricultural land, natural environment and communities.

Residents of Wentworth Shire (and others across the country) have been struck down and out, but through the support of local communities,

generous contributions and various government funding streams, Wentworth Shire will recover, as proven with past events.

I encourage everyone to support local businesses and community groups as we all embark on this road to recovery.

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Flooding at Lock 10, Wentworth



THE SMOKE SHOW
BBQ & SMOKED MEATS FESTIVAL
SATURDAY
8 JULY 2023
12:00PM - 7:00PM

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT | BAR | SMOKING DEMONSTRATIONS | KIDS ACTIVITIES

WENTWORTH SHOWGROUNDS, WENTWORTH NSW 2648

ENJOY WINE CHAR GRILL & BAR WENTWORTH and surrounds NSW

DEPUTY PREMIER VISITS WENTWORTH SHIRE

OFFICIAL OPENING OF COMMUNITY SPACES

Deputy Premier Paul Toole visited Wentworth Shire on 31 January 2023 to officially open some exciting community projects.



WENTWORTH AERODROME

Wentworth Shire Council was successful in securing \$8.42 million of funding from Restart NSW (Regional Growth: Economic Activation Fund – Growing Local Economies Program) in 2019 to provide an all-weather, 24 hour access facility with the capacity for Code 2B Aircraft (15-21 seat planes).

With a \$700,000 contribution from Wentworth Shire Council, this brings the combined total for the project to \$9.12 million.

The upgrade project included the construction of a new sealed runway, taxiway and apron, aircraft parking areas and the installation of pilot activated lighting. The Civil Construction components of the project were carried out by Wentworth Shire Council staff and project managed by Council. This enabled considerable budget savings.

Additional works on the Wentworth Aerodrome Upgrade commenced in September 2021 following approval from funding body Restart NSW to utilise the project's savings to upgrade the facility's secondary runway.



WENTWORTH SHOWGROUNDS COMMUNITY PAVILION

The new community pavilion at Wentworth Showgrounds was completed in December 2020, replacing the Barrett Pavilion which served the community for 114 years. The pavilion will be used by the Wentworth Show Society, several community groups and the broader public.

“On behalf of all Wentworth Showground users, we are really thankful for the funding we have received. This building will be used by all groups and the broader public. It is a great asset not only to the Wentworth Show Society but the whole community” Wentworth Shire Mayor, Cr Tim Elstone said.

Features of the new pavilion include ample meeting and display space, a large kitchen, disabled toilets and plenty of outdoor cover.

Funding for the project came from various sources including a \$450,000 grant from the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund, Wentworth Show Society's own funds, Wentworth Shire Council, Wentworth and District Community Bank – Bendigo Bank, RZ Resources (formerly Relentless Resources) and the Dawes family, bringing the total funds to \$1.1 million for the project.

SENIORS MORNING TEA

AUSTRALIAN INLAND BOTANIC GARDENS

The Australian Inland Botanic Gardens in coordination with Wentworth Shire Libraries, hosted a Senior's Morning Tea on Tuesday 28 February 2023. Organiser of the day Mackenzie Seddon, Acting Team Leader Libraries, was thrilled to see over 60 seniors in attendance.

The morning tea begun with speeches by Deputy Mayor of Wentworth Shire Council, Cr Daniel Linklater and 2023 Citizen of the Year Gwen Wilkinson.

Deputy Mayor of Wentworth Shire Council, Cr Daniel Linklater said during his speech "Our community consists of 28% of people aged 60 and over, making us a Shire with a wealth of knowledge, life experience and embedded cultures handed down for future generations."

He also spoke of fond experiences throughout his life with the older generations.

Following the speeches, an assortment of sandwiches and sweets were served to attendees for morning tea by the AIBG Catering Team.

After the morning tea, the attendees were privileged to a Tractor/Train tour of the gardens from experienced driver Vic Eddy, who has run the tour for over 8 years.



Vic Eddy, Train Driver



Wentworth Shire Deputy Mayor, Cr Daniel Linklater and guests of the Seniors Morning Tea



WORLD WETLANDS DAY

TOUR OF GOL GOL WETLANDS



Wentworth Shire Councillors celebrated #WorldWetlandsDay on Thursday 2 February with a tour of the Gol Gol Primary School Environmental & Cultural Immersion Centre and Gol Gol Wetlands.

The Gol Gol Wetlands, consist of Gol Gol Lake and Gol Gol Swamp, connected via Gol Gol Creek off the Murray River.

BMEET representatives with Wentworth Shire Deputy Mayor, Cr Daniel Linklater

Wentworth Shire Council commends all attendees of the day for coming together and discussing the importance of refilling local wetlands and the partnerships of Traditional Land Owners and Government to rejuvenate the land.

Among the attendees were representatives of the Barkindji Maraura Elders Environment Team (BMEET), WaterNSW, Gol Gol Community Reference Group, Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group, Commonwealth Environmental Water Office, NSW DPE, Western Landcare, Western Local Land Services, Murray Off-road Adventures, NSW Crown Lands, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and other local community groups.



Wentworth Shire Councillors, Cr Daniel Linklater (Deputy Mayor), Cr Sue Nichols, Cr Brian Beaumont and Cr Jane MacAllister

AUSTRALIA DAY

2023 AWARDS & CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Held at the Coomealla Memorial Sporting Club in Dareton on 25 January 2023.

The Wentworth Shire Council 2023 Citizen of the year is Gwen Wilkinson.

Life Member of the Gol Gol Rural Fire Service, wildlife carer for almost 35 years with Sunraysia Wildlife

Carers Group and an extremely active member at the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens since 2012. Other worthy nominees included Ross Hall, Clair Bates and Jan White.

Other award winners on the night included Daniel Hawkins, Young Citizen of the Year, Bec Marshall Sportsperson of the Year, Kalesita Burton Young Sportsperson of the Year.

Mayor Tim Elstone also conferred citizenship on three new citizens.



Wentworth Shire Mayor, Cr Tim Elstone with 2023 Citizen of the Year, Gwen Wilkinson and Australia Day Ambassador Dr Clio Creswell

WENTWORTH WINEDOWN

MUSIC, FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

The picturesque Australian Inland Botanic Gardens Mildura-Wentworth hosted Wentworth Winedown on Saturday 25 February with raving reviews. Free attendance at the Wentworth Winedown was only made possible through the Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program funded by the NSW Government.

The aim of this program was to promote the social and economic recovery of regional communities, by renewing social connections and providing a revenue-boost to local businesses, following the extended COVID-19 restrictions across regional NSW and impacts of border closures.

Over 5 hours of live performances from Australian artists included Alice Ivy, Allday, Mallrat and the Mildura formed Loose Bricks (now performing on multiple interstate tours).

Local food and drink vendors served up a storm to over 3,000 attendees and included a range of options from; Monak Wine Co, Trentham Estate Winery, Fossey's Distillery, Cappa Stone Wines, Scad's Cruisin Café, The Van, El Gringo's Mexican Street Food, Peter's Souvlakis, Outback Almonds, Verdict pop up catering, Two Black Sheep Cafe, Enjoy Catering Mildura, Grazing Into Brunch and the Lions Club of Buronga Gol Gol & Friends of the Gardens Committee.



Mallrat was favoured by all ages



Loose Bricks



Alice Ivy



Artist, Allday entertains the crowd





FIBRE OPTIC SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA (FOSO) LIGHT ART INSTALLATION

The FOSO light art installation will combine sound and colour to reflect the unique environment and regional culture through an ambient orchestral light exhibition. The artist responsible for the installation is Bruce Munro, the internationally renowned artist known for the Field of Light at Uluru.

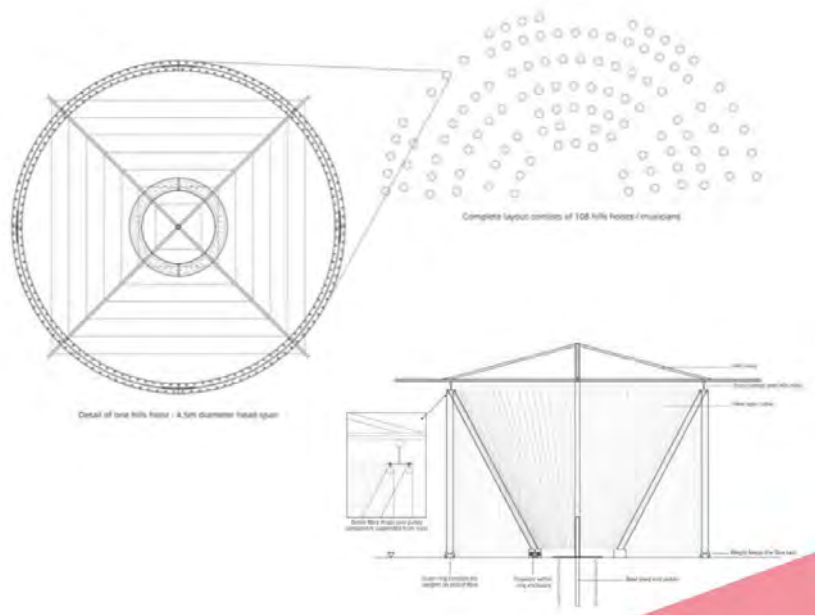
The FOSO exhibition in Wentworth and the Trail of Lights at Lake Cullulleraine will form the Light/State project. Wentworth Shire Council partnering with Mildura Regional Development were successful in securing \$4.99 million of funding as part of the Regional Tourism Activation Fund (Round 2), plus an additional \$1.26 million from other contributors, bringing the total project to \$6.25 million.

The project is currently in the procurement stage and installation is likely to be completed in July 2024. The FOSO installation involves 108 light columns made from cylindrical arrays of fibre optic cables, which encircle an iconic rotary clothes line, the Hill's Hoist.

Measuring 2 metres high and 5 metres in diameter, these colours will be accentuated and timed to the music, to

create a unique melodic experience. The installation will measure approximately 220 metres wide and allow access for visitors of all abilities.

Furthermore, 30 local volunteers from the arts and entertainment sector will have the opportunity to work with Bruce Munro and assist in the installation of FOSO.



ACTIVE LEAK DETECTION WORKS IN WENTWORTH SHIRE

The Department of Planning and Environment's Manager of Water Efficiency Programs Jethro Laidlaw said work on Phase 2 of the Active Leak Detection Project is getting underway at Wentworth Shire Council to pinpoint exactly where pipes, meters and valves need to be patched up.

The NSW Government's innovative \$12.5 million Regional Leakage Reduction Program keeps kicking goals, with more councils joining up and seeing incredible water savings.

Nearly 200km of mains across Wentworth Shire Council will be covered in this latest work thanks to \$32,500 from the NSW Government.

Mayor of Wentworth Shire Council Tim Elstone said it's a huge win for residents.

"Fixing leaky pipes and damaged infrastructure preserves water and improves reliability for Wentworth Shire ratepayers, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars every year in pumping and treatment costs," Councilor Elstone said.

"As Mayor of Wentworth Shire and an advocate for water reliability, partnering with the state government to get this work done is a great opportunity to have our communities on the front foot with water efficiency."

Phase 1 and 2 of the project has involved 34 local government areas and 25 Aboriginal communities, with dozens more councils in the pipeline.

The Active Leak Detection Project is part of the NSW Government's three-year, \$12.5 million Regional Leakage Reduction Program.

For more information, visit: water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/plans-and-programs/water-efficiency/regional-leakage-reduction-program



ENTERPRISE ETHERNET FOR SHIRE BUILDINGS

Wentworth Shire residents and staff will soon have easier access to nbn Enterprise Ethernet at selected community centres as Council conducts ITC upgrades.

Midway Community Centre is the first location to be upgraded, with new download speeds of over 900Mbps and upload speeds close to 900Mbps.

Council is coordinating with nbn providers and technicians

to facilitate the connection of enterprise ethernet during the re-development of the Wentworth Civic Centre. This will ensure a faster and more reliable connection on completion.

The nbn Enterprise Ethernet will enable Wentworth Shire staff and its community users to access state of the art networking speeds, allowing greater accessibility of cloud based collaboration - securing the future needs of the shire.



COURT BOWL UPGRADES FROM SPRAY SEAL TO ASPHALT

Court bowls across the shire are currently being upgraded from spray seal to asphalt as part of the Roads to Recovery program funded by the NSW Government.

The existing treatment (spray seal) typically lasts only 15-18 years with a high maintenance burden in areas of high turning traffic. Asphalt is a more durable road surface designed for longevity, lasting up to 30 years.

An additional twelve (12) court bowls are programmed to be completed with internal funding (dependent on future grant opportunities) in the townships of Wentworth, Buronga and Gol Gol before the end of the 2025/2026 financial year.

There are numerous variations of asphalt material, including variations in stone sizing & binder type, but typically fall within 2 categories;

- Dense Graded Asphalt – most widely used; typically on roads to allow water to shed towards the kerb/gutter or other drainage components of a road.
- Open Graded Asphalt – is utilised to allow water to permeate through the asphalt layer to prevent water ponding on surface in high rainfall events – improving traffic safety.



DID YOU KNOW?

On average of works done thus far, a typical court bowl is 430m² in area and has 40mm of asphalt laid. That's 17m³ or around 40 tonnes of asphalt! To date, there has been 491 tonnes of asphalt laid thus far!



The total direct cost incurred by Council for flood preparation work has been \$1,625,352.

Fortunately works undertaken following previous floods including the building of levee banks around low lying areas of Wentworth and Buronga resulted in the townships escaping relatively unscathed.

Council estimates that more than 1,000 properties have suffered some form of flood inundation, fortunately it appears that the inundation of houses was minimal however damage to other buildings, crops and other property infrastructure was wide spread with more that a dozen properties in the Boeill Creek area having to evacuate, resulting in them being displaced for more than two months.

Fortunately, the majority of Council assets were spared, with the worst affected areas being parks and open spaces along riverfront areas and some sixty-three (63) roads being impacted resulting in road closures and Council having to undertake flood diversion measures to protect local properties.

FLOOD PREPARATION WORKS

Flood preparation works undertaken by Council to protect Council and Community assets include the following:

- Old Wentworth Road - section of road opened over the Fletchers Lake Creek to relieve flood water pressure
- Renmark Road - emergency works undertaken on a 500m section of road fronting the Wentworth Aerodrome to prevent floodwaters back flowing into the Aerodrome. This work involved raising the road surface level by approx. 400mm and blocking the existing under road major culverts.
- Wentworth Showgrounds Sewer - power to the showground complex shut off and removal of switch board undertaken due to flood water inundation. Construction of protection bund surrounding the sewer pump station and fire service infrastructure.
- Willow Bend Caravan Park - relocation of office block building to Darling Street prior to flood period. Additional stockpiles and civil materials relocated.





DURING FLOODS

At one stage, 19 of Wentworth Shire Council's projects had either been stalled or deferred due to flooding.

While the majority of these have since been recommenced it is anticipated that a number of these actions that were expected to be completed in the 2022/2023 financial year will carry over into the 2023/2024 financial year.



FLOOD RECOVERY WORKS

During the 2023/2024 financial year the ongoing management of flood recovery remains a top priority. The flood recovery program is a multi-faceted, highly involved process with the timing of work dependent on receiving approval and funding for each of the individual projects as well as contractor and resource availability.

With the region declared a natural disaster zone, repair work to our community infrastructure has commenced. Assessments of the impacts is ongoing and a number of assistance measures have been announced by State and Federal Governments. However, it will be some time before Council can fully quantify the impacts or determine exact timeframes for when damaged assets can be restored.

What we have done so far (From the Project & Works Update of Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda 19 April, 2023):

Buronga EDS

- Switchboard has been reinstated
- Damaged electrical components have been replaced with pump station currently operational

Flood Affected Sign Replacement – Various Locations

- Affected signs been removed
- Signs to be catalogued and quotes obtained to replace

Fotherby Park

- The underground power supply to the Possum statue, some park lights, and the visitor information board has been lost. Contractor engaged to rectify.
- Contractor engaged to undertake the painting of some park assets – works completion scheduled for late April.
- Awaiting delivery of replacement seating
- Power bollards being modified, will be operational by Easter

Junction Park

- Awaiting underground electrical repairs to be completed
- Painting is underway of Park assets
- BBQ replaced
- Awaiting delivery of replacement seating
- Existing seating is still serviceable and remains on-site until replacement seating arrives

- Viewing platform works identified by the Tonkin structural assessment have been completed
- Bank erosion remedial works are in discussion

P.S Ruby

- Power to the Ruby should be restored by 17 April
- 2 x boat mooring poles were uprooted during the flood period
- Contractor engaged to replace and undertake general clean-up of the site, PS Ruby is securely moored
- Flooding caused bank erosion on the north side between the water and fence. Result has 4 x mooring poles exposed to further erosion.
- Access ramp to the Ruby became detached during flooding and is underwater next to the boat – contractor engaged with other site works to retrieve the ramp

Wentworth Rowing Club

- Building electrical assessment undertaken and passed - power restored
- Building structurally assessed and passed
- Pressure washing internally & externally completed
- Flood-affected components internally and externally gutted and removed
- Discussions are currently in progress regarding directions of the rebuild



Wentworth Showgrounds

- Main electrical switchboard installed on a metal gantry & raised just above 1956 to mitigate effects of future flooding
- Power restored

Wentworth Ski Reserve

- Pressure washing of site completed
- Some minor painting works required – completion scheduled for after Easter
- Replacement Boat ramp solar light
- Toilet block requires major rebuild
- RFQ being compiled
- 2 x Portable toilets placed on site



Wentworth Wharf & Riverfront

- All pressure washing completed
- Wharf power restored
- Houseboat bilge pump is operational
- Stage 1 Painting works of park assets completed. Stage 2 Painting work scheduled for completion by Easter
- Underground power supply lost to the park lamp posts, lights under the wharf and some ground lights
- Park lights come under Essential Energy who are rectifying the issue
- Ground lights and lights under the wharf require major works – works will be undertaken following higher priority sites
- Awaiting delivery of replacement seating
- BBQ's operational
- Power bollards being modified, will be operational by Easter





FLOOD RECOVERY WORKS

Boeill Creek and River Road

Rehabilitation works have commenced in May on Boeill Creek and River Roads. An estimated \$1.3 million will be spent to reconstruct the roads, which is fully funded by the AGRN 1034 Natural Disaster – Essential Public Asset Restoration Program.

Roughly 3 kilometres of River Road and two sections of 200 metres on Boeill Creek Road will be constructed following the destruction from flood damages.

Stabilised road base materials will be used to provide a higher quality finish, increasing the road usability for the future. Road users of River Road is estimated to be a whopping 729,635 vehicles per year¹ where Boeill Creek Road users are estimated at 42,705 vehicles per year².

¹Data based off an eighteen (18) day survey in July 2021 where an average of 1,999 vehicles used River Road per day, 12% of those being heavy vehicles.

²Data based off a twenty-nine (29) day survey in July 2022 where an average of 117 vehicles used Boeill Creek Road per day, 19% of those being heavy vehicles.



What we still have to do:

Including but not limited to, the following:

- Unsealed road network – heavy grading - approximately \$3 million. Assessments ongoing
- River Road, Boeill Creek Road, Amaroo Road reconstruction (commenced late May) - 1.5km, total cost expected to be approximately \$1.5 million.
- Reinstate log bridge road
- Showgrounds – re-instatement of electrical switchboards above the 1956 flood level
- Park reinstatement works including the clean up of paths, pressure washing surfaces, painting and minor repairs of buildings and minor infrastructure
- Playgrounds – repair or replacement of playgrounds at Junction Park, Fotherby Park and Wentworth riverfront
- Reinstatement of the Buronga EDS switchboard
- Rowing club and ski reserve toilet block building repairs

Immediate clean up and emergency restoration and repair works have so far cost \$535,000.



Helicopters at Wentworth Aerodrome during the floods



NSW Rural Fire Service placing sandbags at the temporary wall at Wentworth Wharf



Looking for a career in Local Government?

Wentworth Shire Council has an exciting future and we are currently seeking self-motivated and passionate individuals to add to our expanding team.

Join Wentworth Shire Council and enjoy being part of a progressive, community-driven working environment that has the best interests of the Shire at its forefront.

Wentworth Shire Council is an equal opportunity employer with excellent working conditions and a positive team-focused culture. Council values include:

- Honesty and Integrity
- Accountability and Transparency
- Respect
- Quality
- Commitment

Being employed at Wentworth Shire Council has a range of benefits which include:

- Accrued Rostered Days Off over the course of a year on top of four weeks' Annual Leave
- Long Service Leave entitlements after five years' service
- Professional development opportunities

For further information on advertised positions and details on how to apply, contact Glen Norris, Manager Human Resources:
P: (03) 5027 5027 | E: human.resources@wentworth.nsw.gov.au
or go to wentworth.nsw.gov.au/employment



GRANTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Everyday Australians help make Sport accessible - Sport Access Foundation
- Community War Memorials Fund - NSW Government
- Western Region Sport and Active Recreation Transport Program

For further information, visit wentworth.nsw.gov.au/grants

GARBAGE COLLECTIONS IN WENTWORTH SHIRE

Kerbside rubbish collection services are provided to many of Wentworth Shire Council Residents.

GARBAGE COLLECTION DAYS

MON Wentworth, Pomona & Dareton

TUES Coomealla and Curlwaa irrigation districts, River Road and Boeill Creek

WED Trentham Cliffs, Gol Gol township, Gol Gol North, Gol Gol, Buronga irrigation areas, Buronga township and Mourquong

A weight limit of 100kgs applies. If your bin is too heavy, the truck cannot pick it up.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next Meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday 28 June at 7:00pm at the Wentworth Council Chambers. Members of the public are permitted to attend meetings.

MEETING MENTIONS

Development applications continue to roll in

For the month of April 2023, a total of ten (10) Development Applications and seven (7) S4.55 Modification Applications were determined under delegated authority by the Director Health and Planning.

The estimated value of the determined developments was \$878,598.000. This brings the year to date total to forty-two (42) Development Applications and seventeen (17) S4.55 Applications approved, with an estimated development value of \$8,308,059.00.

Council grants financial assistance

At the May Ordinary Meeting, Wentworth Shire Council voted to grant financial assistance to community groups under Council's Community Funding - Donations Contributions and Grants Program.

During this application period three following four (4) requests totalling \$1,526.00 have been approved under delegated authority:

\$1,104.00

Undenominational Christians

50% fee waiver for hire of Midway Meeting Rooms

\$50.00

Wentworth Area Landcare Inc.

Hire of Wentworth Rowing Club Reserve

\$222.00

Pooncarie Quick Shear Working Group

Hire of Pooncarie Hall & Pioneer Park, Pooncarie

\$150.00

Wentworth Makers Inc.

Hire of Memorial Rooms on three occasions

Council has provided an allocation of \$160,000.00 for the 2022/23 financial year for consideration by Council, for the funding of requests from the community for financial assistance.

In this current application period, there have been four (4) requests for assistance received from community organisations. The total value of the requests under consideration is \$1,707.62.

The Financial Assistance Policy (AF003) allows for requests for fee waivers up to the value of \$2,000 to determined under delegated authority by either the Director Finance & Policy or the General Manager.

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Looking for a career in Local Government?

See available employment opportunities on our website: wentworth.nsw.gov.au/employment



This newsletter has been produced by the Wentworth Shire Council for the benefit of the residents of the Shire and visitors to the region. Ken Ross General Manager



ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION

Do you want to keep up to date with projects and events in the Wentworth Shire?

Wentworth Shire Council is offering a quarterly projects, events and general Council News eNewsletter direct to your email inbox. This is on top of the monthly Council Connects which also appears in the NSW Standard. Scan the QR code and register to join Council's subscriber list.



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You can view live public sessions of Council meetings on Facebook or footage of the meeting can be viewed on the Council website.