



**Strathbogie Shire Council  
Annual Report 2009-2010**





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[www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au](http://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au)

Council meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Euroa Community Conference Centre. Meetings begin at 6pm.

Planning Committee meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at the Euroa Community Conference Centre at 4pm.

Standard Statements, Appendix 1  
 Annual Financial Report  
 Independent Audit Report  
 Performance Statement

Corporate Business Plan - Appendix 2  
 Progress report





## Strathbogrie Shire

Strathbogrie Shire is a vibrant municipality in northeast Victoria which encompasses part of the Strathbogrie Ranges, and the fertile plains of the Goulburn River and beyond.

Situated midway between Melbourne and Albury (NSW), the 3300sqkm municipality has a population of about 9,800 and is among the fastest growing rural areas in the state.

A picturesque municipality, Strathbogrie Shire has many features to complement its traditional agricultural base of wool, grain and cattle.

There has been significant growth in agribusiness, with the equine, pig, mushroom and poultry industries augmenting a long-standing and burgeoning viticulture sector.

The municipality is now recognised as Victoria's Thoroughbred Homeland due to its ever-expanding horse industry. Thoroughbred breeding studs are the cornerstone of this important industry, with prestigious Melbourne Cup winners bred and trained in the Shire.

Tourism is also important to the Shire, with many thousands of visitors each year appreciating the unique, natural and developed tourist sites throughout the municipality.

The Nagambie Lakes precinct, with spectacular views, is among the most popular destinations. Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre attracts thousands of competitors and onlookers each year when it hosts national and state rowing and canoeing championships.

Wineries, markets, water sports at Nagambie Lakes, gliding and the natural features of the Strathbogrie Ranges, Goulburn River and Seven Creeks are among other popular attractions.

Many people move to the shire to take advantage of its lifestyle opportunities, and its proximity to Melbourne.

## HISTORY

Strathbogrie Shire was formed on November 18, 1994 with the amalgamation of the former Shires of Goulburn, Euroa and Violet Town, and part of the City of Seymour. Today, Council operates within a structure of seven Councillors elected from six wards. One Councillor is elected annually by the Council to serve as mayor. Councillor and management resources are jointly focused on long-term planning initiatives, several of which are now strengthening the viable rural image of this Council.

Community meetings are convened to provide direct input to Council in relation to local issues. These meetings are attended by all Councillors and community attendance and interaction is strongly encouraged. Listening to, and acting on the needs of the entire community is one of Strathbogrie Shire's continuing missions. As with most municipalities across Australia, maintaining and improving infrastructure is a major ongoing challenge for Council.

Strathbogrie Shire is well served by transport networks. The busy Hume (Melbourne to Sydney corridor) Freeway and Goulburn Valley Highway cross the shire. The Melbourne to Sydney railway and the Shepparton rail line also operate in the shire, and an airport capable of landing large aircraft is located at Mangalore.

## Vision for our community

A vibrant diverse and caring community, building a sustainable future with enhanced liveability in a secure and stimulating environment.

## Mision

Our mission is to deliver the Vision for Strathbogrie Shire in partnership with our community and to strive for excellence in planning, delivering and managing community services and facilities.

## Guiding principles

Councillors and staff at Strathbogrie Shire Council are committed to the following principles as a guide to all decisions and actions:

Service - Recognition that service to our community is our reason for being.

Integrity - Acting in an honest, impartial and trustworthy manner and engendering a confidence both within our community and our organisation, that this is the case.

Excellence - Delivering quality outcomes based on reliable information, a responsive approach, and driven by the desire to continuously improve.

Valuing people - Valuing the contribution that people inside and outside the organisation make to the achievement of the Shire's vision.

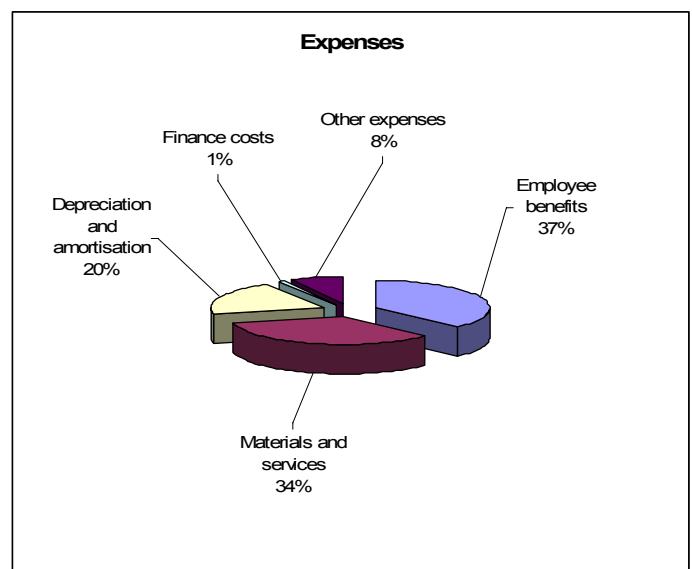
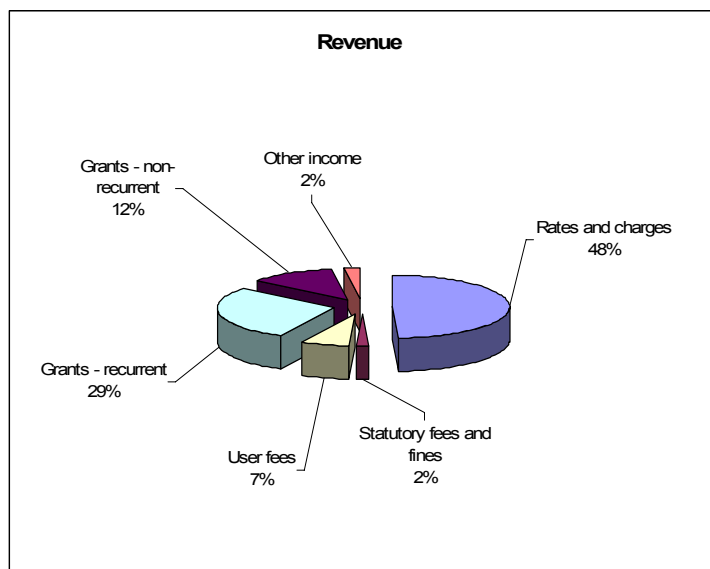
Commitment to Strathbogrie Shire - Ensuring our actions serve the people of Strathbogrie Shire and its long term interests.

Value - Providing services and facilities that offer value for the community in terms of cost, quality and reliability, and that are economically and environmentally sustainable. Participation and consultation - Provide genuine opportunities for informed community involvement in decision making, in a framework of local democracy.

# STRATHBOGIE SHIRE AT A GLANCE

## Local Government Indicators - figures & graphs below

Indicators	2010	2009
<b>Affordability/cost of governance</b>		
Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1,504	\$1,417
Average rates and charges per residential assessment	\$1,285	\$1,201
<b>Sustainability</b>		
Average liabilities per assessment	\$1,215	\$1,191
Operating result per assessment	(\$218)	\$144
<b>Services</b>		
Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$3,188	\$3,073
Constituent satisfaction rating for overall performance generally of the Council	58	57
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$889	\$695
Renewal gap		
- ratio of current spending on renewal to the long term average annual asset consumption (AAAC)	62%	61%
Renewal and maintenance gap		
- ratio of current spending on renewal plus maintenance to AAAC plus maintenance	84%	85%
<b>Governance</b>		
Community satisfaction rating for Council's advocacy and community representation on key local issues	59	57
Community satisfaction rating for Council's engagement in decision making on key local issues	59	58



# National Competition Policy Compliance – 2009/2010

## Certification by Chief Executive Officer

Strathbogie Shire Council has complied with the requirements of the National Competition Policy (NCP) for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, in accordance with the requirements outlined in National Competition Policy and Local Government – A Revised Statement of Victorian Government Policy (January 2002); as set out below:

<b>A. Trade Practices Compliance</b>	Council is compliant
<b>B. Local Laws Compliance</b> No. 1 meeting procedure local law was adopted (following amendment) in the 2009/2010 financial year.	Council is compliant
<b>C. Competitive Neutrality Compliance</b>	Council is compliant

I certify that:

- a) this statement has been prepared in accordance with the 2009/2010 National Competition Policy reporting guidelines, which is pursuant to the 2009 *Statement*; and
- b) this statement presents fairly the Council's implementation of the National Competition Policy.

Signed:



Date: 23 September 2010



# Strathbogie Shire Council



**Cr. Howard Myers - Mayor**  
**Honeysuckle Creek Ward**

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**Goulburn Weir Ward**

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**Seven Creeks Ward**

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**Lake Nagambie Ward**

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**Cr Malcolm Little**  
**Hughes Creek Ward**

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# Mayor Howard Myers

It is once again a privilege and a pleasure to write this my second annual report to the ratepayers of Strathbogie Shire. My first comment will have to be a reflection on the weather this year. A "normal" year or not, it is with confidence I am sure the residents of south Euroa look at the now complete Castle Creek Levy Bank as now being tried and tested 17 years after the 1993 floods.



Once again this year has proven to be a very busy year with all Councillors involved with responsibilities other than Council. During the year we have taken Council to all the major communities throughout the shire with a mixed response from those communities. Recently, we have settled on meetings shared between Euroa and Nagambie having a meeting every fourth one.

Of all the decisions we had to make this year, none were more important or harder to make than the closure of Kirwans Bridge and the 11% infrastructure hike in our rate rise. To make a decision that affects the local community which causes them to travel 7km further each way to go to town, to see a doctor, take kids to school or sport, or to buy milk or bread weighs heavily on a Councillors' mind before that decision is made.



Kirwans Bridge was not the only bridge we closed,

we also closed the Miepola School Road Bridge and the Creek Junction Bridge at Strathbogie. All three bridges were old, in need of major repair and were seen not only at the end of their useful life, but were a danger to safety if they were left in service. One of the reasons the bridges (and roads) had got to that stage is because of our lack of population to generate sufficient rates to properly address this problem. This problem in turn, led us to make the very hard decision to lift and quarantine the 11% infrastructure rate to address the problem of roads and bridges, to improve the road condition for farmers and town people alike to access their properties and facilities in a safer way than they have done in the past. This 11% plus an extra \$520k from operations means that road and bridge expenditure will be 2-3 times greater than in the past.



The budget process caused a shire-wide response from the public and I thank everyone for thinking about and putting in a submission. Strathbogie Shire is unfortunate to be in the position it finds itself in today. This is not the Councillors fault. We find ourselves facing problems that were only on the horizon at the time of amalgamation. We are now 17 years further on and our infrastructure problems (roads, bridges, swimming pools, libraries, halls & toilets) all need maintenance and repair, more maintenance and repair than they did 17 years ago.

These decisions have set the path we have taken, along with continually reminding politicians of our plight. Believe me, they are aware of our situation and now have a report called the Whelan Report which not only affirms our position but also confirms that there are 17 other rural councils (mostly in the north-east and west of the state) who have a similar problem.

Contrary to what many think, our numbers are consistent with other shires of a similar size and income, the money we do spend is spent well it is just that we don't have enough money, especially to address our infrastructure replacement shortfall. If we want to carry on as we have done in the past our assets will deteriorate further and catching up will get harder and harder.

In the last six months we have had conversations with



the local Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) to establish an acceptable farm rate in the light of taking off the farm rural rebate (2011-2012). Council will also continue to address the business and commercial differential which did exist five years ago.

We have had public and user group meetings to discuss important issues like the Nagambie Waterways Strategy, Violet Town Floodplain Management Plan and the Violet Town Structure Plan. The Nagambie Neighbourhood Study Meetings have led to the lake foreshore works taking place. The Euroa Structure Plan and the Road Management Plan Public Meetings were held which address the road service levels and intervention levels across the whole shire.



Council continues to support the eight action groups, and only in early August welcomed Graytown (pictured right with Amanda McClaren and Liz Fuller) on board as our newest action group.

Council believes that the action group plans are an important base to form our own Council Plan and this gives us a good insight into local thinking and aspirations for local communities.

Planning applications and building approval numbers continue to grow, as the lifestyle of our local communities attracts people from all works of life to a village type atmosphere.

People can influence a towns character by being involved in community life, organisations, clubs, libraries, churches and other interest groups.

The shire over the last couple of years has now completed a range of strategic plans for rural living. Following on from the Elloura development in Nagambie, there is now new opportunities in Avenel, adn the eastern gateway. I believe rural living opportunities could also be investigated in the Strathbogie Kelvin View area.

In summing up we do all enjoy our jobs. All of the staff are a great group of people to work with, I hope and wish your ratepayers a safe and prosperous year.

Howard Myers  
Mayor



# Lake Nagambie Ward, Cr Debra Swan

What a tough year we have had but not all bad! As a Council we have looked at our financial situation and have made some really difficult decisions to try and make us more sustainable and provide you with the best services we can within our means. We have also launched an advocacy campaign that we hope will see us gain better funding for small rural shires like ours from both the state and federal governments.

So far Nagambie (only 90mins from Melbourne) with its recognised growth potential, has been particularly lucky in being supported by Regional Development Victoria with the park upgrades and board walk. When completed this will provide a stunning and safe walk between the main shopping area along the banks of the lake and over to the parklands. The toilet block and BBQ shelters are getting a face lift and a stage is being placed over the old children's pool. Nagambie was successful in gaining funding for the "Waterways" mural, designed by Rosa Purbrick and it is getting underway with the help of the school children who are making the ceramic leaves and the rest of the community who will be invited to take part during the placement and construction phase.

With the bypass on schedule to be completed in 2012 it is more important than ever to create a vibrant and enticing centrepiece to our town. We look forward to the next phase of redeveloping the main street to better accommodate our needs as we change from a through town into a tourist destination and growing tree change and waterside location for new residents.

One of the sad things that happened was that during the year we suffered the closure of Kirwans Bridge and we continue to work alongside the Kirwans Bridge community to get funding to rebuild or replace this icon of our area.

I would like to acknowledge the huge effort the volunteers of Nagambie make every year, especially Michelle Mills, Chairperson of the Nagambie Action Group, Nedra Kriekenbeek, Chairperson of Nagambie Lakes Tourism, Di Proud and all the team at the Nagambie Community Voice, Jeanette and Julie who run the Market, Bec

Butterworth & Jenny Gurr for their constant support of all the groups and all the ladies of the Nagambie Hub. Another big thank you to all the service clubs and groups, RSL, Senior Citizens, Hospital Auxilliary, Lions, CERT & CFA, and many more what would we do without you. I am very proud to be accepted as part of the Nagambie community so to all the community please accept my thanks.



Through a great deal of community effort we have been able to build some strong foundations for the future with the work done on the "Nagambie Lakes Commercial and Recreational Strategy" and the "Nagambie Community Infrastructure Strategy". This is important work that needs to be done so we are ready to apply for funds to assist the growth of our Preschool Centre – our lack of youth services – growing needs for the community like adult education, aged care services, neighbourhood house, arts and culture and we have worked hard to gain hoon laws and zero tolerance on our waterways.

I have been told that houses are selling well and the Elloura development is moving ahead nicely. When completed this will swell the numbers of Nagambie significantly and also increase the commercial and employment opportunities to service this growth. We are surrounded by amazing scenery and interesting little towns throughout the Shire all of whom have great community spirit and a sense of place. Yes we are lucky indeed to have a bright future ahead if we can continue to work together and put the right building blocks and safeguards in place to make our growth sustainable and in keeping with the environment we all wish to enjoy.

As we go through this period of change, it is hard during the upheaval to keep an eye on how much we have going for us. I believe we are taking the right steps to make ourselves a vibrant and inclusive environment that will entice growth and bring new experiences to our community that we can be proud of. Nothing is ever perfect but I certainly am grateful to be here in Nagambie with my family and friends.



Work began on the boardwalk



Buckley Park Car Park was completed



Nagambie Recreation Reserve Kitchen received an upgrade

# Seven Creeks Ward, Cr Colleen Furlanetto

## Respectful communities a community responsibility

Strathbogie Shire Council's journey in the *Prevention of Violence against Women* and the commitment we have undertaken as a shire initially began with a chance meeting. Subsequent partnerships and conversations have since developed into a commitment to make a real difference in our communities.

Small rural Councils face many challenges and issues around anonymity and having access to resources and services. This is true for many issues but for us we have made a commitment to lead the community in raising awareness and highlighting the impact this issue potentially has on our community. As a Councillor along with the other Councillors and with staff we see our role in local government as leaders of our community. Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to focusing on this issue at the primary prevention level. We initially began with the white ribbon campaign holding staff gatherings and BBQs selling ribbons and having presentations on the effects of violence on our community and that the prevention of violence is a community responsibility. I am immensely proud of our commitment to raising awareness in our community. A travelling councillor road show supported the community with information and allowed Councillors to have valuable conversations at various events throughout the shire. White ribbon merchandise was sold which helped to initiate community conversation.



I am extremely grateful that the Euroa Junior Senior Cricket Club (a family club) agreed to take up a white ribbon ambassador role.

The "Euroa Juniors" Senior Cricket Club supported the white ribbon campaign. The team and families pictured with Cr Mick Williams and Cr Colleen Furlanetto.

We have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Darebin City Council and VicHealth. A short course facilitated by VicHealth and Darebin City Council, on preventing violence against women, was hosted by Strathbogie Shire Council



where many service providers, neighbouring shires, staff and community members participated.

This course assisted those who completed it to facilitate leadership skills learnt in the course.

Council has also began implementation on the issue of gender equality into our policies and plans as a Shire. Mayor Howard Myers and I were fortunate to attend Parliament House for the launch of the "Right to Respect".

As we move forward with this project we will continue to engage and encourage our community to take a stand.



Project Officer: Kellie Nagle with Councillor Furlanetto and Councillor Swan.

## Local Government Networking and Capacity Building Project

To Prevent Violence against Women (partnership project with VicHealth) Cr Deb Swan and Cr Furlanetto with the road show tent at the Carriage driving championships and Longwood earlier this year.



# Executive Management Team



## **Chief Executive Officer Kevin Hannagan**

Kevin Hannagan took on the role of Chief Executive Officer at Strathbogie Shire in February 2001. Kevin began his working life as a qualified accountant, extending his formal qualifications by gaining a professional diploma in human resource management from Deakin University and the Australian Human Resources Institute.

In 2004 he completed an International Masters of Management with the Norwegian School of Management, BI & Australian Institute of Management. Kevin has a strong rural background and a desire to do something for communities. While he is responsible for the overall operation of the Shire, Kevin also takes a special interest in economic development and community action group planning.



## **Director Strategic & Community Development Steve Crawcour**

Steve Crawcour commenced at Strathbogie in April 2008. Steve has over 25 years experience in local government and was previously employed by the Cities of Brimbank, Warrnambool and Springvale. He is responsible for the Strategic and Community Development Directorate.

Steve has an Advanced Diploma of Business Management, Diploma and Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety, Certificate in Critical Incidents Management and a Certificate in Telecommunications (Contact Centres).

He is an Associate Fellow of the Australian

Institute of Management, Fellow of LGPro (Local Government Professionals) and a member of the Safety Institute of Australia.

His responsibilities include: Community Services, Finance and Administration, Information Technology, Planning (Statutory and Strategic); Provision of Building Control services in accordance with the Building Act; Environmental Health Services; Economic Development; Business Development; Tourism; Events; Community Development / partnerships and The Regatta Centre – Nagambie including boating safety.



## **Director of Asset Services David Westphalen**

David started at Strathbogie Shire Council in June 2006. David served in the Australian Regular Army as an Engineering Officer for 21 years with postings all over Australia in combat engineering and construction engineering roles. After leaving the Regular Army, David was employed as the Manager, Technical and Engineering Services with the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling ski resorts for the Alpine Resort Management Board.

His responsibilities include Council's: Emergency

management; Maintenance of: buildings, roads (gravel and sealed) (2133 km), bridges (136) parks, pools and recreational areas; Construction of new roads, bridges and buildings; Operation of the saleyards; Risk management on behalf of all of council; Roadside weed control; Provision of technical advice to other departments within Council; Provision of Building Control services in accordance with the Building Act, Development, maintenance and implementation of plans including the Electrical Line Clearance Plan, the Roadside Management Plan, the Road Management Plan, Asset Maintenance Plan, and Road Maintenance Plan.

David Westphalen left Council in June 2010.

# Code of Good Governance

In October 2009, Strathbogie Shire Council adopted an updated Code of Good Governance.

The values that underpin this Code of Conduct incorporate respect and consideration of fellow Councillors, staff and the community. We will communicate openly and honestly with an appreciation of the professional views, abilities and the unique contributions each of us make towards the effective governance of the Shire of Strathbogie.

The Strathbogie Shire Council consists of the Councillors who are democratically elected by the voting members of the Strathbogie community in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989. The role of Council is to provide leadership for the good governance of the Shire of Strathbogie. It includes (Local Government Charter sections 3B and 3D of the Act):

- Acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making;
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement;
- Maintaining the viability of the Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner;
- Advocating the interest of the local community to other communities and governments;
- Acting as a responsible partner in government by taking into account the needs of other communities; and;
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

The code is based on the premise that a Council is elected by its citizens to govern the local community and is accountable to those citizens. The legitimacy of local government derives from its central role of representing the interest of communities.

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>\$16,200</b>	<b>per annum</b>
<b>Mayor</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>per annum</b>

Councillors are reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out their duties. Reimbursements are made in accordance with Council's "Councillors Expense Entitlement Policy."

The Mayor is not provided with a mayoral vehicle.



# Principles of public life for Strathbogie Shire

Selflessness

Integrity

Objectivity

Accountability

Openness

Honesty

Leadership



## Membership of Organisations

Livestock Saleyards Association  
Local Government Professionals  
Municipal Association of Victoria  
Records Management Association of Australia  
Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce & Industry  
Victorian Local Governance Association



# Audit Committee / Risk Management

## Audit Committee

Strathbogie Shire Council's Audit Committee performs a critical role in Council's corporate governance, risk management and internal control framework.

The Audit Committee comprises community representatives Michael Tehan (Chairman), Joanne Dwyer, Helen Windsor-Ryley, John McInnes and Council representative Councillor Neil Murray. The Committee operates in accordance with Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989. It reports to Council and its meetings are open to the general public.

The Committee receives independent audit advice in an arrangement with the accounting firm Richmond, Sinnott and Delahanty and is additionally resourced by the Chief Executive Officer, the Director Strategic and Community Development and the Group Manager Finance and Information Services.

The duties and responsibilities of the Audit Committee include:

The review of Council's annual financial statements, standard statements and performance statement prior to their approval by Council. Review of matters arising from the external audit and monitoring action taken on these issues. Determining the scope of the internal audit program and the effectiveness of the function. Reviewing reports of the internal auditor and monitoring actions taken on recommendations.

Monitoring and assessing Council's risk management system, risk register and progress of risk treatments.

## Risk Management

Council has in place various risk management systems aimed at protecting employees, volunteers, contractors and the public under Occupational Health & Safety legislation. The systems also minimise public liability exposure associated with assets such as roads and bridges and financial loss minimisation with Council buildings. Insurance itself is not enough to manage risk. Effective risk management includes a array of things such as hazard and risk identification, development of risk treatments, regular review of procedures to reflect accuracy, engaging and training staff, providing appropriate instruction and supervision, correct equipment for the task, programmed inspections, maintenance programs and reporting mechanisms.

Where risk is identified, relevant stake holders examine the cause or contributing factors and identify controls necessary to mitigate the risk to an acceptable level. Consideration in formulating risk treatments is subject to available resources, and funding. Often risk mitigation requires considerable funds that Council must effectively manage. As risk is a measurable item, priority can be given based on the value derived from the risk evaluation. Council's risk register is used to record identified risk and monitor progress of treatments that have been allocated to staff.

Councils insurers reward the efforts of effective, pro-active risk management systems with reduced premiums. Audit of Councils systems continues to see improvement with an increased audit review score of 4% in 2009/2010 year and reduced premiums accordingly.

# Audit Report

During the year ended 30th June 2010 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit Committee met regularly and major reviews undertaken included Fraud and Corruption Policy and Procedures, Euroa Sale Yards, Capital Works and Contract Management and Council Risk Management Systems.

Advice and overview was provided by the Auditor General's Agent Evolve Accounting and also Johnsons MME and the Council Internal/Continuous Auditor Richmond Sinnott & Delahunty.

Council itself reviewed the status of the Committee and confirmed it should continue as a Section 86 Committee in accordance with its existing Charter.

Regular reports were provided by Management to the Committee regarding to employee leave, Council capital works program and otherwise in accordance with the internal audit plan recommended to Council by the Committee.

After serving Council and the Committee with good counsel and enquiry for many years Peter Morley retired as a member of the Committee. His knowledge and expert guidance ensured the Committee set excellent priorities and prospects.

Joanne Dwyer was re-appointed to the Committee for a further term.

Helen Windsor Riley and John McInnes have been appointed as new members and will bring new energy and direction to the Committee's obligations.

The Auditor General's Agent reported that the financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2010 were of a high standard and management and staff were complimented on their work and assistance in preparation and completion of the Statement of Accounts.

Audit Committee Members continued to participate in relevant professional development through attendance at a Conflict of Interest Workshop and Benchmark and Performance Reporting.

The Committee receive assurance from Council that it was monitoring its long term financial sustainability and the infrastructure gap and that those representations were being made at various levels of Government.

A substantial review of Council Risk Management System was made and has been adopted and will be reported on in the next financial year.

The Committee expressed concern on the issue of delays in Internal Audit Reports being presented to the Committee and action was taken to ensure that this does not reoccur.

Council Management provided to the Committee quarterly updates on the actions arising out of the Audit Committee recommendations and their status.

The Auditor General's Agent and the Committee acknowledge the excellent contribution and professional response and input undertaken and provided by the management and staff throughout the year.

Michael H. Tehan  
Audit Committee Chair  
Dated: 6/9/2010



# Employment Profile



	Full Time		Part time		Casual		Total (EFT)
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Finance & IT	4	8	0	7	2	2	18.13
Asset Services	42	5	6	4	17	4	59.52
Strategic & Community Development	6	13	1	41	9	8	44.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>122.10</b>

The Council and Management of Strathbogie Shire Council are wholly committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

In all policies and practices of Council there shall be no discrimination relating to sex, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, race, national or ethnic origin, disability, religious or political affiliation or union activity, or any other attribute covered in relevant State and Federal anti-discrimination legislation, and which is irrelevant to the person's ability to perform the inherent

requirements of their job. Selection of individuals for employment, promotion or advancement, training and staff development will be on the basis of merit in fair and open competition according to the skills, qualifications, experience, knowledge and efficiency relevant to the position or benefit involved.

Council's policy on EEO reflects its desire to provide a workplace free of discrimination, victimisation, vilification and harassment, where each person has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their ability.

## Service Milestones

Doug Quinlivan	36
Mick Peel	36
John Pearson	33
Suzanne Pollard	32
John Birch	31
Garry Dowell	29
Gavin Williams	28
Margaret Cullen	28
Brian Varley	25
Donna Pearce	24
Gary Abley	24
Alan Ericksen	22
Chris Washusen	22
Peter Smyth	20
Gladys Walter	20
Donald Barns	20
Martin William	20
Barry Woolcock	20
Mark Gordon	20
Philip Morgan	20
Patricia Hayes	20
William Anderson	19
Julie Ryan	18
Lorraine Millard	16
Dianne Burls	16
Cameron Roper	15
Lesley Fowler	15
Alastair Pirie	15
Stephen Cloney	14
Alan Sidebottom	14
Gary Washusen	13
Anne Egan	13
Pamela Ellis	13
Anne Cooksey	13
James Fahlbusch	12
Denice Hemming	12
Raelene Sidebottom	11
Garry Kenyon	11
Karen Doherty	10
Sandra Joyce	10
Dianne Brock	10
Carol Byers	10
Grace Kenworthy	10

## Freedom of Information

Total Requests – 8

- 6 access granted in full
- 1 no documents exists
- 1 not finalised yet



Doug Martin finished with Council after nearly 30 years service

# Council Business Activities



Corporate and financial services	Council
VicRoads agency	Council
Maternal and child health	Council
Immunisations	External contractor
Meals on wheels	External contractor
Home care services	Council
Community transport	Council
Community services administration	Council
Counselling services	External contractor
Library services	Regional corporation
Planning/building services	Council
Environmental health	External contractor
Saleyards	Council / advisory committee
Caravan park	External contractor
Animal control	Council
Tourism services	Council/external committees
Commercial properties	Council
Engineering services	Council
Local roads maintenance	Council
Boating control	Council
Garbage collection	External contractor
Landfill operation	External contractor
Recycling	External contractor
Municipal building maintenance	Council
Swimming pools	External contractors
Parks and reserves	Council
Footpath kerb and channel works	External contractor



Council's Home Care Services Team



# Council Departments

## Executive

The Executive department provides General management, Governance and Councilor support

Governance

General Management

Councillor support

Council Plan

## Strategic and Community Development

The Strategic and Community Development department provides a range of corporate, financial and community services including:

Media and Public Relations

Council Plan

Economic Development

Marketing

Strathbogie Planning Scheme

Libraries

Senior Citizens

Administration Services

Home Care Services

Governance support

Compliance

Arts and Culture

Immunisations

Governance

Contract Administration

Best Value

Tourism & Events

Business Development

Financial management

Libraries

Counselling Services

Youth Services

Maternal and Child Health

Information Services

Centrelink Services

Environmental Health

Purchasing

## Asset Services

The Asset Services Department provides, maintains and manages Council's engineering facilities and assets such as:

Waste management

Local bridges and culverts

Urban and rural drainage

Building Control Act

Council buildings

Civil engineering expertise to other council departments

Special projects, eg. streetscape construction

Land Management

Contract Administration

Council reserves and playgrounds

Parks and gardens

Local laws and animal control

Municipal emergency management

Fire hazard control

North East Store Sales Centre, Euroa

Local roads and reserves (including footpaths, kerb and channel)

Risk Management

# Chief Executive Officer Kevin Hannagan

## Council Plan

In November 2008 the newly elected Council determined that the Council Planning process needed to be changed to ensure greater input by the community. Consequently, Council invited 100 community representatives from across the Shire to be involved in providing input to the development of the newly elected Council's first four year Council Plan 2009/13. The Plan was endorsed by Council and Council then provided feedback on progress to the community representative group and members of Council's Community Action Plan Groups across four locations in the Shire during March 2010.

## Budget

Council's operating result for 2009/2010 was an \$880,237 loss against Council's budgeted surplus of \$58,000. This was mainly due to an increase in the non cash value of infrastructure assets replaced and a short delay in receipt of some non recurrent grant funding from other levels of government. Council also undertook \$6.1 million in capital expenditure and maintained our cash from operations at \$678,113 better than budget for the year.

Council's debt financial ratios continue to improve with the debt servicing ratio (debt servicing costs to total revenue) now below 1% at 0.98% and down from 1.5% in 2007/2008. Borrowings have been reduced by \$65,673. Council's financial flexibility continues to improve each year with our total debt servicing and principal repayments as a proportion of total rate revenue standing at a low 6.5% (well below the state government prudential ratio for borrowing approval).

Close monitoring of Council's cash throughout the year has once again allowed us to meet our day-to-day operational obligations without having to use the available overdraft facility, thereby avoiding the resultant charges for use of the overdraft. Council has finished the year with sufficient cash (\$5.2 million) to ensure that cash is available to meet present obligations for completion of grant projects and other restricted assets (\$1.8 million).

Despite the global economic crisis, the municipality has been resilient to the current times, and this annual report details Council's current financial position.

## Staffing

Employee costs in the budget for the year were increased due to three factors:

1. Increase of two parks and garden employees, one roads and bridges employee and one additional building maintenance employee.

2. Increased engineering administration costs for part-time / contract engineers to project manage substantial grants from the Federal and State Governments for lake foreshore improvements in Nagambie, town entrance and overpass in Euroa and a number of smaller community projects across the Shire.
3. Increase in Enterprise Bargaining Agreement rates of pay.



## Financial Sustainability

Like most small rural Councils across Australia, Council has infrastructure that has reached the end of its economic life and needs substantial renewal or upgrade such as bridges, sealed road network and swimming pools. Council's gravel road network also needs extensive re-sheeting and as a result of several years drought conditions Council has been fortunate that the impact on users of these roads has not been greater. A return to normal rain events will impact heavily on the road network as there is not enough gravel to grade.

Council has been involved in the Municipal Association of Victoria's STEP Asset Management project. The project identified that Council has an unfunded infrastructure gap of approximately \$59 million over 20 years. This equates to an increased revenue need of \$3 million per annum on Councils existing rate base which equates to a 35% rate increase.

Council has also joined with other small rural Councils to commission a study into the financial sustainability of Councils across the state. The 'Whelan Report' has identified that 18 small rural Councils are considered not financially sustainable and Strathbogie Shire is one of those. The combined Councils have advocated to Federal and State government for increased funding to avoid large rate increase but we have received no response from those levels of government.

Council has initiated the 'Save our Rural Communities – Rural Infrastructure Projects' advocacy campaign as a community-based program that might gain a better hearing from higher levels of government.

## Economic Development

Council is committed to supporting and growing the local economy of our municipality and there have been some great programs initiated by our Economic Development department in achieving this.



The 'Elloura' comprehensive development zone project at Nagambie has commenced construction with the first stage of new housing. Council has negotiated a rate rebate for properties within the development but Council will not be providing any services to the development. The net rates received from the establishment of this development will substantially increase Council's revenue base over the next few years.

Council was delighted to be advised that David Hayes' Racing were relocating and expanding their thoroughbred horse racing enterprise to Euroa. This development will again increase Council's revenue base and bring new jobs to the area. Council initiated the establishment of the shire as the 'Horse capital of Victoria' several years ago and it is pleasing that the industry continues to expand in the shire.

Council also completed the 'Progressing Euroa' and 'Euroa Town Entrance and Overpass' projects that have greatly contributed to the improvement of town entrances and general amenity of the town.

Council has also received significant grants to support the above-mentioned projects and further information detailing those grants is contained later in this report. We are still seeing a steady increase in our population and planning and building approvals, which is pleasing as most small rurals are experiencing population and growth decline. Council is actively planning to accommodate this growth with the initiation of our first Rural Living Rezoning initiatives around Avenel and Euroa.

I would like to thank all of Council's staff and

volunteers for their contribution to the wellbeing of all our residents, ratepayers and visitors. The team we have built is capable and results-focused.

I would also like to thank the Mayor, Howard Myers and all of the Councillors who served over the past year, for their support and confidence in the organisation. It is extremely satisfying to reflect on the achievements of the past year as we move forward with confidence to pursue the objectives outlined in our Council Plan.



# Steve Crawcour, Director Strategic and Community Development

As with most years this has been one of significant changes and challenges. The Directorate has grown in size but due to the commitment by its staff to the community and the organisation it continues to have the ability to provide exceptional customer service and a seamless approach to service delivery.

On a personal note I have had the privilege to be nominated to participate on the State Government's Essential Services Commission (ESC) Review into Local Government and Performance Reporting. This process has taken considerable time to complete and the ESC has provided a final report to the Minister for Local Government with recommendations on what Performance Measures should be reported by Local Government. The formal reporting process for all Councils is due to commence in January 2013. I have also had the opportunity to complete further studies during the year which resulted in being awarded a Diploma of Management which will have flow on benefits for the Community and Organisation.

The Shire has received support via funding for projects at a local level from the Department of Planning and

Community Development and Council and Regional Development Victoria.

The Directorate was very proactive in providing material and briefings prior to and during the Bushfire Season (October 2009 to February 2010) to its community. This included monthly Fire Prevention Updates in Council Reports, Media Releases via the Euroa Gazette and Fridge Magnets and Mayor's message to every household.

Whilst the Directorate has faced its challenges over the year I am extremely proud of the staff for their efforts, commitment and the ability to always respond to their community where required.



## The Directorate is made up of:

- Statutory and Strategic Planning
- Compliance Services
- Community Services
- Finance and Administration
- Information Technology
- Building Services
- Health Services
- Economic and Business Development
- Tourism and Events
- Grants Program
- Environmental Health
- Media / Public Relations
- Boating Safety Operations
- Regatta Centre
- Corporate Planning and Performance
- Human Resources
- Community Development Programs

## Highlights

- Hosting Rowing Australia's National Championships and Interstate Regatta with live Website Coverage and a visit by the Honourable, Quentin Bryce, Governor General of Australia
- Euroa Buy Local Program with over 20,000 entries
- Winning the rights to have the Great Victoria Bike Ride stay within the Shire for 3 nights and 4 days which will bring an economic boost to the economy with over 5,000 participants expected
- Supported the development and participated in the formation of United Tourism which became Goulburn River Valley Tourism and is represented by City of Greater Shepparton and Mitchell, Murrindindi and Strathbogie Shires
- Commissioned the Lake Nagambie Automated Ticket Machine
- Completed the \$250,000 Car Park at McNamara Point which was supported with a grant from Marine Safety Victoria
- Managed the \$200,000 Community Grants Program

## Hosted the Australian National Open Water Swimming Championships



# Planning



The Strategic Services department was an amalgamation of the statutory services of Council comprising Planning, Building, Health and Compliance. This initiative was undertaken by Council in 2009/2010 to increase customer service by creating a team that would take a consistent approach in assisting the community and developers to progress the Shire. Customers have access to Town Planners, the Municipal Building Surveyor, Environmental Health Officers and officers administering the local laws of Council by contacting one department only. These officers then work together to ensure the client has the appropriate information and permissions to build their house or develop their land without undue hassle or distress. Thus their experience (which could be their first one) with Strathbogie Shire Council is a good

one. Internally, the benefits are numerous as processes are not duplicated and professional staff can pool their resources for the optimum community outcome. This increases productivity and reduces the need for extra resources, which is part of the Council Plan and certainly part of community expectations. For example, if you are building your first home, you will need a building surveyor, your plumber will need to contact the Environmental Health Officer, a town planner maybe required, and if you wish to live in a temporary dwelling while it is being built; you need the local law officers. We can deliver all this via one department, controlled by one senior officer, the Group Manager of Strategic Services.

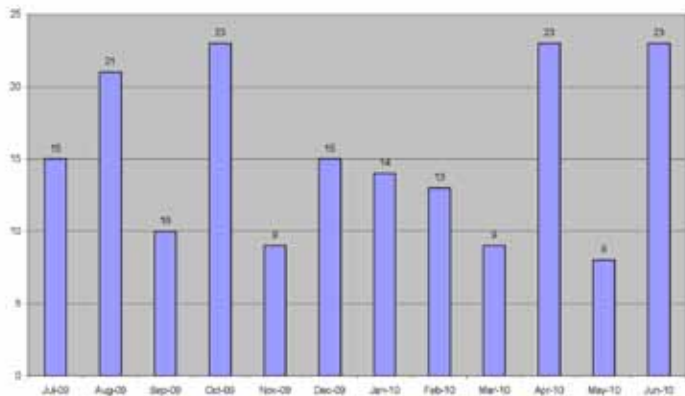
## Highlights:

- 4% increase from last year in applications received
- First Stage of Lake Nagambie Resort Development (Elloura) completed
- Structure Planning for Townships commenced
- Rural Residential Re-zoning approved for exhibition
- Heritage Study (funded by Heritage Victoria) continues into stage 2
- Rural Land Use review completed

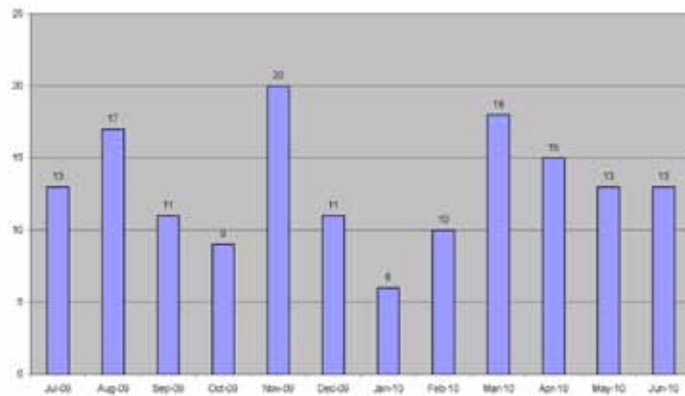
## Challenges:

- Bushfire settlement strategies
- Intensive Agriculture expansion and feedlots
- Encouraging Whole Farm Planning
- Native Vegetation outcomes
- Development near waterways

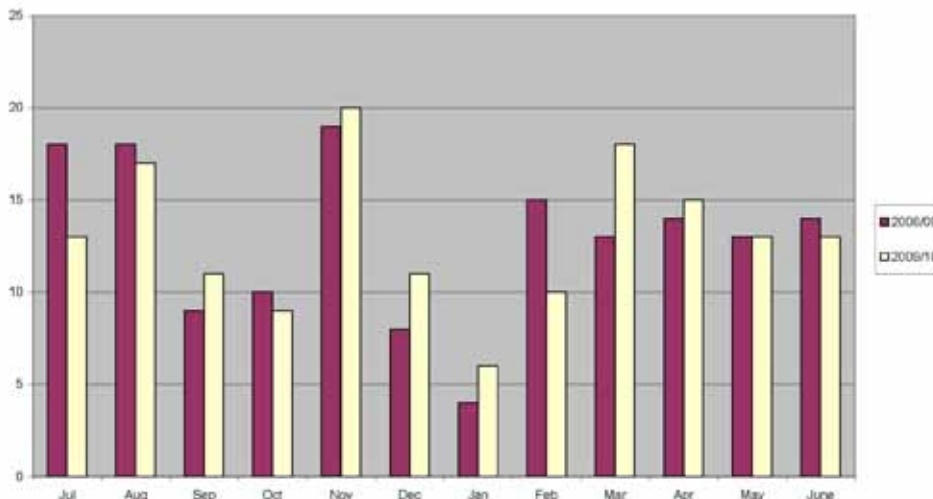
Planning Applications Received



Planning Permits Issued



Comparison Year/Month - Planning Permits Issued







# Economic Development

## Euroa Buy Local Campaign

Council was successful in securing funding from Regional Development Victoria to run a Buy Local Campaign in Euroa. This funding was supported by cash contributions from the Business Enterprise Euroa and the BEAR Program which was completed in Euroa in the 2008/2009 financial year.



At the beginning a committee was formed to assist in the preparation and direction of the campaign. The campaign took place over a nine month period and consisted of three prize draws of products or vouchers and the final cash prize. Paper shopping bags, badges, posters, flags and fridge magnets supported the brand and

provided essential marketing tools for the campaign.

Entry into the draws was via an entry slip. To qualify for entry customers spent over \$15 in participating businesses and all entries rolled over to the final draw. There were 34 prizes donated by the businesses of Euroa and an impressive total of \$2,920 was donated for the final cash draw. These donations were received from, and promoted all sectors of the business community.

Analysis of the tickets showed that 20,159 were accumulated over the term of the campaign; with 15,131 from within the local 3666 postcode. The shopper form received from the farthest away was from Darwin. This shows an expenditure of in excess of \$302,385.00 over the campaign period.

Also during the campaign there were

puzzle competitions published in the local newspaper, the Euroa Gazette, which further promoted the campaign and encouraged customers to see what was available on their doorstep and therefore discourage out of town spending.

A hard copy business directory was also produced as part of the campaign. A mail out was sent to all households in the 3666 area to encapsulate all types of businesses, such as retail, industrial, farming and home-based businesses. Over 200 businesses utilised the opportunity to market their business in the directory free of charge. Contact details were also published on the Strathbogrie Shire website business directory, which further promoted them to an even wider audience and provided to the local traders group Business Enterprise Euroa; which swelled in numbers as a result.



Draw 1 winner: B Harris



Draw 2 winner: N Hull



Draw 3 winner: D Williamson



Draw 4 winner: M Cerini



Final Cash Draw - Easter 2010



with thanks to our sponsors  
 Printed March 2010

## Website Updates

Economic Development, Tourism and Events continued to work towards providing up-to-date information for residents and visitors to Strathbogie Shire. The business directory continues to grow as more and more business take up the opportunity to market their business online free of charge and the calendar of events, another free online tool, also saw continued support from event holders in the shire. This work has been supported by the thousands of hits these sections received, which included over 57,000 hits to the business and community directories alone.

## World Class Service Project

Strathbogie Shire Council continued its collaboration with the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development with the online one-stop shop which delivers advice, practical tools and dedicated support on starting and running a business. This portal on the Strathbogie Shire Council website allows businesses to save time and money by using this service to access small business resources. Tools such as Ask A Question, Find A Contact and Step-By-Step Guides make it easier for businesses to get the information they need.

## Live Work Invest

As part of Council's continued promotion of the shire the economic development team have had a presence at events to hand out promotional material, as it is important to highlight the advantages of living/working/investing in the shire.

## Hume Strategy

Council has assisted Greater Shepparton, Campaspe and Moira Councils, in the development of the Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities a regional blueprint of strategic directions for the Hume Region.

These four councils form the Goulburn Valley Sub-Region and strategic work has been carried out to define the sub-region's competitive and sustainability opportunities and advantages.

The Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities also includes other councils in the north-east and is an initiative that defines regional policies and prioritises them to assist the state government in setting its regional program.



## North East Thoroughbreds

Council continued its commitment to the North East Thoroughbreds during this period. Support was given to the committee in the ongoing promotion of Strathbogie Shire as the Horse Capital of Victoria which assists in the attraction of national and international investment.





# Building



The total Building Expenditure for the 2009 – 2010 year (July 09 to June 10 incl.) was \$32,323,791.00 which represents a significant increase over the same period last year which was \$27,851,180.

The financial year started out weak but by January building activity had strengthened and continued to rise rapidly towards the end of the financial year.

Standout permits for the financial year were:

Euroa Primary School	\$1,597,990
Euroa Library	\$861,115
St John Primary Euroa	\$627,062
Nagambie Medical Clinic	\$600,000
Chicken Farm	\$970,538
Horse Complex	\$1,466,004

The average cost of building a new dwelling:-

2009-2010	\$288,000
2008-2009	\$285,000
2007-2008	\$210,000

In relation to regulatory changes impacting on the department new requirements for swimming pool

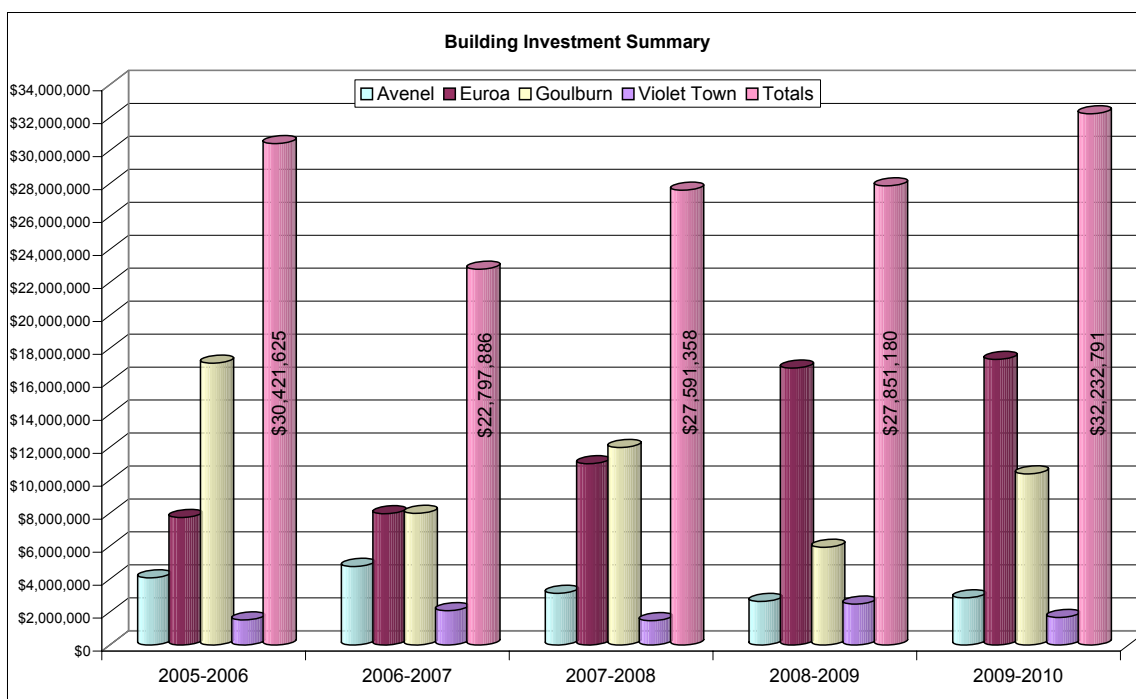
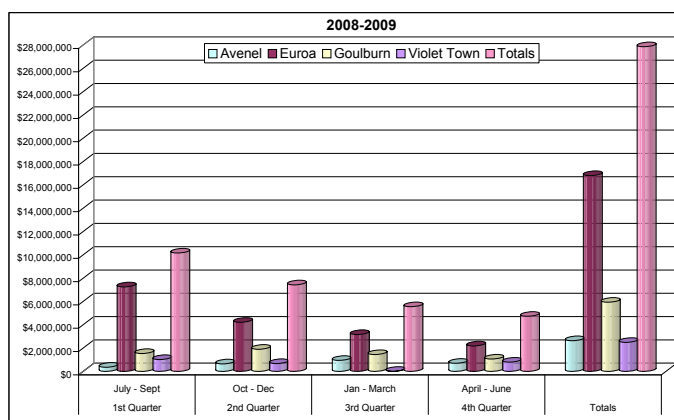
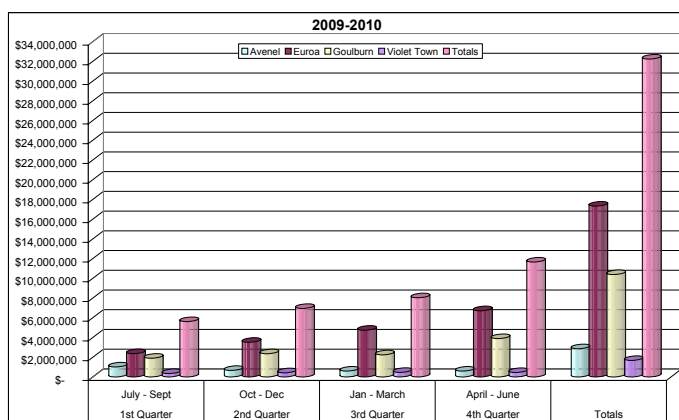
fencing was adopted in the Building Code of Australia 2010.

The Municipal Building Surveyor attended the Bushfire Workshop with the Building Commission in June 2010. The workshop objective was to implement a strategy state-wide for an Emergency Response Plan so that the Municipal Building Surveyor and key stake holders are aware what to do in a crisis during the emergency response, recovery and rebuilding periods.

A strategy for Municipal Building Surveyors to respond to the crisis has been drafted by the Building Commission and will be finalised in the next few months.

The Building Department continues to carry out audits on essential safety measures within commercial buildings to ensure safety within these buildings.

Charts illustrating the distribution of building permit expenditure for 2009-2010 and Building Investment Summary for the last 5 years over the four localities with the Shire are below.



# Events



## History, Heritage and Heroics

Euroa's History, Heritage and Heroics event is designed to celebrate the rich history of the district, to celebrate the past and to re-enact moments of Euroa's history in an engaging, unusual and interesting way.

On Saturday June 12<sup>th</sup> the event was officially opened by celebrated artist, cartoonist and national living treasure, Michael Leunig. The event featured tours to historic properties throughout the town. A number of notable Euroa residents dressed up in period costume and stood on soap boxes to tell the tales of Eliza Furlong, Lieutenant Colonel Maygar & Mr Scott (the Manager of the bank that the Kelly gang robbed). Binney Street shop windows were decorated with various displays that related to the theme, and a number of locals wandered the shopping precinct in period costume to enhance the streetscape.

The Seven Creek's Hotel presented a 'Settler's Dinner' with live music that 100 diners enjoyed. Euroa's Community Cinema featured Heath Ledger's film of the Ned Kelly story.

On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June a large group joined the Hoi Polloi walking tour led by Jeff Starkey hearing stories of the history of various buildings around town. During the day Euroa hosting the Holden HD & HR Car Club with 100 vintage and veteran Holdens taking over Seven Creeks Park. At dusk 120 people attended a tour of the Cemetery with Max Burnside.

A tour to 'Drysdale' sheep station to see the amazing 34 stand shearing shed and a demonstration of sheep shearing was extremely popular. The Euroa Arboretum hosted presentations on the amazing history of trees and heritage plants found in our gardens, while enjoying a mug of billy tea.

This event provided something for everyone to enjoy, for the whole weekend and was extremely well received.



Michael Leunig opened the weekend

Binney Str., Euroa



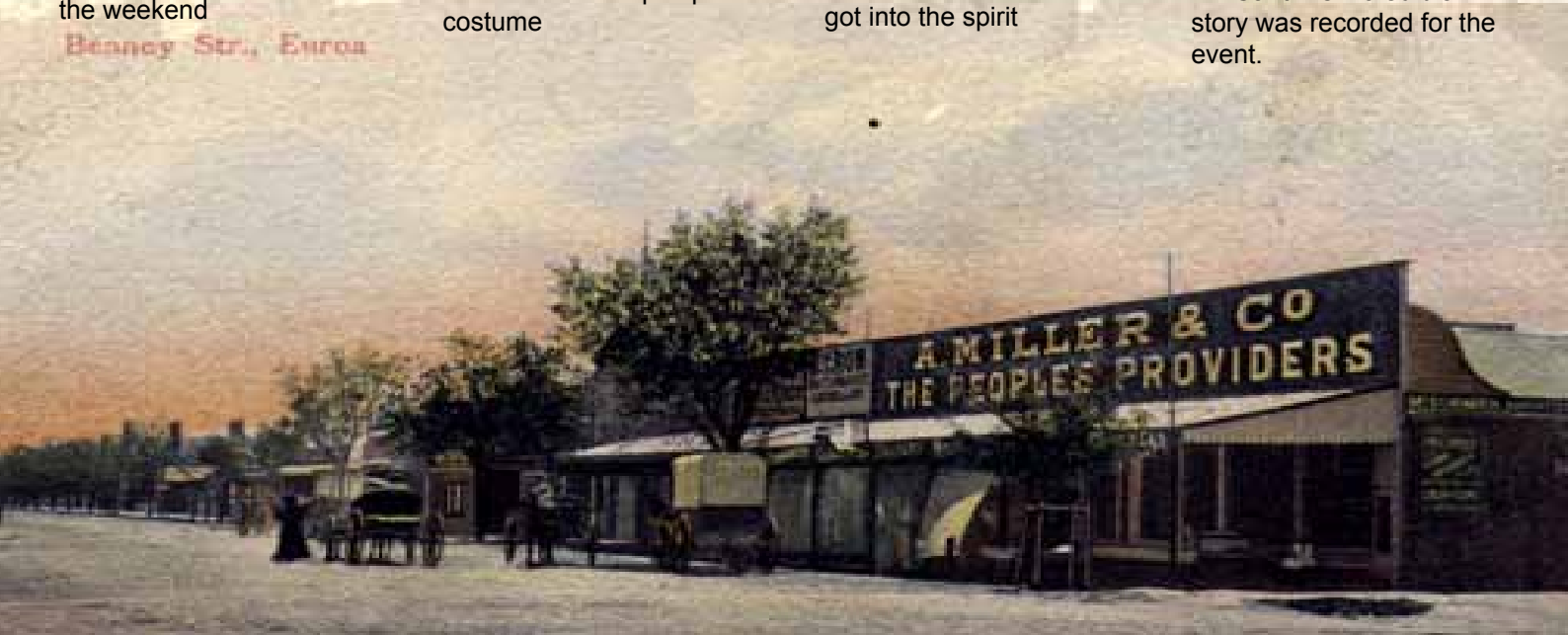
Locals dressed up in period costume



Cr's Furlanetto and Myers got into the spirit



Bill Cantlin's incredible story was recorded for the event.





## Grassroots Strathbogje Shire Gift

The inaugural Grass Roots Strathbogje Shire Gift was held at the Memorial Oval in Euroa on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March. The event was hosted by the Euroa Football Club and the races run by the Victorian Athletics League.

\$10,000 was raised by the Euroa Football Club as prize money for the races, with the main race – The Strathbogje Gift (worth \$5,000) was considered a precursor to the famous Stawell Gift held three weeks later.

The weather was fabulous and the ground was in perfect condition after all the rain and sun the week prior. Over 300 athletes completed including Olympian, Tamsyn Lewis, with many of the competing athletes vying for Commonwealth Games' selection. All the athletes were very impressed with the facilities



Tamsyn Lewis competed in the inaugural Strathbogje Grassroots Gift

– many said it was the best ground they had competed on. The committee is looking to stage the event again next year and looking at different options for additional events to be held on and around the carnival. Chair of the committee is John Irvill, with Peter Woodhouse and Allan Smith assisting.

This was an outstanding event where locals had the opportunity to view first-class athletics in their own backyard. The meet was made up of 70 and 100 metre sprints, 400, 800 and 1600 distances. Former Shepparton WIN News reporter Shane Woodrow also competed in the 100 metre gift and the 400 metres.

The morning opened with a 4.5km Fun Run from the Seven Creeks Park along the Apex walking track finishing at the Memorial Oval. This was a very well attended event with over 75 runners from as young as 9 to the oldest competitor who was 73 years old.



Participants in the Fun Run

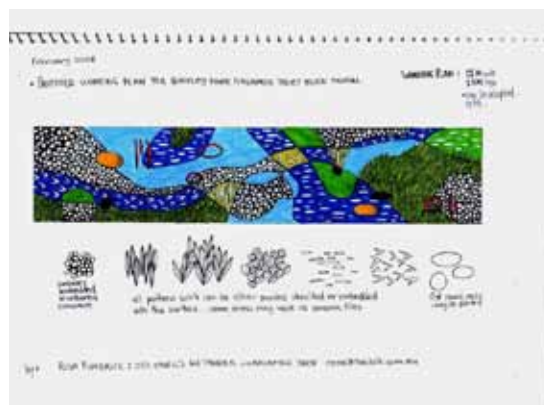
## Buckley Park Waterways Mural

In December 2009 a grant from the Federal Government's Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts was awarded to the Strathbogje Shire Council to create a Public Art Mural approximately 12m wide x 2.5m high to be created on the external wall of the toilet block in Buckley Park, Nagambie.

The mural, designed and directed by local professional artist Rosa Purbrick, is a contemporary work depicting the local waterways and is a celebration of our lifestyle. The waterways are the life blood of the Nagambie community and by taking advantage of local river stones and materials as part of the design feature; it will create a wonderful tribute to the past, present and the future.

The mural wall will be rendered and constructed of local materials along with ceramic tiles that are impervious to the weather embedded into the surface. On completion, we will seal the surface so that it will be strong enough to withstand some possibility of vandalism, providing us with a permanent work of art to appreciate.

The project will be divided into 3 sections under the direction of the artist in residence, Rosa Purbrick. With the assistance of our two primary school art teachers, the children will complete the first stage, the Nagambie Youth Group the second with the elderly from the Lakeside Hostel and Nagambie Hospital, the last. Initial rendering of the brick wall will need to be done by a professional trade's person, which the Strathbogje Shire Council will provide at their cost as part of the upgrade to the park and the toilet block. Placement of ceramic tiles, pebbles, stone work, block or timber items and painting will be done by our community participants with the assistance of their various carers, teachers and volunteers.



## Euroa Show 'n' Shine

Since its inception in 1991, the Euroa Show 'n' Shine event has grown and become increasingly successful, with 6,000 plus people visiting Seven Creeks Park, in early October to attend the vintage, veteran, classic and special interest car and bike show. The event regularly attracts over 1,200 vehicles and 250 motorcycles that participate, on the first Sunday in October, making Euroa the Show 'n' Shine capital of Australia.

This event is run by the Rotary Club of Euroa a group of enthusiastic volunteers, who work tirelessly every year with very little budget to put on the Euroa Show 'n' Shine. They are fully supported by the Strathbogie Shire Council with event funding, Event Officers input, assistance with grounds maintenance from Strathcon works and the events team on the day.

In 2008 the group, with assistance from other local community groups, businesses and tourism operators, expanded the one day show to harness the tourism potential and events were held throughout the weekend in and around the historic township, with great success. The vision for this event is to build on this success and offering a wider range of activities as part of the two day Euroa Shines Festival including car rallies, special dinners, tours through

the Strathbogie Ranges, cinema, art exhibitions and a market all of which offer a diverse range of activities appealing to many groups, including families, couples, tourists and car enthusiasts, who we hope will stay and enjoy the delights of the region.

Currently the team is aiming at an attempt at the world record for the most number of cars – in 2011, the events tenth anniversary. The aim is to attract 2,500 cars for the show. This is a significant increase on what has been experienced so far and will require upgrades on many aspects of the event such as park infrastructure, traffic management, parking, catering, volunteers etc.

A huge success this year was the Saturday morning 'Chuck a Lap' – where over 50 cars circled the main street and the shoppers were given the opportunity to vote for their favourite car.

With the expansion of the weekend activities there will be a lot more advertising and promotion to a greater range of people than has ever been undertaken before.

The vision is to directly target the car clubs, caravanning clubs, service clubs, Probus groups, etc. via mail out, handing out flyers at other car shows and at the conclusion of

the event as the car leaves, email, posting blogs on relevant websites would all be utilized.

A database has also been compiled from tourists who came to the show last year, to target directly.

Visitors per event – in 2009 the Euroa Show n Shine attracted over 6,000 tourists on a day when the weather was inclement. The numbers attending each year grow as the reputation of the event grows. Over the weekend everything is booked out and we estimate that over 400 visitors stayed overnight

For the weekend all accommodation and the caravan park were completely booked, most are booked out 12 months advance.

This influx of Tourists has a direct impact on the traders in town, accommodation providers, restaurants and petrol stations. Tourists stay and explore the town, into the Strathbogie Ranges and beyond.

This event is put on as a free family event. There are no entrance fees charged or relied upon. All the costs are covered by sponsorship, which is collect prior to the event - so there is no risk in relation to numbers of tourists attending.







In 2010 the community combined two major festivals – New Year’s Eve Fireworks display and the Nagambie on Water (NOW) festival, into one enormous weekend of family oriented fun. In 2010 the increasingly popular Fireworks over the Lake, now in its seventh year. Due to the ever expanding crowds, this year, the main Festival will be held in Buckley Park. This is an alcohol free, family oriented celebration with delicious food, live music and a fun carnival atmosphere.

After a days rest - The Nagambie On Water Festival, was held on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd January 2010. Saturday’s events include on water displays of wakeboarding, water skiing featuring the Moomba Masters Waterskiing Group and the Nagambie Waterski Club, with the very popular Park to Pub Open water swim at midday. On land there was a community market, classic car display, carnival rides and slides, culture corner, live music, gourmet food and wine in Buckley Park with the day concluding with live music and a twilight cinema. On Sunday the pace was a little more relaxed with a Come n Try Day offering experiences in waterskiing, canoeing and more.

Research from previous events showed nearly 80 per cent of NOW attendees from last year travelled from outside the township. In 2010 the marketing program

aimed to increase the momentum to capitalise on the 94 per cent of visitors to last year’s event who said they would make a return visit.

The Strathbogie Shire Council is fully committed to this event. In 2010 they provided approx \$10,000 in cash sponsorship plus the assistance of the Event Development Officer on a full time basis for three months prior to the event, then the event team is on the ground at the event. The Shire’s Media Officer is also very involved with getting the word out prior to the event by issuing press releases, organising media to attend the event and arranging the most appropriate advertising. There is also support of the Strathcon Works team in getting the park ready – such as mowing, tree assessment and treatment, cleaning and minor upgrades; then at the event there is constant cleaning of the rubbish bins and toilets for the duration.

The Community of Nagambie are very supportive of the event, this event has the entire community working together to achieve something great. Traders in the town and tourism operators give donations ranging from \$50 to \$3,000 totalling over \$20,000 for the two events. There are a number of other volunteers who offer their time and services for the event. The committee has a committed team of 15 who meet monthly and then weekly closer to the event. They each have a specific coordination role for each aspect of the event.

Into the future this Festival has the potential to become THE iconic festival for the region, if not the whole of Victoria, with the abundance of water making it a wonderful backdrop for an array of water-based attractions for the whole family, no matter what the climatic conditions.







## Establishing Farmers' Markets in Strathbogje Shire

Strathbogje Shire Council under the Victorian Governments - Regional Development Victoria's farmers market program conducted a feasibility study to source producers, identify customers, develop a market plan and assist with the start up of markets throughout the Shire.

The completed feasibility study was presented to Councillors and Council offices on the 22nd March 2010. The study found that Euroa presents a real option to establish a farmers market, in addition Avenel has the advantage of an already established market and this market is willing to expand.

A key recommendation from the Farmers Market Feasibility Study was that a survey be undertaken to gauge community interest and support for

the development of farmer's markets in the Shire. This survey asked the community for feedback on what they would like a Farmers' Market in the Shire to provide, their preferred location, type of stallholders, products sold and what they would like to see at a farmers' market.

The survey results showed that there was strong support for a market in Euroa and to continue the market in Avenel. The Euroa market was preferred on a Sunday (73%) and in Seven Creeks Park (73.8%). It showed that on average customers would spend \$20 - \$50 at a market and that fruit, vegetables, plants and bread are the items customers would most like to be able to purchase.

The next step is for the Council advertise and convene a meeting for interested parties to organize and run a market on the 4th Sunday

of the month in Seven Creeks Park, Euroa and to offer the Avenel farmers market be support.

Developing a farmers market in the Strathbogje Shire will be a fulcrum for much socio economic growth in the region. There are a number of businesses that we have identified that are looking for exactly this sort of opportunity to market and sell their product and to be able to do so on a weekly basis would make the development of these businesses viable. Many have indicated that they would be willing to upscale their current businesses to accommodate regular markets and hope that this initiative from the Victorian Government will lead to many more Farmers Markets within reasonable distance to sell their product.



There is no doubt that on road cycling is THE big thing of the new millennium. There are over a million bicycles imported into Australia annually and over 572,000 riders in Victoria alone. Cyclists are a diverse group coming from all walks of life and all ages. There are many social, economic and environmental benefits to touring on bikes and it is an extremely popular pastime for enthusiasts, who love touring the different areas of Victoria, especially those that are not too far from their home base.

The inaugural Ride the Ranges Euroa was held on 25th April 2009. The weather was no better in 2010 when over one inch of rain fell in the morning of the ride. This definitely affected numbers who undertook the ride - which was disappointing, but the one thing we cannot control is the weather! Two routes were offered - a 40km route towards Violet Town and a 125km route up to Strathbogje and down via Polly McQuinn's Weir.

The vision is to grow this event into a three day cycling fest, by offering various smaller cycling events in Euroa on the Saturday such as a criterion, time trials, etc culminating in the major ride on the Sunday. Riders tend to be savvy when it comes to

absorbing advertising. Face book pages, twittering and direct emails to cycling clubs throughout Victoria and Southern NSW was the main focus of the marketing strategy. Information about the event was posted on the Bicycle Vic and Cycling Sports Vic websites and other sporting websites. Handing out of flyers at similar events will be undertaken along with advertising in Cycling Magazines.

It was a great community event with many of the riders commenting that they had never been on a ride that was so well organised. This will be a great basis to develop future rides on.



# Tourism



This year a revised structure of communication was introduced, with monthly Tourism and Events Council Committee meetings scheduled alternately in Nagambie and Euroa on the fourth Tuesday of the month. The format involved reports of a tourism or events nature from Council Officers, exchange and sharing of information by operators and community groups and guest speakers on occasion.

The Shire's two local tourism associations representing operators have had mixed results. Strathbogie Ranges Tourism Association has been in recess for some months, and at the time of going to print is unsure of its future, while the Nagambie Lakes Tourism and Commerce Inc group continues to operate actively with key areas being the monthly Nagambie Lakes Market, the fortnightly Community Voice newsletter and organization of the New Years Eve Festival. The NLTC group now meets with the Nagambie Community Action Group, but maintains its independence.

## Benefits of Tourism to the municipality

Tourism within Strathbogie Shire brings \$29 million annually to the Shire with day-trippers spending \$76 per trip (\$10 million annually) and a person who stays overnight spending \$200 (\$19 million annually). Our focus therefore has been on extending visitors stays to 2-3 days (or more), via our calendar of events, along with the development of touring routes and encouraging a diverse range of attractions, new businesses and activities to encourage the visitor to stay a little longer.

## Achievements 2009-10

New Events - Five major new events have been initiated in the past three years by the Tourism Department to attract overnight (or longer) visitation and with committee collaboration. These have been scheduled strategically in the seasonal calendar of events in an effort to level out the troughs in visitation.

Nagambie On Water (NOW) Festival - March

Euroa Shines Festival (extended the Show n Shine event to incorporate three days of activities) - October

Ride the Ranges Cycling event (Anzac weekend)

History, Heritage and Heroics Weekend (Queens B'day)

Dragon Boat Festival (Cup weekend)



Our focus now is to consolidate and grow the hallmark events while ensuring all events run in the shire are conducted safely and adhering to OH&S, risk management and compliance laws.

## Communications and Marketing strategy

A bi-monthly e-Newsletter has been published since April and distributed to all operators and businesses as requested.

The popular Nagambie Lakes and Strathbogie Ranges Official Visitors Guide has had two reprints this financial year - with 30,000 copies now distributed all over the state (at Visitor Information Centres) as well as to local outlets and businesses.

The development of the Nagambie A3 tear-off township map has been extremely popular, with many businesses requesting more copies.

## Website

A Business Case to support the Book Easy online booking service was accepted by Council and the new tourism website and online bookings service will be live by October 2010. Free training for operators will be held in September 2010 and anyone is welcome to sign up to Book Easy at no charge. A 10% marketing fee accompanies each successful online booking. A Shire-wide accommodation audit has been completed as part of this process.

The new website address will be [nagambielakesandstrathbogieranges.com.au](http://nagambielakesandstrathbogieranges.com.au) and we encourage all tourism groups to link their websites to this address in order to provide a consistent marketing brand across the Shire.

## Township events signage strategy

Funding for three township entry signs per year over three years has been approved. Preferred placement of these signs will occur in liaison with Community Action Groups prior to placement. Community groups will then be able to promote their upcoming events in the boards by phoning the Events Co-ordinator at the Shire to book their dates.





## Visitor Information Centres

The Nagambie Lakes Visitor information Centre has continued to provide an excellent service as part of the Grapevine by the Lake operations this year. Our thanks to Therslie Darbyshire and Merrilyn Hall who have continued the high standards and been re-accredited a level 1 service



provider, entitling them to the "I" road signage. The Euroa BP Visitor Information Centre is no longer an accredited Level 1 provider. The information signage will unfortunately be taken down accordingly by Vic Roads and Tourism Alliance.

Welcome shops (brochure stands only) have been operating at Plunkett Fowles Winery, Avenel; Euroa BP and Euroa Freeway Service Centre (Hume Fwy); Wahring Petrol Station and the Naturally Made Store, Binney Street Euroa.

## Tourism month

An initiative of Tourism Greater Shepparton last year, the program has expanded in 2010 to include Goulburn River Valley Tourism partners, with the aim of educating locals about what we have right on our doorstep. A regional events calendar will be produced and distributed widely, plus extensive media promotion regionally of what's on.

## Winery tourist shuttle bus

A trial service was run in January operating on the hour between Mitchelton and Tahbilk wineries, the Nagambie Lakes Leisure Park and the Visitor Information Centre. Facilitated by the Tourism Department with financial support from each partner, the trial was felt to be successful given the limited marketing available with excellent feedback from those who used the service. Implementation during peak visitor times would require an increase in the number of financial partners, which is being discussed.

## Melbourne & Surrounds

Strathbogie withdrew from the Melbourne and Surrounds Board for this financial year due to concerns about value for money and outcomes relevant to this region. Instead it was decided to focus on the United Approach to Tourism (see Goulburn River Valley below).

## Tourism Challenges and Opportunities

Trails development; Visitor Information Centres development; Central accommodation bookings service online; Improved communication; Tourism committee & local tourism associations roles clarified; Best practice models; jigsaw black hole - United tourism; recruiting volunteers as ambassadors; developing partnerships and private/public funding; financial constraints.

## Our Tourism Vision for the next 3 years:

- To promote best practice customer service skills training for all businesses
- Develop welcome shops in many businesses and a tourism ambassadors program
- Develop business to business cross promotion and packaging
- Provide a dedicated tourism Visitor information service
- Recruit volunteer guides for regular history & heritage tours or as Ambassadors at events
- Grow the on-line bookings and tour building markets
- Develop and promote the horseshoe and cycling trails - with associated road signage
- To be a Wi Fi registered Shire allowing people to download maps/trails, attractions and restaurants
- Develop water-based tourism - eg water skiing lessons, sailing lessons and water taxis
- Increase the number of tour offerings within the Shire



## Goulburn River Valley Tourism

The Shire's of Mitchell, Strathbogie, Greater Shepparton and Murrindindi have been working collaboratively since late 2008 to explore the potential of combining our resources to brand our region as a whole.

A feasibility study was commissioned in Feb/March 2009 by Tourism Alliance which outlined the four shires strengths (wine/equine; history, heritage and art; water and adventure activities) and weaknesses (Visitor Information Centre Services & dedicated staff member funded by Council; online booking & communication



with operators and businesses; branding and marketing of region).

Further to this report, a three year commitment was made by each of the Councils to support the development of a regional tourism board and a memorandum of understanding was drawn up.

The appointment of a Board, plus a Council representative from each Shire, with an independent Chair occurred in August 2009. Tom Smith, Tourism Victoria, is interim Chair of the Board, while Strathbogies' representatives are Wendy Jones (Longwood) and Catherine Macmillan (Tourism & Events Manager).

Stakeholders branding workshops have been completed over several weeks across the region, plus focus groups will be held in July/August for marketing; nature based tourism, touring routes: wine, food and culture and Equine.

Based on branding workshops and surveys of the target visitor market, the new name for the region was announced.

The new name for the region is Goulburn River Valley - the heart of Victoria. It was recognised that the name needed to represent the four shires and the Goulburn River was the link - while valley conjured up images of fertility and production.

The appointment of Executive Officer, Amanda McCulloch, ensured a coordinated bid for the Great Victorian Bike Ride 2010 which we were successful in winning. More exciting news came just before Christmas, that Council had been successful in securing \$375,000 in T. Qual funding from the Federal Government.

Urban Enterprise were appointed to develop the five year Tourism Development Strategy for GRVT.

### **Regional Networking - Goulburn River Valley Visitor Information Centres**

This is a new group formed with Mitchell, Murrindindi and Strathbogies Shires and Greater Shepparton City Council representatives. The purpose of the group is for communication, resource sharing, familiarisation tours with and between Shires, statistics collection and professional development. A requirement of all accredited Visitor Information Centres (VIC's) is that they must attend 50% of VIC network meetings to maintain their accreditation.

### **Sporting Events**

National Rowing Championships were held at Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre from 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> March, with 2,000 competitors and 8,000 spectators enjoying

excellent facilities and a highly successful event. Governor General, Quentin Bryce attended the final day and made presentations to the winning crews.

Local tours offered throughout the Nationals included wine/equine tours to local studs Woodnook and Swettenham, as well as Tahbilk and Mitchelton wineries. A shuttle bus ran between the Regatta Centre, the main street and the wineries daily during the week. Self drive options to other parts of the shire were available e.g Walking Heritage tours at Euroa or an open spirit nature tour of the Strathbogies Ranges. Every participant received an Official Visitor's Guide with inserts including the touring options and shuttle bus timetable. The Major Mitchell river cruiser also offered afternoon tea & twilight dinner cruises with wine tastings on board.

### **Regatta Centre Events**

A diverse range of users continue to utilise the Regatta Centre for functions, conferences, board meetings, and events. From sporting bodies to schools using the lake or river for rowing or canoeing camps.





# Community Planning Program

Strathbogie Shire Council continued to be fully committed to the community planning process which has enabled communities to become stronger, plan for and take ownership of their future directions.

Council believes that local communities are best at identifying and resolving local issues and that building 'community capacity' is essential to developing vibrant healthy communities.

To assist Action Groups to undertake projects, Council established the Community Action Group Grants program and set aside funding specifically for projects listed as priorities in Community Action Plans from Council's \$200,000 Community Grants Program.

The community planning project "Strengthening Strathbogie Shire Communities" is due to be rolled out to eight communities across the Shire. Community Action Groups have prepared, adopted and continue to review their project-focused community plans.

Every community's need is different and their action plans reflect this. Projects, large or small, are being fully supported by the community and the outcomes achieved to-date have been exciting and of great benefit to the community.

Council looks forward to continuing to develop strong partnerships with all Community Action Groups.

Council also thanks the support of the Victorian Government through the provision of a Victorian Community Support Grant.

- Euroa Action Group \$13,000
- Nagambie Action Group \$13,000
- Avenel Action Group \$10,700
- Violet Town Action Group \$10,700
- Strathbogie Tableland Action Group \$10,600
- Ruffy Action Group \$10,600
- Longwood Action Group \$10,600

A full listing of community grants is on page 44.



# Community Services



The role of the Community Services Unit is to work within the Local, State and Federal Governments funding and service agreement parameters to ensure social and community needs are met. Community Services main areas of operation and service delivery are:

- Home and Community Care Program
- Customer service/information and referral
- Emergency relief
- Centrelink Agency
- Community transport
- Health promotion

This year we had quite a few staffing changes. Caroline Harlow commenced as the Coordinator of Community Services, taking over from Elin Ree. Deb Ellis, who commenced on reception last year moved into the Roster Coordinator role and is now responsible for rostering our Home Care Workers – she took over from Anna who moved into Compliance. We welcomed Lyn Nichols who has taken on the role at reception with gusto.

We celebrated National Meals On Wheels Day in August 2009. Councillors delivered MOW and commemorative placemats were given to all MOW recipients on the day. Information about the event appeared in the Euroa Gazette to provide information to the community about the MOW service.

Council gave thanks to our volunteers by celebrating National Volunteer Week. Our volunteers, who do such an outstanding job, were treated to a movie and afternoon tea.

In partnership with Goulburn Rural Access, Council ran the Euroa Lifestyle Expo – “Better Health and Wellbeing” during Seniors Week and it was such a success we are doing all over again in 2010.

## **Aged and Disability Services**

Aged and Disability Services is funded by Federal, State and Local Government to support frail, aged and younger people with a disability to remain independent within their own homes for as long as they are able. A cornerstone for developing appropriate and healthy services is the implementation of the Department of Health’s Active Service Model (ASM) for HACC programs. Under this philosophy of care, we are ‘doing with’ our clients rather than ‘doing for’. The ASM is a quality improvement initiative which explicitly focuses on promoting capacity building and restorative care in

service delivery.

We provide the following services to meet program goals and community need:

- Domestic Assistance - 12,867 hours
- Meals on Wheels – 10,966 meals
- Planned Activity Groups & Social Support – 4,744 hours
- Volunteer Coordination
- Home Maintenance – 923 hours
- Assessment and Care Coordination – 2,122 hours
- Respite and Personal Care – 5,330 hours
- Case Management

In total, Council delivered 25,989 hours of home care services.

Council also supports activities through Senior Citizens Centres at Avenel, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogie, Violet Town and Euroa.

## **Planned Activity Groups**

Planned activity groups are a popular activity providing clients with social support. Luncheons and a range of other activities are coordinated by Pam Ellis, who has been in this role since 1995. All participants in Planned Activity Groups require an assessment to determine eligibility.

During this year, Pam focussed on introducing a new range of activities in addition to the always popular luncheons. These included trips to the Kerrisdale Railway; the Mulwala Paddle Steamer; BBQ evening at the Arboretum in Euroa and the Third Age Club.

Our Men’s Group continues to provide once a month activities. Jim Fahlbusch and John Dougall have provided an interesting program this year. The participants visited many interesting and varied venues during the year which included Eildon Weir Houseboats; Hells Creek Goldmine/Crystal Mines in Strathbogie; Tamleugh, Confectionary Capers, Seymour Railway Heritage Centre and Cheviot Tunnel, Kinglake district after the bushfires to view the forest recovery. Outings to local areas of interest included Puckapunyal Tank Museum, The Odd Jug at Ruffy and The Rockery Gem Museum at Longwood.

Our Swimming Group is run weekly and is also very popular – transport is provided to the swimming centre in Shepparton.

If you would like to know if you are eligible to join a group, please contact Community Services on 5795 0001 for an assessment. There is currently a waiting list for all groups.

### **Maternal Child Health & Early Years**

Within MCH service parameters, the main areas of focus are:

- Health monitoring of early childhood development
- Early stages screening and assessment
- Enhanced MCH visiting provides additional support to families who have multiple or complex parenting issues to manage
- Health education and promotion
- Outreach program including home visiting and group work
- Community development
- Immunisation support

The generic and enhanced Maternal and Child Health programs have continued to develop with the following program initiatives:

- Outreach to homes and community groups for reviews at key stage health growth and development for children aged 0-6 years.
- Enhanced Maternal and Child Health program provides families with special needs individualised assessment and support.
- Development of groups for parents to enhance health and well being, including baby massage and parenting groups.
- Children's Week celebrations coordinated by Maternal and Child Health nurses provided an excellent opportunity for community awareness of the importance of early childhood. The celebrations included road and traffic safety, and children's fun activities with a day at the Euroa miniature railway with free rides and Nursery Animals. Health promotion and safety activities from Fire Brigade, Police and RTA and others are part of Children's Week.

The most significant policy direction to affect the Early Years sector is the introduction of the Universal Access to 15 hours of Early Childhood Education policy by 2013 and the requirement for a degree qualified early childhood teacher in all standard services including long day care from 2014. Strathbogie Shire Council participated in a review of preschool services and reported its findings back to Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). We continue to provide support to local preschools investigating ways they can implement the new policy. We have provided feedback to the MAV to ensure that the policy is not implemented prematurely; is funded; provides the infrastructure required and supports parent committees to manage the changes.

An important strategic plan, the Municipal Early Years

Plan, has been identified for review and will be updated in the 2010-2011 financial year with input from all of the key stakeholders across the municipality.

### **Disability and Access**

The term 'disability' encompasses a broad range of characteristics including impairment of a physical, intellectual, or sensory nature. The term 'disability' as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2006 also includes people with a medical condition, short term or temporary disability, psychiatric disability (mental illness) or learning disability. It also covers physical disfigurement and the presence in the body of an organism capable of causing disease such as HIV/AIDS.

The DDA covers a disability which a person now has, may have in the future, had in the past or is assumed to have. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis that their associate (partner, carer, friend, family member or business partner) has a disability.

The DDA is a Commonwealth law designed to complement State and Territory Equal Opportunity legislation and in this context, alongside the Equal Opportunity Act Victoria (1996) and the Human Rights & Responsibilities Act (2006), makes it illegal to directly, or indirectly discriminate against a person with a disability in:

- Accommodation
- Employment
- Access to premises used by the public
- Provision of goods, services and facilities
- Buying or disposal of land
- Administration of Commonwealth laws and programs
- Membership of clubs
- Sport
- Provision of information

### **Disability Act (2006)**

The Act states in part -

A public sector body must ensure that a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purpose of:

- (a) reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- (b) reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- (c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- (d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability

It is estimated that 19% of the Australian population have a disability. The estimate for Strathbogie Shire is



that 22% of our population of 9,800 have a disability = 2,122 people live with a disability (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). In addition to this figure, there are people with a disability who work or visit in the Shire.

Strathbogie Shire also has a high percentage of the population (26.4%) over the age of 60 years and this is expected to increase in the future. This demographic group requires ease of access to public places and facilities in their community to ensure their safety and maximise wellbeing.

Strathbogie Shire Council's Community Access Plan is the formal document which addresses the requirement of Local Governments to have a Disability Action Plan. The Plan is under review and will be formally reviewed and updated in the 2010 – 2011 financial year.

### **Disability Advisory Committee**

Strathbogie Shire has a Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). This committee comprised up to 10 members including people with disabilities. Meetings are held monthly to discuss issues of importance; to work with Council to raise awareness of access and inclusion issues and to provide input into the development of the Disability Action Plan. The DAC is well supported by the Goulburn Rural Access Officer; Council Officers and a Councillor.

### **Healthy Communities' Plan**

A Municipal Public Health Plan is one of the central platforms for strategic planning in Community Services and for the shire, as it contributes to the responsiveness and quality of services, and to the realisation of the Shire's vision for our citizens. The Strathbogie Shire Council's Healthy Communities' Plan was reviewed and updated during this year, and can be found on our website.

### **Heatwave Plan**

The Strathbogie Shire Council Heatwave Plan was developed during the year in response to requests from the Victorian government. It will be used by Council and its partners in the planning for and responding to heatwave conditions. It has been developed using the general principles of emergency management as a guide to planning, preparation, response and recovery. The plan can be found on our website.



# “Making Links”



“Making Links” offers support for up to 20 young people each year who are 15 to 25 years old; who are at risk of becoming disengaged from education or vocational opportunities; who have a disability and who live in Strathbogie Shire and Greater Shepparton.

Young people are matched with volunteer mentors who help them to explore options for employment, education and training, and recreation. Mentors provide advice, insight and a range of opportunities to enhance young people’s knowledge of what might be available in their local communities, based on each young person’s goals and interests.

Fourteen young people completed the program in 2009, which concluded with a certificate presentation in November.

Making Links was successful in securing a further grant from Department Planning and Community Development through the Office for Youth. This allows for the program to continue until the end of 2011. Strathbogie Shire Council provides in-kind support in terms of administration costs and office space. Greater Shepparton City Council provides in-kind support in terms of program promotion and the use of training facilities. Sponsorship and in-kind support was also provided in 2009 by Tatura Milk; Euroa Secondary College; Careers Connection Local Community Partnership; South West Goulburn Local Community Partnership and Euroa Fine Foods. Goulburn Ovens TAFE has come on board as a sponsor for the 2010 program.

The program is managed by Strathbogie Shire Council and overseen in 2009 by a Steering Committee made up of representatives from Council, Willing and Able Mentoring, Department of Human Services, Department of Planning and Community Development, National Disability Co-ordination Program, Goulburn Ovens TAFE and Rural Access. The Rural Access representative has since moved to the program’s Reference Group, and a representative from Greater Shepparton has joined the Steering Committee.

Support is also offered through the Hume Region Mentoring Co-ordination Project and the Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance.

Making Links was a finalist in the 2009 Premier’s Community Volunteering Awards, in the category of Young People’s Community Participation – Regional.

Some outcomes for young people from the 2009 program

were:

- Enrolling in TAFE Courses
- Undertaking volunteer work
- Gaining work experience
- Developing resumes and job seeking skills
- Deciding to stay at school for Year 11 or 12, or to enrol in alternative education programs
- Engaging in a literacy program
- Getting involved in community programs and interest groups
- Joining job networks
- Finding out about drivers’ licences and learners’ permits
- Widening social and professional networks
- Increasing in confidence, knowledge and skills

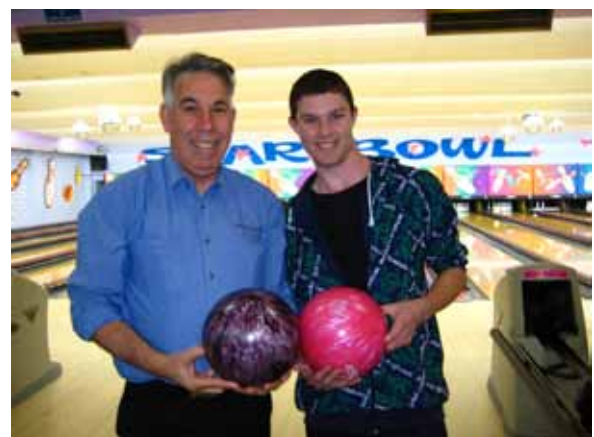
There have also been many positive outcomes for the mentors. Mentors have commented that they:

- Feel a sense of achievement by assisting their mentee to find direction
- Feel a sense of satisfaction watching their mentee grow in confidence and develop new skills
- Feel they have ‘made a difference’ in the life of a young person
- Have gained knowledge and developed their own skills and networks
- Now have a much greater understanding of the hopes, abilities, and situations of young people, and the challenges they face

Mentoring sessions have commenced for 2010, with 16 young people engaged in the program.

Quotes from 2009 program:

“Things I got out of the program were work experience in radio; help to make life choices; and a new attitude.” (2009 mentee)



“It’s good for all kids. I enjoyed myself and it helped me look for work.” (2009 mentee)

“I wouldn’t have got anywhere if I didn’t have her to help. I probably would’ve dropped out of school and done nothing. But she helped me work out what to do with my life. Now I’m doing VCAL next year and going to TAFE one day a week to do the automotive course. She helped me organise it all and it’s going to be really good. She helped me write a resume too. I never would’ve got around to that on my own. And I got my L’s. She helped me with that by saying, ‘Just give it a go’. So I did. She’s really good. She helped me with everything.” (2009 mentee)

“I feel good about making a difference, and can see that the little things make a big difference to the young people in this program.” (2009 mentor)

“I’m glad I did the program. It’s positive and it resets your values. I feel I made a difference, and I got to meet some good people. I learned that young people just need a bit of direction through someone else’s experience.” (2009 mentor)

“I found the whole thing very rewarding and enjoyable. It has improved my communication skills in that it has taught me different skills in communicating than I normally use.” (2009 mentor)

“The mentoring program opens up other learning pathways that can team up with schooling. It brings in other avenues of support for the mentee that otherwise may be left on the shelf. It opens the lines of communication between schools, the community, parents and teachers. This mentoring program is terrific for the mentee to build confidence, knowledge, respect and communication.” (2009 parent)

“Outside support encourages youth to explore career options. It’s a reliable program with practical outcomes which boosts self-esteem / motivation.” (2009 teacher)



Steering Committee Member, Kevin Murfitt being presented with award by Premier, John Brumby and Minister Peter Batchelor.



The Making Links was a finalist for the second time running in the Premier’s Community Volunteering Awards.



# Youth Services

Over the past 12 months, Strathbogie Shire Council's Youth Services department has been busy planning, organising and facilitating a wide variety of programs and activities that are available and accessible to all young people aged between 12 and 25 residing in Strathbogie Shire.

## **Eclipse Café**

The Eclipse Café is a dedicated youth space for all young people aged 12-25 who reside in the Shire of Strathbogie. The Café is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and has computers with internet, table tennis, Playstation games, craft, board games and other equipment. The Eclipse Café is supervised by qualified youth workers, who provide activities for young people. Each Tuesday evening refreshments and a light meal are provided and transport to surrounding towns is also available.

After school excursions and activities include: swimming at Aquamoves, craft and cooking evenings, scrap-booking, beading, mini-golf, movie nights and video game competitions. These have been very popular with young people, who enjoy the opportunity for structured activity during the school term.

Youth Committee meetings which have been held at the Eclipse Café in the past year have included Youth Events Team, FReeZA and Goulburn Making the Links Youth Mentoring project.

In conjunction with Strathbogie Shire Council, the Eclipse Youth Café is funded by the Victorian Government Youth Participation & Access (YPA) Program.

## **School Holiday Activities**

School Holiday Activities were held throughout the year, successfully connecting young people from the community. The programs were carefully planned and facilitated by the Youth Services department and Strathbogie Shire Youth Events Team.

Holiday activities attracted about 100 young participants within the Strathbogie Shire, and provided them with affordable and accessible recreation during school holiday periods.

Activities included excursions to:

- The Zone Entertainment Centre in Bendigo
- Tobogganing at Mt Buller
- Ten-Pin Bowling
- Aquamoves
- Cinema
- Mini Golf in Shepparton
- Funfields Water Park in Whittlesea
- The Science Works in Melbourne

Activities held in the Eclipse Café during the holidays, included video game competitions, graffiti art workshops, craft activities and Hip-Hop dance sessions. Camps were also held for young people at Mt Buller in July 2009, and an Adventure Camp at Howmans Gap in March 2010. The camps are highly anticipated and are a wonderful opportunity for challenging themselves, getting to know new people and building self esteem.

## **'Reducing Risk' – Drug and Alcohol Education Program**

The 'Reducing Risk' Drug and Alcohol Education Program was delivered to young people in March 2010. The project, which was funded by the Australian Government: Department of Health and Aging under the Regional Health Services Scheme, was a partnership between Violet Town Bush Nursing Centre, Euroa Secondary College and Strathbogie Shire Council Youth Services.

The half day program, held at the Euroa Flour Mill, engaged Year 9 students from Euroa Secondary College, and was aimed at preventing alcohol and drug dependency and binge issues in young people, as well as education about mental health, basic first Aid and sexual health. Students were engaged as groups in topical workstations, where they spent 5 minutes with various health professionals discussing key topics, working through a workbook.

The workshops were well received by Year 9 Students, and evaluations carried out by Euroa Secondary College showed that young people gained knowledge and enjoyed the activities presented.

Student and Parent information sessions were presented by Paul Dillon, a national leader in his work around youth, alcohol and drugs and author of a book entitled 'Teenagers, Alcohol and Drugs'.

## **Youth Events Team**

The Youth events team meet weekly and have opportunities to not only make recommendations to Youth Services staff about youth issues, but to also be actively involved in every aspect of planning, organising and facilitating all youth events run throughout the year. Young people who are involved in the Youth Events Team make decisions about and have input into all Youth Services events and activities.

This group of up to 10 young people work closely with Youth Services staff, and are a wonderful asset to the program, ensuring that the activities and events provided are relevant to the needs of young people.

## National Youth Week 2010

Youth Services was delighted to be granted funding by the Victorian Government to run a Youth and Family Event during National Youth Week 2010. The Youth Events Team were responsible for the planning and organising of the event.

The Skate'n'Fun Day event was held in April at the Euroa Skate Park, and included many activities for young people and their families across the shire. The highlight of the event was a Skate/BMX/Scooter Competition, which was facilitated by Melbourne Youth Organisation 'Bridge Builders'. Prizes including gift vouchers and clothing were sponsored by Wayne Ritchie Skiers Edge, and presented to the winners by Cr Furlanetto at the event.

Violet Town Community House supported the event by hosting a Youth Music Stage at the event, where young musicians showcased their musical talent for an audience of community members and peers. The event was very successful, attracting over 120 community members. Attendees enjoyed the activities on offer, and we look forward to running similar events in the future.

## FReeZA

The Youth Events Team are involved in providing FReeZA funded events for other young people, and enjoy the challenge of catering to the different needs of all young people in the Shire.

This is achieved by providing a variety of different types of events, and providing transport options to ensure events are well attended and accessible for their peers.

During the past year, the FReeZA Committee have organised several events, including a fun Halloween Disco and Hip Hop dance workshops. The committee have met weekly and attended FReeZA committee training events.

## Networking with youth related organizations

Youth Services is a member of the Goulburn Rural Youth Affairs Network (GRYAN), which offers links with the Victorian State Government, opportunities to discuss youth-related issues, and a supportive network for workers employed in the local youth community sector. GRYAN meets monthly at various locations, and two meetings have been held at the Eclipse Youth Café during the past year.

Youth Services maintain positive connections with youth providers in Violet Town, Avenel, Nagambie, Seymour, Moira Shire and Greater Shepparton. The Euroa Youth Focus Group meets regularly at the Euroa Community Education Centre (ECEC) and is a network of Youth providers who work with young people in and around the Euroa Township.







# Compliance

## Domestic Animals

The State Government has amended provisions of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (“The Act”) to further improve animal management. Council prepared and implemented its Domestic Animal Management Plan, something that was commended by the State Government.

Animal management today encompasses issues associated with:

- The registration and identification of dogs and cats
- Protecting humans and animals from dog attacks
- The confinement of dogs and cats
- The overpopulation of dogs and cats
- Any impacts on the environment
- Nuisance behaviour
- Access to public open spaces by dogs and their owners
- The health and well-being of dogs and cats

The purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan is to improve animal management in general. The plan also aims to increase the likelihood of animals being reunited with their owners and reduce the high numbers of cats and dogs being handed in or brought to animal shelters and consequently reduce the high numbers of cats and dogs having to be euthanased annually.

The Act also prohibits all Councils from registering a new dog or cat unless that animal is implanted with a microchip. The Act also has provision for Council to refused registration of a dog or cat unless it is desexed. This includes any animal that has moved to the Shire from another municipality.

Compliance Staff have been busy out-and-about across the Shire attending to a variety of jobs over the last 12 months. The majority of requests that we have responded to have been for animal control, with over 60% of jobs involving stray pets/livestock, animal attacks, noise complaints, ferals and animal welfare investigations. Rangers also conducted inspections of properties in built-up areas as part of annual fire prevention responsibilities prior to summer 2009/10, which utilised approx. 20% of staff resources.

**Domestic animals** – includes lost and found, animal attacks, noise complaints, feral animals and animal welfare.

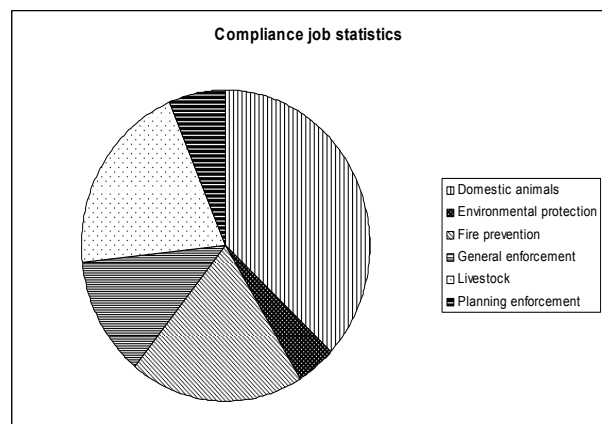
Over the past 12 months the Compliance Department has had an increasing amount of complaints relating to animals in townships. Many of the complaints are about stray pets, noise, or animals that are prohibited by Local Law to be kept in town. Residents who live in any area OTHER THAN rural or farming zone are permitted by local laws to keep the following:

Animal	Non-Rural Zone	Rural Zone
Dog	2	5
Cat	2	5
Domestic mice	4	No limit
Guinea pigs	4	No limit
Domestic rabbits	4	No limit
Chickens	5	20
Roosters	0	2
Livestock	0	No limit
Horses/Donkeys	0	No limit
Camels	0	No limit

## Stray animals

Over the last financial year the Rangers have impounded approximately 117 stray pets and 81 head of stray livestock. This is up on 2008/09 totals of 114 and 22, respectively. These totals don’t include the animals picked up by Rangers that are identified and returned to their owners on the same day. Council would like to remind animal owners that if you care about your animal, please ensure that they can be identified by microchip or tag so that they can easily be returned home.

Council has been strategically profiling animal management and responsible pet ownership in the media and will continue to do so in response to kerbing the dominance of animal management issues in our day to day operations. This, with a concentrated effort, will free up resources for a more balanced response to the broader scope of our operations.





# Environmental Health

Strathbogrie Shire Council's Environmental Health Department is responsible for the protection and promotion of public health and wellbeing. In keeping with this duty of care Council is responsible for the following issues:

- Immunisations
- Outbreaks of Communicable Diseases
- Septic Tank Installations
- Wastewater Disposal
- Food/Health Premises Registration and Inspection
- Temporary Food Events
- Tobacco Enforcement

## Septic Tanks Permits

A total of 49 permits to install "Septic Tank Systems" were issued during the year. As part of their approval conditions, each system is inspected by the Environmental Health Officer before approval to use is issued.

## Food Premises

There are 110 registered food premises within the Strathbogrie Shire which include supermarkets, restaurants and takeaways, services stations, hotels, school canteens, nursing homes, food processors and growers. Working under the jurisdiction of the Food Act, Council's Environmental Health Department has made routine inspections, investigated reports and responded to customer complaints relating to food safety over the past 12 months.

## Food Safety

It is the Environmental Health Department's responsibility to ensure that acceptable standards of hygiene and cleanliness exist at food premises, community markets and at events where temporary food stalls are located. Council received a number of food safety related complaints during the year. All issues were investigated and satisfactorily resolved without the need for legislative action.

## Immunisation

Strathbogrie Shire Council continues to employ the services of the City of Wodonga's Mobile Immunisation Service. Timetables, programs and further information is available from Council.



# Grants

Council has applied for a wide range of grants from State and Federal Programs throughout the 2009/2010 year. As a small rural shire, grants funding plays an important role in the Shire's ability to deliver quality projects to the community.

Council focussed on applying for funding to improve access to quality sport and recreation facilities; increase access to community space; build the community's capacity to deal with change; strengthen the community's resilience and provide essential infrastructure.

Changes to the Grants team included the transfer of Caroline Harlow from Grants to the Community Services Department, with Mel Keogh commencing as Grants Coordinator in July 2009.

## Challenges

- Competition for grants remains fierce and often excellent applications are not successful due to limited dollars.
- Motivating groups to keep trying if they are not successful.
- Bushfire recovery – supporting neighbouring shires and dealing with reallocation of resources to areas of high need.

## Highlights

Federal Funding – Council received a further \$161,000 from the Federal Government, with which the following projects were funded:

- Avenel Golf Club Amenities Upgrade
- Birkett Street Euroa – Installation of Gross Pollutant Trap
- Violet Town Child Care Centre – Shade Sails
- Nagambie Community Hub Access Improvements
- Construction of Creek-side Recreational Trails – Avenel and Violet Town

State Funding – a significant number of Applications to the State Government were successful, and included:

- \$100,000 for the Nagambie Recreation Reserve Community Facilities Improvements Project
- \$117,000 for the Longwood Community Facility Improvements Project
- \$25,000 for the Nagambie Multi-Use Community Facilities Development Plan
- \$18,570 for the Water For the Future – Plan for Drought Proofing Violet Town, Nagambie and Longwood Recreation Reserves
- \$60,000 for the Ruffy Recreation Reserve Upgrade
- \$1,000,000 for the Strathbogie Equine Industry Expansion Project – Widening Creightons Creek Road and Bartons Lane
- \$180,000 for the Nagambie Regatta Centre Upgrade
- \$31,100 for the L2P – Learner Driver Mentoring Program
- \$50,000 for the Strathbogie Heritage Study – Stage 2



\$2,814 for the Longwood Boer War Memorial Restoration Project

\$650,000 for the Euroa Library Lives Project





# Community Grants

The aim of the Community Grants Program is to provide funding for the community groups across the Shire to undertake minor capital works or purchases, conduct community based events and to implement Community Action Group planning priorities. The Community Grants Program also incorporates the William Pearson Bequest and the previously separate Arts & Cultural Development Program.

Action Groups were given an allocation with which to implement their respective Action Plans. The allocations were based on a flat rate, plus additional monies based on population. The following amounts were allocated:

- Euroa Action Group \$13,000
- Nagambie Action Group \$13,000
- Avenel Action Group \$10,700
- Violet Town Action Group \$10,700
- Strathbogie Tableland Action Group \$10,600
- Ruffy Action Group \$10,600
- Longwood Action Group \$10,600

In addition to the above allocations to Action Groups, the following Community Groups were awarded individual Community Grants in 2009-2010.

Applicant	Project	Amount Allocated 2009/10
Avenel - Jubilee Park Committee	To further develop the monthly market event across the region and consolidate the free community kids activities and live music acts.	1,640.00
Avenel Preschool	To replace playground fort.	7,500.00
Avenel Senior Citizens Centre Inc.	Purchase electrical appliances and utensils for kitchen	600.00
Creightons Creek Rec Assoc Inc	Purchase four 'super sound panels' to improve the acoustics in the hall.	1,200.00
Euroa Agricultural Society Inc	Promotional activities of Euroa Show	1,500.00
Euroa Arboretum Inc	Stories of Steel & Stone - Completing the Story. To enhance the recently installed decorative screens with complementary landscaping and pedestrian access.	1,500.00
Euroa Citizens Band	To present Carols by Candlelight in the park (weather permitting) with a BBQ for no cost, to the community.	1,350.00
Euroa Citizens Band Inc	Ongoing activities of Euroa Citizen's Band (William Pearson Bequest)	2,500.00
Euroa Community Playgroup (auspiced by Playgroup Victoria)	To purchase indoor play equipment.	3,000.00
Euroa Health Inc (Mens Shed)	Purchase furnishings for new Men's Shed location.	4,300.00

Avenel Jubilee Park Committee received \$1,640 to further develop the monthly market across the region.



Euroa Historical and Genealogical Society - The Farmers Arms Hotel Museum	To fit clear perspex covers over shelves in three rooms of the museum to protect items displayed.	1,000.00
Euroa Miniature Railway	To purchase and install recycled plastic sleepers to existing track to increase safety and help protect park environment.	3,000.00
Euroa Wool Week Festival Committee	To hire a marquee for musical entertainment - Sunday in the Park and partial funding for inaugural wool week cook off.	880.00
Longwood Community Centre	To purchase a commercial vacuum cleaner for the Longwood Community Centre	700.00
Longwood Football Netball Club Inc	To erect a shelter for teams, officials and spectators of visiting netball clubs.	3,600.00
Longwood Rural Fire Brigade	To construct a wall to divide the tanks from the meeting room/ office/kitchen area in the Longwood Fire Station.	2,000.00
Miepoll Public Hall	To complete the staining, sanding and polishing of hall flooring and to clean and paint toilet flooring.	2,970.00
Nagambie & District Lions Club	Carols by Candlelight at Mechanics Hall.	500.00
Nagambie Branch - Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation	Nagambie Library Play Area	9,500.00
Nagambie Historical Society	To restore the 1910 fire cart to original condition.	2,200.00
Nagambie Playgroup	Build a free-standing structure to provide covered area for outside activity.	2,000.00
Nagambie Pre-School	Build a bike track.	2,500.00
Strathbogie - Kelvin View Hall Committee of Management	Connect spring to water line to toilets.	1,100.00
Strathbogie Memorial Hall	Strathbogie Memorial Hall Sounds Revived.	2,000.00
Strathbogie Recreation Reserve	To purchase seed to resurface oval playing area	800.00
Strathbogie Recreation Reserve	To provide year round thermal comfort and expand catering facilities. (\$3k for air conditioner)	3,000.00
Violet Town & District Early Childhood Centre Inc	Upgrade play area with rubber edging and safety surface.	5,000.00
Violet Town Community House	To purchase a portable projector screen and DVD/Video player and speakers.	820.00
Violet Town Lions Club	A free community, family based event showcasing the skills of speed shearing. Free entry, entertainment for children including train rides, merry-go-rounds, jumping castle. Goods & services auction and food stalls.	3,000.00
Violet Town Tennis Club	Replace surface of 2 old modgrass tennis courts with modern synthetic grass playing surface at VT public courts. Contribution towards State Government Grant Application.	5,000.00
Violet Town Garden Club	Donation for prize at show	200.00
Women of Euroa (auspiced by Euroa Health Inc)	Women of Euroa Group (auspiced by Euroa Health Inc) wish to hold 4 events, 3 of which are targetted to women in Strathbogie Shire and surrounds. 27 Aug 09 - a dinner with Guest Speakers from ANZ Bank - "Opportunities for Women in Organisational Focus. 12 Nov 09 - Special Event Evening "You Won't Die Laughing" - open to all members of community. 25 Feb 10 and 27 May 10 - Dinners with Guest Speakers to be advised.	1,000.00





# Asset Services

This year saw a number of staff changes in the Asset Services Department.

Council's Director, Asset Services, Mr David Westphalen was "called up" from his Army Reserve role and was posted to Iraq. David returned to the Shire, but resigned shortly after to take up another posting as a Colonel with Australian Troops in Afghanistan in June 2010.

In this period Bruce Andrews relieved as the Acting Director, Asset Services.

Council also seconded two experienced engineers to the department to assist with the management of major projects.

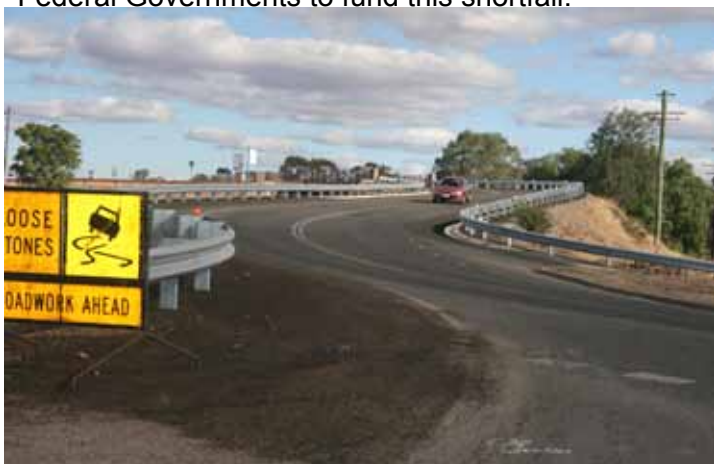
This period has seen the implementation of two rounds of the Federal Governments incentive project (RLCIP) which this department has managed.

Council continues to attempt to manage its asset base with restricted funds. The underlying 'infrastructure gap' means assets such as roads and buildings are deteriorating at a faster rate than Council funds permit to renew them. This means the condition of these assets is deteriorating and it is a constant battle for Council to maintain them in a serviceable and safe condition for community use.

Council has been concerned for some time about its inability to properly fund the adequate maintenance and renewal of its road and bridge network in particular. This issue has been highlighted with a condition assessment of Kirwans Bridge near Nagambie, which has led to the requirement to close the bridge due to safety concerns.

Condition assessment across all Council assets shows that the Shire has a need to accelerate infrastructure spending particularly on its road and bridge network to maintain it in a safe and serviceable condition.

Council cannot fund this gap entirely from its own resources (rates) and is looking to the State and Federal Governments to fund this shortfall.



## Major Achievements

- Completion of a \$700,000 bituminous resealing program
- Completion of a \$966,000 road pavement cement stabilization program
- Practical completion of the Euroa Flood mitigation project
- Completion of 2 rounds of the Federal Governments RLCIP Program



## Council Buildings and Community Facilities

The Euroa Library redevelopment construction work commenced. Moretto builders from Shepparton are constructing the new library on the existing site in Binney Street Euroa. The project will be completed in November 2010.



The Nagambie Board Walk Project at Jacobson's Outlook in Nagambie has commenced with all piles being driven to support the structure. Beams and planking have commenced and the walkway is taking shape. Landscaping and access work have commenced. The associated project at Buckley Park has seen the construction of a new car parking area and the commencement of the redevelopment of the toilet block and BBQ shelter in this area. Landscaping and access work (including disability access) has also commenced.

At McNamara Point on Lake Nagambie a car and boat trailer parking area has been constructed. Improvements have been made to the Boating Safety Officer's building with the installation of a dedicated boat ramp to the boat storage area.

These projects complement other facility improvements at the Regatta Centre on Lake Nagambie, including work on the public address system and judges boxes, beaching for the rowing course and pontoon improvements.

The North East Store Cattle Sale Centre has operated very successfully with regular sales and good yard numbers with a total of over 24,000 head being sold throughout the year.

Improvements to loading ramps and yard facilities have been made at the yards.

### Roads and Bridges

The reconstruction of Elizabeth Street in Euroa has been completed. The pavement, kerb and channel have all been renewed to bring this street into as new condition.

The completion of the Progressing Euroa project has seen the construction of two township entry signs in Euroa and the landscaping of the intersection of Binney and Clifton Street in Euroa.



Council has expended \$700,000 on bituminous reseals on its roads. This work protects the road pavement by keeping the water out of it and thereby extending pavement life. An additional \$966,000 was expended on pavement rehabilitation which was carried out under a cement stabilization contract. This process adds cement to the existing pavement with a large rotary hoe (stabilizer) mixing it into the pavement and then re-compacting it. This is a cost effective way of recycling the existing pavement.

A very successful employment creation scheme was embarked on for employees of Teson Trims. Landscaping and improvement works on the Railway Overpass on Anderson Street Euroa were completed. Additionally Euroa township entries were improved. Most of this crew have continued on with Council on the Nagambie Boardwalk Project Landscaping.



### Euroa Flood Mitigation Works

Substantial flood mitigation work was done along the Castle Creek to protect the township of Euroa. The contractor Rod Newnham Pty Ltd has transported some 14,000 cubic meters of clay from a borrow pit in the Euroa Golf Course to construct the levee bank.

### Violet Town Flood Study

In association with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and State Government funding Council has carried out a Flood Study for the Township of Violet Town. Options for flood mitigation work have been explored and the recommended flood mitigation option will shortly be presented to Council.



This is the list of contracts for the 2009/2010 financial year

- Creighton's Bridge Longwood Pranjip Road
- Nagambie Lake Boat Ramp Car Park Stage 1
- Violet Town Floodplain Management Study (on going)
- Buckley Reserve Car Park
- Design and Construction of a boardwalk
- Buckley Reserve Buildings Toilet Block and Barbeque Pavilion
- Euroa Library Building Redevelopment



## **Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program**

The Australian Government provided funding to local councils under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program. The following projects were successful

### **Violet Town Community Hall Upgrade**

The interior of the Community Hall was renovated. The work included the removal and enclosure of asbestos and the lining of walls. Total cost \$40,000.

### **Strathbogie Pedestrian Footbridge**

A footbridge was constructed over the Spring Creek at Strathbogie. The footbridge provides improved access for pedestrians to the town and the school. Pedestrians no longer have to use the narrow road bridge which had limited visibility. Total cost \$90,000.



### **Euroa Sporting Oval Upgrade**

The surface of the Euroa Oval was improved by resowing with drought tolerant grasses. Total cost \$62,000.



### **Longwood Tourist Rest Stop**

A toilet and barbeque was constructed in Down Street with the support and assistance of the Longwood community to provide a facility for the travelling public. Total cost \$45,000.

### **Jubilee Park Facilities Upgrade, Avenel**

A new toilet block was constructed. The toilet block is central to many community facilities and provides a much needed facility for people using the local sporting facilities. The total cost was \$144,000 of which \$40,000 was provided under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program.

### **Nagambie Sporting Facilities Upgrade**

The building facilities at the Nagambie Recreation Ground were upgraded including the replacement of the kitchen. Total cost \$40,000

### **Strathbogie Picnic Facilities Program**

Picnic tables and seats were installed at recreation reserves and community halls throughout the Strathbogie Shire. Total cost \$35,000.

### **Strathbogie Water Tank Program**

Water tanks were installed at community halls and sporting venues throughout Strathbogie Shire. Total Cost \$64,000.

### **Upgrade of Wastewater Infrastructure at Avenel Golf Club**

Works have commenced on the connection of the amenities to the sewer and the improvement of disabled access. Estimated cost \$22,000.

### **Construction of Shade Sails over Violet Town Child Care Centre**

Shade sails have been erected in the child care centre. Total cost \$6,000

### **Installation of Gross Pollutant Trap on Birkett Street**

The work involved the installation of a prefabricated gross pollutant trap in the existing stormwater outlet in Birkett Street, Euroa. The trap will filter litter from the stormwater drain that serves a major part of the Euroa Town Centre. The trap was funded by contributions from the Australian and Victorian Governments and Strathbogie Shire. Total cost \$28,000.



### 2009/2010 Plant Replacement

Plant replacement for this year only consisted of the purchase of one second-hand mini-compact based out of Nagambie to improve the street garbage service mainly over the summer months. We also replaced one out-front mower and two small ride-on mowers.

### Transfer Stations

Although, Council took over the running of the Transfer Stations in the 2008/2009 Financial Year from contract and hired additional staff (commenced 1/2/08) we had little knowledge of the operations and the learning curve and training has taken approximately 12 months to complete. I would like to mention that our staff are doing a very good job and have also improved the appearance of the Transfer Stations.

### Storm Damage

Over the last few years we have been noticing that we are receiving major storms rip through the Shire. Unfortunately in the 2009/2010 financial year this trend continued causing major damage to our infrastructure and damaging or removing a large number of trees. This meant that our staff had to work long hours, nights and week-ends to make our roads safe and trafficable for the public. I would like to thank the staff for their assistance at these times.

### McKernan Street

McKernan Street, Euroa has been reconstructed, it still requires sealing, this will happen in the 2010/2011 financial year.



# Land Management

Land Management continues to centre on the Rural Land Rebate and associated activities. Other natural resource management projects have included community education, the control of blackberry on priority roadsides in Longwood, Creighton's Creek and Strathbogie Tablelands areas.

The Land Management Officer also provides internal advice to Planning and Asset Services Departments, liaises with external with organisations and agencies including Landcare, Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) and Trust for Nature (TFN) and responds to general land management queries from community members.

The Land Management Program Advisory Committee met four times during 2009/2010 to provide advice and support to the program. The Committee members are, 10 community members, 1 Councillor, 1 representative from the Department of Primary Industries and 1 representative from the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

## Rural Land Rebate

The Rural Land Rebate is offered each year to all ratepayers within the Farming Zone. It is a financial incentive to assist ratepayers to control a number of weeds and rabbits and/or maintain their properties free of these pests. Ratepayers must complete an annual application form, committing to undertaking the control of declared noxious weeds and rabbits on their property and adjacent roadsides over the 2009/2010 financial year. Rabbits and 13 target weeds have specific land management goals.

The monetary value of the rebate is calculated on the Site Value of each property and is determined in each year's Council Budget. In 2009/2010 the rebate was 0.000697% of Site Value.

Uptake of the Rural Land Rebate continued to be high with 75.9% of ratepayers in the Farming Zone choosing to commit to the program and receive the rebate. This was a slight decrease of 3.4% from the previous year.

## Property Audits

Visits to properties continue to be an important part of the Land Management Program. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that plants have been correctly identified; appropriate works are being undertaken and is also an opportunity to provide information to ratepayers about weeds, rabbits and other natural resource management issues. During 2009/2010 a total of 240 ratepayer's properties were audited, of which five ratepayers will be revisited during 2010-2011 to ensure appropriate works are continued.

Ratepayers for each property selected for audit receive advance notification via letter and requests for changes to appointment times are accommodated. Ratepayers may also request an audit or give permission for an inspection in their absence.

## Breakdown of 2009-2010 Completed Audits by Landcare group area

Landcare Group area	No. of Properties	Area (ha)
Arcadia	1	80.94
Balmattum Sheans Creek	2	814.48
Burnt Creek	1	1,269.9
Creighton's Creek	5	359.94
Gooram Valley	8	583.13
Hughes Creek	6	2,663.7
Mclvor	5	1,510.7
Mt Camel	6	443.31
Molka-Miepoll	7	2,031.05
Nagambie	116	7,826.55
Sheep Pen Creek	33	3,386.47
Strathbogie Tablelands	31	3,000.77
Upper Hughes Creek	19	3,756.99
	<b>240</b>	<b>27,727.99</b>



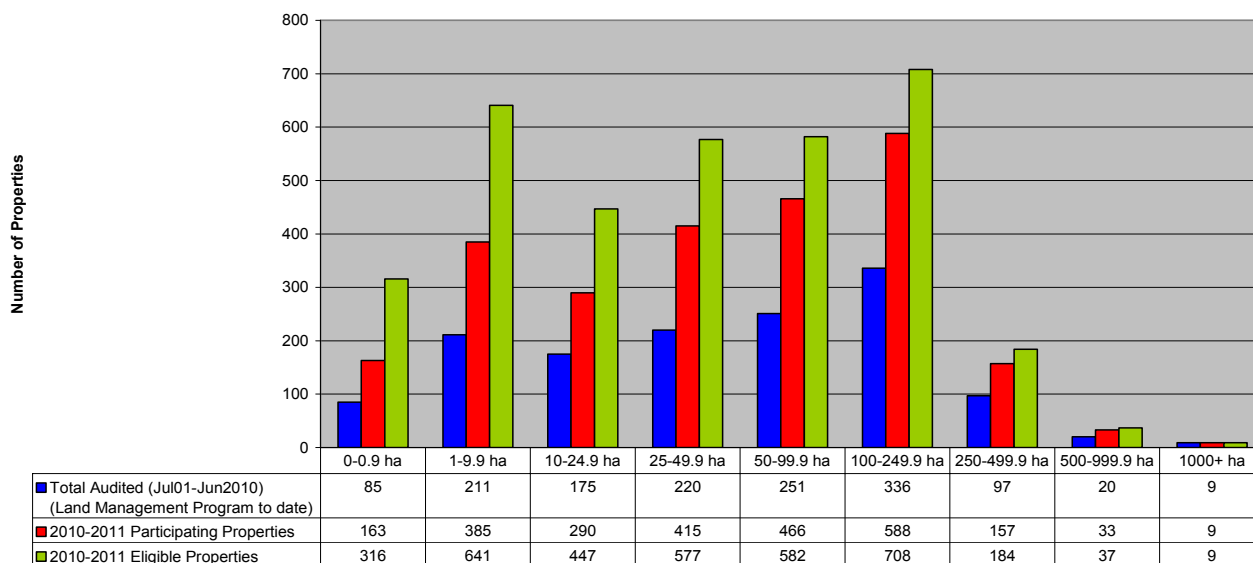
## Breakdown of 2009-2010 Completed Audits by Property Size

Property Size	No. of Properties
0-0.9 ha	31
1-9.9 ha	60
10-24.9 ha	23
25-49.9 ha	26
50-99.9 ha	24
100-249.9 ha	45
250-499.9 ha	18
500-999.9 ha	9
1000+ ha	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>240</b>

## Analysis of Land Management Program

Properties Audited from July 2001 to June 2010 (Land Management Program to date), Categorized by Size (Hectares) and

Number of Eligible and Participating Properties in 2010-2011



### Blackberry control on roadsides

Council worked in partnership with Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to support ratepayers in priority areas by undertaking control works targeting blackberry along roadsides in the Creighton's Creek, Longwood-Ruffy and Strathbogie Tablelands areas. The priority areas were those where DPI had worked intensively with the ratepayers to undertake blackberry control works on their properties. To undertake these works a contractor was engaged to treat approximately 920km of roadside across these three areas.

To fund these on-ground works, Council successfully bid for DPI grants under the "Building the Capacity of Local Government to Respond to Pest" program, which is part of the Victorian Government's Future Farming Initiative.

There are three different pieces of information represented on this graph.

a) Breakdown of the number of eligible properties in each size range (green bar). This shows the majority of properties in the Shire are within the 100-249.9ha (708 properties) and the second most abundant range is 1-9.9ha (641 properties) and the third most abundant range is 50-99.9ha (582 properties) very closely followed by 25-49.9ha (577 properties).

b) Breakdown of the number of 2010-11 Participating properties in each size range (red bar). This shows that all

properties over 1000ha (9 properties) are participating and that as the property size decrease so too does the proportion of landholders participating (difference between the green bar and the red bar).

c) Breakdown of the number of property audits completed from July 2001 to June 2010 (Land Management Program to date) in each size range (blue bar). This shows the total number of audits completed as at June 2010 for all size ranges. Given that audits have been conducted randomly over the previous 10 years, this represents an excellent spread across each of the size ranges and surprisingly is in proportion to the number of properties participating in 2010-2011 (comparison of red bar and blue bar).

Points to consider:

- Eligible properties are all properties in the Farming Zone and refers to an individual assessment number, so a landholder may own several properties, receive several rates notices etc
- Participation is voluntary so a property may not be participating in 2010-2011, however may have previously participated and been audited.
- Audits completed, only represents if a property has been audited and does not reflect how many times.

# Sustainability & Waste Management



Through the implementation of the 'Sustainable Communities Program' Council has continued to provide environmental leadership, education and support to the boarder community. The program is partly funded by the State Government's 'Local Sustainability Accord' and in partnership with Mitchell Shire, Department of Defence at Puckapunyal, Resource GV, BEAM Mitchell Environment Group, Goulburn Valley Water and Yarra Valley Water. Based on the successful 'Sustainable Homes Program', this three year project is one of the first to be offered outside metropolitan Melbourne. The program complements our commitment to assisting the development of a sustainable community that responds effectively to the challenges of climate change. The program also aligns with keeping environmentally sustainable resource use at the top of community and Council agendas by helping to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, potable water consumption and landfill waste.

This information workshop program is designed to promote, encourage and foster environmental sustainable behaviour change to our local communities of Strathbogie and Mitchell Shires. The workshops are an exciting opportunity for everyone to take practical action and to reduce their ecological footprint to create a more positive future. The collective population of the project areas is 40,000 persons including the Puckapunyal Military Base. Total number of residents registered to the Sustainable Communities Program is five hundred and fifty-five (555).

Twelve (12) FREE practical workshops have been delivered on each of these five key environmental themes:

- Energy
- Water
- Biodiversity/Sustainable Gardening
- Waste Reduction/Recycling
- Sustainable Travel

Five hundred and nineteen (519) registered program participants attended the workshops. Expert presenters provided the attendants with practical information, the tools and confidence to begin implementing sustainable practices in their homes and/or in their workplaces. The workshops have acted as a "meeting place" for local residents to share knowledge and

advice. The workshops commenced in August 2009 and are complemented by FREE Sustainability Kits, self audits and surveys to help measure the changes the participants have adopted.



FREE Sustainability Kits were handed out to participants.



Composting Workshop presenter above, Brad Montgomery and daughter Maddi.

A composting and worm farm subsidy is also offered to residents of Mitchell and Strathbogie Shires. This popular subsidy provides a low cost opportunity to introduce composting and worm farming into householder's recycling routine. Residents are offered up to 50% subsidy on compost bins and worm farms. The rebate is capped at \$25 per compost bin and \$50 per worm farm. The subsidy is limited to one compost bin or worm farm per household. Eleven (11) business sales outlets participated and a total of two hundred and forty-seven (247) residents took up the subsidy.

The publicity and promotion of the SCP has successfully built the communities awareness of the program's profile. Our endeavours are strongly supported by the SCP partners, Council's communications staff, local businesses, SPC web site [www.sustainable-communities.com.au](http://www.sustainable-communities.com.au), media including local newspapers, radio and television, community and school newsletters, environment groups and other networks.

## Natural Resource Management

Environmental sustainability focuses on protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment for current and future generations and educating our community about environmental issues. We are also involved in planning for the future, to ensure the way we design, build and maintain our community's natural and built assets is to enhance the appearance of the municipality. Responding to climate change challenges and effectively managing all aspect of

Local Government's core business with a sustainable approach has seen innovative solutions. Striving to develop a consistent response to Rural Land Use, Sustainable Land Management and Sustainable Development through the Victorian Planning Provisions is one of the areas identified to have a beneficial impact on the environment. A frequently asked questions list was developed addressing environmental initiatives and solutions also assisting in delivering a consistent response.

Developing a secure foundation that supports a sustainability framework is imperative to Councils future. An Environmental Sustainability Strategy will identify how Council can best achieve sustainable outcomes for both the natural environment and the built environment. The strategy will guide Council's future actions to plan for a sustainable future. Council's funding application to the State Government's Sustainability Fund was successful in attracting a \$30,000 grant. These funds will allow the employment of a parttime Environmental Sustainability Strategy Project Officer to be appointed in early 2010/2011. This employment position may be implemented in conjunction with other successful surrounding municipalities.

### **Waterway Health**

Through the development of the Stormwater Management Plan, prepared in consultation with Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA), strategies to improve the quality of urban stormwater entering the river systems have been identified. Stormwater quality risk assessment and cost estimates of proposed work actions were analysed and priority sites set. A works proposal to install Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) at various locations was submitted for additional funding and has been successful. Further action will be subject to funding.

### **Roadside Management**

The Regional Biodiversity Risk Management Reference Group, of which Strathbogie is a member, was successful in gaining State Government funds which will resource the Backbone to Biolinks project. This twelve month extension and education project will consist of the development of a Training Package for the "community", which will address biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, community engagement, leadership and education. Council



committed to a formal agreement with the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) on a shared approach to use a planning permit exemption, agreed under the Victorian Planning Provisions, to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation to maintain the safe and efficient function of existing public roads. This requires Council's tree inventory system, data relevant to the management of the health and safety of trees that are managed by Council, to be regularly updated and a maintenance works reporting system be developed for possible offset purposes. This monitoring and recording system identifies the requirement for offset plantings and by exercising this pro active approach it can benefit work procedure efficiencies by reducing storm damage from falling trees during storm events.

Council engaged in a supporting role with the 'Beyond the Fauna Bridges' project. This collaborative conservation project aims to reconnect fragmented woodland habitat for threatened indigenous fauna species through strategic planning and linkage to the Hume Freeway fauna crossing structures. Through whole of community engagement the project will protect woodland ecosystems through 'Trust for Nature' Conservation Covenants and fencing of vegetation remnants including along waterways, extend and build on existing woodland habitat through revegetation, enhance habitat for the conservation of threatened species through understorey planting, and provide additional nest sites for hollow dependant fauna through the nest box program.

### **Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance**

In 2009/2010 the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance, GBGA, finalised a number of aspects associated with the organisational structure. It was established that the eight founding council members of the GBGA are Shire of Campaspe, Moira Shire, Murrindindi Shire, Mitchell Shire, Mansfield Shire, Strathbogie Shire, Greater Shepparton City Council and Benalla Rural City (Associate).

Other achievements of the Alliance consist of gaining funds to the amount of \$76,650 to conduct a Climate Impact Assessment/ Gap Analysis for the region which will inform Councils Environmental Sustainability Strategies, finalising the GBGA Strategic Plan/ Business Plan, and provided a \$500.00 subsidy to ten student positions in the Home Sustainability Assessors Training Program delivered at the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Ovens instate of TAFE.

### **Waste Management**

Council aimed to improve the environment by reducing the volume of waste and litter generated and improving the management of the disposal of waste and litter.

In March, six (6) Clean Up sites were registered,



majority being roadsides, to the Clean Up Australia Day campaign across the local government area. Registered volunteer groups consisted of two (2) community groups, one (1) business and three (3) schools. Possibly a number of unregistered sites and groups participated also. In total an estimated 730 volunteers participated in the campaign and approximately thirteen point two (13.2) tonnes of rubbish and materials were collected across the registered sites and removed from the environment. Council provided invaluable support to each site by collecting bags and receiving them free of charge at Transfer Stations also additional bags were on hand.

Education materials were provided to the public about waste, recycling and litter. Many residents, businesses and students have learnt about their waste services and environment raising a sense of interest, respect and pride for their local environment. The community's efforts have helped to reduce the unsightly visual pollution in these roadside areas.

The Violet Town Landfill ceased receiving waste on June 30 2010. All waste received is being transported to the Mitchell Shire's Seymour Landfill located at Hume and Hovel road, Seymour. A new Transfer Station is being designed and implementation at the Violet Town site is intended for 2011. Council continues to introduce initiatives that reduce the quantity of waste going to landfill.

Council provides public place waste and recycling bins in strategic locations such as main streets, parks and reserves throughout the municipality. As a result of a series of community consultation sessions the recent development of Nagambie's Buckley Park, Blaney Reserve and Jacobson's Lookout have seen a number of new waste and recycling public bins installed. Public bins are provided to encourage people to responsibly dispose of their waste, avoid littering, manage litter in public places and encourage the public to recycle their waste. Council has a maintenance schedule for the public bins and the weekly and fortnightly collection is performed by Council's waste services contractors, Wheelie Waste.

The Transfer Stations at Nagambie and Euroa accommodate 20m<sup>3</sup> Bulk Bins receiving recyclables which replace the 4m<sup>3</sup> Skips. The Collection Points at Greytown, Ruffy and Longwood now provide a recycling service in the form of a 4m<sup>3</sup> Skip. The recycling facility at Strathbogie was relocated to the Recreation Reserve and provided with 4m<sup>3</sup> Skips. These upgrade improvements increase the capacity at all sites to divert recyclables from landfill. All site attendants are employed by Council.

Council is now offering the service of Plasback program at the four Transfer Stations within the municipality. Council enter into an agreement in conjunction with Resource GV and other councils throughout the region. The waste Industry estimates are that between 8,000



to 10,000 tonnes of fodder conservation plastics go onto farms in Australia every year. This includes silage wrap, bale net, baling twine, silage covers and grain storage tubes.

After use, fodder conservation plastics result in a waste stream that is unsightly, expensive to collect, costly to dispose of and of little commercial value. The two most common methods of disposal are for the plastic to go into landfill or to be illegally burnt. Although classified as "inert waste" (acceptable for landfill), it is expensive and wasteful to put into landfill. If the products are burnt – it is damaging the environment. Both methods of disposal result in a wasted resource.

Less than two hundred tonnes of this plastic was recycled in 2008. In 2009, the market price for plastic waste declined by 70%, due to the global slowdown. Farm plastic waste is no longer economic to collect.

This plastic waste is now either: staying on farm, being illegally burnt, going into landfill or being stockpiled by Council. No long term, state wide solution to recycling this waste has been found. Until now ...The Plasback Solution.

Fodder conservation plastic delivers a range of environmental, social and economic benefits to the agricultural sector. The Plasback farm plastics recycling program has been set up by Tapex to create a market for this plastic waste stream. Initially this program will focus on silage wrap, silage covers and grain tubes. The Plasback program involves the collection of a clean segregated waste stream, which is then recycled into a range of lumber replacement products under the Tuffboard brand.

Plasback provides a long term, low cost solution for farmers and Councils for the disposal of this waste. It will minimise plastic waste to landfill, minimise environmental damage, ensure these valuable products are recycled and make their use sustainable into the future.

The Plasback Program benefits all such as farmers gain a long term solution for the recycling of this waste, Councils reduce the waste to landfill, waste contractors are provided a new stable waste market, recyclers have a reliable raw material source and market for end

products, retailers engage in sustainable business practise, Tapex fulfills it's product stewardship goals and engages in sustainable business practise.

As part of Councils commitment to environmental sustainability and waste reduction, Council provide households with a coupon for free disposal of hard waste or green waste. Hard / Green Waste Disposal Coupons were delivered to each ratepayer with their Annual Rates notice. The coupon entitles each household to deliver to a municipal landfill or transfer station, a cubic metre of hard waste or a cubic metre of green waste only.

Hard waste includes items such as Ewaste (electrical and electronic), white good items (washing machines, refrigerators, stoves etc), furniture and junk but not car parts or tyres. Green waste includes plant material including grass clippings, pruning's, weeds and tree material.

Deliveries of hard waste and / or green waste to Council's Violet Town Landfill or Transfer Stations at Euroa, Nagambie or Avenel could be made during their normal operating times.

Coupons were to be surrendered to the site attendant when the householder delivered hard waste or green waste to the Council's landfill or transfer station. The Coupon was restricted to one cubic metre of hard waste or green waste per household and expired on the 30th of April 2010.

Original copies only of the coupon were to be accepted (no photocopies) and the coupon was not transferable. Residents who are frail, aged or have disabilities who require assistance to remove their hard waste or green waste can contact Council's Community Services office for assistance.

2009/2010 Quantities of disposed materials at Violet Town Landfill site only as a result of the Coupons:						
GARBAGE cubic metres	RECYCLABLES cubic metres	EWASTE cubic metres	GREEN WASTE cubic metres	WHITE GOODS cubic metres	RESOURCE RECOVERY ITEMS cubic metres	TOTAL CUBIC METRES
124	0	15.35	20	47	0	<b>206.35</b>

2009/2010 Quantities of customers at Violet Town Landfill site only using Coupons:	
YEAR	COUPON CUSTOMERS
2004	97
2005	80
2006	69
2007	39
2008	40
2009/10	169





