

From Council:

Rochester Recovery Update

October - November 2023

For all enquiries and requests, contact Council on 1300 666 535.

Flood Inquiry Public Hearings

Public hearings on the Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria were held in Rochester and Echuca in August. Campaspe Shire Council's Mayor Cr Rob Amos, Chief Executive officer Pauline Gordon and Director Emergency Management Shannon Maynard presented at the Echuca hearing, highlighting a raft of issues that hampered the various authorities' efforts to effectively tackle the disaster. Among these issues included:



- a lack of role clarity and accountability, particularly in relation to the Victorian Government's decision to establish a temporary levee in Echuca
- lack of data sharing by the Victorian Government
- government red tape and blockages hampering councils' efforts to access funding needed to repair the extensive list of damaged infrastructure.

The Mayor also made a presentation as Chair of the Murray River Group of Councils, which is comprised of Campaspe, Gannawarra, Loddon, Mildura, Moira and Swan Hill councils.

"The October 2022 flood was the most traumatic and devastating event of its kind in living memory in Campaspe Shire," Cr Amos said. "It is now incumbent upon all levels of government to do everything in their power to take heed of the lessons learned and work together in finding solutions and taking action to better prepare for, and mitigate against, the severity of any future flood events."

To read the full Campaspe Shire Council and Murray River Group of Councils submissions to the inquiry, visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/recovery.

Transcripts and responses to questions on notice at the public hearings will be published at <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/floodinginquiry/> once processed by the Parliamentary Committee.

Advocacy Update

Council welcomed the Victorian and Australian Governments' recent announcement of \$9.4 million for a Council Priority Betterment Program to improve the resilience of public assets damaged by the Victorian floods in October 2022. Council, along with many others in the local government sector, has advocated for change to the current restrictive Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, which only allow councils to repair critical assets, such as roads, bridges and footpaths, to pre-disaster condition. Campaspe Shire Council will now receive up to \$1 million in betterment funding to enable damaged critical infrastructure to be repaired to a more resilient standard.

While critical infrastructure such as roads are essential for the mobility of our residents and day-to-day operations of businesses and industry, the importance of community facilities that foster social connection, and contribute positively to mental health and wellbeing, cannot be understated. With the Victorian Government promising that regional Victoria will still get the \$2 billion package of benefits the cancelled Commonwealth Games would have delivered, including new and upgraded sporting facilities, the Mayor has urged the government to consider redirecting a portion of this funding towards the rebuilding of a new aquatic facility in Rochester to replace the facility demolished by the floods.

New Recovery Events Calendar

Campaspe Shire's Flood Recovery team has organised a new program of events and information sessions for residents impacted by the October 2022 floods.

From fun and creative school holiday activities to pop-up events in local towns, information sessions and training opportunities, there are opportunities for all ages and interests. See the back page of this newsletter for upcoming events. To view the entire events calendar, and access a range of recovery information and resources, visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/recovery.



Rochester Community Information Session

More than 120 members of the Rochester community attended Campaspe Shire Council's flood recovery community information session held at the Rochester Shire Hall on 22 August. The audience heard updates on: Council's current emergency management and advocacy activities; Emergency Recovery Victoria's Recovery Support Workers, Structural Assessment program and Homes in Homes program; Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's study on Lake Eppalock; and the Public Hearings on the Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria. Attendees also enjoyed a presentation on wellbeing and resilience by Australian television presenter and Beyond Blue ambassador Brad McEwan.



Members of the Rochester community during question time.



Mayor Cr Rob Amos chats with emergency services representatives.



Television presenter and Beyond Blue ambassador Brad McEwan makes a point about kindness.

ROCHELLA Music Event

On Saturday 14 October 2023, the community is invited to come together for ROCHELLA, a family-friendly festival of live music, local food and fun at the Rochester Recreation Reserve. The event will feature performances from some of Victoria's finest musical exports, including Joe Camilleri and The Black Sorrows, Cash Savage and the Last Drinks, Stumbling North and more. Tickets are \$10 for 3561 residents and can be purchased from the Rochester Newsagency or online. For friends and family members from outside 3561, tickets are \$30. Entry for children under 12 is free.

ROCHELLA is organised by the Rochester Community House and Music Victoria, with support from Campaspe Shire Council and the local community. For more information, please visit www.musicvictoria.com.au/rochella-rochester/.

Recovery Hub

More than 1,250 people attended Campaspe Shire's new Flood Recovery Hub at 48 Mackay Street in Rochester in the first 10 weeks of opening. The hub is the primary place for people to access flood recovery information and support. Council's dedicated Flood Recovery team operates from the hub Monday to Friday from 8.30am-5.00pm. The hub is also home to a range of government and professional agencies, including Anglicare, Partners in Wellbeing, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Mind Australia, Echuca Regional Health case management and Bendigo Community Health case management. To download a Recovery Hub services guide, visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/recovery and click on 'Recovery Hub'.

Road Works

Road repair works have recently been completed at the following locations:

- Railway Road – Ends to Dingee Road (*pictured*)

Works will be undertaken in coming weeks at the following locations:

- Singer Road-Bamawm Road to 1230m East at C/L Channel
- Restdown Road-O'Donnell Road to North
- Murdoch Road-Webb Road to North



Before



After

Farmer Health Support

The National Centre for Farmer Health is committed to supporting primary producers whose properties, livestock or crops were damaged or lost in the floods and storms through the delivery of initiatives to boost farmer mental health and wellbeing, including:

- a supportive online community through the #BuildingFarmSpirit social media campaign
- free access to online psychology support delivered by farmer health trained psychologists
- support for community events providing social connection and mental health promotion opportunities for farmers, farming families and farming communities
- distribution of mental health resources and support information.

More information is available at <https://farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit>.

Grants for Business Groups

Chambers of commerce, trader groups, industry associations and other business organisations can apply for Victorian Government flood recovery grants of between \$20,000 and \$50,000 to deliver locally-led projects that help flood-affected small businesses to recover and thrive. The program closes on Tuesday, 31 October or when funds run out.

For more information, please visit <https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/>.

Mental Health Support

For local mental health support Monday to Friday, from 9.00am-5.00pm, please call Echuca Regional Health (ERH) on 5485 5800. You can also contact your local GP or Headspace Echuca for those aged 12-25 years. Other support lines include Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636 or Lifeline on 131 114. For more information, scan the QR code.



Partners in Wellbeing

Partners in Wellbeing provides free and confidential support for individuals, carers, veterans, sole traders, small business owners, their employees and families. Services include wellbeing support, financial counselling and business advice. Partners in Wellbeing is one of the many service providers operating out of the Recovery Hub, with a focus on supporting small business owners affected by flood. As an example of how they can help, Partners in Wellbeing recently assisted a person experiencing both financial and emotional stress. A financial counsellor advocated on their behalf in relation to an insurance claim which resulted in an increase in their compensation payout. The person is also working with a wellbeing coach learning new coping strategies to help navigate family dynamics in a new living space and improve their quality of sleep.

To be eligible for service, a person must be 16 years and older, and experiencing increased life/business stressors. There are no visa or Medicare requirements and access to interpreters is provided free of charge. Partners in Wellbeing is available from 9am-10pm weekdays and 9am-5pm on weekends. For more information call 1300 375 330 or chat online at www.partnersinwellbeing.org.au. Or contact the Recovery Hub on 1300 666 535 and press 2, or drop in between 8.30am-5pm, Monday to Friday at 48 Mackay Street, Rochester.

Partners in Wellbeing

Waste Services

Twelve months on from the floods, Council's waste services in flood-affected communities have now returned to normal operation. Although flood waste will no longer be received free of charge at Council resource recovery centres, sandbags will continue to be accepted at no cost for quantities of less than three cubic metres. If you have any other flood waste enquiry, please contact the Recovery Hub on 1300 666 535 and press 2, or email shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au.



Recovery Hotline

For information on clean up services, temporary accommodation, and mental health and wellbeing support call 1800 560 760.



Council Information

For the latest new news and information on flood recovery, including previous community recovery newsletters, visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/flood.

Recovery Events Program

An Evening with Shane Jacobson

Don't miss the highly-entertaining and engaging Shane Jacobson for a night of laughter and light-hearted storytelling.

When: Wed, 26 October, 7.30pm

Where: Echuca Paramount Cinemas, 392 High Street, Echuca

Cost: FREE, including light supper

Tickets: Contact Bobbi Aitken, Executive Assistant Communities on 5481 2206 or email b.aitken@campaspe.vic.gov.au (limit 4 tickets per person)

Shane Jacobson is one of Australia's most loved, award-winning actors, presenters and entertainers, with a career spanning more than 40 years. The successful film 'Kenny' (2006) brought Shane worldwide recognition as well as an AFI Award for best lead actor. As a TV host, presenter and actor, Shane's appearances have been numerous and varied. His stage career, just as successful. Shane is also an author, with his best-selling biography, 'The Long Road to Overnight Success' and, most recently, his exploration of his life as a motoring tragic in his second book, 'Rev Head'. Amongst this incredible body of work, Shane has always found time for people and causes close to his heart. He is or has been, the patron or ambassador for HeartKids Australia, Scouts Victoria, Bridgestone, Docklands Film Studios, Australian Side by Side Racing Championships, HMAS Canberra, Entertainment Assist, The Mirabel Foundation, The Leukemia Foundation, Bowel Cancer QLD, and Parkinson's Victoria.



Community Outreach Program

Through our mobile unit, Council's Recovery team visits flood-impacted towns across Campaspe Shire. Come along to a pop-up session to ask a question, discuss a concern or get some information. Or join us at a Lunch 'n Link session and speak to attending representatives from our recovery service partners, such as Anglicare, Echuca Regional Health, Partners in Wellbeing, Mind Australia and AgBiz Assist, to name a few.

Gunbower and Torrumbarry

Lunch 'n Link

When: Thurs, 19 October from 11.30am-1.30pm

Where: Gunbower Apex Park, Gunbower Island Road and Brown Street, Gunbower

Lunch: Free lunch catered by the Gunbower Workshop Café

Nanneella

Lunch 'n Link

When: Wed, 11 October from 11.30am-1.30pm

Where: Nanneella Hall, 480-484 Echuca-Nanneella Road, Nanneella

Lunch: Free lunch provided

Lockington

Lunch 'n Link

When: Thurs, 12 October from 11.30am-1.30pm

Where: Lockington Lions Park, Pannoo Road and Lockington Road, Lockington

Lunch: Free lunch provided

Echuca Village

Pop-Up Session

When: Wed, 18 October from 10.30am-2.00pm

Where: Echuca Village Tennis Court/Hall, Mitchell Road, Echuca Village

Lunch 'n Link

When: Thur, 16 November from 11.30am-1.30pm

Where: Echuca Village Tennis Court/Hall, Mitchell Road, Echuca Village

Lunch: Free lunch provided

Colbinabbin

Pop-Up Session

When: Fri, 20 October from 10.00am-2.00pm

Where: Colbinabbin General Store, 37 Mitchell Street, Colbinabbin

Rochester

Barefoot Bowls

When: Fri, 27 October from 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Wed, 15 Nov from 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Where: Rochester Bowls Club, Victoria Street, Rochester

Dinner: Served at 7.30pm

For bookings call the Recovery Hub on 1300 666 535 and press 2.

The barefoot bowls events are organised in conjunction with the Rochester Bowls Club.

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg Presentation

One of Australia's leading psychologists on adolescent mental health, Dr Carr-Gregg, will speak on the topic of child and adolescent mental health following a disaster.

When: Mon, 16 October

Times: 4.00pm - Session for educators (of any age group)
6.00pm - Session for parents and carers

Where: Rochester Campaspe Valley Community Centre, Edward Street, Rochester

Details: More details to come



Australian Government



Campaspe Shire Council's Flood Recovery Program is generously funded by the State of Victoria through Emergency Recovery Victoria's Recovery Hubs Program in response to the October 2022 flood event which impacted Victorian communities in the Shire of Campaspe.