

From Council:

Echuca Recovery Update

3 February 2023



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

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of Echuca Recovery Update. This regular bulletin will keep the Echuca community updated on the recovery process and progress of activities. It will include information from Council as well as updates from the community, and government authorities and agencies supporting recovery.

Thank You!

Council would like to acknowledge and thank all those in the community who have helped to protect the people and township of Echuca, both during the crisis and since the waters have receded. Many people have gone above and beyond to assist their fellow community members while at the same time grappling with their own challenges. Like those living in other flood-impacted communities across Campaspe, you have demonstrated an incredible community spirit and for that, we say thank you.

Echuca Community Recovery Committee

While Council is the lead agency for the recovery phase, community-led recovery is at the heart of the process. The Echuca Community Recovery Committee (ECRC) has been established to drive the recovery process for the Echuca community. Its purpose is to inform, advise and develop recommendations for Council on community needs and priorities. It also helps individuals and communities by providing a platform to share information and resources, and coordinate services/activities to facilitate the community recovery process.

The committee consists of:

(Chair) Sarah Peake – Manager, Echuca Neighbourhood House Inc

Cynthia Opie – Executive Director of Community Services, Echuca Regional Health

Tim Ford – Business Improvement Manager, Foodmach

Jodi Mann – Industry Recovery Manager, Murray Regional Tourism

Karen Colvin – Visitor Centre Manager, Echuca Moama Tourism

Dean Oberin – Oberin Hospitality

Mark Francis – CEO, Campaspe Port Enterprise

Rebecca Caldwell – Landcare, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Hazel Hudson – Njernda

Hayley Lawton – Community member

Andrew Fletcher – Director Community, Campaspe Shire Council

The ECRC has developed an action plan to assist Council in determining priorities and identifying areas of focus for recovery planning and action.

Progress to Date

The following are some key activities and achievements delivered by different agencies and organisations, many of which are priorities highlighted within the ECRC action plan.

- Echuca Regional Health secured funding for mental health services and practitioners to support those impacted by the flood. This resulted in 13 full-time equivalent staff being available to help residents, including children and families.
- Echuca Moama Tourism and other organisations are promoting Echuca as open for business. Mid-week and weekend packages are being offered to encourage visitation.
- The Insurance Council of Australia held a forum in Echuca on 30 November to help impacted policyholders to navigate the insurance process.
- Council has been working with the Environment Protection Authority to assist residents of Warren Street to clean up items moved by flood water across properties.
- Following SES approval, removal of the temporary levees started on 9 January and is expected to be completed within the fortnight. An initial assessment of the sealed and gravel roads surrounding the levees has been conducted. However, the full condition of the roads and required repair works will not be fully understood until the levees have been removed.
- Works on food-impacted roads is continuing. In late January, emergency flood works were completed over the culvert on Campaspe Esplanade, near Anstruther Street. Works have commenced on the Campaspe footpath, just south of Ogilvie Avenue, and at Bangerang Road in Echuca Village (road closure in place). Works on Homan Street are complete and works on Simmie Road are underway (partial closure in place).
- Works to repair the sink holes over the culvert on Haverfield Street, south of Eyre Street in Echuca, will commence soon.
- Clean-up has started on the walking tracks and shared pathways on Warren Street and next to the new bridge.



Free Sandbag Removal

The state government's program for the free collection of sandbags from properties in Echuca and Echuca Village will end on Thursday, 23 February.

Householders and business owners are asked to place sandbags on their nature strip or kerbside away from any fixed assets, such as power poles.

Please note that the contractors do not enter properties to remove sandbags.

Residents who are unable to move their sandbags from their property to their nature strip can call the Flood Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760. Emergency Recovery Victoria provides these requests to Disaster Relief Australia, a not-for-profit, volunteer-based organisation. A response to requests may take some time and are based on community need.

Once sandbags are on the nature strip, residents are asked to register for removal of the sandbags as soon as possible via Council's website:

www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/sandbag

Music Events Program

The state government has announced it will contribute \$1 million to enable live music events to be held across flood-affected regions to ignite tourism and reunite communities. People in flood-affected communities, including residents, venues, event presenters and artists, are encouraged to contact Music Victoria at info@musicvictoria.com.au to put forward ideas and discuss being part of the program.



Youth Action Group



Campaspe residents aged 12-25 years who are passionate about improving outcomes for young people are encouraged to join the Campaspe Youth Action Group (YAG). The YAG meets monthly at different locations across the shire, and regularly engages with Council, the youth sector and broader community to raise awareness and act on key issues impacting youth. For more information, contact YAG Facilitator, Ben Hearn at b.hearn@campaspe.vic.gov.au.

What's Happening Next?

Council will continue to work with community recovery committees, support agencies, government departments and the emergency services to support those impacted by the floods. We'll also be working with the state government and local water authorities to amend the current flood study with new data from the recent flood. A range of potential flood mitigation options will then be developed. We'll keep the community informed of progress.

Recovery Hotline

Please note that the hotline (1800 560 760) has been set up to assist people about clean up services, temporary accommodation, and mental health and wellbeing support. All other enquiries should be directed to the appropriate authority.