

From Council:

Rochester Recovery Update

May 2023

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

New Community Recovery Hubs

Since the floods last October, residents, businesses, primary producers and other impacted people have been able to access support and resources from temporary community recovery hubs, such as through the 4Rs and now at the temporary location at 43-45 Mackay Street.

Council has now received funding from the Victorian Government to establish fit-for-purpose community recovery hubs, including a mobile unit for outreach. The hubs will be staffed by dedicated community recovery officers and will be the primary locations for people to access services and support from a range of service providers. The community will also be able to participate in forums, workshops and programs designed to strengthen emergency preparedness and resilience. The first recovery hub will be established in Rochester in coming weeks. The hub will be staffed five days a week and will be home to a range of Council and Victorian Government services, as well as professional support services. In the meantime, Council officers continue to be available to talk to residents about their needs at any time by contacting us by phone on 1300 666 535 or email shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au.



Lachlan Cozens is Council's new Team Leader Flood Recovery and will be based at the Rochester Recovery Hub. Many people will already know Lachlan who, as one of Council's Community Development Officers, has supported the Rochester community since the floods.

Recovery Hub Services

Please note that services currently operating from the temporary recovery hub at 43-45 Mackay Street are available as follows:

Monday and Friday – community outreach

Tuesday

- MIND Australia 10.00am-3.00pm
- Anglicare 10.00am-2.00pm
- Echuca Regional Health – Drumbeat therapy 2.00pm-3.00pm (programming)

Wednesday

- MIND Australia 10.00am-3.00pm
- Anglicare 10.00am-2.00pm
- ARC Justice 10.00am-2.00pm
- DFFH Northern Reestablishment 10.00am-2.00pm
- Rochester Community House playgroup 10.00am-2.00pm (programming)

Thursday

- MIND Australia 10.00am-3.00pm
- Anglicare 10.00am-2.00pm

Additional services attending by appointment and programming:

- Ag Biz Assist
- Echuca Regional Health
- Anglicare Financial Counselling
- REDHS Social Support Group, Monday and Friday, commencing 10:30am, Monday, 22 May (programming)
- Strength and balance Monday 9.00am-10.00am (programming)

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.





Echuca Regional Health Flood Recovery Program

ERH's Flood Recovery Program can be accessed through the Victorian Government hotline on 1800 560 760, by referral from other service providers, through local recovery centres, or by self-referral. The ERH Flood Recovery Support office operates Monday to Friday, from 8.30am-4.30pm. For information, call 5485 5421.

Australian Insurance Council Forums

The recent Insurance Council of Australia forum held last month at the Rochester Shire Hall was a great success. More than 130 appointments were made with the insurers for local people to discuss the claims process. Another forum is planned in coming months.

Consumer Affairs Victoria Support

Consumer Affairs Victoria has information, support and resources for renters, rental providers and consumers. For more information call the dedicated flood support helpline on 1800 803 800 or visit www.consumer.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools.

Wirima Play Space

Campaspe Mayor Cr Rob Amos officially opened the Wirima Play Space on 12 April. The driving force behind the project was a small and very passionate group of Rochester community members who formed a committee under the auspice of the Rochester Business Network. The design of the play space acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land through sculpture, signage and language. It also has strong links to Rochester's local history, depicting the Campaspe River, the Red Bridge, Bill's Hill, irrigation wheel and windmill.



Wirima means "Play" in Dja Dja Wurrung Language, and play this space inspires, through its nature-based elements that spark curiosity and a sense of adventure.

Flood Inquiry

Please note that submissions by any organisation or person to the Victorian Government Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria close on Monday, 5 June. For more information, visit <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/floodinquiry/submissions>.

Rochester Service Centre

Council has extended the opening hours of its Rochester Service Centre on the corner of Moore and Gillies streets (former Commonwealth Bank Building) to four days a week, starting Friday, 19 May 2023. The opening hours are Tuesday to Friday from 8:30am to 12noon and 1:00pm to 4:30pm. Closed Mondays.

Community Recovery Committee

The Rochester Community Recovery Committee (CRC) first met on 24 October 2022. With myriad challenges facing the community, such as displaced residents and impacts to the NBN and mobile networks, the committee formed from residents actively working in response to the disaster. Since this first meeting, the Rochester CRC has been addressing a range of immediate needs and priorities, including mental health, housing, schools, aged care, hospital and physical health, among others. The committee had early success in their community advocacy efforts, including the rapid reestablishment of classrooms and childcare in town, the establishment of a temporary village in Elmore, the establishment of a dedicated recovery hub and the increase in mental health support. The committee's current advocacy priorities include community wellbeing, the rapid and safe return of people to their homes, and mitigation measures to prevent or reduce the impact of flooding in the future.

Members of the Rochester CRC include: Leigh Wilson (Chair), Amanda Logie (Rochester Community House), Tanya McDermott (RCH), Matt Hawker (Mitre10), Eliza-Jane Watson (Hodgy Podgy, Community & RFNC), Glenda Nichol (RBN), Megan Weeks (RBN), Darrel Schwab (Ward Brothers), Hayley Ettershank (CFA), Judith Gledhill (SES), Karen Laing (REDHS), Leeanne Fullard (Rochester Senior Citizens), Liz Trewick (Rochester Primary School), Meagan Keating (Emergency Recovery Victoria), Lachlan Cozens (Campaspe Shire Council).



Rochester Place-Based Plan Engagement

It's time to think big, and build Rochester bigger and stronger! The Rochester Place Based Plan Committee is inviting residents to contribute their ideas and future ambitions for Rochester across a broad range of areas, including sport, recreation, parks, entertainment, business and tourism development. Council's Community Development Team has worked with the committee to develop a helpful 'kitchen table' conversation guide which can be completed in person, via email or as an online survey to enable everyone to have their say. We encourage people to get together with their friends, family, neighbours, community group or colleagues and host their own 'kitchen table discussions' and complete the conversation guide collaboratively.

The engagement period will close on 31 May after which a draft Place Based Plan will be developed and community input sought. To complete the survey and follow progress of the project, visit Council's website www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/rochesterpbp or simply use the QR code.

Have your say for the Future Rochester plan



Road Maintenance Blitz

A road maintenance blitz on residential streets in Rochester has been underway since 8 May. Council's roadworks team is making repairs to gravel roads and shoulders, and patching sealed roads. These planned road maintenance works are in addition to the emergency repair works to flood-damaged roads Council has been rolling out over the past few months. Notification letters are being placed in letterboxes a few days ahead of scheduled works in specific streets.

We're seeking the help of all residents to not park any vehicles, trailers, vans, skip bins or other obstruction on their road while the works are underway. We'll do our best to minimise any potential disruption to pedestrian and traffic movement during the work and we thank the community in advance for their cooperation.



Introducing Shannon Maynard

Shannon Maynard has been appointed Council's Director Emergency Management to lead the shire's emergency management program and flood recovery over the next two years. With a strong background in regulatory services and statutory compliance, extensive experience managing community emergencies and 20 years in local government, Shannon brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position. He is also a passionate advocate of local government and the vital role it plays in emergency management.

It was for these reasons Shannon's expertise was called upon to assist with the October 2022 flood response effort. Since then, Council has advocated strongly to the Victorian Government for funding to address the myriad challenges arising from the flood, and this has, in part, resulted in the funding of Shannon's position.

Shannon's key priorities are to:

- strengthen the Council's emergency management capability through robust policies, procedures and training
- ensure the necessary supports, resources and funding are provided to facilitate and expedite the recovery process for impacted communities
- better position local communities and the shire as a whole to respond to emergencies, such as floods and bushfires, through improved preparedness, mitigation and resilience.

Shannon's immediate priorities include setting up the flood recovery hubs, recruiting dedicated community recovery officers and driving Council's advocacy efforts. He's also meeting with local community recovery committees, and working closely with emergency services and agencies to understand local needs and priorities. In coming weeks, Shannon will be establishing a Municipal Recovery Committee and conducting a community debrief of the October 2022 flood event to gauge what worked well, what didn't work well and what learnings can be taken forward to better plan for, and respond to, emergencies and disasters in the future.



Shannon Maynard brings extensive experience and a deep commitment to strengthening the shire's emergency management capability and resilience.



Newspaper Story Clarification

Recent editions of the Campaspe News (2 May, "\$8.9m in flood recovery funding") and Kyabram Free Press (3 May, "\$8.9m flood funds") contained articles regarding recent government funding announcements for Campaspe Shire's flood recovery. Unfortunately, the articles were factually incorrect in stating that "a flood warning system and a new swimming pool will be developed on the back of the latest funding announcement into the flood-ravaged Rochester community" (KFP) and "The pair are the big ticket items announced as part of an \$8.9million injection from the state and federal governments." (CN).

While Council is continuing to advocate strongly for these outcomes, they do not form part of any current government funding commitment. To clarify the situation, Council's media release "Council Welcomes Flood Recovery Funding" issued on 26 April states in part:

"Among other key flood recovery priorities, Council will continue to advocate for:

- funding to review and update the Rochester Flood Plan. This will enable potential future flood mitigation measures, warning systems and triggers to be developed based on the latest information.
- funding for construction of a new Rochester aquatic facility to replace the destroyed Rochester swimming pool."

Urgent Road Works

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

- Tasker Road – localised grading
- Burgoine Road – culvert separation patched and shoulder grade
- Diggora Road – broken away seal patch

Works are expected to be undertaken in the next few weeks at the following locations:

- Sullivan Road – full length maintenance grade
- High Street - full length maintenance grade
- Baynes Street – maintenance grade shoulders

FREE Rabia Siddique Presentation

When: Wednesday, 28 June, starting at 7.30pm
Where: Paramount Theatre, 392 High Street, Echuca
Cost: Attendance is free of charge, including supper.
Tickets: Tickets available by contacting Bobbi Aitken on 5481 2206 or b.aitken@campaspe.vic.gov.au (limit of 4 per person).

Campaspe residents impacted by the October flood event are invited to attend a special presentation by Rabia Siddique. Rabia is a history-making humanitarian, an Australian criminal and human rights lawyer, retired British Army officer, former terrorism and war crimes prosecutor, hostage survivor, international speaker and published author.



Buckle in for an extraordinary experience as Rabia shares her story of extreme courage in a wartime hostage crisis, and beyond. Rabia inspires audiences to rise up and live with strength, integrity and humanity in the midst of adversity.

Rabia has received numerous awards, including a Queen's commendation in 2006 for her work in Iraq, Runner Up for Australian Woman of the Year UK in 2009, Australian Business Woman of the Year Finalist and being named one of Australia's Top 100 Women of Influence.

Primary Producer Flood Recovery Package

Applications for primary producer and rural landholder financial supports related to the October 2022 to 13 January 2023 flood and storm event have been extended to **4pm, 13 July 2023**.

- **Primary Producer Recovery Grants:** Up to \$75,000 grants to cover the cost of recovery and get businesses up and running again. Note: This replaces the \$10,000 Primary Producer Flood Clean-Up, Relief Grants announced on 19 October. Producers that have received a Primary Producer Flood Clean-Up Relief Grant of \$10,000 can now apply for up to a further \$65,000 under the Primary Producer Recovery Grant, bringing the total to \$75,000.
- **Rural Landholder Grants:** Up to \$25,000 grants to cover the costs of disaster impacts for small-scale producers.
- **Primary Producer Concessional Loans:** Up to \$250,000 to restore or replace damaged equipment and infrastructure, or to cover the short-term business expenses.
- **Primary Producer Transport Subsidies:** Up to \$15,000 to support the transport of emergency fodder or stock drinking water, and the movement of livestock.

For more information or to apply for support, visit www.ruralfinance.com.au.

Road to Recovery - Six Months on From the Floods

Much progress has been made across the Shire of Campaspe since the October 2022 floods, the worst event experienced in our area in more than 150 years. While recognising that there's still some challenges to overcome, the collective efforts of communities, governments and service agencies working in partnership is ensuring that locally-identified needs and priorities are being progressively addressed. Here's a snapshot of Campaspe's flood recovery activities over the past six months.

Support for Communities

- A **2022-23 rates relief package** for identified flood-impacted properties was endorsed by Council.
- As a result of Council's advocacy, the Victorian Government has provided \$944,200 to establish **flood recovery hubs** to operate for at least the next two years and \$512,000 for dedicated **community recovery officers**.
- A **multi-agency mental health and wellbeing forum** has been established in Rochester to facilitate a responsive and streamlined suite of mental health and wellbeing services.
- With funding from the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, a range of free sport and leisure activities have been run for **young people** so they can learn new skills while socialising in a supportive and fun environment.
- Five localised **flood recovery update newsletters** are distributed regularly to impacted communities across the shire.

- **2,500 cubic metres of general flood waste** plus 120 fridges and 260 mattresses have been received free of charge across the shire's eight resource recovery centres
- **3,378 tonnes of flood waste** has been received at the Rochester emergency transfer station alone (equivalent to 30 years' worth of waste usually received through the Rochester Resource Recovery Centre)
- **60,000+ sandbags** have been removed from residential and commercial properties.

Repair of Council Assets

- More than **1,400 road segments** have been assessed, with 630 locations identified for immediate repair and urgent works undertaken at 370 of these sites.
- Council has removed sections of **temporary levees** from Council-owned roads in Echuca and Torrumbarry. The temporary levees were built by the Victorian Government as part of the flood response.
- **Damaged buildings, sports grounds, paths, playgrounds and other community facilities** are being progressively repaired. Several buildings in Rochester have reopened, including Council's Service Centre and library service, and Rochester Early Learning Centre.

Working with our Partners

- Council staff are supporting three **community recovery committees**, and key community leaders and groups to address locally-identified needs and priorities.
- Council is working with key stakeholders on the recalibration of the draft **Echuca Moama Torrumbarry Flood Study** to

incorporate data from the October 2022 flood event.

- Council hosted a **Campaspe Flood Recovery Forum** with all three tiers of government to discuss current flood recovery challenges, emergency preparedness and mitigation, and support of vulnerable people during disasters.

Flood Recovery Advocacy

As a result of our ongoing advocacy efforts to the state and federal governments, Council has so far received the following commitments:

- The Victorian Government will assess the operating and infrastructure arrangements at **Lake Eppalock** to find opportunities to reduce the impact of flooding from overflow spillage.
- Estimated **\$38+ million** to repair damaged Council-owned infrastructure. Council has so far received a **\$7.44 million** advance under the jointly-funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding arrangements and **\$1.5 million** from the Council Support Fund.
- **\$944,200** to establish **flood recovery hubs** and **\$512,000** for dedicated **community recovery officers** to work directly with communities to address locally-identified needs and priorities

Among other key flood recovery priorities, Council will continue to advocate for:

- funding to review and update the **Rochester Flood Plan**.
- funding for construction of a **new Rochester aquatic facility** to replace the destroyed Rochester swimming pool.

2022-2023 Rates Relief Package

Council has now completed rate adjustments and sent amended 2022-2023 rates notices to all ratepayers whose properties were identified as being flood-impacted from the October 2022 flood event. If however, your property was flood-impacted and you believe you may be eligible for a rate adjustment, please contact Council on 1300 666 535 or via email shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au by Wednesday, 31 May 2023.



Waste Services

Free Aerated Caddies for Rochester Residents

Council is offering one free aerated food scrap caddy and one roll of compostable bags to any Rochester resident who uses a green bin service and lost their caddy in the October floods. To register, please scan the QR code or call Customer Service on 1300 666 535. Council will be in contact shortly with more information.



Commercial Volumes of Flood Waste

Residents and commercial operators with over three cubic metres can contact a local landfill for disposal options. The closest landfills are Moama Landfill (Murray River Council), Shepparton (Cosgrove) and Patho Landfill. Patho Landfill only accepts trucks that are equal to, or larger than, a light rigid while Moama and Shepparton (Cosgrove) landfills accept flood waste over three cubic metres and any truck size is accepted.

Please note that Victorian Landfills (Patho and Cosgrove) will accept eligible flood waste free of charge until 30 June 2023.

Greater Shepparton City Council currently requires that all flood waste to Cosgrove Landfill (Shepparton) is pre-registered with Campaspe Shire Council and then a disposal time pre-booked directly with Greater Shepparton City Council. To pre-register scan the QR code, visit Council's website www.campaspe.vic.gov.au, or call Council on 1300 666 535.



Household Flood-Affected Waste

All resource recovery centres (RRCs) located in Echuca, Kyabram (Mt Scobie), Rochester, Rushworth, Gunbower, Lockington, Colbinabbin, and Toolleen are still accepting household flood waste (under three cubic metres), free of charge. This is at the discretion of the operator. Contact details of householders will need to be provided to the RRC at the time of drop off to use this free service.

For opening hours of each RRC, please visit: www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/rrc or scan the QR code.



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