



## Mayors Report

### The Midlands Irrigation Scheme: Most Welcome!



It is indeed very timely that the Midlands Irrigation Scheme was finally commissioned at the end of August. Southern Midlands Council spent many years lobbying for such a scheme and its value is now immediately evident in compensating for the extremely dry spring season during September and October. The Irrigation Scheme has "saved" many crops, especially poppy crops, and has brought certainty to cash-cropping in the Midlands region. I have no doubt this certainty will encourage other forms of cash-cropping into the future including, hopefully, fibre hemp crops.

It was disappointing to hear the leader of the Tasmanian Greens, the Hon. Kim Booth M.P., denigrating the investment in irrigation in Tasmania. His comments were disrespectful to the farmers who have substantially funded the irrigation scheme in a tripartite financing arrangement with State and Federal government. This is a most worthy economic development project for the Midlands region and for Tasmania as a whole. It will generate real wealth for our community for many decades to come. The Hon. Member's comments are quite uninformed and display a complete disregard for the potential economic drivers that will, over time, make significant contributions to repairing the State Budget.

### Rural and Regional State Services

The future of State Government services to rural and regional Tasmania is under a cloud.

During the former Labor-Green government's incumbency we were under threat of school closures in the Southern Midlands. The Levendale School was unfortunately closed, with the previous government citing the small number of pupils. For a time there was uncertainty over other schools in the municipality. Thankfully the former government suspended that rationalisation process, and with the change of government in March this issue has been shelved and the immediate threat has receded. Southern Midlands Council will be working hard to ensure that the "status quo" will be maintained in the Southern Midlands in regard to our schools into the future. Council and the community are now concerned over

what appears to be a steady withdrawal of government resourcing from our Hospital and Ambulance Services at Oatlands. The operation of the Midlands Multi-Purpose Health Centre (MMPHC) has been in the media recently as the medical practitioners point to reduced resourcing that is impacting the centre's ability to provide the range of medical services that it has in the past.

This facility has approximately 10,000 clients from the broader midlands region and is a critical facility in this part of the State, a long way from the major medical facilities in Hobart and Launceston. Not only does it serve those who live in the region but it provides key coverage for the thousands of motorists who traverse the Midland Highway every day.

The reduced resourcing has significantly impacted the Oatlands ambulance service, putting it off-line and unavailable to respond to emergencies for several days every week. During such occasions, an ambulance has to come from Hobart, New Norfolk or other distant location to attend the emergency, resulting in time delays that may well prove critical. An on-farm emergency last year involving local man Adam Jones highlights this importance, and I take the opportunity to quote from Adam's facebook post:

*"I was lucky enough to receive emergency care from the ambulance and doctors from the Oatlands Hospital. I cannot express the relief and comfort I felt when I heard the simple words; 'Hi Adam it's Dr Jackson and the ambulance from Oatlands'. From that moment I felt everything was going to be ok. The care and support these wonderful people showed me and my friends that day was priceless. I feel we must show the Tasmanian health system and the Tasmanian Government that we will not stand by as they cut our services in regional Tasmania. Because one day when there isn't anyone to say those simple words, this story might not have the same ending."*

I have arranged for the Minister for Health, the Hon. Michael Ferguson M.P., to attend a community meeting on 5 November, 7:30 pm, at the Oatlands District School Gymnasium. This will provide the Council and community members with the opportunity to impress on the Minister the importance of maintaining medical services in our region, and to seek answers and commitments.

Southern Midlands Council is also committed to working with our local police to assist them in their important role within the community. Our current police officers are providing an outstanding service, however their capacity is

stretched and I note one permanent officer position has not yet been filled at the Oatlands station. We are indeed fortunate that we are currently experiencing lower levels of crime in the Southern Midlands region - a result of our police officers' good work.

**Keep Australia Beautiful Awards for Southern Midlands**

The Southern Midlands Council has again been recognised at the recent Keep Australia Beautiful Council Awards following presentation of a Certificate of High Commendation in Council's population category. The awards were presented at Sheffield in the north-west of Tasmania and Southern Midlands was represented by the General Manager, Mr Tim Kirkwood, and our Community Youth & Recreation Officer, Greg Hunt.

Many towns, villages and individuals within the Southern Midlands have been recognised in previous years. This reflects the level of community pride that exists and the overall interest that is demonstrated within the respective communities.

I wish to thank Greg Hunt for submitting the nomination(s) in the Awards.

**Honour for Campania Sheep Breeder**

Well known Campania farmer and stud sheep breeder Mr Kevin Moore has been awarded with the honour of being named a "Living Legend of the Royal Hobart Show". Mr Moore has been a very successful farmer and breeder of stud White Suffolk sheep and he has received State and National recognition for the quality of his stud sheep. Congratulations on a well-deserved award for Mr Kevin Moore as "a Living Legend of the Royal Agriculture Show".

**Julie Cooper - A Loss**

Sadly, we lost Julie Cooper recently to an untimely death due to illness. Julie was a valued member of the community and provided great service to the Midlands Multi-Purpose Health Centre for many years and to Council before that. I wish to express Council's sincere condolences to Julie's family.

**Council Elections**

At the time of writing this report the provisional results of the October 28 Local Government Elections had been released. I was glad to see a healthy participation rate of 58% of enrolled voters in Southern Midlands, as compared to the State average of 54%.

From the provisional results it appears that six current councillors and one new councillor (Edwin Batt) have been elected. Two councillors retired at the election, Cr Marie Connors & Cr John Jones, O.A.M. and Cr Colin Beven sadly passed away. The total number of councillors at Southern Midlands is now seven, having been reduced from nine in the previous Council. I have been returned as Mayor and Cr Mark Jones as Deputy Mayor.

I am very confident the newly elected Councillors will be working hard on your behalf to address your concerns and deliver the services you require.

On behalf of Sue and myself, my fellow Councillors and Staff of the Southern Midlands Council, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy and safe Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Clr Tony Bisdee O.A.M.  
**MAYOR**



Capacity numbers and a waiting list a mile long were the order of the day at this school term break's southern midlands school holiday program . Proudly supported by Council , Rural Primary Health Service and the Communities for Children organisation , the two days of activities were lapped up by almost 80 young people aged 9 – 16 in our municipality.

Day 1 saw 'hot laps' of the Southern Tasmanian Kart Club's track at Orielton by all 36 children in attendance , interspersed with cartoon drawing lessons from our regular tutor Bradfield Dumbleton.

The occasional rain squall certainly caused some indecision for the inexperienced drivers , but great fun was had by all [ adult supervisors too] . Some of the cartooning end products were amazing and will feature on the tutor / artist's web page very shortly.

Photo 2 – Southern Midlands young people are seen enjoying the games and activities at Zone 3 and Intency on Day 2 .





26 JANUARY



**AUSTRALIA DAY**  
CELEBRATE WHAT'S GREAT

**Nominations are now open**  
**Citizen, Young Citizen and Community Event**

To be eligible for Citizen of the Year or Young Citizen of the Year nominees must be Australian citizens & reside within the Southern Midlands Municipal Area. Young Citizens of the Year must be not more than 27 years of age on 26th January next.

The nominations must be accompanied by a testimony of at least 100 words and include the nominees contribution to the community and the name of at least one referee.

Nominations are to be submitted to the Southern Midlands Council, PO Box 21, Oatlands, Tas. 7120 by 4.00 p.m. on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014. Visit the website for more details [www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)



## An Invitation

Were you part of the **Creative Community** forum that was held two years ago? If so, your input and the subsequent report has led to Council adopting an Arts Strategy and now we are ready to implement a key project.

We are laying down the building blocks of a Heritage Arts and Crafts project  
Our aims are

- To use heritage buildings by running workshops for a wide selection of heritage arts and crafts skills
- To encourage local people to become involved in teaching or learning these skills.
- To showcase our heritage buildings and local history
- To encourage tourists and people from other parts of Tasmania to visit, take part in the workshops, visit local businesses and stay longer in the region
- To produce and sell locally the products of the workshops

Heritage arts and crafts could include: spinning, weaving, knitting, crochet, dressmaking, quilting, patchwork, leatherwork, candle making, woodwork, kite making, cooking, confectionery, fine arts, sculpture, pottery, papermaking, button making and many more.

These were the sorts of skills our ancestors used which would fit so well within our historic towns.

## Fire Hazards

Owners and occupiers of land in the Municipality are reminded that over the coming week's abatement notices will, where considered necessary, be issued for the appropriate clearing of fire hazards.

Under the Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to issue Fire Abatement Notices that calls for the removal of the hazard within a specific time period.

Failure to remove fire hazards by the specific time, could lead to compulsory clearance at the property owners expense.

For further information or for reporting of a potential fire hazard, please contact the Fire Abatement Officer Jack Lyall on 62545008.

WE'RE HERE  
FOR YOU

**Grand Opening**  
to be held  
7<sup>th</sup> November  
2:00pm onwards

Devonshire Tea,  
BBQ, Face Painting  
and Balloons.

Please come  
and support this  
exciting  
community  
project.

At Life Without Barriers' Oatlands Respite Centre our services are designed to meet the needs of the people we support while providing carers and families with short term overnight breaks to support and maintain relationships for community members living with disability. We also provide a range of activities that promote community access, engagement and friendship through our day options program. To speak to the Coordinator and to learn more about our exciting new service please contact us.



We know what talented and interested people you are! So please join us for an exciting evening as we embark together on this project. We will show you our vision but we need your imagination too! We would like to hear what skills you could teach or would like to learn. Now is the time for everybody to contribute.



**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00pm at the Supreme Court, Oatlands**

*A glass of wine and a light supper will be served*

RSVP preferred to  
Nova Miller ([njm@bigpond.com.au](mailto:njm@bigpond.com.au))  
Edwin Batt ([edwincbatt@gmail.com](mailto:edwincbatt@gmail.com))  
Carolyn Bassett ([carron@gotalk.net.au](mailto:carron@gotalk.net.au))  
Jenny French ([graeme.french1@bigpond.com](mailto:graeme.french1@bigpond.com))  
Dot Evans ([wilmotarms@bigpond.com](mailto:wilmotarms@bigpond.com))

## DOG BEHAVIOUR

### Is your dog continually barking and you are not sure how to manage it?



Southern Midlands Council is often asked question about dog barking. Dog barking can, at times, pose quite a problem especially in built-up residential areas and in rural situations where dogs are kept in close proximity to dwellings on nearby properties.

It is the responsibility of the dog owner to ensure that their dog gets plenty of stimulation and exercise to assist in dealing with this issue. Remember, barking is natural! It's an important means of communication for dogs. Some barking is to be accepted, but excessive barking in proximity to other dwellings is not. If problems develop, it is the owner's job to step in and control excessive barking.

#### Here are 4 tips to help stop nuisance barking for good

##### Correct dog problem behaviour and follow through.

Tell your dog to stop barking using a look, a sound, or a physical correction. But don't stop there. Your dog may pause and then go right back to what he was doing. His body relaxed, but his brain still on alert. Be patient. Wait until your dog completely submits before you go back to what you were doing.

##### Stay calm when trying to stop dog barking.

Constant barking can be irritating, but you won't be able to correct the dog behaviour problem if you are frustrated.

##### Stop the barking by challenging your dog mentally and physically.

Excessive barking is often the result of pent-up energy. If this is the case, the solution is simple: release that energy in more productive ways. Does your dog receive a daily walk? Can you make the walk more challenging with a bicycle or by walking on an incline? Can you provide more mental challenges, such as herding, agility training, or simple obedience games? There are many ways to increase the challenges in your dog's life. Find one that you enjoy that your dog can participate in safely.

##### Get professional help.

When you brought your dog into your life, you made a commitment to provide the care it needs. If your dog is not responding to the ideas listed above, you can consider calling in a canine professional to help address the problem.



### Lake Dulverton – Midlands Water Scheme

Water is finally flowing into Lake Dulverton!

In 2011 the Southern Midlands Council was able to secure a special (non-irrigation) water allocation for Lake Dulverton through the Midlands Water Scheme (MWS). An ongoing annual 215 mega litre water allocation was granted and made available as a winter water take.

The water will flow into the section of the lake on the town side of Marys Island, an area of approximately 51 hectares. Unfortunately there is just not enough water quantity to flow into the entire lake area, being 235 hectares!

The water scheme officially commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, coinciding with the start of the MWS summer take period. The commencement of the full operation of the scheme was delayed by several months from the anticipated start date, mainly due to a number of technical issues around the 'in scheme' power station. In the case of Lake Dulverton, this delay meant that we effectively missed the 2014 winter season for delivery of the Lake's water allocation. The winter season normally runs March to September each year, being a period of 214 days. Under normal rules of the scheme, the Lake is therefore entitled to take a flow rate of virtually 1 ML per day over winter. (i.e. 215 ML delivered over the 214 day 'winter period').

Whilst we do not have a flow rate allocated for summer water take, through negotiations with Tas Irrigation, they have agreed to allow the water to be delivered to the lake as and when they can find 'spare' capacity in the pipeline system. This arrangement would not normally be available, but following acknowledgement that this water will maintain the Lake for our wildlife and the wider benefit of the community, we have been able to strike an agreement. Water entering the lake can be seen flowing over a large rock at the end of the small bund wall. The flow rate of the water has been varying from day to day, which is influenced by the demand of other users who have purchased summer water and therefore have priority.

There are many wondering how the lake will fair over the summer period, given that it is once again quite shallow and evaporation rates will be high. The MWS water, if the full allocation is delivered, should offset evaporation plus add a little to the final depth of the lake.

Other works which are planned in relation to this project is the installation of a gate valve on the large bund wall pipe that links the 51 Hectare section of the lake to the larger 189 Hectare section of the lake on the Parattah side of the bund wall. This will enable improved control over the flow of water between the two sections.

PS: For those that are keen on fishing, apparently there are some good size fish in the lake!

If you have any further queries or would like more information on the water supply, contact Maria Weeding at the Council office on a Monday or Tuesday on 6254 5048.



## BUILDING WORKS WITHOUT APPROVALS

In our rural areas Council officers occasionally come across illegal dwellings in the course of their duties. Once such situations have come to our attention, Council is bound to follow up with the landowner to ensure the rules are applied equally to everyone.

Over the last ten years, changes to State legislation and the Building Code of Australia have certainly resulted in an increase in costs and processes associated with gaining the necessary approvals to build a house. This appears to have led some landowners down the path of avoiding the proper process altogether in the belief that they would be able to legitimise things fairly easily if eventually 'found out'. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to do, and we are finding some illegal dwellings where it is almost impossible. Moreover, there appears to be a lack of understanding amongst some landowners in regard to all the problems that can arise from having an illegal dwelling on a property. These are not just confined to council issues. They can include:

### Risks from living in a potentially unsafe or unhealthy building:

- The Building Approval system exists to ensure buildings are safe and healthy. Illegally constructed buildings can pose a risk to the wellbeing of both occupants and visitors.
- Further to the above, the landowner is placing him or herself at risk of being sued by the occupants or visitors.

### Higher costs for maintenance, heating and cooling:

- Illegally constructed buildings can be more susceptible to damage from wild weather and other environmental factors (such as rising damp, mould, reactive soils, etc.). Ongoing repairs and maintenance can be costly and disruptive.
- Illegally constructed dwellings may be inefficient to heat and/or cool. This can add significantly to energy costs. A dwelling built to the modern Building Code of Australia will save significant money in this regard.

### Difficulties in selling a property:

- If Council is aware of the situation and has issued statutory notices and/or orders, these documents have an infinite life until the landowner rectifies the situation. At the time of sale of the property, any such notices or orders that have not been addressed are brought to the surface.
- If Council is not aware of the situation there is likelihood that potential purchasers (or their real estate agent or solicitor) will themselves investigate and discover the building works are illegal.
- Financial lenders often seek confirmation from Council of building approvals. Lenders may not recommend approval of funding in such cases.

### Problems with insurance:

- In the event of a fire or other damage, the illegal status of a dwelling may provide an 'easy out' for the insurance company to refuse a payout.

### Expensive to legitimise the building:

- It can be very expensive to 'retrofit' an illegally constructed dwelling to meet the Building Code of Australia.
- A landowner may even ultimately come to the conclusion that it is cheaper to demolish and start again rather than

fix up what is there.

- Some illegal buildings are inadvertently built over underground services, easements or right-of-ways and need to be removed. The approval system can help avoid such costly mistakes.
- Before seeking the necessary permits from Council to legitimise an illegal dwelling, the landowner will need to pay for an accredited designer to draw plans, and then for a private Building Surveyor to inspect the structure, assess the plans and to certify them as being in accordance with the Building Code of Australia. An engineer may also be required, adding to the costs.
- Whether or not a Building Surveyor is willing to 'take on' an illegal dwelling job is completely up to the Building Surveyor. Sometimes the owners of illegal dwellings cannot find a Building Surveyor willing to risk taking on their job.
- In addition to all of the above, in many parts of the municipality the planning rules state that only one dwelling is allowable on a title. If the illegal dwelling is a second dwelling on such properties, it simply cannot be permitted.

### Wastewater disposal and environmental health:

- Plumbing work and on-site waste water disposal systems need to be properly approved and constructed. There can be health issues for occupants if not installed correctly or if an "un-approved" system is used.

### The new bushfire rules:

- All new dwellings in bushfire prone areas must now comply with state-wide requirements designed to minimise the risk from bushfire. Depending on the circumstances, it can be very expensive to retrofit an illegal dwelling and/or undertake the associated site works to comply.

### Enforcement action by Council:

- Some implications of Council commencing enforcement actions may be:
  - ⇒ Fines;
  - ⇒ Infringement Notices;
  - ⇒ Prosecution.

Southern Midlands Council's preferred approach to dealing with illegal dwellings is to work cooperatively with landowners to rectify the situation as soon as practicable. We appreciate that the circumstances that lead to the existence of illegal dwellings are varied and often quite personal, and we endeavour to take such circumstances into account. As long as we can see that the owner is using their best endeavours to work through the legitimisation processes with Council in a timely manner, we will not issue fines or other penalties.

If you have an illegal dwelling on your property, you are encouraged to come forward and seek to legitimise the situation.

For further details contact:

Council's Building Department phone 6259 3011;

Building Surveyors' details are available on Council's website: [www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au), [www.justice.tas.gov.au](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au) or the Telstra Directory Yellow Pages.

Details about legislation contact Building Standards and Occupational Licencing [www.justice.tas.gov.au](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au)

### A final note:

If you purchased a property with building works which were not appropriately approved, you inherit all the problems.

### Council Meetings 2014/15

Date	Venue	Time
26/11/2014	Council Chambers 85 Main St Kempton	10.00am
10/12/2014	Council Chambers 71 High St Oatlands	10.00am
	& Annual General Meeting	5.00pm

A public copy of Council meeting agendas and minutes are available on the web site:  
[www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)



### Heritage Highway Visitor Centre & Callington Mill

1 Mill Lane, Oatlands Tas 7120  
 Phone: 03 6254 1212 Fax: 03 6254 1467  
 Email: [tourism@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:tourism@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)

**Opened 9am to 5pm Daily**  
 (Closed Xmas Day & Good Friday)

Our team are on hand to assist you with local and state-wide travel information, maps, local accommodation bookings, tours through the fascinating Callington Mill, and the surrounding historic buildings plus general enquiries.

Located within the Visitor Centre is our gift shop and Mill keepers Café.

The gift shop offers a wide range of gifts, crafts and of course, our popular unique Callington Mill stoneground local and organic flours. After a tour of the Mill, indulge yourself with delicious snacks made with the Callington Mill Flour accompanied by a hot or cold drinks.

## How to contact us!

### Council Head Office Oatlands

71 High Street, Oatlands Tas 7120  
 All mail should be addressed to  
 The General Manager  
 PO Box 21, Oatlands Tas 7120  
[www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)  
 Facsimile 03 6254 5014  
[mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)  
 Monday-Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm

**03 6254 5000**

Corporate Services 03 6254 5000  
 ie rates, administration  
 Landcare Unit 03 6254 5046  
 Works Dept. 03 6254 5008

Development & Environmental  
 Services Office 03 6259 3011  
 85 Main Street, Kempton Tas 7030  
 Facsimile 03 6259 1327  
[mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au](mailto:mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au)  
 Monday-Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm

Planning, Building, Health,  
 Animal Control, Community & Corporate  
 Development 03 6259 3011

### Tourism & Recreation Facilities

Heritage Highway Visitor Centre  
 Callington Mill,  
 1 Mill Lane, Oatlands 03 6254 1212

Oatlands Swimming Pool,  
 Campbell Street, Oatlands 03 6254 5024

Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary  
 350 Chauncy Vale Road, Bagdad 03 6268 6365

After Hours Emergency Service  
 0419 325 405

### Elected Members:

Due to the recent Local Government elections this information has not been ratified and the details will be available shortly on Councils web site.



**COAL RIVER  
 NEIGHBOURHOOD  
 WATCH HELPING TO  
 MAKE THE COAL**

The next meeting of the Coal Valley Neighbourhood Watch will be held at

Anton's Pizza Restaurant,  
 42 Bridge St Richmond  
 on  
 15 November at 7.00pm.

All are welcome. Call Frances 6260 4453 if you would like a lift to the meeting or for further details.

Come and have your say about issues such as safety, vandalism or theft that affect us. Southern Midlands Council and Tas Police representatives are usually in attendance to provide immediate feedback on these and any other issues of importance to you.

All residents of the greater Coal River Valley area are welcome.

Chris Adams, Co-ordinator  
 0408 335585

## HOUSEHOLD WASTE TRANSFER STATIONS OPERATING HOURS Southern Midlands Council

OATLANDS Tunnack Main Road	DYSART Huntingdon Tier Road	CAMPANIA Brown Mountain Road
<b>Tuesday</b> 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm	<b>Tuesday</b> 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm	<b>Tuesday</b> 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm
<b>Friday</b> 11.00 am to 3.00 pm		<b>Thursday</b> 1.00pm to 5.00 pm
<b>Saturday</b> 8.00 am to 12 noon	<b>Saturday</b> 12 noon to 5.00 pm	<b>Saturday</b> 8.00 am to 12 noon
<b>Sunday</b> 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm	<b>Sunday</b> 10.00 am to 5.00 pm	<b>Sunday</b> 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm
<b>Closed</b> Mon, Wed & Thurs	<b>Closed</b> Mon, Wed, Thurs & Friday	<b>Closed</b> Mon, Wed & Friday