

Communities in Action Update Newsletter No. 1 – June 2007

Welcome...

...to the first edition of the *Communities in Action Update*.

This newsletter is an intermediate communication between *Communities in Action* meetings to provide you with an update on issues you have told us are important to your community.

Moorabool Shire Council's *Communities in Action* team would like to thank you for your participation as a valued contributor to Council's new framework for communicating, planning and working with local communities – we look forward to continuing the good work with you.

***“In universities, people know through studies.
In business and bureaucracies, people know by reports.
In communities, people know by stories.” John McKnight, 1987***

Tell us your community story. We are looking for content for our next edition which will be circulated mid-July 2007. If you have a suggestion for the name of our newsletter, if you would like to tell us about your community, if you have photos or stories you wish to contribute ...please contact Tamsin Luke, Communities in Action Project Officer on 5366 7100 or email cia@moorabool.vic.gov.au

New Garden Bed for Blackwood

Plenty of people got their hands dirty in Blackwood on Thursday 7 June when a new garden bed was planted at the Blackwood reserve.

Over five years ago, the community constructed the garden bed which consisted of cottage-style plants. The plants were at a point where they had reached the end of their lifespan and needed to be replaced.

Council purchased a variety of drought tolerant native plants to be planted in the garden bed. All of the plants purchased are low maintenance and will look spectacular.

Mulch will be placed in the garden bed to help maintain moisture in the ground for longer, reduce water evaporation, reduce competition from weeds and provide the plants with a more stable soil temperature.

Council worked with the Blackwood community and Landcare to replant the garden bed. Community members pitched in to help plant the new garden and were consulted about garden bed design throughout the process.

All plants, mulch and compost for the garden bed have been purchased locally.

The replanting of the Blackwood reserve garden bed has cost more than \$2,000 and has been funded by Council.



Cr Pat Toohey, Pat Liffman and Moorabool Parks and Gardens crew at work on the new Blackwood Reserve garden bed.

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Communications – Getting your message across

Community Noticeboards

Communities in Action meetings held across the Shire have highlighted Community Noticeboards as being one of the most important communication tools for groups within communities and a great way for Council to communicate with ratepayers and residents.

Over the past twelve months Council has worked with the Blackwood and Lal Lal communities to build and install noticeboards within these communities and a noticeboard at Bungaree is due to be installed later this month.

The Myrniong and Yendon communities have been identified as high-need areas for community noticeboards in the 2007-2008 financial year and Council will continue to work with its communities to provide these across all Wards.

Current contacts and sites for public noticeboards are listed below:

Township	Location	Contact	Contact Ph
Blackwood	Blackwood General Store, 21 Martin Street, Blackwood	Dennis Lee	5368 6525
Mt Egerton	Mt Egerton General Store, 65 Main Street, Mt Egerton		5368 9294
Gordon	Outside Post Office, Main Street, Gordon	Betty Winter	5368 9313
Elaine	Elaine General Store, 5326 Midland Hwy, Elaine		5341 5572
Ballan	Ballan Mechanics Institute – Inglis Street, Ballan	Dawn De Polo	5368 1155
	Ballan Community House – PO Box 71, Ballan 3342	Susan Thompson	5368 1934
Bacchus Marsh	Visitor Information Centre – 156 Main Street, Bacchus Marsh	Various	5367 7488
	Bacchus Marsh Adult Education Centre - The Laurels – 229 Main Street, Bacchus Marsh ** Community Noticeboards are also available at shopping centres across Bacchus Marsh.	Various	5367 1061

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Communications – Getting your message across

Moorabool Online

Do you need to get your newsletter out to the broader community? Are you looking to promote your group or an upcoming event? Would you like to generate discussion on a hot topic in your town, or do you just want some information on businesses or community groups operating in your area?

The townships of Ballan, Gordon, Navigators, Myrniong, Blackwood, Lal Lal, Korweinguboorra, Greendale and Dales Creek are now online promoting events, news and more!

A mix of information about each town is featured on each website, including business and community group directories, events calendars, discussion boards and other exciting information about each township.

The websites:

- www.blackwoodvictoria.com
- www.lallal.com
- www.ballanonline.com
- www.navigatorsvictoria.com
- www.mtegerton.com
- www.myrniong.com
- www.greendaledalescreek.com
- www.gordonvictoria.com
- www.korweinguboorra.com
- www.mconline.com.au

are all designed and managed by a group of community volunteers in each township.

The township websites were funded by the Macpherson Smith Community Alliance and supported by Moorabool Shire Council. The funding was awarded to support nine small communities in establishing local township websites. The websites are designed to encourage community groups, businesses and residents to communicate and share information about their communities.

Registering to post items to the sites can be completed at each site or you can send a suggestion form to the administrator of your desired website to get your message on-line.

Connecting Community

New Resident Kits

Moorabool Shire Council's new resident kits have been redesigned to provide our newest residents with up to date and relevant information relating to the area of Moorabool in which they reside.

Council has proactively designed and produced new 'Info Sheets' to provide new residents with information pertaining to a range of Council's most sought after services and promote Council's ability to service their needs and requirements.

Every month, new residents are identified via Council's rates database and will receive a new resident kit inclusive of standard documents, info sheets, promotional information and guides, plus information supplied to Council which is pertinent to their local community.

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Connecting Community Transport Connections Projects

The Western Moorabool and Hepburn Shire Transport Connections Project was launched by the Minister for Victorian Communities, Peter Batchelor MP, in conjunction with the Macedon Ranges Project on Friday 1 June, at the Daylesford Town Hall.

The details of the successful projects granted under the Department for Victorian Communities Transport Connections program are:

- Western Moorabool and Hepburn Shire Partnership Project - \$328,500 grant over three years
- Eastern Moorabool and Melton Shire Partnership Project - \$323,190 grant over three years.

These projects will focus on helping people who are not able to access social activities, employment, educational or health services in Melbourne or other regional centres because of a lack of suitable transport services.

Both projects will be managed by a partnership steering group. Funding will be used to employ a Transport Coordinator for each project to implement transport initiatives and solutions over the three year period. Council is presently seeking two community representatives from Eastern Moorabool and Western Moorabool communities to serve on the steering committees of these projects.

To register your interest, please contact Kate Diamond-Keith, Community Development Coordinator, on 5366 7100.

Council and Community working together Summer Community Grant Offers Announced

Moorabool Shire Council recognises and significantly supports the major contribution that "not for profit" community groups provide to their local and wider communities. Grants are available for projects which may fit the following categories:

1. Community Development Initiatives – Community Programming projects developing community capacity and or leadership (grants up to \$5,000 available)
2. Community Development Capital Improvements – Capital Works projects delivering community facilities improvements (grants up to \$5,000 available)
3. Seed Initiatives – Grant applications for projects under \$1,500

At the 5 May 2007 Ordinary Meeting of Council "Summer" Community Grant offers were approved for:

Bacchus Marsh:

Bacchus Marsh Pony Club- Cross Country Course Upgrade

- \$5,000 towards upgrading the Cross Country Course.

Bacchus Marsh Baseball Association

- \$5,000 towards an upgrade of the Bacchus Marsh Baseball Association Kitchen.

Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club

- \$5,000 towards the formation the Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club.

Bacchus Marsh Senior Citizens

- \$4,250 towards purchase of a PA system.

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Council and Community working together

Summer Community Grant Offers Announced (continued)

Ballan:

Ballan Primary School – Ballania – Reaching Artistic & Gardening Heights

- \$5,000 towards a Community Sculpture Garden.

Ballan& District Pre-School – Our Children, Our Water, Our Future – Sustainable Outdoor Water Management & Education Program

- \$2,630 towards implementation of a sustainable outdoor water management system at the Ballan kindergarten.

Ballan Angler's Club Inc – Children, Youth and Adult Safety

- \$780 towards provision of 4 Personal Flotation Devices to ensure juniors are able to participate in club activities by following current safety regulations for boat users.

Country Fire Authority (Ballan Brigade) – \$1,000 Medical Equipment Upgrade

Darley:

Darley Football Club Inc –Darley Sports Club Function Rooms

- \$5,000 towards refurbishment of the Daley Sports Club Function Rooms.

Gordon:

Gordon Fire Brigade – Gordon Junior Fire Brigade Leadership Camp

- \$1,500 towards a leadership and teambuilding camp to encourage junior fire brigade members.

Greendale:

Greendale Reserves Management Committee – Greendale Country Market.

- \$5,000 for Equipment for Greendale Country Market and Events.

Lal Lal:

Lal Lal Soldiers' Memorial Hall Committee of Management – Replacement Seating

- \$2,345 towards provision of safe replacement seating for Lal Lal Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

Lal Lal Falls Advisory Committee– Lal Lal Falls Moorabool Falls Walking Track

- \$5,000 towards development of a safe public loop walking track linking the conservation zone of the Lal Lal Reserve to Moorabool Falls.

Shirewide:

Wombat Arts Group – Inspirational Cinema

- \$1,500 towards the running of 4 free film nights aimed at inspiring and building community connectedness. Film nights in Ballan and smaller, surrounding towns over a six month period.

Applications are called for in two separate funding rounds ("Winter" and "Summer") each year. Applicants must demonstrate a capacity to complete their project and present a final report to Council.

The next "Winter" round of Community Grants opens in August. Further information about the "Winter" round will be available in the next edition of Moorabool Matters.

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Council and Community working together

Summer Community Grant Offers Announced (continued)

Prospective applicant groups are advised to contact Council's Community Development Team to discuss a project proposal prior to lodging an application. Assistance with the application process can be accessed by contacting the Community Development team at Council on 5366 7100 or emailing info@moorabool.vic.gov.au

Recreation Projects Update

Wallace Netball Court Project

Wallace residents and netballers from across the region are enjoying the benefits of the recently upgraded Wallace Netball Court. Through funding and the hard work of volunteers, the Wallace Netball Court now provides netball players from the Springbank Football Netball Club and their Central Highlands League competitors with a court playing surface which meets international standards. Funded from the 2006/07 Annual Budget, Council contributed more than \$11,000 to the project, which cost a total of almost \$17,000 to complete. The Wallace Recreation Reserve Committee of Management contributed over \$3,000 to the project.

Resurfacing of the Wallace Netball Court was a joint project between Moorabool Shire Council, the Committee of Management, Springbank Football Netball Club and in-kind support from local community members and is a perfect example of what can be achieved in the Shire when Council and community members work together. The new Wallace Netball Court not only benefits Springbank Football Netball Club's junior and senior netball players, but also other users of the court including the local primary school, preschool and kinder.

Dunnstown Netball Court Project

Works to resurface the netball/tennis courts at Dunnstown Recreation Reserve have now been completed. Funded through Sport and Recreation Victoria's Country Football Netball Program 2006/07, the successful application was awarded funding of \$13,335 as part of the Moorabool Shire Netball Court Upgrade Project.

The provision of this upgrade provides an excellent netball facility for the Dunnstown Football Netball Club for its two senior and three junior netball teams. This project also directly benefits the Dunnstown Tennis Club, with two newly resurfaced tennis courts for the summer season.

Best Start

Families are a large part of our Shire's population and we need to look at ways we can make our great communities even more child and family friendly. Best Start works with children 0 to 8 years, their families and their community to identify ways to make Moorabool a more inclusive community. It aims to get groups working together to improve the services to families in Moorabool Shire.

The Best Start Project works with schools, kinders, playgroups, childcare centres, community groups and parents on a variety of child and family friendly projects such as community gardens, parenting groups, post natal depression support groups and any other ideas you may have to make it easier for local families.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, or would like to know more information, please contact Sally Goldstraw, Best Start Project Community Facilitator, Mondays to Thursdays on 5366 7100.

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Council and Community working together

Community Calendar 2008 – Get Involved!

Would you like your town showcased in the upcoming Community Calendar for 2008? Here's your opportunity!

Council is looking for enthusiastic people to join a combined committee to produce next year's Community Calendar which will showcase 12 of Moorabool's communities. The 2008 calendar will be produced by members of the community in conjunction with Moorabool Shire Council.

Each community will have their own page to highlight their individual towns, people and sights.

Please contact Council's Customer Service Officers to register your interest in becoming a member of the committee.

Contact Customer Service now on 5366 7100 to register your town's interest.



If you'd like to be included in our email mailing list rather than receiving this newsletter by post, please send your details to: cia@moorabool.vic.gov.au

Media Release

Issued: Thursday 31 May 2007

PROPOSED ANNUAL BUDGET AND COUNCIL PLAN – OUT FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

At a Special Meeting of Council last night, Moorabool Shire Council elected to place its Proposed Budget for 2007/08 and Council Plan 2007-2012 on public exhibition for a 14-day period.

The public exhibition period will commence on Saturday 2 June and close at 5pm on Friday 15 June 2007.

Speaking after last night's Special Meeting of Council, Mayor, Cr Dianne McAuliffe said this year's Proposed Annual Budget focussed on maintaining and improving Moorabool's infrastructure and services to the community, and reducing Council's underlying deficit.

"Council's key goals for this year and over the coming years are to address the challenge of improving local roads, providing appropriate urban infrastructure in Ballan, addressing major traffic management issues in Bacchus Marsh and continuing to raise the standard of services to the community, whilst ensuring Moorabool Shire Council's financial sustainability.

"Council will maintain existing services, maintain existing infrastructure and deliver on key capital works. It will undertake projects which are important to the community – and Council won't just start these projects, it will finish them.

Mayor McAuliffe went on to say that Council has developed a five year financial framework to help predict its future funding needs and guide forward planning. She said that it has greatly assisted Council in preparing this year's budget, while also considering the bigger picture moving forward.

"Working to a five year financial framework has been a great challenge for Council, requiring a longer term view and vision for the Shire. Council has been focussed on making the community's needs its top priority in planning for the Shire's future – ensuring existing services and assets are maintained.

"I believe that this year's Proposed Budget is a sound, responsible budget and sets a positive direction for future budgets.

"Council is proposing a rate increase of 7.6 percent in 2007/08. The Municipal Association of Victoria, the peak local government body, has determined that it will cost local governments five percent more in 2007 to deliver the same services it did last year due to construction costs growth and material and wage expenses. Costs are impacted by wages and the purchasing of materials more than they are by CPI. Considering this, and the challenges of maintaining local infrastructure, Council believes the 7.6 percent rate increase is responsible.

"Council is proposing a borrowing program of \$1.7 million to fund capital asset expenditure. This borrowing is well within the financial limits set by the State Government.

“The Proposed 2007/08 Annual Budget also seeks to reduce the operating deficit. Through this strategy, Council will generate sufficient funds to maintain existing assets and provide the capacity to repay additional borrowings for new and enhanced community facilities.”

All members of the public have an opportunity to provide written submissions to Council about any aspect of the Proposed Annual Budget or Council Plan, however consultation with some community members has already taken place.

“This year, Council has worked with its Communities In Action groups and Committees of Management to identify key community priorities for inclusion in the 2007/08 Annual Budget,” Mayor McAuliffe explained. “Wherever possible, these priorities have been addressed in the Budget.”

Moorabool Shire Council Chief Executive Officer, Robert Dobrzynski, said this is the first time Council has developed the Annual Budget and Council Plan using a five year financial framework.

“The five year financial framework aims to ensure Council is a financially sustainable organisation, whilst responding to the needs of the Shire’s fast-increasing population. Significant importance is being placed on ensuring Moorabool Shire’s future livelihood and vibrancy through this framework.

“The Proposed 2007/08 Annual Budget includes operating revenue of \$25.37 million and operating expenses of \$27.63 million, resulting in an underlying operating deficit of \$2.26 million. After non-operating items such as grants and developer contributed assets are included, the result for the year is a surplus of \$1.94 million.

“Within the 2007/08 Capital Improvement Program, Council proposes to spend over \$3 million on roads, footpaths and kerb and channel, over \$47,000 on new and existing playgrounds, \$26,000 on water saving measures at swimming pools and over \$815,000 on improving community facilities such as community centres, walking paths, sports venues and public spaces.”

The Capital Improvement Program is \$6.02 million for 2007/08, with a projected total of \$36.99 million over the next five years. Funding for the 2007/08 Capital Improvement Program consists of \$1.66 million from grants and contributions, \$1.687 million from loans, \$0.442 million from trade-ins of plant and vehicles, \$0.31 million from reserves and \$1.91 million from operations.

The Proposed 2007/08 Annual Budget also includes \$1.072 million of new initiatives in the form of: service delivery enhancements - \$0.655 million; additional staffing of 3.5 EFTs - \$0.178 million; systems development - \$0.139 million; and strategic projects - \$0.100 million.

Mr Dobrzynski went on to say that submissions from members of the community on the Proposed 2007/08 Annual Budget and Council Plan 2007-2012 were welcomed.

“It’s important for citizens of Moorabool Shire to remember that this is their budget and has been developed with their best interests in mind. Moorabool Shire Council exists to provide the community with essential infrastructure and services.

“Feedback from the public ensures that the money Council spends and the way it spends it is in line with the community’s needs and wants. I urge all members of the community to view the Proposed Annual Budget and Annual Plan which will be on display at Council offices and on the website.”

Public submissions will be welcomed from Saturday 2 to Friday 15 June 2007. All submissions should be made in writing and be addressed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
Moorabool Shire Council
PO Box 18
Ballan VIC 3342

Alternatively, submissions can be sent via email to info@moorabool.vic.gov.au

Community briefings about the Proposed Council Plan and Annual Budget will be held next week to assist people with the submission process. Sessions will be held at the Gordon Public Hall on Monday 4 June, the Quamby Room in Bacchus Marsh on Tuesday 5 June and the Council Chambers in Ballan on Thursday 7 June. All three meetings will commence at 7pm.

Council will consider all written submissions at its Ordinary Meeting of Council on Wednesday 20 June 2007. Any person who wishes to be heard in support of a submission should indicate this request in their written submission and may appear before the Council at this meeting, either personally or by a person acting on their behalf.

It is anticipated that Council will adopt the Proposed Council Plan 2007-2012 at a Special Meeting of Council on Wednesday 27 June. The Proposed Annual Budget is scheduled for adoption at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on Wednesday 4 July.

Please note: Proposed Annual Budget and Council Plan media kits are available upon request and can be supplied in hard copy or electronically.

Robert Dobrzynski
Chief Executive Officer

Fact Sheet COMMUNITIES IN ACTION LINKS



In 2006, Moorabool Shire Council launched Communities In Action – a new way for Council to communicate, plan and work with local communities.

Community reference groups are being formed across Moorabool Shire, with representatives from these groups working with Council to address key community issues and provide input into the way Council conducts its business – ensuring the best outcomes for the Shire.

Throughout the Communities in Action consultation and community planning process, several key priority areas within Moorabool emerged as being important across all communities. As part of the 2007/08 Annual Budget planning process, Moorabool Shire Council has considered these priorities and where appropriate addressed them within the Budget.

Communities In Action priority	Budget/Council Plan actions
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend over \$3 million on roads, footpaths and kerb and channel. • Develop a bus interchange at Nelson Street, Darley, opposite the School. • Conduct a safety audit of school bus routes in West Moorabool.
Sewerage/gas connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with Central Highlands Water regarding the sewerage of Gordon, Blackwood and Dales Creek. • Continue to lobby for the extension of gas to areas not currently serviced.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to advocate for improved water outcomes for Moorabool Shire. • Reduce reliance on groundwater systems by implementing the ICLEI sustainable water use plan. • Sinking of bores at Bungaree and Gordon recreation reserves.
Weed and fire management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with the CFA to educate communities in high-risk fire areas of precautions needed to ensure their properties are adequately protected and comply with planning permit conditions, fire prevention measures and weed eradication programs.
Better utilisation of existing facilities and improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bacchus Marsh Community Learning Centre – Business Plan Development. The aim of the business plan will be to provide a background to the project, analysis of environmental context, proposed program range and proposed partnerships and facility management. • Spend over \$815,000 on improving community facilities such as community centres, walking paths, sports venues and public spaces.

For immediate release. Please contact Council's Communications/PR Officer on (03) 5366 7100 for additional information.

Communities In Action priority	Budget/Council Plan actions
Connecting the community/ Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue, through <i>Communities In Action</i>, to provide a forum for open communication between Council and the community. • Ensure the community is engaged in decision making on local issues. • Continue to improve communications with the community through <i>Moorabool Matters</i>, media releases, up-to-date information on Council's website, community noticeboards and advertising. • Continue to produce an audio version of <i>Moorabool Matters</i> on CD. • Continue to produce and disseminate New Residents Kits to new families to Moorabool.
Connecting the community/ Communications	
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Youth Policy and Youth Action plans. The original Youth Policy and Youth Action plans, which require reviewing, do not reflect changes in service delivery system, demography of the Shire and the needs of young people. This project will more effectively examine the needs across the entire Shire and include input from Moorabool and Schools Together (MAST), Highlands Local Learning Employment Network (HLEN), Victoria Police and local communities. • Continue to work with community and service agencies to plan and deliver youth services across the Shire.
Road safety and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install new Guard Rail at Golden Point Road, Blackwood. • Modify the roundabout at Wittick Street and Halletts Way, Darley intersection.
Access to health and community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression of key strategies in the Local Area Plan. This will include the implementation of two issues forums with key stakeholders and agencies to determine key focus areas and strategies.
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for matching funding to undertake a Shire-wide heritage study to upgrade Moorabool's Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay.
Tourism and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agribusiness Support - Participate in the AgriWest and Central Highlands Agribusiness Forum (CHAF) activities. • Aerodrome Development - Undertake an Industry Opportunity Strategy for the Bacchus Marsh Aerodrome. • Growing Moorabool Strategy - To provide funding to implement other initiatives in the Growing Moorabool Economic Development Strategy (2006). • Source additional volunteers for the Visitor Information Centre so that it can operate as a fully accredited, seven-day-a-week Centre.
Planning and zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowance for additional Planning Scheme Amendments. • Bacchus Marsh Activity Centre Structure Plan - The structure plan will establish the planning guidelines with regard to what land uses are to be located where and other overarching considerations such as type and style of built form, environmental and aesthetic principles, accessibility and parking and infrastructure layout.

For immediate release. Please contact Council's Communications/PR Officer on (03) 5366 7100 for additional information.