



GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT*

2022 - 2023



*2023 Annual Report does not include Audited Financial Statements as at 30 November 2023. The Report will be resubmitted to Council and the Office of Local Government once the 2023 Audited Financial Statements are received and acknowledged.

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VISION

To be the recognised leader in Local Government through continuous learning and sustainability.

MISSION

To ensure that the Council's long term role is viable and sustainable by meeting the needs of our residents in a responsible caring way, attract sustainable development while maintaining the traditional rural values, character and culture of our people.

COUNCIL CORE VALUES

- 1. For Our Community and Visitors**
 We will provide a safe, clean and healthy environment in which all people have the opportunity to participate in and share in the Council's services and facilities.
- 2. For Our Community Committees**
 We will seek their opinion in relation to the services in which they assist us, offer relevant and timely support and recognise their valuable contribution.
- 3. For Our Staff**
 We will create an atmosphere of team support, which encourages frank and honest communication, and the use of common sense and innovation in a safe and friendly working environment with the aim of efficiency.
- 4. For Our Councillors**
 We will treat all Councillors equally and ensure that they are provided with accurate and timely advice and expect that they will treat each other and the staff with due respect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land, the Kamilaroi People and pays its respect to Elders both past and present.



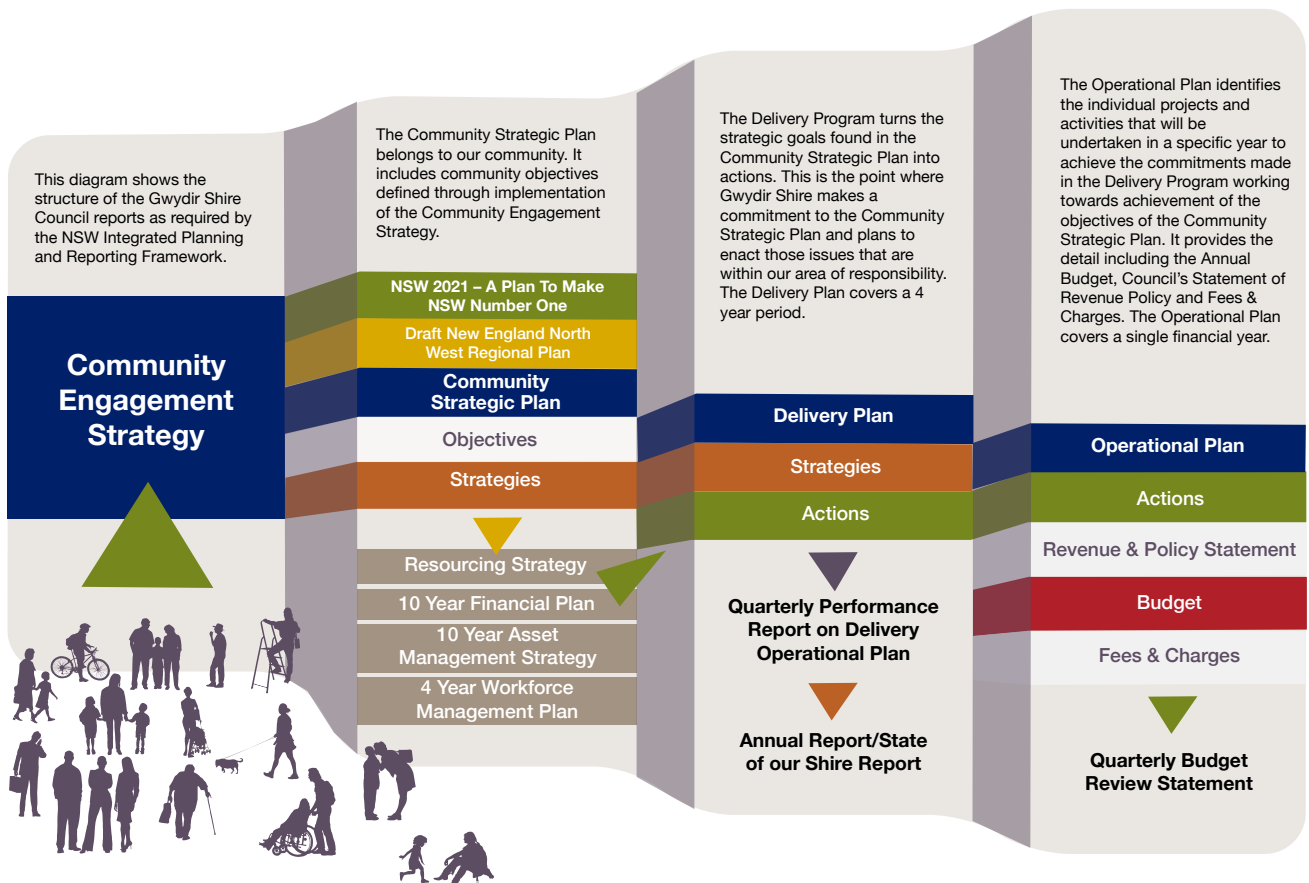
OUR PLANNING FRAMEWORK

How it all fits together

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework impacting all NSW Councils was introduced by the NSW State Government in 2009. The reforms replaced the former Social and Management Plan structures. All NSW Councils are required to develop a Community Strategic Plan spanning 10 years, a Delivery Program spanning the four year period of the elected council and Operational Plans covering each financial year.

The framework allows Gwydir Shire Council to link all their plans together to get the maximum leverage by planning holistically for the future. Key changes to the Act in 2021, reinforce the pivotal role of the IP&R framework in guiding all council planning and decision making.

Gwydir Shire Council has been working within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework since June 2012. The essential elements of the framework, and how they fit together, are shown in the diagram below.



Our Community Vision established during the community consultation process is...

GWYDIR COUNTRY–FRESH AIR, INNOVATION, OPPORTUNITY & RESILIENCE

The Community Strategic Plan as developed by the community will be implemented by the Council on behalf of the community. The plans are underpinned by the principles of social justice and are built around the five goals outlined below:



All NSW Councils provide different services. Some of these services are the traditional services such as infrastructure renewal and waste management or ‘roads, rates and Gwydir Shire Council is committed to meeting its commitments under the Local Government Act 1993 – Sections 8A, 8B and 8C and to be transparent in reporting to our community and stakeholders. This Annual Report 2022-2023 is the primary means of sharing our performance in the last financial year.

If you would like to find out more about Gwydir Shire Council or contribute, through feedback, to the running of the Council you can do the following;

Visit Council’s website

24/7 access to council is provided through our website www.gwydir.nsw.gov.au. On our website you will find information on our operations by viewing the Integrated Planning & Reporting documentation (IP&R), agendas and minutes and other key documents. Policies and guidelines are also available on the website www.gwydir.nsw.gov.au

Social Media

We are on Facebook and Instagram. Look for us on Facebook or Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/gwydirshirecouncil>. Enquiries, suggestions and comments can be posted here for consideration by the Administrator. Please ‘like’ and ‘follow’ us to make sure you get regular updates.

Council & Committee Meetings

Council meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month commencing at 9am. Committee meetings (involving the whole Council) are held on the second Thursday of every month commencing at 9am. Although this is not the forum to contribute, members of the public are encouraged to come along and sit in the gallery to view the business of the council. Information on the location and time of these meetings are published in the local media and on our website.

Community Public Meetings

Public meetings in outlying centres are held once a year or when there are topical issues concerning certain areas. Residents are encouraged to attend these meetings and have their say on the future planning and current operation of the Council. Information on the location and time of these meetings are published in the local media and on our website.



MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Gwydir Shire Council's Annual Report.

The past 12 months have been busy and productive. Council has been blessed with a huge road budget due to stimulus funding and natural disaster assistance from both the State and Federal Governments. Work continues which, unlike previous years, has been assisted by the dry weather.

The bitumen road network has expanded within our Local Government Area with the completion of the Upper Horton Road off Killarney Gap Road works being completed. Work continues to progress on the I B Bore Road, Getta Getta Road and County Boundary, all of which will be sealed upon completion.

Plans are well advanced with the construction of a new administration office in Bingara. The indoor staff at Bingara are to be congratulated on the way they have handled the disruption of a condemned building.

We continue to experience a housing shortage throughout the Shire. The land release in Bingara was well received and it is pleasing to see new dwellings being constructed.

Warialda residents should soon see more building blocks available there also.

The council has functioned well despite ongoing challenges including staff in Bingara being spread across multiple locations. I am pleased to report that we continue to have a good rapport between staff and elected members with everyone working toward the same goals and passion for our community.

Thank you to the Gwydir team for another fruitful year.

I trust you will enjoy reading our Annual Report and in doing so you can observe and appreciate all of the services a rural Shire provides for their communities.

Mayor John Coulton.



MESSAGE FROM **GENERAL MANAGER**

Another very productive year has passed. This document outlines what the Council has achieved.

Some years ago, the Council developed its first Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP and R) documentation. Included in its pages were a myriad of requests from the Shire's various communities, which were gathered following Community Meetings throughout the Shire.

At that stage it was difficult to imagine that the great bulk of those requests would ever be realised.

However, having all those requests catalogued came in very handy when the State and Federal Governments started to release untied grants to communities in response to the many adverse conditions being suffered by communities across Australia.

Rural communities such as Gwydir were particularly vulnerable especially to droughts and bush fires.

The allocation of grant funds within Gwydir Shire were driven by the community priorities that were gathered in the Shires first attempt at developing the IP and R document.

Although this report is focussing on the last 12 months, I think it is important that the Gwydir Community start to think about the next Local Government Elections, which are scheduled for Saturday 14th September 2024 and how they can contribute to their community alongside Council.

Finally, there is no reason why the next 12 months cannot be as productive as the last year.

I trust you will enjoy reading this Annual Report and all that Council has been able to achieve throughout the year.

Max Eastcott
General Manager

GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Gwydir Shire is located on the North West Slopes and Plains of NSW, approximately 400kms north of Sydney, 120kms north of Tamworth, 300kms south west of Brisbane, 40kms west of Inverell and 40kms east of Moree.

The Shire sits at the crossroads of the Fossickers Way, a popular north-south touring route, the Gwydir Highway, a significant east-west route linking the NSW North Coast to Outback NSW and on Nature's Way (State Touring Route 3), which links Narrabri to Inverell via Gwydir Shire. The Bruxner Highway (east-west route) traverses the northern edge of the Shire with links into southern Queensland.

Much of Gwydir Shire lies between the 29°S and 30°S latitudes, placing it mid-way in the realm of arable lands within the Southern Hemisphere. It has a temperate climate with warm to hot summers (25°C – 35°C) and cool to mild winters (10°C – 20°C). The average elevation across the shire is approximately 350m above sea level. The Gwydir Shire lies about 300kms from the Tasman Sea and the north coast of NSW.

The Shire is part of the New England – North West Region of NSW (also known as the Northern Inland Region) and is bounded by Tamworth Regional Council to the south, Narrabri Shire to the south west, Moree Plains Shire to the west, Inverell Shire to the east and Uralla and Guyra Shires to the south east.



Incorporating an area of 9,122 square kilometres, Gwydir Shire extends from the Nandewar Range in the south and north to close to the Queensland border. The landscapes of the Shire are diverse, and in places, breathtaking.

The southern and central areas of the Shire are located within the Gwydir River catchment area with the Gwydir River flowing through Bingara and Gravesend. The southern areas of the Shire are hilly with pockets of highly fertile river flats along the Gwydir River and its main tributaries.

Mt Kaputar National Park forms the western edge of the Shire, with rugged remnant volcanic peaks and landforms rising above the Gwydir Valley. The northern part of the Shire lies within the 'Golden Triangle'. Built on the black soils from basalt outflows of the New England, it is one of the most productive agricultural areas in Australia.

Agriculture is the primary land use and economic activity within Gwydir Shire. Livestock production dominates in the southern and central areas of the Shire, with the Shire producing prime beef, lamb and pork. The Shire has a collection of beef cattle and sheep properties with a number of renowned beef studs.

Broadacre cropping is undertaken in the northern part of the Shire, with the main crops being wheat, sorghum and barley. Other crops include dryland cotton, other grains (oats, maize, triticale), hay and pasture seeds, pulses (chickpeas, field beans, mung beans, faba beans, lentils)

and oilseeds (canola, soybeans and sunflowers).

In June 2015, Gwydir Shire had an estimated population of 5,068. The Shire has two small towns, Bingara and Warialda, located approximately 40km apart. Bingara services the southern part of the Shire. Located on the Gwydir River at the intersection of the Fossickers Way and Nature's Way (State Touring Route 3), Bingara is a popular stop for travellers.

Warialda is located on the Gwydir Highway, midway between Inverell and Moree. The town is a service centre for both the surrounding rural area and Highway travellers.

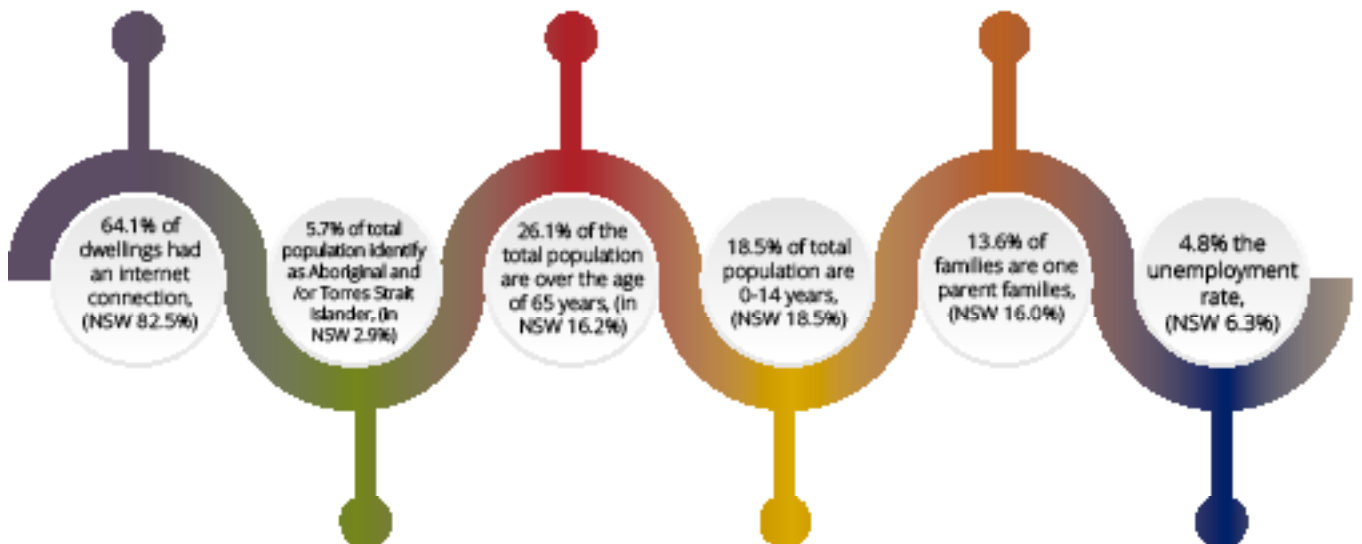
Both towns have small, vibrant shopping centres, with IGA supermarkets, historic hotels, eateries and shops that meet the day-to-day needs of the community. There are also a few boutiques and some lifestyle and 'quirky' retailers that are always popular with visitors. Both towns are ideal to use as a stop-over base for exploring the Gwydir Shire and surrounding regions.

The Shire has five rural villages – North Star, Croppa Creek, Coolatai and Gravesend in the northern part of the Shire, and Upper Horton in the south. The Shire has 21 rural localities – Boonal, Blue Nobby, Yallaroi, Crooble, (part of) Pallamallawa and Balfours Peak in the northern half of the Shire, and Warialda Rail, Gineroi, Bangheet, Riverview, Elcombe, Pallal, Rocky Creek, Back Creek, Cobbadah, Gundamulda, Dinoga, Gulf Creek, Upper Bingara, Keera and Copeton in the southern half.

SOME OF GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL STATISTICS



There are 2082 people in the labour force in Gwydir Shire. Of these 60.6% were employed full time, 28.2% were employed part time, 4.8% were unemployed.

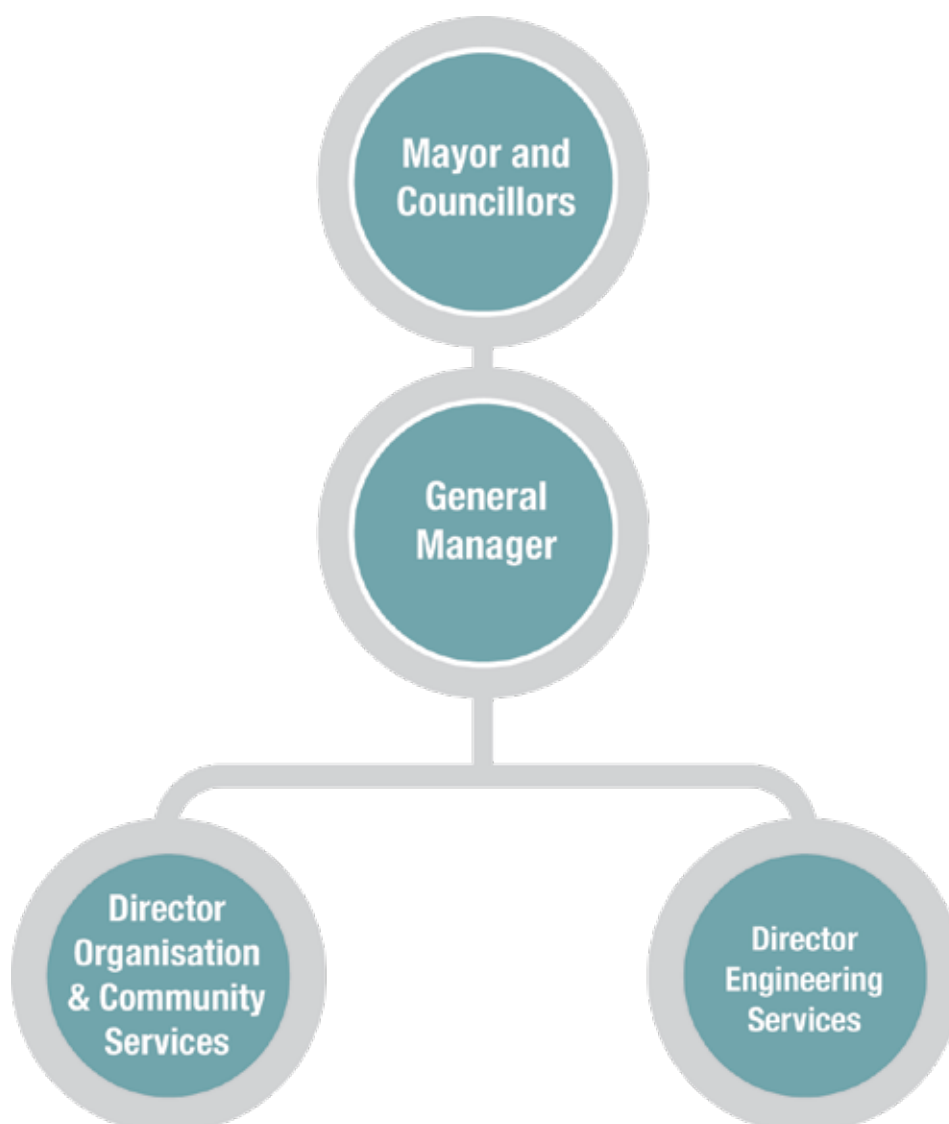


The most common occupations in the Shire are 33.2% managers, 14.8% labourers, 11.3% professionals, 8.6% technicians and trades.

SOME OF GWYDIR SHIRE **ORGANISATION STRUCTURE**

Below is the organisation structure in place during this reporting period.

Our Structure



OUR ELECTED COUNCIL

CR. JOHN COULTON – MAYOR



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CR. CHRISTOPHER MATTHEWS



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CR. LYNDON MULLIGAN



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HOW THE ANNUAL REPORT IS STRUCTURED

This Annual Report is divided into three sections:

Section 1 – Gwydir Shire Council Achievements

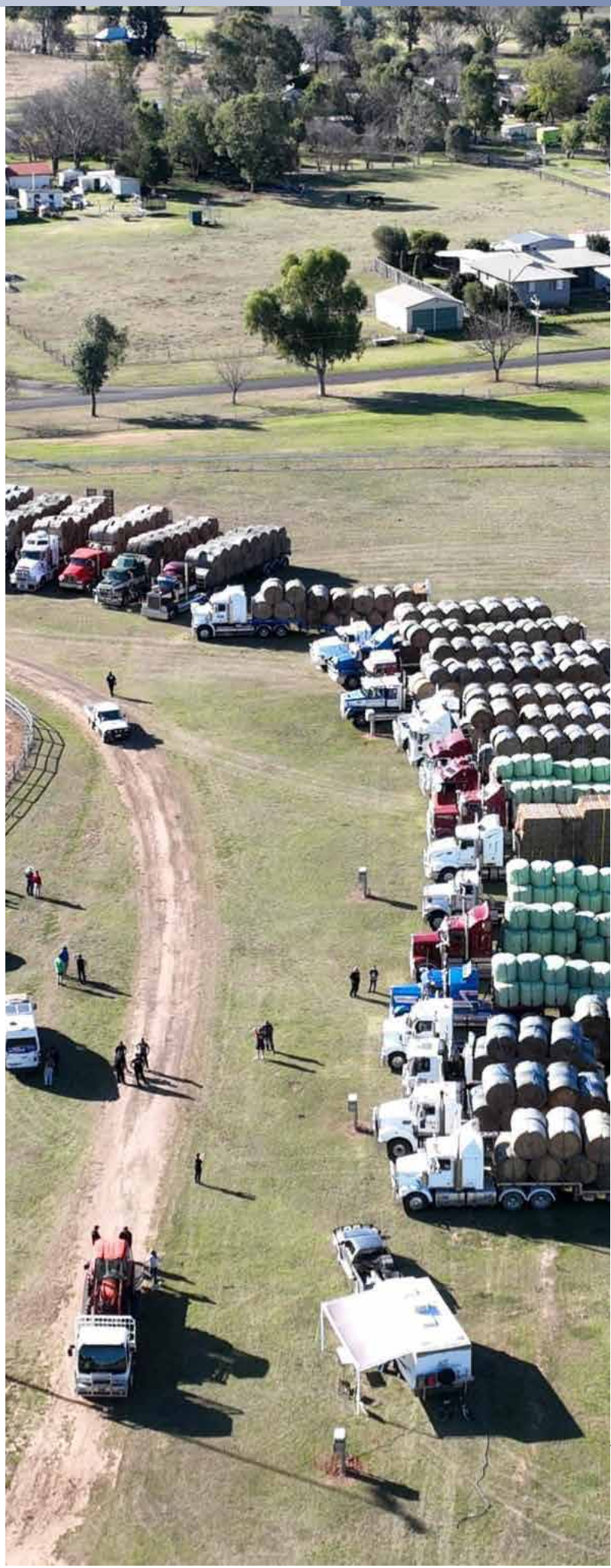
This section provides an outline of Gwydir Shire Council's progress against the actions set out in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

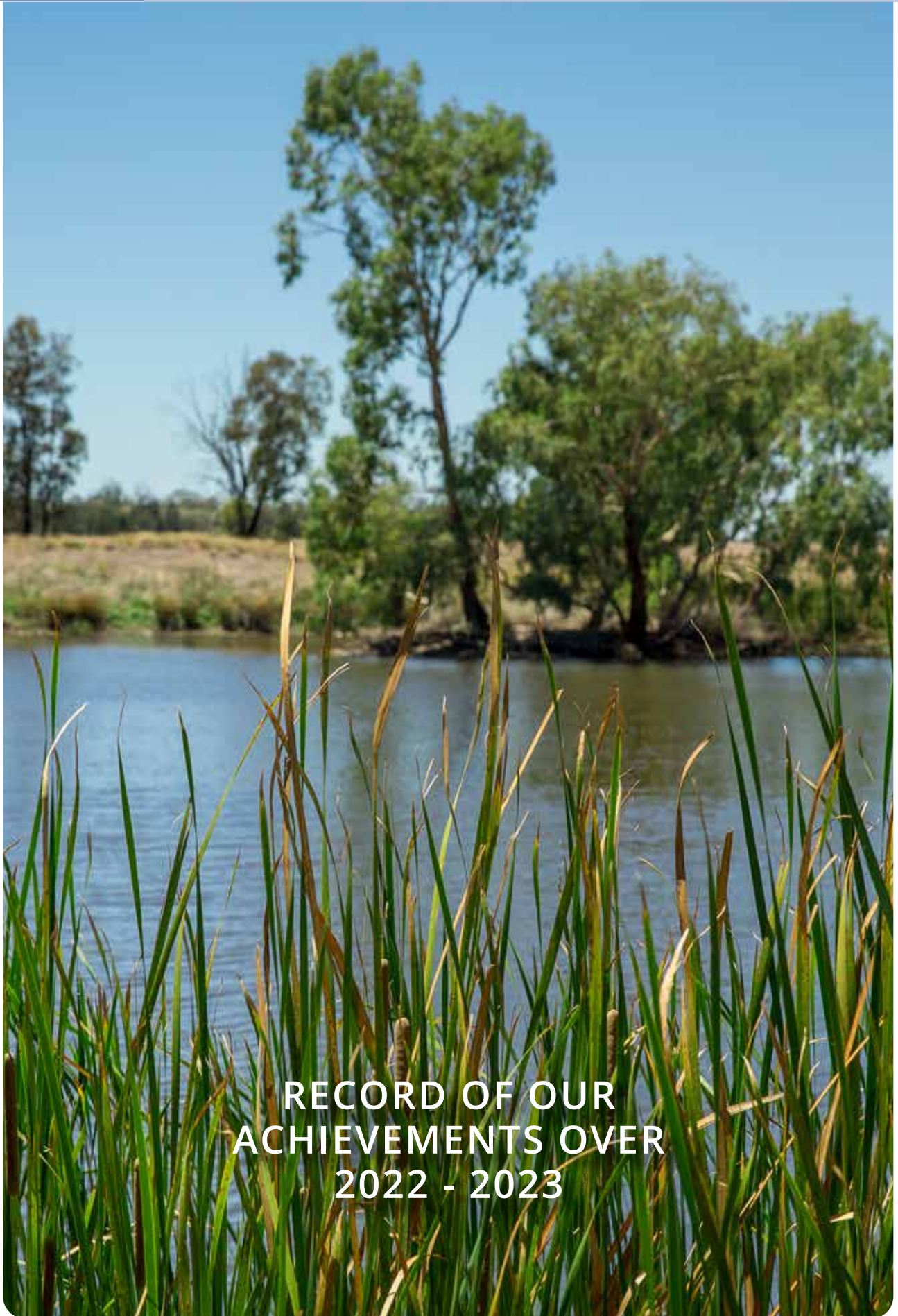
Section 2 – Statutory Reporting Requirements

This section includes the Statutory reporting requirements prescribed by the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Section 3 – Financial Statements

This section includes Gwydir Shire Council's General Purpose Financial Statements for the Financial Year Ending 30 June, including an Income Statement, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows.





**RECORD OF OUR
ACHIEVEMENTS OVER
2022 - 2023**

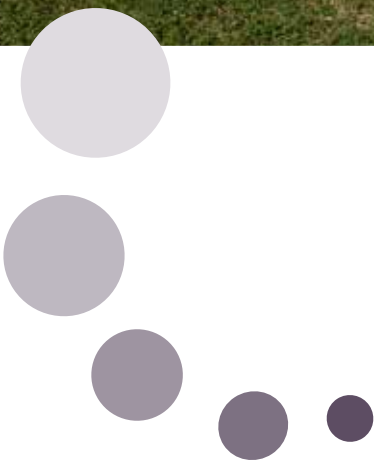


A HEALTHY
AND COHESIVE
COMMUNITY (SOCIAL)

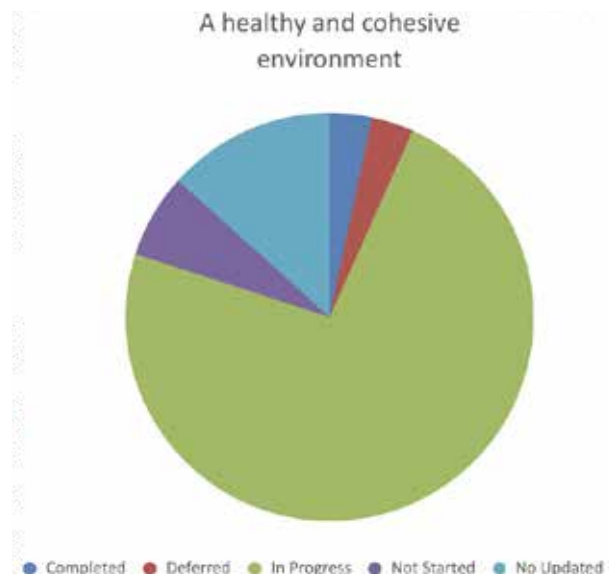
The first key theme identified by our Community through the consultative process was a social objective that we titled 'A healthy and cohesive community'.

Council utilises a software program to track progress against actions. Progress reports on the actions during the period of the Operational Plan are reported to Council monthly.

This section of the report outlines the progress we have made during this reporting period in implementing the adopted Delivery Program. Additional information on the achievements for Council Business Units is included following this summary information.



A healthy and cohesive environment





**BUILDING THE
BUSINESS
BASE
(ECONOMIC)**

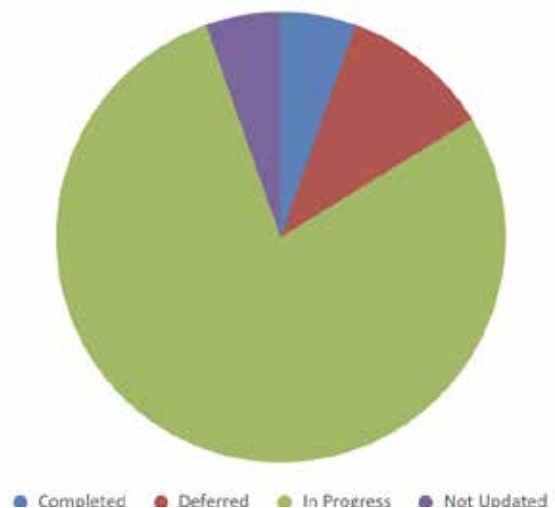
The second key theme identified by our Community through the consultative process was an economic objective that we titled 'Building the business base'.

Council utilises a software program to track progress against actions. Progress reports on the actions during the period of the Operational Plan are reported to Council monthly.

This section of the report outlines the progress we have made during this reporting period in implementing the adopted Delivery Program. Additional information on the achievements for Council Business Units is included following this summary information.



Building the business base





AN
ENVIRONMENTALLY
RESPONSIBLE SHIRE
(ENVIRONMENT)

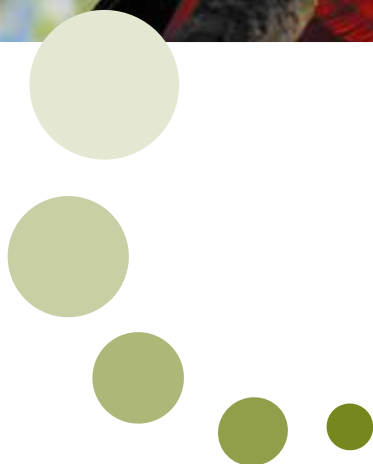
The third key theme identified by our Community through the consultative process was an Environment objective that we titled ‘an environmentally responsible shire’.

Council utilises a software program to track progress against actions. Progress reports on the actions during the period of the Operational Plan are reported to Council monthly.

This section of the report outlines the progress we have made during this reporting period in implementing the adopted Delivery Program. Additional information on the achievements for Council Business Units is included following this summary information.



An environmentally responsible Shire



• Completed • Deferred • In Progress

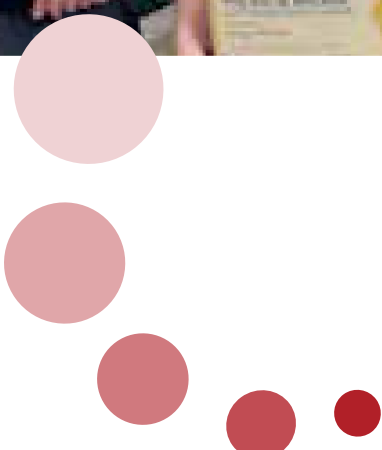


**PROACTIVE
REGIONAL AND
LOCAL LEADERSHIP (CIVIC
LEADERSHIP)**

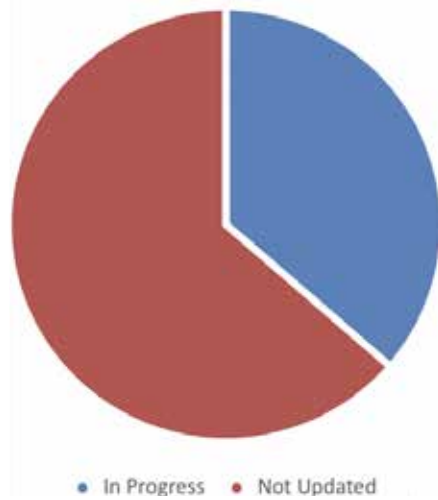
The fourth and final key theme identified by our Community through the consultative process was a civic leadership objective that we titled ‘Proactive regional and local leadership’.

Council utilises a software program to track progress against actions. Progress reports on the actions during the period of the Operational Plan are reported to Council monthly.

This section of the report outlines the progress we have made during this reporting period in implementing the adopted Delivery Program. Additional information on the achievements for Council Business Units is included following this summary information.



Proactive regional and local leadership



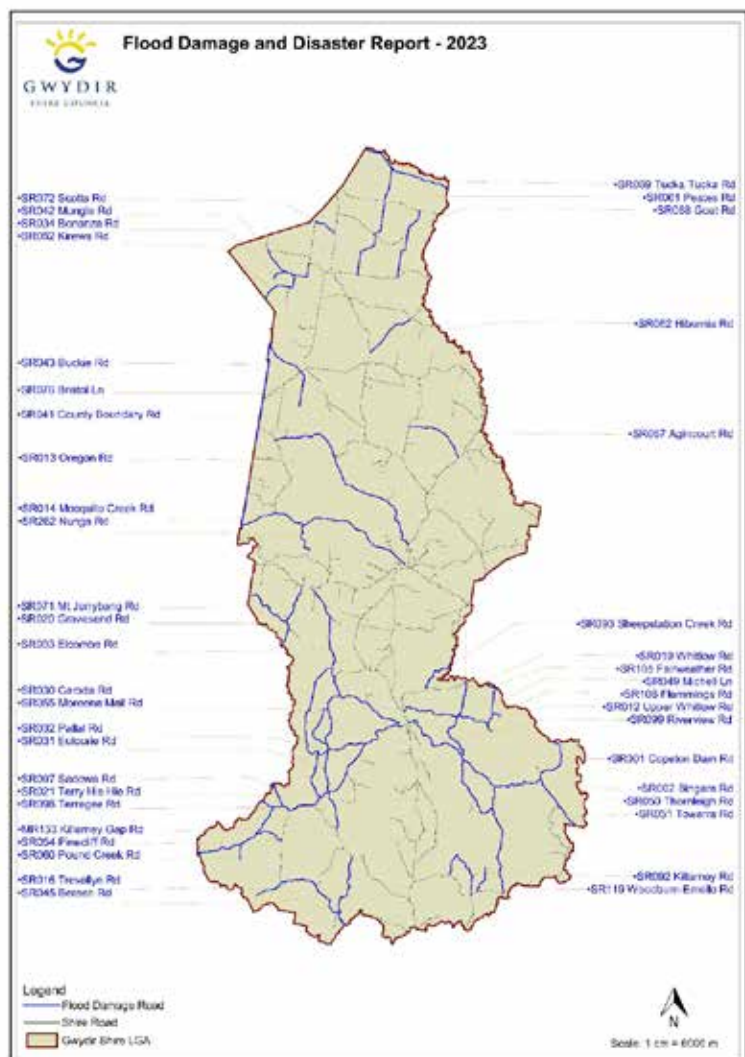


GWYDIR SHIRE FLOOD DAMAGE REPORT

In September 2022 Council received its fourth round of natural disaster funding in 23 months. The cumulative damage from all four flood events is more than \$22 million. The damage ranges from gravel loss on unsealed roads to failed drainage structures, to complete, widespread pavement failures.

During the 2023 financial year, the average expenditure on rectification works has been over \$120,000 per week. Councils' current priority is to continue working on any remaining damage. At present all the roads consisting of long sections of damage have been repaired. Council is now working on the roads with small sections of damage throughout the length.

As a result of the four flooding events, Council now has a dedicated Flood Damage Response Team. This includes a Flood Damage Project Manager, two Council Construction Crews and contractors from Council's earthmoving panel contract.

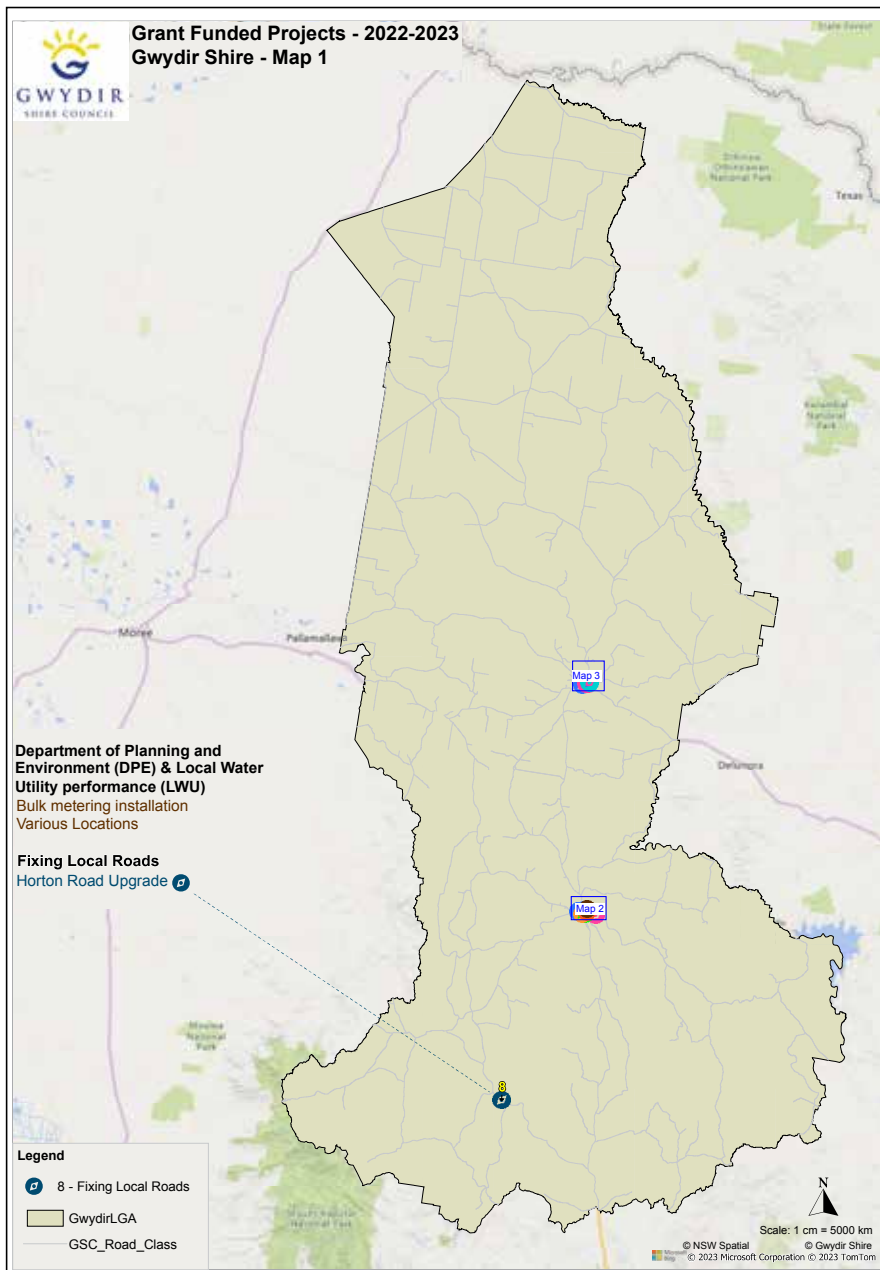


OUR ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH OUR GRANT FUNDED WORKS

In recent times there has been unprecedented, once in a generation, access to both State and Federal Grants to meet the challenges that the natural disasters presented to the Shire's communities. Through this access to funding Gwydir Shire and various community groups have successfully upgraded or installed infrastructure

and provided events for and to the community that is going to benefit both locals and visitors for many years to come.

Below are some maps of the grant funded projects that have been completed or are in the process of being completed in 2022-23.





Grant Funded Projects - 2022-2023 Bingara - Map 2



Grant Funded Projects 2022-2023

Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 3

- Junction Park Park Footpath

Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 4

- Bingara Sporting Club Tennis Court Upgrades

Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) Phase 1

- Batterham Lookout Bingara Makeover

Regional Sport Facility Fund – NSW Sport

- Gwydir Oval Bingara Covered Netball Court

Start Strong Bingara Preschool

- Bingara Preschool Room Addition

Get NSW Active Program

- Link to Cunningham Street Footpath Upgrade

AGRI

- Gwydir River Willow Tree Project

Legend

- 1 - Stronger Country Communities Fund Rd 4
- 2 - Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) Phase 1
- 3 - Start Strong
- 4 - Regional Sport Facility Fund – NSW Sport
- 7 - Get NSW Active Program
- 9 - AGRI
- Reserve / Park
- Hospital
- GwydirLGA
- Waterway
- School
- MR63
- Shire Road
- Crown Road



Scale: 1 cm = 110.001 m



Grant Funded Projects - 2022-2023 Warialda - Map 3



Grant Funded Projects 2022-2023

Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5

- Warialda Showground Amenities

Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) Phase 1

- CBD Improvements - Reedy Creek Park Furniture

Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) Phase 3

- Warialda Fitness Centre Amenities

Dept of Health Business Improvement Fund for Residential and Aged Care - Round 1

- Naroo Frail Aged Care Hostel Upgrade and implement technological improvements

Legend

- 1 - Stronger Country Communities Fund Rd 4
- 2 - Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) Phase 1
- 5 - Dept of Health Business Improvement Fund for Residential and Aged Care Rd 1
- Reserve
- School
- Hospital
- Waterways
- Road
- Highway
- GwydirLGA



Scale: 1 cm = 100 m

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH OUR SECTION 355 COMMITTEES

Bingara Anglers Club

The Bingara Anglers Club held a very successful Easterfish Competition this year. There were 272 registrations, a number not seen in recent years or for quite some time. Competitors came from various surrounding towns and set up camps along the Gwydir River for the 3-day event. The presentation of prizes to the winners was held at the Hatchery following the competition with a good crowd of people enjoying a BBQ, drinks and entertainment. The Hatchery is currently undergoing renovations, which is nearing completion. The Club will host an open day later in the year for the community to see the new facility and showcase how the Hatchery operates and how the breeding program works. The Club is hoping to commence the breeding and restocking of Murray Cod and Yellowbelly next year.

Bingara District Historical Society

The major event of the year was the Opening of the Bingara Military Museum on April 22nd, 2023. After many years of planning and fundraising we had a spectacularly organised day of entertainment, special guests and displays.



The Orange Festival this year included the museum grounds in the festivities, by stationing the Children's rides and activities within the grounds this allowed a lot of community attendance at the museum complex.

It also highlighted the need for an accessible amenities facility, which is necessary for visitors to the museum.

In addition to the ongoing work at the Military Museum, we have also had a roof built over the old Dray to protect it from the effects of being out in the open. Our Photo Collection now has appropriate Archival Storage, with the purchase of vinyl pouches to protect them for the future. The Military Museum collection is being catalogued so it can be recorded in a digital database. A new brochure was designed to include the Military Museum, with a map of the entire complex to help those visiting find all our attractions.



This year also saw the introduction of a “Uniform” for the Volunteers. Included in the new look is a logoed shirt and a badge that identifies individuals as a Volunteer of the Museum/ Historical Society.

The Society has several projects that will be worked on over the coming year which include the construction of an accessible toilet, a new front fence at the Military Museum which will enable better crowd control of people on site.

Several items need professional restoration which will require grant applications to cover these projects one of which is an original paper linen backed map of the world dated 1833. Also, the collections room will need to be completed and ready for viewing.

Warialda Cultural Community Centre (WCCC) - Carinda

Warialda Cultural Community Centre (WCCC - Carinda) continues to enjoy local and visitor patronage with sales in the Shop continuing to do well.

In October 2022, Carinda held a Garden Party as participation in the Warialda Honey Festival. Patrons enjoyed tea/coffee and honey treats in the garden. During festivities at the Honey Festival, WCCC was announced as the winner of the Fay Honour Busy Bee Award. Members were very chuffed and proud to accept this award.

The Christmas Twilight Markets were held in late November 2022 and stallholders and Carinda Shop enjoyed good sales coming up to Christmas.

In May 2023, Carinda celebrated Mothers’ Day with in-store sales and special cooking treats.

The Biggest Morning Tea Garden Party on May 27 resulted in \$1,725 being raised for Cancer Research. Patrons were entertained by the Warialda Public School choir and Sue Smoothy. The guest speaker was Bernadette Allport and the newly formed Warialda Neighbourhood Watch group and Anglican Care also addressed patrons.

WCCC has now managed Carinda for 45 years with the maintenance of the 1880s building being the main priority of members.

The Tuesday Craft Group continues to be a great social outlet for patrons and a place to share craft skills. The group meets in the Stump Room between 10.00am and 12 noon every Tuesday. There is also a Thursday Night craft group for those who are unable to attend the day meeting.

The Thursday group also meets in the Stump Room between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. WCCC continues to be an integral part of the Warialda community providing monetary support to local organisations and as a place for social contact.

WCCC meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month [except January] at 10.00am and the Carinda shop is open Monday to Friday 10.00am to 2.00pm and Saturdays 9.00 am to 12.00 noon.

All members are volunteers who are dedicated to maintaining the beautiful old building and providing a service to the Warialda and district.

Thank you to Gwydir Shire Council for their support.

Warialda Historical Society



Once again, we have had a productive year promoting Family and General History for Warialda and District.

It is very pleasing to have some new faces join our Society and already they have become very valuable members of our small group.

Our cemetery project has progressed slowly mainly due to the wait for delivery of granite from our supplier. However, as this is our last year of the Project, I am confident that we will achieve our initial program timeline by having all the missing plaques up to 1950 completed. The project would not have been done in the time frame without the wonderful contribution from Gwydir Shire Council and for this we are very grateful.

With the small grants from Be Connected we have been able to pay for internet and worldwide Ancestry. We hope that this facility will be used more widely by our members.

A successful open day was held in October last year and was quite well attended.

A meeting with Adam Marshall MP earlier this year was successful in gaining advice on heritage buildings and having Adam on board to fight to have our Courthouse re-opened. This is an ongoing matter.

A meeting with Council representatives to inspect the buildings in Hope Street resulted in being able to save the former Bakery building from being demolished. A history of this building will be provided to Gwydir Shire so that they can apply for grants to renovate the building. We are still trying to save the former John Lanagan building and members have supplied the Council with some very valuable history.

The Society has supplied additional historical information for the former Jim Bowman shop in Plunkett Street so the Council can apply for grants to renovate this building also.

We had visits from Inverell Probus and Inverell Family History group, which were both successful days.

The recent working bee with Apex members and Probus was a very successful and enjoyable day.

Tony Sonter met with members and identified the rocks that David Conway has supplied from the property "Durang" and within the District of Warialda. The council is looking for quotes to place name plaques on these rocks.

A huge thank you to the executive and all volunteers for the cooperation and dedication they provided to the Society and its many activities that were conducted throughout the year. Many volunteer hours are given to not only open the Museum but to fundraise, coordinate activities and maintain facilities.

In conclusion I wish all members a very happy and successful 2023/2024.

Warialda Men's Shed

The Gwydir Shire Council initiated the formation of the Warialda Men's Shed in 2008 by providing a large shed, some equipment and some projects to start us off.

Council has continued their generous support each year and have helped us apply for Government grants to purchase equipment – the most recent of which was a large thicknesser for which they also financed us to purchase a sawdust extractor.

We currently have 12 members with an average of 6 or 7 meeting each Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30am until midday – with an all-important morning tea being held at 9:30am.

Since its inception there has not been a day when we have had no jobs awaiting attentions, so besides the fellowship it is also fulfilling a vital, practical role in the community.

Projects for this year include a football passing practice target, restoring a set of outdoor table and seats, reframing and repainting bench seats for St Joseph's Convent School, converting a round wooden table to a larger oval table, constructing a set of timber outside steps, 5 Camphor Laurel timber tables, sitting castors on a BBW, 2 routed timber signs, and many other repair jobs in timber or steel.

Five times each year we prepare the shed for use by the Roads and Maritime Services to carry out checks for registration for local trucks and buses.

Most of our members are retired and I think the 2 half days each week really gives us a sense of purpose and fellowship that is invaluable. Of course, we are always on the lookout for more members, so if you would like to join come along on Tuesday or Thursday morning and see what the Warialda Men's Shed is about.

Warialda Driver Reviver

Warialda Driver Reviver recognises the importance of road safety with offering travellers a place to stop, have a break and enjoy refreshment before continuing to their destination. Local volunteers help keep this initiative going with operating at peak holiday periods including long weekends and during the school holidays. Warialda driver reviver opened over 10 times throughout the year.

Warialda Rail Community Group

For the period of 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, the Warialda Rail Community Group held weekly raffles at the Warialda Rail Recreation Ground most Friday evenings, where there were 15 x \$20 IGA vouchers up for grabs.

The annual Christmas Carnival was held on the 3rd of December 2022, which was free for the community to attend. This event went smoothly and was enjoyed by all who attended. The Viper Creek Band performed to an excited crowd and there were lots of rides for the children to play on. There were also market stalls which added to the festive atmosphere, and the evening's success.

The committee took a break over the summer holidays and reconvened late February with weekly raffles. The raffles are suspended during the winter months as they are not well attended during the cooler periods. The committee is preparing for our first raffle night back on the 16th of September where we will have karaoke and lots of local vouchers up for grabs.

The committee are busy preparing for our 2023 Christmas carnival which we are hoping to keep free for the community. This may or may not be possible, but we are currently fundraising to help fund the kids rides. We have booked Viper Creek Band again this year as they were a massive drawcard for our little community at last year's Carnival. Stay tuned for details on our upcoming activities and events.

Warialda Sports Council (WSC)

In its 44th year, Warialda Sports Council continues to make significant contributions to the sporting community in Warialda.

WSC currently has 11 affiliated sporting bodies. Affiliations cover junior and senior rugby league, touch football, cricket, netball, golf, swimming, pony club, jockey club, little athletics, and three local schools.

Our local sports people have once again achieved outstanding results over the past 12 months with representatives competing at local, zone, regional and state level. Warialda Sports Council continues to recognize these achievements at an annual presentation evening where awards are presented for sub-Junior girl or boy of the year, junior girl or boy of the year, senior sports person of the year, sporting team of the year, sporting event of the year and service to sport.

WSC was involved in obtaining State Government funding of \$525,000 via Stronger Country Communities program for the construction of a new amenities complex at Nicholson Oval, and \$163,700 for upgrades to Warialda Recreation Ground including new goal posts, electronic scoreboard, canteen refurbishment and terraced earthworks to the southern end of the ground to improve spectator seating.

Mini Numbers is the primary fundraising activity for the WSC and is still a big success. Incredibly, since 2014, \$59,524 in jackpots has been distributed to lucky local ticket purchasers.



Above left: MC – Tim Cox with Special Guest, Noel 'Crusher' Cleal. Above right: Presentation of 2022 Team of the Year to representatives from Warialda Wombats League Tag Team.

S355 HALL COMMITTEES

Yallaroi Hall

The Yallaroi Hall Committee is an active committee who work collaboratively with Council to provide facilities that are safe and fit for purpose for residents of Gwydir Shire and visitors alike.

The services and activities supported include:

- Tharawonga Mobile Preschool uses the hall every Wednesday during school terms.
- Anzac Day 2023 held at the Hall. With the County of Burnett and the hall committee providing catering.
- County of Burnett CWA using hall for various activities such as meetings.
- County of Burnett CWA also organised a band and dance in February 2023 for the community.
- North Star Motorbike Ride was held in July 2022 utilising the hall as a meeting spot. The North Star School catered for this event.
- Local exercise group meet at the hall mainly on a Tuesday morning.
- Tables, chairs, cutlery and crockery hired out to members of our community when required.

Croppa Creek Soldiers Memorial Hall

Gwydir Shire Council provided the Croppa Creek Soldiers Memorial Hall Committee with a grant of \$10,000 to hold a community function on Saturday February 11, 2023.

The day was attended by around 100 people who enjoyed a BBQ followed by the Will Day Band who entertained the crowd with many seen dancing and enjoying themselves. As it was a very hot evening and loud music, some of the older members of the community chose to sit outside, enjoy the music and chat.

Crooble War Memorial Hall

The Crooble War Memorial Hall Committee had a busy year with a number of events being held in the Hall, which included:

- Australia Day Recovery Friday 27th January 2023 – Viper Creek Band
- Crooble Carols Night Sunday 11th December – Sarah Mills, Meridee and Ray singing
- Movie and casserole night – Saturday 20th August “The Sapphires” – with a bus load of visitors from Moree attending.
- Defibrillator Course 19th September provided by McGregor Gourlay Croppa Creek. Andrew Stephenson on behalf of McGregor’s donated a defibrillator on 6th June at a hall meeting.
- Rabobank breakfast 6th September – Felicity Taylor
- Gwydir Shire Council installed a satellite dish to the hall to improve communication as the hall is an Emergency Evacuation Centre.
- ANZAC Day Service Crooble organised by Faye Sullivan and Meridith Miller, well done. Graham Wilson guest speaker.
- We were unsuccessful in our application for a Stronger Country Community Grants but could not make the \$100,000 limit for a new deck on the northern side of the hall.

North Star Memorial Hall

The North Star Hall continues to provide a facility for community events on both a regular and casual basis, over the past financial year these have included:

- Tharawonga Mobile Preschool has increased its service to two days a week, Tuesdays and Fridays.
- The local not-for-profit fitness group meets twice a week on Monday and Friday mornings.
- North Star school uses the space for performance practice and other events as required.
- Casual private users hire the facility and the chairs and tables as necessary for local functions.
- The North Star CWA regularly hosts workshops in this facility.
- Our hall provided the venue to enable the delivery of Reconnecting Rural Community events including Pilates instruction and crafting workshops.
- The Electoral Commission continues to make use of the Hall to hold elections.

Improvements to the hall were also undertaken with the installation of new signage to better reflect the history of the hall, and a working bee held to remove some old scrap building materials from around the hall.

Gravesend Hall

The Gravesend Hall Committee continued working towards restoration of the hall. The builder who had previously been working on the hall has relocated and the committee are working on securing a new builder to progress works.

Future works yet to be completed include:

- New lining boards to the old dining room section.
- Replacement of some exterior lining boards and around the doorway and fireplace in the dining section finished off to the outside.
- Electrical installation to be completed when the wall linings have been installed.
- Painting inside and out.
- Timber floors to be sanded and refinished.

The annual Warialda Christmas Carnival was held on 11th December 2022. This reporting period was difficult due to small committee numbers and other commitments. The only funding done in the lead up to the Carnival was the Major Raffle. Our raffle was made up of prizes that were donated by other business houses and items purchased by the committee.

Entertainment this year travelled from Newcastle, a band by the name of Savage Groove, who also supplied the stage and sound. We believe this year the crowd was down compared to previous years.

Our annual Christmas light competition is always a hit and is sponsored by the Regional Australia Bank. And our colouring in competition is sponsored by the Committee.

We extend our gratitude to the Council for taking over the Christmas Carnival.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN SOCIAL SERVICES



TARGETED EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES



Playgroups

In Bingara and Warialda families have enjoyed both inside and outside/backyard activities to keep everyone learning with different styles of play experiences that each of those spaces provide. During the sessions, children are encouraged to play, learn and grow.

Staff encourage the children and families to think about fire safety, water safety, taking good care of their teeth, and their ears by way of resources available at the Toy Libraries.

The Toy Libraries are exceptional facilities and our families not only use them to borrow toys but as a meeting place and support service. They are a place families can come to experience playgroup, catch up with friends, meet new locals, be supported and not judged and/or relax for a while with the security of many eyes and hands to help.

Festive Events and Celebrations

Each year special events like Mother's Day, Father's Day, Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas, Birth Certificate Ceremonies, Easter, Grandparents' Day, Dental Health week, International Women's Day, and Childrens' week, are celebrated at the toy libraries.

Children's and Families Week

On Thursday 27 October, the Warialda Toy Library held the annual Children's Week event. Children engaged in many different activities, with the farm yard animals on the farm mat with tractors, bouncing, throwing, catching balls and pretend play in the home corner area. The families were also provided with a sausage sizzle for lunch

In Bingara, Children's Week was celebrated on Wednesday 26 October at the Bingara Preschool. A sausage sizzle was enjoyed by the families, children, and staff for this occasion. The families enjoyed meeting the Preschool Director and Staff. They were able to talk about enrolment for next year and joined in activities set out for the children. The grounds at preschool were gorgeous with plenty of natural shade to congregate under and play.



Children’s Week is celebrated with a theme based on an Article from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This year it was “All children have the right to an adequate standard of living including house, food and clothes that support their development”. Article 27 identifies children’s development being inclusive of their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. We strongly support this convention within all childrens services across the Shire.

Gwydir Shire Birth Certificate Presentations

Warialda welcomed ten (10) new babies into the Shire during the period. A ceremony was held at the Toy Library and a gift bag with the Gwydir Shire Birth Certificates were presented by Cr Catherine Egan.

The Bingara Toy Library Birth certificate ceremony was held in March this year with six (6) new babies being welcomed to our Shire. Cr Catherine Egan once again presented the four families who attended with their certificate and giftbags.

Guests / Guest Speakers

Each month our toy libraries provide information sessions for families on a wide range of topics. This year we had staff from Inverell Rural Outreach Service and the Moree Women’s Refugee visit our services. These services intend to engage with families and offer support.

Warialda Toy Library had sessions with Sandy Scotton – Speech Pathologist, Sally Lavery – Dietitian from Moree Community Health, Ellen Gordon – physiotherapist, Rachel Sherman – personal trainer and nutrition coach and Warialda Ambulance Service.
 Bingara Toy Library has had sessions with Sandy Scotton – Speech Pathologist, Sally Lavery – Dietitian from Moree Community Health, Brooke Bone – Veterinarian, Local Paramedics, Preschool Director – Preschool Readiness.

Kool Skool Kids

The Kool Skool Kids Program continued each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon which has been well attended and much appreciated by those families. This valuable service allows working families that extra time in their day before collecting the children at 4.30pm. Activities during these afternoon sessions include cooking, movie afternoons, Lego, card games, outside ball games, backyard water fun, drawing, painting, making special occasion gifts, puzzles, toy room fun and chalk drawing on the footpath.

Over the 2022/2023 financial year our toy libraries facilitated 1,681 points of contact with children and families. Bingara Toy Library had 937 points of contact and Warialda Toy Library had 744 points of contact.

Vacation Care



Children participated in Christmas craft activities during December. The children were encouraged to think outside the box to create a Christmas tree ornament for them to take home.

Vacation Care was again held during Autumn School Holidays at the Bingara and Warialda Toy Libraries. The children participated in activities which required them to utilise their imagination and problem-solving skills, to work as part of a team and to exercise their fine and gross motor skills. Activities included a talent quest, an obstacle course, and a game of “Among Us”, where participants had to identify an intruder. The children also participated in craft sessions, and other games together, enhancing their social skills.

July Vacation Care was held in Warialda only. Children participated in a craft activity as a collaboration with Naroo Aged Hostel. The children painted a tree using their hands and arms which was given to Naroo after a tough couple of months due to COVID-19 restrictions. The children did multiple paintings each so there were enough for each resident of Naroo. This was a beautiful experience for the children and the Naroo residents alike. It was a great way for the children to show their care and respect for the older members of our community.

	April	December	July	Total
Families	15	12	10	37
Children	26	22	14	62
Boys	13	11	5	29
Girls	13	11	9	33
Points of contact	41	34	24	99

YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Programs

The GirlGlow program ran in Bingara from July through to September 2022 and provided an opportunity for students to participate in after school activities which were tailored to their strengths and interests, as well as being a chance to develop new skills and friendships. The program ended due to the loss of the Social Worker in Schools from Bingara Central School and this position has not been refilled at the time of this report.

The Social Services team has worked hard to develop new programs for our young people to participate in moving forward. An after school program has been offered in Warialda since November and staff continue to seek engagement by young people in this program.

The Gwydir Shire Talent Quest was held on the 21 January 2023, with three categories advertised: Under 18 years, 18 and over and mixed (Under 18 and 18 or over). The event was held in the Warialda Memorial Hall as the venue was central to the Shire's residents. This strategy seemed to work with contestants coming from Yetman, Warialda and Bingara and one contestant in the 18 and over section travelling from Moree. We also had an entrant from outside the district, who was visiting friends in Bingara.

Families and friends of the performers, and members of the public, were treated to presentations by dancers, singers, musicians, and a poet. Some delivered two items, extending the afternoon's entertainment.



Youth Week

Local artist Larrisa Cooper was engaged to facilitate art activities for Youth Week. Workshops were held at Bingara and Warialda. The art was then displayed for a quick exhibition at Ceramic Break Sculpture Park, providing an opportunity for artists, their family, and others to see their work in a gallery setting. Many items were entered in the Bingara and Warialda Shows, with prizes received in each competition.

Youth Exchange



The Gwydir / Willoughby Youth Exchange program commenced on Thursday 30 June 2022. There were four (4) young people from Gwydir and six (6) from Willoughby.

The students met at The Living Classroom for the welcome dinner with Gwydir Shire Council's Mayor, Councillors, and Senior Staff.

The following day the young people went on a tour of the Myall Creek Memorial Site. Whilst doing the walk, they listened to the Sound Trails and for the young people from Willoughby this was an eye-opening experience, they had no idea what had happened at Myall Creek or the significance of the events that followed the massacre.

The Annual Orange Picking event was next on the itinerary. Whilst it did start to rain, the group was dedicated to the challenge, picking as many oranges as they could whilst getting absolutely soaked through. Even though the rain continued into the afternoon, the Trail Ride along the Gwydir River went ahead, the Willoughby Mayor and several Willoughby Councillor's joined the group for an afternoon ride in the rain. The group finished off their Friday night with dinner at the Roxy Café and a movie in the Roxy Theatre.

On Saturday, the sun came out and the Group participated in the Orange Festival where the young people received Certificates of Participation from Gwydir Mayor John Coulton and Willoughby Mayor Tanya Taylor. The group walked in the Festival parade in the afternoon. Before dinner, the

group walked to the Showground to watch the Motorbike Show and Rodeo, once again this was another eye-opening experience for the young people from Willoughby and their supervisors, as it was something they had not seen before. The program concluded on Saturday night with a roast dinner and bonfire at The Living Classroom.

In September the Gwydir participants headed to Willoughby, catching the bus to Tamworth and a train to complete the rest of the trip. All the participants were happy to see one another and picked up where they left off. The young people enjoyed a wonderful Japanese dinner experience which took some of the Gwydir participants out of their comfort zone by trying new foods. One of the Willoughby students gave the rest of the group a tutorial on how to use chopsticks and a Gwydir Student decided to taste wasabi. She will not do that again!



The next day the group travelled into Circular Quay on the train and tram. They took the ferry to Taronga Zoo, then onto the Sky Trail which went over the Zoo. They then enjoyed a walk around and lunch in the Zoo.

On Friday afternoon the group successfully completed the Harbour Bridge Climb to the Summit. What a wonderful experience it was for the group to reach the top!

The Willoughby City Council Emerge Festival Parade was called off due to rain the previous evening, but the Festival still took place. The young people were given free time to explore Chatswood, including a visit to an Arcade. A great experience, as this was a much larger space than the one in Inverell and Tamworth.

The afternoon was spent at the Chatswood Youth Centre with Gwydir and Willoughby Mayor's and Councillors. The young people then attended an NRL game at Kogarah between the St. George Illawarra Dragons and Brisbane Broncos. The group really enjoyed the atmosphere of the live game.

On Sunday the program came to an end and the Gwydir Students headed home. This was a wonderful opportunity for both the Gwydir and Willoughby students to experience the very different lives that they all live.

CENTRELINK

New Jobseeker Mutual Obligations and alterations to the MyGov website contributed to an increase of activity at the beginning of the financial year.

The Agency managed numerous in-house staffing changes and a new Centrelink supervisor during the year. Staff provided support in arranging a visit from Inverell Services Australia staff to assist Bingara residents connect to sign up for and access online services. The Service received a very successful service audit, with ongoing changeover of Services Australia branding, signage and promotional materials. The office continues to be well utilised.

BINGARA PRESCHOOL

It has been a year of accomplishments and success for Bingara Preschool, with the main goal being to extend and maintain positive, respectful relationships with children and their families. The team of Educators have implemented a child led and child focused curriculum, in collaboration with the educators, children, their families, and the wider community.



Educational Curriculum

Bingara Preschool facilitated a play-based curriculum, focusing on encouraging each child to feel safe, secure, and supported. Early in 2023, the new version of the Early Years Learning Framework was published, and the team of educators undertook training in relation to these changes. The main changes included the introduction of the link between play-based learning and intentionality, enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and the importance of strengthening partnerships. These three main changes were discussed with the team and have been implemented into the service's curriculum.

Another focus of the Bingara Preschool curriculum is to acknowledge and celebrate diversity, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness, which are also important pedagogies outlined in both the Early Years Learning Framework and the Service Philosophy. During the year, the children have engaged in, celebrated, and explored a range of events including:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAIDOC Week • Remembrance Day • ANZAC Day • Lunar New Year • National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day • National Italian Day • Harmony Day • Pancake Day • A Filipino Birthday | <p>year, the children and educators have explored and learnt about the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pirates • Animals from around the world • Football and fishing • Dressing up • Families and home events • Occupations • Dinosaurs • Colours |
|--|---|

Another focus of the Educational Curriculum is to extend and investigate the children's interests and home culture. Over the past

Educational Leader

The Educational Leader has started studying the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Teaching). This will build capacity in the role of Educational Leader and will improve knowledge of Early Childhood Teaching. Training has been organised for the team of Educators, this has been both in-house and through professional webinars. The training has covered the topics of

our curriculum planning cycle, the changes to the Early Years Learning Framework Version 2 and mentoring the Trainee Educators. The Educational Leader audits the observation and planning cycle on a regular basis.

Qualifications and Training

Over the past year, four educators have updated and completed their Early Childhood qualifications. One educator has completed the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, two educators have completed the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, and the director has completed the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood).

In 2023, the Service welcomed two new trainees to the team, a School Based Trainee who works one day per week and a mature aged trainee who works the four full operational days per week. Both Trainees are studying Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care.

Quality Improvement Plan

One of the main goals identified in the Quality Improvement Plan in 2021 and 2022, was for there to be embedded communication and involvement of families within the Service. This goal has now been removed from the current Quality Improvement Plan as the team has critically reflected and found this is now common practice. The Service asks all families to complete a Family Participation Sheet, where they can choose how they are involved within the Service. It provides ideas and suggestions on ways to take part in the Service and is also inclusive of all families. The team has found that this simple change has increased family involvement substantially.

One of the main goals in 2023, as outlined in the Quality Improvement Plan is to increase the range and the number of resources that could be used to encourage play based learning, including the collection of loose parts resources. This year already, the local builder, plumber and mechanic have all added to our resources for loose parts play.

Graduation and End of Year Celebration

In December 2022, the Bingara Preschool welcomed families back on site for the end of year celebration and graduation ceremony. Using a semi-formal approach, the children, their families, and the educators celebrated each child's time at the Service. Each child received their special folder full of memories reflecting on their time at Preschool. Each family also received a copy of each of their child's completed observations and related documentation.

Excursions and Events

Bingara Preschool has continued to build strong reciprocal relationships within the wider community. Over the past year the children have attended the following excursions and community events: The Orange Picking Ceremony (community event), The Easter Hat Parade (Bingara Central School - excursion), The Orange Festival (community event), The Bingara Multipurpose Service (excursion) and participating in the Gwydir Shire T-Shirt Day Challenge (community event).

Bingara Preschool has also celebrated the following events

Dental Hygiene Week was celebrated between the 9th – 12th August. The children explored and engaged with a range of activities based around learning more about the importance of dental hygiene. The children each got a new toothbrush and toothpaste, which was donated by Colgate. At the playdough table, the children made teeth for the face and a plate of healthy food. The children even created a toothbrush cake out of playdough.

Children's Week is an annual event celebrated in Australia. This year to celebrate Children's Week, Bingara Preschool welcomed the Toy Library families and the Gwydir Toy Libraries Coordinator for a morning visit to play and explore outside. The Gwydir Toy Libraries Coordinator organised and cooked a sausage sizzle for the children, their families, and the Educators. The focus of holding

a Children's Week event is to widen the community's view on children, their rights, and their achievements.

National Simultaneous Storytime was held on Wednesday 24th May, and this year the Toy Library Families and the Gwydir Toy Library Coordinator visited Bingara Preschool to share the story: 'The Speedy Sloth', written by Rebecca Young. The visitors, the children and the educators all listened and watched the story on the newly donated Smartboard, which has been hung outside near the boardwalk. National Simultaneous Storytime is celebrated around the country, where services, children and families all listen to the same book at the same time, on the same day.

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea Bingara Preschool participated in the Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, which raised money and awareness for the Cancer Council. The Bingara Preschool families were invited to bring a plate to share in a picnic style morning tea. The children got to show their families their favourite things to do at Preschool. The morning tea raised a total of \$264 for the Cancer Council. During the morning, a game of football was played, many creations were made with the Duplo and the sandpit was very busy.

Other events that were celebrated at Bingara Preschool during the last year included:

- Hamburger Day
- National Yoga Day
- Father's Day
- Mother's Day
- Oceans Week

Visitors, Family and Community Involvement

Bingara Preschool has welcomed a variety of visitors to the Service during the last year. This included the residents and employees from Tourandi, and on multiple occasions during the year they visited Bingara Preschool. The Tourandi visitors, children and educators enjoyed a shared morning tea, craft activities, dancing and exploring the yard together. This intergenerational program has received positive and encouraging feedback from all involved. Tourandi also donated Easter eggs for the children to enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt whilst at Preschool with their friends. Bingara Preschool also welcomed the Library Officer from the Bingara Library. The Library Officer visited the service several times throughout the year, reading the children their favourite stories and facilitated craft activities for the children to engage in.

Other visitors to Bingara Preschool included:

- The owner and dance teacher at Bingara Physical Culture
- Bingara Central School Kindergarten Teacher for a series of transition classes
- Family members who shared a recipe, a game of football or a board game
- The Inclusion Support Teacher from Early Links
- The Early Intervention Teacher from Ross Hill Public School
- The Transition Support Teacher Early Intervention from Narrabri Public School
- The Speech Pathologist from Moree Community Health
- The Steps Vision Screener from Inverell Community Health

THARAWONGA MOBILE RESOURCE UNIT

Tharawonga Mobile Resource Unit has experienced a very different year with many changes within the service throughout the year. The Thursday Gravesend venue was no longer operational in 2023 due to the significant reduction in the number of children who would utilise the service. Tharawonga was able to provide North Star with an additional day. Tharawonga operates at Croppa Creek on Monday, North Star on Tuesday and Friday, Yallaroi on Wednesday, and Yetman on Thursday in 2023. Educators have received training in CPR, First Aid and Asthma and Anaphylaxis. Throughout the course of the year, there has been an increase in children enrolling across most of these venues. We are seeing a particular increase in two (2) year olds at the Croppa Creek venue.



Educational Program

The program displays the planned learning experiences and program opportunities, including intentional teaching, group time focuses such as transitions, language and music and movement, community, and family collaboration/partnerships. The program reflects children's voices, interests, strengths and needs and allows for spontaneous and child-directed activities. Our programs are focused on the Early Years Learning Framework and childhood theorists and are designed for the specific venues that Tharawonga visits, they are facilitated by a different lead educator on each day so that all educators are collaboratively providing an educational program for the service.

Transition to School Program

Tharawonga builds positive relationships with remote schools where possible. We operate on two school premises, which makes the transition to the school program an easy and effective transition for the children attending formal schooling. Nine children transitioned from Tharawonga to schools for the 2023 year and seven children will transition into school in 2024. Educators completed nine NSW Department of Education Transition to School Statements for the children attending school in 2023. These forms went to five different schools to support the teachers to get to know the children's interests, strengths and needs and share successful strategies. The kindergarten teacher from Gravesend Public School came to visit the Gravesend venue on two different occasions one visit was conducted in the morning and the other in the afternoon to observe the children who were transitioning in 2023 to the Gravesend Public School.

Compliance visit and Assessment & Rating

The service is continuing to work on the feedback that was provided from the assessment and rating visit in mid-2022 and implementing this into the service self-assessment tool, working toward establishing these practices within the service. The service is working collaboratively to continue reviewing and updating the self-assessment documentation in line with current practices and areas that require improvements.

Excursions and events

The rural and remote locations of venues can at times impact what events and excursions are available to the service, where possible, many opportunities are facilitated.

The service has had an annual visit from the STEPs screening program conducted by the representative from the Inverell Community Health Facility. A representative contacts the service and arranges to conduct the vision screening across our venues on all children who are four years old and attending formal school the following year.

We participated in Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, inviting families to our service for a cuppa and fruit and raising funds for the Cancer Council through a gold coin donation. Money raised from this event was forwarded onto the Cancer Council.

The following learning was shared with the children through celebrating significant events and dates.

Dental Week we have had discussions at group times with the children about how to keep our teeth clean and why we ask children to drink water and give their teeth a clean after they eat. We shared with the families a tip sheet and the children were able to colour in a colouring page on dental health.

Book Week each of our venues participated in book week with the children and families going to great efforts to have children dressed up in different costumes each day at the services. The children were given the opportunity to bring in a story that reflected their costume and the educators read the children's stories to them in language group times or at the rest period time.

At each of our venues the children have all participated in **Father's Day** opportunities or for someone special to them. The children were involved in a variety of experiences to celebrate this occasion. The children listened to different titled stories all about Dad's, we had group discussions at language time to ask the children who their dads were and what they do, they made their own wrapping paper for the gifts they created, and using the Bolsa wood to make their dad's or someone special made their own unique gifts.

Children participated in celebrating **Grandparents Day** by making cards and drawing their grandparents in the cards. Educators supported children to label and provide an explanation of their drawing. Families provided their preference for children to mail cards to their grandparents or bring them home to deliver in person.

Tharawonga hosted a **Christmas** party at all venues. The children learned to sing and play bells to "Jingle Bells" and performed the song for their families. Families brought in food to share for afternoon tea, and many families brought significant or cultural dishes that represent the Christmas holiday for them.

The program incorporated Christmas inspired craft, reading stories, and singing carols. Educators are working closely with families to ensure their traditions and culture are represented. Children have brought special books in to share with their peers. We listened to German Christmas Carols from a "toniebox", a special music box that a child brought from home to share. As our service has families enrolled from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Other events that were celebrated at Tharawonga during the last year included:

- Children at Croppa Creek participated in Remembrance Day, reading Lest We Forget and honouring a minute of silence at 11.00am.
- The service celebrated the first day of Autumn by making a collage.
- St. Patrick's Day by learning about the folklore of the leprechaun and crafting rainbows
- Harmony Day by creating a Hands around the World display

- Tharawonga educators supported children to engage in Easter celebrations, providing stories and songs to sing, Easter craft and games to play and individual help to make a very special Easter hat. Keeping in line with our nutrition policy, educators filled plastic eggs with Easter stickers, small chicks and pencils to hide for an Easter hunt.

- In partnership with our Parent Fundraising Community, we were able to bring Reptiles on the Go to most venues. Ben presented a range of Australian animals to the children, asking children about their knowledge and experience with these animals, sharing facts and letting the children touch and hold the animals as appropriate. This incursion was one of the most significant for our year.

- The children made a special gift for their mothers (or significant women in their lives) to celebrate Mother's Day. They filled small bottles with olive oil, cut garlic and rosemary leaves to infuse in the oil and traced their hands to make one-of-a-kind cards. The children shared why they love mum and what makes their mum special.

- Tharawonga invited families to share in morning tea and visit our service during National Families Week. The children drew and painted family portraits to share with their families.

- The service participated in National Simultaneous Story Time reading the story "The Speedy Sloth" written by Rebecca Young. The children then created their own sloth.

Reconciliation Week promoted a variety of experiences for the children to participate in, including Aboriginal puzzles, making tapping sticks with branches and dot painting them, Boomerangs, stone painting, reading cultural stories (Somebody's Land by Adam Goodes) and participating in cultural music and movement experiences. Educators will continue with

a strong focus working toward embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, awareness and actions for reconciliation within our service.

- We connected with several international days of recognition, including World Ocean Day and World Environment Day. Educators programmed group experiences for children to share their knowledge and experiences with the ocean and environment and to learn about ways we can act to protect our Earth's resources.
- Farm Safety Week was highlighted as this is reflected in the communities and is a major part of the family's home culture. The children engaged in meaningful discussions around how we are safe on farms and what we can do to be safe on the farm. We shared a newspaper article from the country leader explaining farm safety and children riding on quad bikes and the dangers these present. The children listened to a story "Boo's Adventures on the farm". This story focuses on dangers on the farm around water areas. The educators provided the children with learning that focused on finding activities that were identified as unsafe on the farm. For the younger children at the service, we had age-appropriate discussions based on safety on the farm and they were able to identify animals that belong on the farm.
- The children engaged in an event with Theresa from Clean Way visiting to educate us about worms and how they help us with sustainable living. We learnt about what foods the worms like to eat and what foods they don't like and how we can use their waste in our gardens.

Graduation

Families were welcomed to the service to be able to participate in a Preschool Graduation Ceremony for children attending school in 2023. Educators presented children with their portfolios and Certificate of Graduation from Tharawonga. Children wore graduation caps and had the opportunity to take photographs with staff and family. Educators also presented children returning to Tharawonga in 2023 with their portfolios and Certificate of Appreciation.

This event allowed for valuable conversation and community engagement with our service in relation to providing feedback for the 2022 year and ideas for 2023.



1

1 The children at North Star working together collaboratively in small groups with the new coloured blocks.



2

2 The educators at Tharawonga conduct group time experiences which reflect on promoting positive language opportunities for the children. Our educator is reading the children a story about feelings to help the children understand how we can express our feelings and what feelings we can have.



3

3 The Educator's provide children with the opportunities to access new resources. These resources can promote many learning opportunities for each child with the experience providing time to develop curiosity, discovering, and exploration.



4

4 Building collaborative partnerships is a very significant part of our service particularly when our service works on school sites that allow this to be facilitated as we are in the shared space.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

During the 2022 / 2023 financial year Council received 47 Development Applications and 11 s4.55 Modifications with a total value of \$11,540,595.00. The types of development applied for were 17 new dwellings/residential accommodation types, 16 applications for residential ancillary developments (such as dwelling additions and alterations, garages, carports verandahs, pergolas, patios, shipping containers and swimming pools), 1 rural subdivision, 4 residential subdivision, 2 farm buildings, a private cemetery, 2 telecommunication towers and 4 applications for the demolition of commercial premises.

Development Locations:

Locality	No	Locality	No	Locality	No	Locality	No
Bingara	23	Coolatai	1	Gravesend	2	North Star	2
Upper Bingara	1	Upper Horton	2	Warialda	16		

The total number of development applications determined for the year was 60 as seen in the below table which also includes various other applications and approvals issued under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

	Development Application		S4.55 Modification Application		Subdivision Certificate	
	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23
Applications Received	70	47	4	11	0	4
Applications Refused	1	1	0	0	0	0
Applications Withdrawn/Closed	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total Applications Approved	54	60	4	10	0	4
Applications Approved by Delegation	54	59	4	10	0	4
Applications Approved by Council	0	0	0	0	0	0
Application Approved by Regional Planning Panel (RPP)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Applications Approved by Private Certifier	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN AGED CARE



NAROO FRAIL AGED CARE FACILITY

2022 / 2023 continued to be a busy time for Aged Care services with Naroo Frail Aged Hostel bed occupancy consistent at 98%-100% and with a current wait list. Management of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases such as influenza has been a priority within the service. Naroo experienced a second COVID-19 outbreak in 2023 and the staff worked tirelessly to keep our residents safe and comfortable in this challenging time.

Below is a list of physical improvements to the facility:

- Purchase and installation of a new S8 Drug safe to comply with regulations on storing of S8 and S4 drugs.
- Purchase of mobile computer and trolley to enable the use of Telehealth to access specialists such as wound specialists for management of resident's wounds and reduce travel for residents.
- Development and implementation of a Palliative care/ End of life trolley for family members to access information regarding End of life, it also includes aromatherapy and music resources
- Purchase of a vaccination fridge to be compliant with storage of medications and vaccines
- Further update of security system to include improved perimeter security and swipe card access for all staff, negating the need for key access and therefore reducing the costs associated with a key system.
- Chefs and kitchen staff have completed the 12 modules of Maggie Beer Education to enhance the food and dining experience here at Naroo.
- Succession Planning Funding - Recruitment and Expressions Of Interest (EOI) sent out to all staff. Successful applicant Alison Froome has commenced education and mentoring in the position of Acting Manager for Naroo Frail Aged Hostel.
- Electronic Medication System - decreasing medication safety risks, such as inconsistencies between prescriber records and paper medication charts, also lessening time spent by suppliers reconciling these differences. Increasing visibility of residents' medication record for prescribers, pharmacists, and aged care staff. Timely provision of medications. Alerts to advise allergies or medication interactions, and reminders of new prescriptions or follow up consultations. Reducing administration burden for aged care providers, prescribers, and pharmacists. Reducing the number of daily medications taken by an individual (polypharmacy).
- Bladder scanner and Clinical urinalysis.
- Increased cleaning hours - because of ongoing challenges with managing COVID-19 and other infectious diseases the cleaning hours at Naroo have been extended to 7 days per week providing a safe and clean environment for our residents.
- Manual Handling equipment – hover matt, Raisor chair, stand up and sling lifters.
- Bariatric equipment – new day care chair and bariatric bed
- Purchase of new stand up and Bariatric weigh scales
- Implementation of new electronic rostering system.

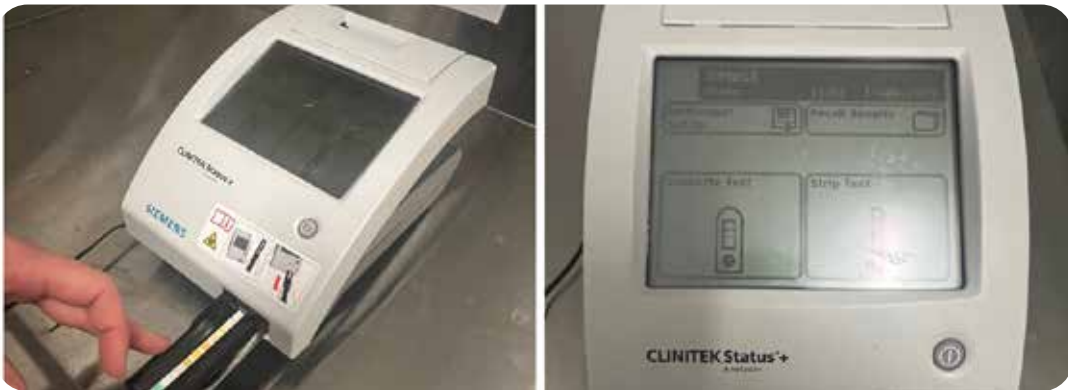
SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS

ACAR Grant

A grant submission was submitted under the ACAR Commonwealth Government grants and was originally successful for \$493,215.00 in September 2022. Following this submission, it was recognised by the Department that there was an error in submission at the Department level and in March 2023 there was a reallocation of funding to the total of \$1,520,000.00. This grant will be used to improve the interior courtyard and refurbish the High Care (Dementia wing) to be more homelike, incorporating a kitchen, lounge and dining area and music/TV room. The project is being managed by Constructive Dialogue. Nick Seeman who is the Director of Constructive Dialogue is also heavily involved with Dementia Australia and environmental planning in aged care facilities throughout Australia.

Naroo Advisory Committee

Naroo Frail Aged Care are fortunate to have a very active and supportive fundraising committee and have provided financial support for many things to enhance the lives of the residents residing at Naroo. One of these was the purchase of a bladder scanner which allows the Registered Nurses to assess residents' clinical needs correctly and access timely intervention as required. The committee meets quarterly and are very supportive to the Aged Care Manager and the cares of the residents at Naroo. The committee also organised an open day to showcase Naroo Frail Aged facility on the March 18th, 2023, and was very successful with over 100 community members attending.



Clinitest urinalysis machine



Bladder Scanner

Vaccination Fridge

Business Improvement Fund Round 2

An application was submitted and successful for the Business Improvement Fund (BIF) Round 2 of \$284,100.00. This funding has been utilised by purchasing manual handling equipment including bariatric equipment, building works and purchase of a Rhapsody bathing system, upgrade to security system and implementation of an electronic rostering system.

Bingara CHSP Annual Report 2022 / 2023

The past year has been positive as we adjust to living life with COVID-19, and we can resume the activities we enjoyed before the pandemic.

During the year we visited the Delungra Pub for lunch. Clients also enjoyed a BBQ on the banks of the Gwydir River and picnic on the Golf Course. Lunches were held at the Imperial Hotel and the Sportsman Hotel. The Ladies visited the Bingara Sporting Club for Lunch at the Chinese restaurant.

Celebrations were held for special events such as Halloween, Melbourne Cup, Christmas, Australia Day, St Patrick's Day, Anzac Day, Easter, Mother's Day and a monthly Birthday Party on the last Tuesday of the month for everyone who celebrated their birthday during that month. We had the pleasure of hosting a 99th birthday Party for one of our beloved regular clients.

CHSP Staff attended NSW Transport Forums which are always very informative. They also hosted a regional Meals on Wheels Forum which had been postponed multiple times due to COVID-19 outbreaks and wet weather. Staff also updated their First Aid certifications.

The Bingara CHSP Lingerlonger room has been host to free chair exercise classes conducted by Dale Hartin from ReHealth in Moree. Two six-week blocks of classes have been held during this year and have become increasingly popular. Numbers grew to ten in total by the end of the second block. We hope the classes will continue in the future.

While attending morning tea/lunch, the ladies have continued their knitting. They have contributed to some very worthwhile causes while doing something they love. The many squares knitted by the ladies were sent to "Wrapped with Love" and made into blankets. The finished products are distributed to homeless people. Baby jackets, beanies and booties knitted were sent to "Life's Little Treasures" for premature babies.

Transport to out of town medical appointments has continued to be very busy. During 2022 / 2023 1,998 trips were made to medical appointments in Inverell, Tamworth, Armidale and Moree. Eight (8) DVA clients had 208 trips during this time as well. Bingara CHSP is supported by 15 Volunteers who have remained devoted to the cause looking after our clients in an exceptional manner.

The Access Bus travelled to Inverell twice a month and made a couple of trips to Tamworth. The bus was also utilised for medical appointments when both other vehicles were in use.

Local transport has increased this year as more people become aware of the service.

Meals on Wheels service has serviced up to twenty-four (24) clients at one time during the past twelve months, levelling at seventeen clients at the end of the financial year. Salads have become increasingly popular all year round. We have been joined by eight (8) new volunteers for the Meals on Wheels deliveries. During the year, 3,263 meals were delivered to 37 Clients.

Social Support of 6,287 hours was given to 124 clients by staff and volunteers by way of Transport, Group Social Support, Meals on Wheels and Local Transport. There were 368 meals served in Centre to 15 clients and there were many laughs shared during Centre Based Day Care held every Tuesday.

Warialda & Delungra CHSP

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) provides services to clients in and around our Local Government Area.

The Warialda CHSP Coordinator would like to take this opportunity to say that our services would not survive without our volunteers who help daily & throughout the year. Our Volunteers enjoy interacting with clients when delivering services like Meals on Wheels to our clients, and quite frequently this interaction is the only access to human contact some people have on a regular basis. So to our volunteers, we Thank You!

The supply of services for clients can be long or short term and include Meal on Wheels (MOW) delivery, Day Centre meals and activities, transport both locally and out of town for appointments and Social Support, both individual and group support. Some of our outings during the reporting period included fortnightly trips to Inverell, monthly birthday celebrations for any client having a birthday that month - the birthday people are treated to a free lunch when they visit the Centre for the celebration, - Regular monthly events are celebrated throughout the year, for example Easter, Christmas, Melbourne Cup among a few! Our Carers luncheon is also a special celebration, and this year was hosted at the Commercial Hotel in Warialda. These services are all a part of the CHSP Wellness and Reablement Initiative.

Part of our service is the compliance and reporting required. Some of which include but is not limited to:

DEX (Data Exchange) reporting sent monthly, six monthly & annually.

- Wellness and Reablement report
- Client Care Plans continually updated throughout the year.
- Clients have signed the Charter of Aged Care Rights.

Some statistics of our services can be found in the table below for the 2022 / 2023 reporting period.

Warialda/Delungra Day Centers	Warialda	Delungra
Clients receiving service	103	17
Transport trips provided (one way)	534	30
Meals provided in home	2200	-
Meals provided at centers	1938	482
Group social support	4035	1404
Individual social support	1081	168
Volunteers	36 x 4835 hours	1 x 1826 hours
Outings	4	2

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN **BUILDING SERVICES**

Our Achievements in Building Services

Council's Building Services Business Unit comprises five full time, 1 part time (shared resource), 1 school-based trainee and 1 apprentice staff members and is responsible for, but not limited to providing the following services to the community:

- Building approvals, certification, and inspections
- Swimming pool compliance and inspections
- Sanitary plumbing and drainage approvals and inspections
- Building repairs and maintenance
- Capital works construction

Building Certification and inspections

Building Services staff provide an effective and affordable building approval, certification, and inspection service to the community. Services extend to the assessment and issuing of construction certificates, complying development certificates, building certificates and occupation certificates. Staff also carry out critical stage mandatory building inspections during the building process to ensure that buildings and structures are compliant, safe, and fit for purpose.



Our Business Unit provides information and advice to members of our community in relation to various building related issues, including lodgment of applications on the NSW Planning Portal.

Building Services staff respond to complaints received in relation to illegal development, building safety and other matters and carry out investigations and enforcement action where necessary.

Swimming Pool Inspections

Building Services have a private swimming pool inspection program in place where all known swimming pools in Gwydir Shire are inspected once every three years. The program is designed to ensure that owners of private swimming pools maintain their pools and pool barriers in an effective manner to ensure the safety of all pool users.

We are now in our 6th year of swimming pool inspections with every known swimming pool within Gwydir Shire having been inspected at least twice. In the 2022 / 23 financial year Council inspectors carried out 33 pool inspections. Of those 33 inspections, 27 pools were found to be compliant on the 1st inspection. Of the 6 non-compliant pools, 2 were de-commissioned with the remaining 4 pools found to be compliant after minor works and re-inspection.

Sanitary plumbing and drainage approvals and inspections

Gwydir Shire Council is the delegated authority by Fair Trading NSW to issue approvals for and inspections of sanitary plumbing and drainage within the Gwydir Shire Local Government Area. This includes the installation of all sanitary plumbing and drainage and includes the installation of on-site sewerage management systems (OSSM) where there is no access to a reticulated sewer system.

Council regularly conducts inspections on OSSM systems for the sale of properties to ensure that systems have been installed properly and are operating effectively to ensure health of the occupants, adjoining properties, and the environment. All sanitary plumbing and drainage work must be carried out by an appropriately licensed plumber.

Building Repairs and Maintenance

Building Services continues to carry out planned maintenance activities and, during the reporting period, responded to reactive repairs and maintenance requests across approximately 200 Council owned building assets. Staff also responded to after-hours security calls and emergency repairs to Council buildings.

Capital Works

The majority of our regular Capital Works program for 2022 / 2023 was again deferred to allow Building Services staff to undertake projects under the Stronger Country Communities Grant Funding program and other Grant funded projects.

Capital works projects completed included:

- Warialda Administration Centre – Refurbishment of Council Chambers
- The Living Classroom – Extension of deck off bunkhouse and erection of awning
- Bingara Preschool – Additions and alterations
- Warialda Showground – Construction of new accessible amenities
- Warialda Recreation Ground – Canteen renovation and upgrade.

Training

Council's Building Services staff continue to undergo mandatory training to ensure their ability to maintain a safe and compliant workforce which includes:

- Safe working within proximity of power lines training
- First Aid training
- Asbestos removal
- Working at heights.

Staff also participated in CPD training to ensure their ability to maintain accreditation where required under relevant legislation.

Summary



Below left: Warialda Showground amenities. Right: Living Classroom Bunkhouse deck

The Building Services Business Unit continues to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other Business Units within Gwydir Shire Council to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of our goals for our community.

We have commenced work on a number of exciting projects that we look forward to delivering in the 2023 / 24 financial year. There are a number of other Capital Works projects that are in the planning stages which we hope to add to our works program for the future. We look forward to reporting on these projects in the next annual report.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Biosecurity Priority Weeds

As we enter the third year of the Council's 5 year Weed Action Plan, Officers continue their regular inspections, community education, weed control and weed identification. The Shire's property owners are working closely with Council to identify and control weeds across the Shire which is divided into 5 management areas. This partnership is of paramount importance in guaranteeing any weed outbreaks are responded to effectively and ensuring new, invasive species are identified and eradicated before they can establish themselves in the Shire.

The year welcomed two new Biosecurity Officers to the Gwydir Shire Council team, both of whom have undergone extensive training and have been able to hit the ground running.

This year, Council received grant funding from the Australian Government's Murray Darling Healthy Rivers Program. The Biosecurity Officers were able to utilise this funding to inject herbicide capsules into weed trees along the Gwydir River. This method effectively eliminates any overspray and residual herbicide in the surrounding aquatic environment and soil making it a great method to maintain the biodiversity in the riparian zone. This treatment allows for the weed to die in situ and maintain any stability its structure provides whilst other plants can be established organically. This method is particularly helpful in riparian environments where it mitigates bank stability issues that may arise with other weed control methods.

Parthenium outbreak at Croppa Creek

The major Parthenium outbreak that was identified at Croppa Creek saw a coordinated response which involved the Weeds Unit and Local Land Services. Although parthenium plants continue to be detected, the three-week inspection cycle conducted by councils officers has had a major impact in disrupting the growth cycle of the weed before it can set seed. By stopping the germination cycle there has been a significant reduction in the number of parthenium plants in the identified areas.

The Parthenium outbreak at Croppa Creek was a high priority this year for the Gwydir Shire's Biosecurity team and we are grateful to the Department of Primary Industries for the additional funding provided to manage this weed.

In addition to the hands on spraying and monitoring of weeds, councils biosecurity officers also manage the Chartis software for Global Positioning System that captures and reports weeds data to the standards required by the Department of Primary Industry (DPI), enabling best practice management and control of weeds across the shire

This year priority weeds were successfully controlled in hotspots identified around the Shire and across our road network by working in close partnership with the Department of Primary Industries, Local Lands Service, Landcare and bordering shires. Importantly the Harissia Cactus containment line at North Star was held, with control works being carried out across the area. Staff continue to attend the Harrisia working group meetings.

Biocontrol Program

The weeds unit in partnership with Landcare, run Cochineal bug propagation in the purpose-built greenhouse at The Living Classroom. Bugs are available for landholders to control Tiger Pear, Rope Pear and Prickly Pear. Work was also done on reviving colonies of biocontrol agents for Blue Heliotrope. Biological control continues to be monitored on Cat's Claw Creeper on the Gwydir River in Gravesend.

Private works

There were two private works undertaken for the period:

Residential landholder Bingara Village general weed control \$75.00 December 2022

Crown Lands Gulf Creek Mine site St Johns Wort control \$1,040.50 in January 2023

Compliance and Regulatory Control

The compliance team recruited a new Compliance Officer to the team towards the end of the period. He has settled in well and learnt the ropes under the guidance of the current Compliance Officer.

Riverside Camping

The Department conducted camping inspections along the Gwydir River to ensure that camping is being conducted in a safe and environmentally sustainable manner. Inspections of camping areas are undertaken daily through the working week, with Compliance Officers providing a welcome face and answering enquiries from campers about the area. The Shire collected \$5,830 from the four donation boxes across the camping grounds. This is an increase from \$4,064 for the year before.

Across the year there was a daily average of 16 caravans and motorhomes visiting the Gwydir River campgrounds. This was a drop of about 16 per cent from the previous year. There was a major river rise in 2022 that caused flooding in both late September and again in late October. At which time the river camps were closed for safety reasons. The campgrounds were evacuated, and some campers relocated for a temporary stay at Bicentennial Park. The majority of those in the park then went onto the CMCA rally at the Bingara Showground, with a small number of campers staying in the park until the end of the month. The river rise emergency management process was executed without any loss of life or property to campers being recorded.

After the October river rise the camps were closed for a short period of time to allow them to dry out. A complete inspection was conducted prior to reopening with a small number of signage needing repair. Collections of plant based debris was washed downstream that collected around trees and shrubs and with the force and volume of the dam water a handful of trees along the river were uprooted and transported rocks and sediment displaced. In some places this altered the shape of the lower flow banks.

There were no other major incidents in the camping areas. There have been minimal camps set up outside the designated areas with six camping complaints received.

General behaviour of campers was compliant and there were no public order or safety issues.

Animal Management

Regulatory officers seized 14 dogs that were microchipped and registered with current owner contact information. This enabled their canine friends to be successfully reunited with their owners rather than going to the pound. A further seven dogs were seized and transferred to the impounding facility. Four dogs were successfully rehomed within the area and the other three went to rehoming organisations. The staff have networked with several rehoming organisations across the state to ensure that the maximum number of unclaimed suitable pets find new homes. Council

is pleased to report that it has successfully met all the new rehoming requirement introduced in the Companion Animals Act.

During the year 12 dog barking noise complaints were reported and investigated. There were ten dog roaming reports, nine nuisance dog reports and four reports about cats that were investigated and actioned. The Regulatory Officers seized four domestic cats, two being returned to their owners and two being rehomed within the area. Feral cat control continued at the landfills as well as cat traps set and monitored throughout the Shire.

Vehicles and property

Routine surveillance was conducted at rest stops for litter and truck effluent release. Council received three abandoned vehicle reports. These unclaimed vehicles did not reach the required value threshold and were taken to the landfill for scrap as provided for under the Impounding Act and the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act that came into force on 1 November 2022.

During the period there were no non-companion animals impounded. Two grazing permit concurrences were processed for the period compared to nil for the proceeding period and two for the one before that. 12 nuisance animal reports were investigated. These comprised of four cattle roaming complaints, two for horses, four roosters, one for goats, two chicken and one rabbit. Council also issued two notices of intention that required fencing to prevent stock escaping which both went to order.

Council received 27 overgrown and untidy block reports in the reporting period. These were inspected along with proactive patrol of the villages and 18 notices of intention were issued. 15 of these went to order. The Council also issued two notices of intention that required fencing to prevent stock escaping which both went to order.

Dog Attack Statistics

Known dog attacks reported and investigated by Council's Regulatory Officers are entered into the Companion Animals Database, in accordance with the requirements of the Companion Animals Act 1998. During 2022 - 2023 there was one incident involving one dog reported to Council. This incident was investigated and reported through the Companion Animals Database portal. All incidents were resolved.

The Ranger's attended the Ranger's Conference in Parramatta. At the conference the Rangers receive up to date legislative developments and participate in professional development workshops.

Penalty Notices

Companion Animals Act

One for an owner not in control of a dog in a public place
Three for owners of dogs who rushes or attacks

Local Government Act

Six for failing to comply with order, overgrown, untidy allotment
One for failing to comply with terms of notice

Protection of the Environment Operations

Under the Act

One for not complying with requirement to supply information about waste

Under the Clean Air Regulation

One for Burning without approval

Legal Proceedings

Council successfully defended a court nomination challenging a penalty infringement notice issued for not complying with an order for an overgrown allotment. No legal fees were incurred.

Water sampling

Weekly water sampling was conducted for Bingara and Warialda, fortnightly for Gravesend and monthly for North Star as per the NSW Health requirements. The sampling is undertaken by the Council’s Compliance team

Public Health (Food)

All 27 high-risk food businesses had an annual inspection, except for the school canteens. Mobile food vans and stalls operating in the shire were also inspected. The yearly food inspection survey was completed and submitted to the Food Authority.

Information was distributed to food businesses including food authority fact sheets and a regional food safety calendar. People seeking information about starting a food retail business, mobile and home food businesses were given the relevant information. One complaint was received for the period. It was investigated and the appropriate actions were taken. Staff attended regional meetings and training sessions with the Food Authority.

Electricity

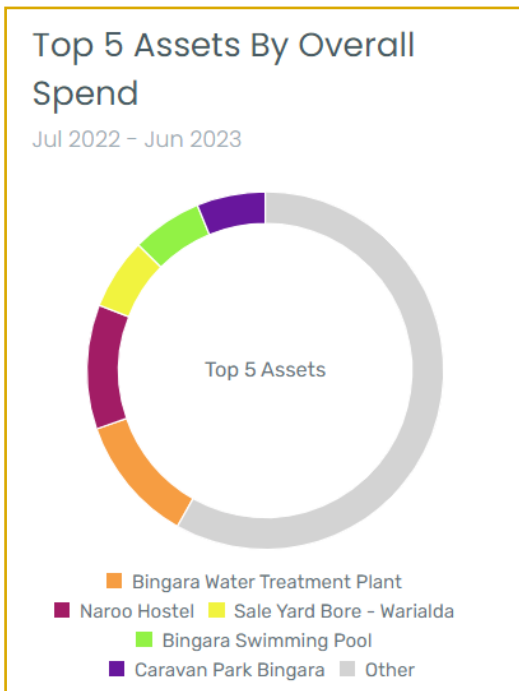
Electricity consumption continues to be monitored through the Azility portal. The total electricity usage was 6332 Gj (1,758,918kWh) this is an increase of 5%. However the expenditure was up 25% for a total cost of \$558,723. This is an increase in costs from last year of \$110,369. Despite having the best available market price through Local Government Procurement, increases across the board for electricity were unavoidable.

Annual Electricity Usage and Cost

Financial Year Name	Electricity Usage (kWh)	Electricity Cost (\$)	Percentage Change Electricity Cost
2018-2019	2,006,676	\$570,310.00	0%
2019-2020	1,937,058	\$536,824.00	-6%
2020-2021	1,782,670	\$498,839.00	-7%
2021-2022	1,669,299	\$448,354.00	-10%
2022-2023	1,758,918	\$558,723.00	25%

Council’s 3 large sites (Naroo, Bingara Water Treatment Plant and the Warialda Sale Yard Bore) and street lighting are contracted through Shell, and all small user sites are through AGL. The contracts are made through Local Government Procurement who negotiate for the best price and stability in the volatile energy market. The top 5 sites for power costs are Bingara Water Treatment Plant, Naroo Hostel, The Sale Yard Bore for Warialda water supply, Bingara Memorial Baths and Bingara Caravan Park.

Solar systems are operational at Naroo Hostel, Warialda Council Chambers, Warialda Works Depot, Warialda Sewerage Treatment Works and the Roxy Theatre Complex, The Living Classroom and Bingara Wastewater Treatment Plant.



Cemeteries

Annual cemetery reporting was completed for the period for all nine cemeteries under council's control, whether operating or closed. Of the active cemeteries in the Local Government Area (LGA), the total internments were 39 for the period, 18 burials at Warialda Cemetery and two internments in the Warialda columbarium. There were 18 burials at Bingara Cemetery and one internment in the Bingara columbarium. There was no activity at any private cemeteries.

Council's Cemetery Policy has been comprehensively updated along with the associated cemetery administration forms.

A request was completed to the lessee of the Travelling Stock Route (TSR) to fence the Gravesend Mountain Cemetery to exclude stock and preserve the site.

The Warialda Pioneer Cemetery changed its status to prevent off leash dogs from accessing the site. A new sign was erected reflecting this and the site's name being confirmed as 'Pioneer Cemetery' from 'Heritage Park'.

Waste Collection

Collection reminders and education have been sent via push notification through Council's waste application. The education campaign targets improvement of recycling habits and increased use of Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bins. There were minimal changes to the collection per service over the period.

- An average of 340 kg per service was collected in the Red bin over 1563 services up from 329 kg up, +3%.
- An average of 108 kg per service was collected in the Yellow bin over 1563 services down from 112 kg, -3%.
- An average of 141 kg per service was collected in the Green bin over 1373 services down from 147 kg, -4%.

The continued drop in recycling was expected with better diversion through the container deposit scheme. The minor decline in green bin mass may be due to a drier climate over that time. This reinforces the need for ongoing education to a better uptake across the resource recovery for Organics and Recyclables.

This period also saw the tendering for a new waste collection and processing provider as the current 10-year contract comes to an end.

Community Consultation Streetlight Recommendations

The Environmental team conducted community consultation for new streetlight recommendations during this year. In total, seven community members commented, with six replying via email and one via Facebook. Five of the respondents suggested multiple streetlight proposals within North Star, Bingara and Warialda, one requested the council repair an existing inoperable streetlight in Warialda, and one suggested no further streetlights in Queen Street, Warialda.

Council has submitted the first nine recommendations as per Essential Energy requirements, targeting high priority areas including the Bingara and Warialda Hospitals.

Solar system relocation quote

During the reporting period, two solar installation businesses from Inverell supplied quotes to remove and relocate the solar array from the Bingara Council Office to the Bingara Library. Relocation has been put on hold based on the community submission process on the building.

Warialda Creek Plan of Management

During the period, the Plan of Management for Warialda Creek was presented to the council, seeking approval for public display. Approval was granted.

The Plan of Management for Warialda Creek has now been collated with the draft Gwydir Generic Plan of Management covering all parks and reserves where the council is nominated as Council Crown Land Manager.

Part 5 Assessments

Across the year, several Part 5-Review of Environmental Factors were completed, which assessed the potential of environmental impacts arising from construction activities. Approval was granted for the new amenities block at Warialda Showground, the Warialda Creek footpath and the Warialda Childrens Bicycle Safety Park.

Koala Park Wildlife Reserve

The Koala Park Wildlife Reserve was officially opened by Mayor, John Coulton, on June 7, 2023. The park has interpretative signage detailing the creation of the reserve, its features as well as Koala ecology and is a must visit for visiting family and tourists.

Council has recently been in discussion with several key stakeholders including Landcare, North West Koala Arks, and knowledgeable individuals in this field, requesting the development of a management plan. The plan will define project goals, management procedures, mitigation of threats/ such as feral animals (cats, foxes, cane toads, plant species) and highlight further improvements required to the area.

The Koala Park Wildlife Reserve will also be featured on the newly updated Gwydir Shire tourism website.



Above: John Hodge and Mayor, John Coulton officially open the Warialda Koala Wildlife Reserve

Australian Koala Foundation Koala Kiss Project

The Environmental and Compliance teams attended The Koala Kiss Project two-day workshop hosted by the Australian Koala Foundation in February 2023. At the workshop, both teams learned about “kiss points” with the first one proposed for Warialda.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN TOWN UTILITIES

Gwydir Shire Council provides water supply to Bingara, Warialda, Gravesend and North Star. Bingara's water supply is sourced from the Gwydir River via bank infiltration chamber; the water is then treated using a dissolved air floatation/filtration process and disinfected with chlorine before delivery to reservoirs where the water gravitates to users.

Warialda's water supply is sourced from groundwater from five (5) bores. The water is aerated and disinfected with sodium hypochlorite before being delivered to residents.

Gravesend's water supply is sourced from the Gwydir River via bank infiltration bores located north-east of Gravesend township. The water is disinfected with sodium hypochlorite before being delivered to residents.

North Star's water supply is sourced from sub-artesian ground water. The water is aerated and then treated using a Reverse Osmosis process and disinfection with sodium hypochlorite before being delivered to users.

Water Operations and Maintenance

A total of 630ML of water was treated and delivered across Gwydir Shire during the 2022 - 2023 year.

- 1 new water connection was installed during 2022 - 23
- 14 water service lines were replaced from main to meter
- 144 service lines repaired
- 91 water meters replaced
- 34 water main break repairs
- 25 water meter isolating taps replaced
- 196m water main replaced
- 180m new water main installed at Dunrobyn Road Gravesend.

Council's four (4) water supplies operate under a Drinking Water Quality Management System which involves placement of multiple barriers of protection to ensure water quality is maintained. Inspection and testing of water quality occurs daily, and protocols are followed. As an independent check, Council's Environmental Department collects water samples from the reticulation system of the four (4) supplies and these samples are provided to the NSW Health Laboratory for analysis.

In 2022 - 23 there was one (1) emergency water quality incident at Gravesend as a result of the flooding of the Gwydir River causing high turbidity in the river. A Boiled Water Alert was issued on 20 September 2022 and lifted on 1st December 2022.

Ongoing flooding in October 2022 caused electrical issues preventing pumping and emergency water restrictions had to be implemented on the township of Gravesend. Water was trucked from Warialda to Gravesend to maintain sufficient water supply for Gravesend residents from 24th to 29th October 2022. These water restrictions were lifted on 29th October 2022.

Water Charges

Water charges have an access and a usage component with a two-part tariff. Water usage less than 600 kL is charged at \$1.60 / kL and water usage over 600 kL is charged at \$2.15 / kL. Water meter reading and billing are undertaken on a quarterly basis.



Gravesend switchboard replacement



Gravesend bore replacement

Grant Funding

Council received funding from NSW Department of Planning and Environment (NSW DPE) to undertake a Bulk Water Metering Project, which involves calibration of Bingara Water Treatment Plant raw and clear water meters. The replacement of reservoir meters at Gravesend, Bingara, Warialda South, Warialda North and North Star. Including a new meter at North Star Water Treatment Plant. The project total was \$165,000 with \$148,950.00 funded by NSW DPE. The aim of the project is to monitor water usage and identify water losses.

Council received funding from NSW Department of Planning and Environment (NSW DPE) to undertake a Gravesend Water Treatment Plant options assessment study. The aim of the study is to recommend a suitable water treatment process and concept design that will enable Council to go to tender for the design and construction of a water treatment plant in 2024.

Water Supply Capital Improvements in 2022 - 2023 included:

- Water meter replacement program
- Land acquisition adjacent Bingara Water Treatment Plant
- New air compressor and chemical dosing lines at Bingara Water Treatment Plant
- Colourbond sheeting of the north wall chemical shed
- Telemetry upgrade – Warialda south reservoir
- Replacement submersible pump at Gravesend
- Replacement of 100m water main Halls Creek
- Water main extension 180m – DunRobyn Road Gravesend
- Bulk metering program.



Warialda South Reservoir outlet meter

Sewerage Systems

Gwydir Shire Council operates two (2) sewerage systems. Warialda's sewerage system was built in 1969 - 70 with a design size of 1500 EP (equivalent population). Warialda operates under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Licence L584 for small treatment plants with an allowable discharge of 250 mL per year into Reedy Creek. The yearly inflow into the sewerage treatment was 171ML with 31ML of treated effluent being recycled and used on the local golf course to irrigate fairways and tees.

Bingara's sewerage system was commissioned in 1971 and has a design capacity of 2000 EP. The Bingara system operates under EPA Licence L586 for small treatment plants with an allowable

discharge of 250 mL per year into the Gwydir River. The inflow for Bingara Sewerage Treatment Plant for 2022 - 23 was 46ML and 8ML of treated effluent was recycled and used onsite.

Council undertakes monthly testing of samples from both Bingara and Warialda sewerage discharge to comply with the EPA standards. These results are published on Council's website. Council's residential sewer access charge is \$625 per annum and the non-residential sewer access charge is \$555 per annum. Non-residential sewer customers also pay a usage charge based on their water consumption and a sewer discharge factor. Non-residential customers have a trade waste charge levied each year.

Sewer Operation and Maintenance

Council water and sewer operators undertook the following repairs in 2022 - 23.

- 81 sewer blocks
- 36 sewer pump blockages
- Repaired 15 sewer mains.

Grant Funding

- Nil

Sewer Operations Capital Works during 2022 - 23

- 180m Ridley Street sewer extension
- Warialda - 800m sewer mains relined
- Sewer main extension Keera Lane
- Warialda STP trickle filter refurbishment
- Bingara SPS 3 – switchboard replacement
- Bingara SPS 3 – pump replacement
- Warialda STP – Pond pump replacement
- North and East Bingara Pressure sewer project commenced.



Pressure sewer pump stations



Northern wall at Bingara water treatment plant

Warialda Truck Wash Facility

The Warialda truck wash facility was used by 1,518 trucks between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, averaging 126 trucks per month with an average wash down time of 60 minutes. An average of 815kL of water was used per month.

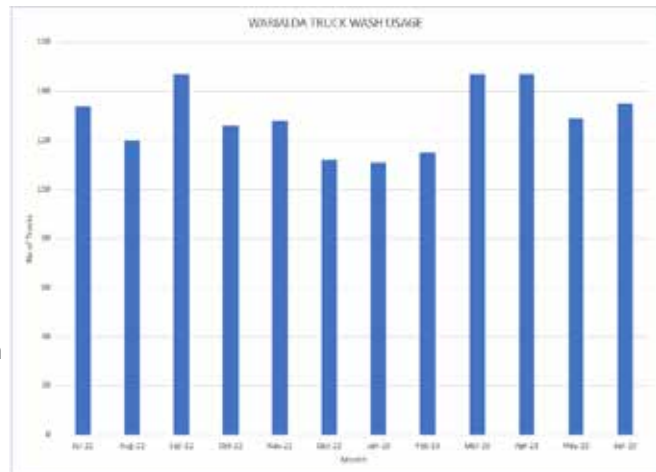
Truck wash usage 2022-23

The truck wash hours of operation are from 6am to 11pm with the amenities building open 24 hours / day accessed using the AVDATA fob. This appears to have minimal effect on the truck wash facility.



*Above left: Pond 1
Above middle: Pond 2
Above right: Trees*

The truck wash evaporation ponds were treated with Diatomix to promote good algae growth and this treatment has made a considerable improvement on the water quality and odour control. Fifty Kings Park Special callistemons were planted on the western perimeter fence.



Parks and Gardens

Gwydir Shire Council operates and maintains fifteen (15) parks, three (3) sporting fields, eleven (11) playgrounds, twelve (12) reserves and numerous gardens.

Two (2) separate work crews operate in the north and south of the Shire. The northern crew maintains parks and gardens in the Warralda, Warralda Rail, Gravesend, Coolatai and North Star areas. The southern crew maintains parks and gardens in Bingara, Upper Horton, the Glacial Area and Myall Creek Memorial site. Facilities in these areas are frequented by numerous visitors and Council aims to keep these areas in prime condition. During the cooler months gardeners undertake tree trimming, stump grinding and maintenance activities.

Retaining walls were erected and trees were planted at All Abilities in Warralda, finishing the project.

Below left: retaining wall at All Abilities Park. Middle: street tree planting and guards. Right: herbicide spraying for clover control.



Gwydir Oval, Bingara

The number two playing field at Gwydir oval had under ground irrigation installed in 2022 - 23 period, The electronically controlled irrigation for night watering has improved watering efficiency and operator manual handling.



No 2 Oval underground irrigation



Maitland Street trees

Town Beautification

Council is undertaking a yearly tree planting and replacement program. A total of 186 advanced trees were planted across the shire in the 2022 - 23 period. The trees were a variety of native Eucalyptus trees, Claret Ash, Golden Ash, October Glory, Tristaniopsis Laurina (water gum) and Chinese Pistachio.

Bingara Showground

Gwydir Shire Council is the trustee for Crown Land Reserve D560019 Bingara Showground. The Showground is maintained by Council in consultation with six main user groups: Bingara Show Society, Bingara Pony Club, Bingara Polocrosse, Bingara Jockey Club, Gwydir River Run and Bingara Campdraft. The Showground is popular for holding large regional equestrian events due the size and excellent facilities available onsite. A number of scheduled events were held during the 2022 - 23 year:

- State Showjumping July 2022
- Bingara Races
- Auction Sale
- 2023 Bingara Show
- Stockman's Challenge
- Dog Trial
- Bingara 2022 Pony Camp
- Pony Club 2023 Mini Camp
- Bingara Campdraft
- Numerous one day equestrian events

Bingara Showground was host to the annual Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) during October 2022. Approximately 605 motorhomes attended the rally. Pictured below left.

Drainage work was undertaken on the Bingara Showground to alleviate wet areas affecting events including the racetrack. Pictured below right.



Grant Funding

Batterham's Lookout improvements under Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase 1 were completed. These improvements consisted of replacing the guardrail, carpark fencing, signage, picnic shelter, tables and chairs.



Batterham's Lookout Picnic shelter



Batterham's Lookout guardrail

Gravesend Recreation Ground

An underground irrigation system and Rhino tank were installed at Gravesend Recreation Ground under Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Phase 3



Gravesend Recreation Ground Rhino tank



Covered netball courts at Gwydir Oval

Regional Sports Facility Program

A covered netball court adjacent to Gwydir Oval was installed during the reporting period. The facility is a great asset for the community and can be utilised for multiple functions in addition to netball.

Skate Park

Council obtained funding under NSW Open Spaces Program to construct a skate park in Cunningham Park, Bingara. The project will be constructed in the 2023 - 24 period as there is a high demand for skate park construction across the state and the contractor Council have engaged is completing a similar project.

Gwydir River Foreshore

Substantial damage was sustained along the Gwydir River in Bingara during the September / October 2022 flooding.

The copious rainfall combined with regular large releases from Copeton Dam during September resulted in the flooding of waterways and Gwydir River. The debris washed down in floodwaters

caused the pontoon on the river at Bingara to be damaged and subsequently washed away. While the pontoon has remained in place for previous flood events, the extraordinary releases from Copeton Dam saw the river peak at >5m during September, and the constant force of the floodwaters, along with a log caught between the walkways proved too great, shearing the aluminum from the anchor points of the pontoon.

Further flooding in October caused the much loved and popular 'Fairy Tree' to lose its footing and fall into the river. Councils garden staff relocated picnic shelters and replaced damaged fences after the flood. Remediation work of the site will be undertaken in the 2023 - 24 period.



*Above left: Inundation of the Gwydir River foreshore in Bingara (taken in August before the flood).
Right: Pontoon on Gwydir River at 5m - 23 September 2022*

Workshop and Plant

Council operates two workshops. The Wialalda workshop operates from the Wialalda Depot with a Workshop Supervisor, two fulltime mechanics, one fabricator/welder, an apprentice mechanic and a school-based trainee mechanic.

The Bingara workshop consists of a Workshop Supervisor, trades assistant and school-based trainee mechanic.

During 2022 - 23 the workshops completed 358 services and carried out a total of 1528 repairs to individual items of plant.

Council's fabrication section constructed a new frame for the switchboard at the Gravesend water supply, koala water covers, depth gauges for causeways, Gravesend's irrigation pump shed and regular plant welding repairs.

New workshop tools and equipment purchased during the reporting period included:

- Air conditioning maintenance station.



Council's heavy plant fleet consists of the following equipment:

Description	Number	Trucks	Number
Graders	7	Primemover/lowloader	1
Excavators	4	Primemover/Side tipping trailers	3
Front end Loaders	3	Tip truck and pig trailer	3
Backhoes	3	Jetpatcher	2
Skid Steer Loader/sweeper	2	Watercarts	5
Rollers – smooth drum	3	Lime Spreader	1
Roller – padfoot	2	Medium tipper trucks	5
Roller – rubber tyred	1	Light trucks	5
Tractor – Grid roller combination	3		
Tractor – Slasher combinations	5		
Compactor – Landfill	1		
Rock Crusher	1		
Road Reclaimer	1		

Three of Council's graders are now equipped with grade control equipment, introducing technology into the road construction process, leading to more accurate road construction and design and minimising material wastage.

The Ecombi roller (previous page) has been purchased for maintenance of gravel roads towed behind grader. Roads crews are open to new methods of road maintenance that help maintain Council's road to an excellent standard.

Plant replacement Program

The following new items of plant were purchased in 2022 – 23:

P2051 – Hyundai Tucson for Bingara Commonwealth Home Support Program

P2052 – Triton ute for North Star

P2053 – Triton ute

P2054 - Toro mower 7210

P2055 – Toro mower 4800

P2056 – Kia Sportage SX

P2057 – Kubota u55-4 Mini excavator

P2058 – zero turn mower for Naroo

P2059 – JCB Backhoe

P2060 – Skid Steer road broom attachment



- P2061 – Ford Ranger utility
- P2062 – box trailer (Bingara Op Shop)
- P2063 – Mitsubishi Triton utility
- P2064 – ECombi roller multi tyred/ smooth drum (second hand)
- P2065 – Skid Steer - mulching slasher (Bingara Sewerage Treatment Plant)
- P2067 – Toyota Hilux Utility
- P2068 – Mitsubishi Triton Utility
- P2069 – Isuzu Mux
- P2070 – solar traffic lights
- P2074 – Broons ECombi Roller – Grid/multi tyred
- P2076 – Case Maxxum 110 tractor (for slashing)
- P2079 – Kirpy rock crusher (second hand)
- P2080 – Ford Ranger – Bingara RFS
- P2081 – Toyota Kluger



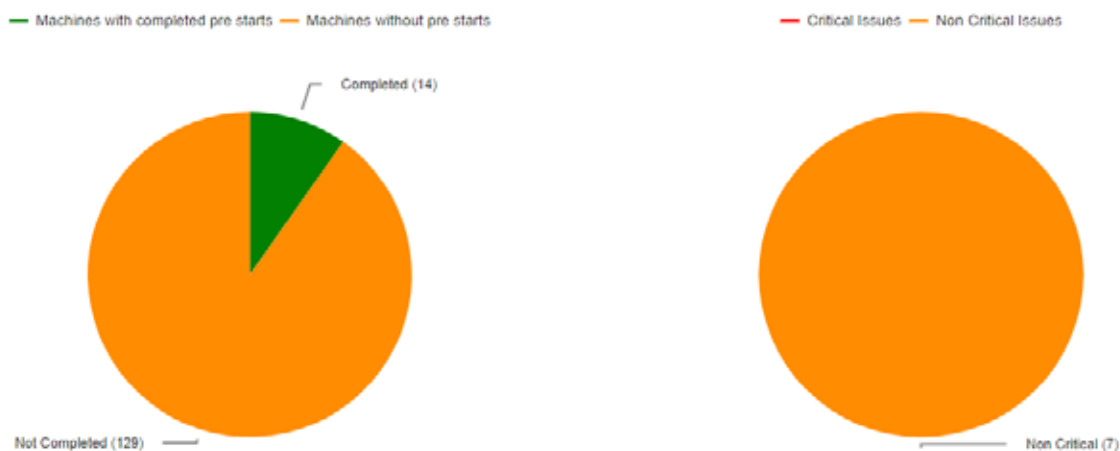
Heavy Plant Disposal:

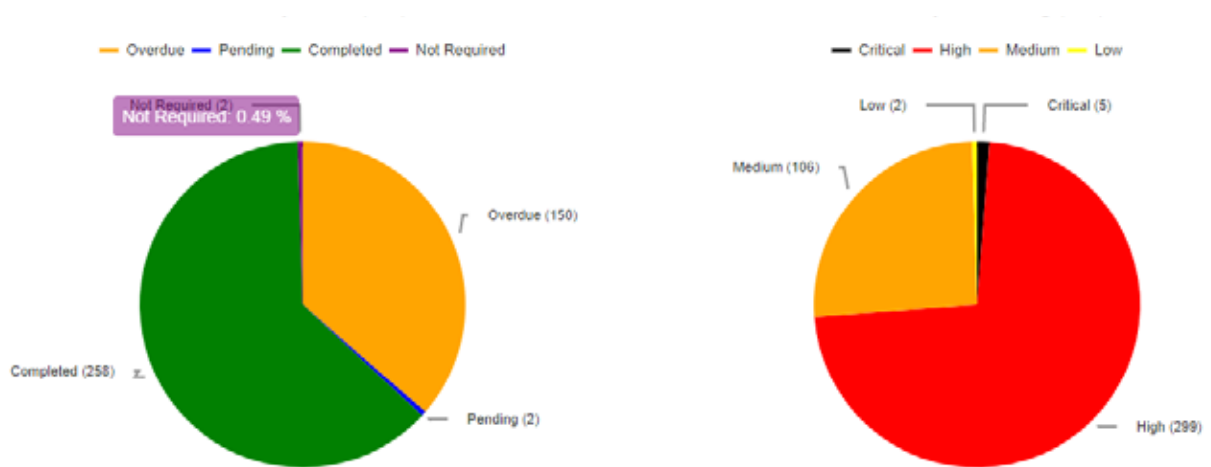
- P1625 – Komatsu backhoe - sold
- P1695 – Zipper - sold
- P1724 – New Holland Tractor – traded
- P 1768 – John Deere mower – traded
- P1739 – Toro 48” zero turn – sold

The new road broom attachment for skid steer loader was delivered in November. This will be based in the southern end of the council and used for town street maintenance.

Plant

Council moved to electronic daily inspections for plant during the reporting period. This can be undertaken in the field via an App on mobile phones. Staff have undertaken training and it is expected that this new procedure will enable more efficient and accurate reporting of plant and assist with workshop planning. The picture below is an example of the reporting function.





Portable toilets

Council has four (4) portable toilets available for use on road works and for private hire. The use of the toilets was donated to a number of community events during the previous year including:

- Model Aeroplane Fly In
- Pulse of the Earth Festival
- Anglers Club Easterfish competition
- Upper Horton Rodeo
- Copeton Fresh Water Swim
- Upper Horton Trail Ride
- Coolatai Campdraft
- Landcare field days
- Coolatai Tractor Pull
- Warialda Show
- Warialda Races
- Nicholson Oval Junior League
- A number of private rentals

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ENGINEERING SERVICES

Horton Road Sealing

The 2023 financial year saw the completion of the Fixing Local Roads Round One project, sealing Horton Road. This \$5.88million project now provides consistent, all-weather access to Upper Horton from both the east and west. Despite several setbacks during the construction process, such as natural disaster declared flooding events, the project was delivered within budget, and on time. Whilst working in the area, the streets of Upper Horton were sealed, improving the overall amendment of the town. The project was delivered in partnership with the NSW State Government, Council and local landholders, who contributed gravel to the project.

IB Bore Road

Upon the completion of drainage work conducted by JK Williams contractors, Council construction staff commenced bulk earthworks on IB Bore Road in April 2022. This \$11.54million project is cofounded by the NSW Government's Fixing Country Roads program and the Federal Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program. The 2023 financial year saw good progress on the project, despite rainfall making the site inaccessible on several occasions.

To facilitate efficient project management, the project was divided into smaller sections, and earthwork activities began 8.2km west of North Star. This was part of a comprehensive plan to carry out substantial earthwork enhancements at the approaches of an existing multi cell concrete box culvert.

The initial section, extending over 2 kilometres consisted of major improvements before the importation of manufactured road base. Sections 2 and 3, each measuring 1.5 km, focused on similar upgrades. Meanwhile, the fourth section, spanning 1 km, included significant improvements to the existing road alignment and earthwork adjustments at the intersection of IB Bore Road and Mistake Road.

As of the end of June 2023, a total of 6 km had been stabilized and sealed as part of the 20km project.

Getta Getta Road

At June 30 2023, approximately 11km of the 20.9km Getta Getta Road resheeting project was complete. The objective of this project was to provide the most robust unsealed pavement feasible. This was accomplished through the use of locally won basalt gravel, laid in two layers for a total thickness of 300mm. Additionally, a polymer stabilising aid was incorporated into the base layer to improve wet weather performance and reduce dust. All gravel has been crushed on site utilising Council owned rock crushing implements. This has allowed modest savings over traditional crushing plants, allowing for a thicker application of gravel. Ultimately, the quality of the gravel laid on Getta Getta Road was deemed to be suitable for a graded bitumen seal. Sealing works will commence early in the 2024 financial year.

County Boundary Road Upgrade

This project involves the construction and bitumen sealing of 12.22 km of County Boundary Road from the intersection of Croppa Moree Road to the Moree Plains Shire Council boundary to the south. This section is currently a dry weather access only gravel road and is a gravel 'missing link'

section between the Croppa Moree Road and the sealed section of County Boundary Road in Moree Plains Shire Council.

The project is jointly funded by the Federal Government's Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) Program (\$9,75 million) with Council contributing an additional \$2.44 million.

After geotechnical site investigation, survey and design plans were completed, an exhaustive multiple tender process was carried out to test the market and find the best value for money for the project.

Final tenders called for the construction of drainage in August 2022. Council accepted a tender for the construction of all the major drainage structures from Finn Valley Plant and Civil in October 2022. Finn Valley started work in January 2023 and are due to complete all contracted works well ahead of schedule in September 2023. Road construction works will be carried out by Council crews and are scheduled to begin in August 2023 and take 15 months to complete.



County Boundary Road Floodway 6 – placement of concrete on the western side of the new causeway.

Roads Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC)

On top of additional maintenance funding for State Roads this year, totalling \$843k, Transport for NSW have funded a \$750k guardrail replacement program, a \$300k heavy patching program, a \$570k resurfacing preparation program and a \$1.1M bitumen resurfacing program spread across both Fossickers Way and Gwydir Highway. Construction crews also saw the start of a \$2.4M construction project on Fossickers Way between Bingara and Warialda that will continue into the 2024 financial year for completion. This 1.2km project will see the extension of three major culverts, shoulder widening and a pavement overlay.

Stormwater

After a letterbox drop to the residents of Bingara and Warialda in October 2021, asking for community feedback regarding stormwater issues, Captivate Consulting analysed the responses received to further develop a stormwater program report. This year saw the start of the rectification process, with Local Government Engineering Services being engaged to undertake survey and design around the Bombelli Street and Cunningham Street intersection, where flooding has become an evident problem in the area. Further to this, maintenance staff undertook emergent works, replacing an underground stormwater pipe in Riddell Street, Bingara, that had collapsed, creating a large hole in the road pavement next to the kerb.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN RECREATIONAL SERVICES



Gwydir Shire Council operates and maintains two community fitness centres. Gwydir Fitness Centres are 24-hour centres open for public membership. The Warialda centre is located next to the Warialda Library at 38 Hope Street and the Bingara centre is in the Bingara Sporting Club 8 Bombelli Street. There is electronic entry and cameras installed to provide security for members at both gyms. The Gwydir Fitness Centres contain separate weight training, cardio, aerobics and boxing areas. Memberships are available on a casual, monthly or six-monthly basis.

The aim is to provide the community with a facility to help promote a healthy and active lifestyle, while also having the facility available to those who are working on rehabilitation or just keeping mobile.

In the reporting period, Gwydir Shire Council successfully completed renovations at the Warialda facility, which included significant improvements to the restroom facilities. These enhancements have breathed new life into the area, giving it a rejuvenated appearance. Additionally, a glass door has been installed in the gym, offering the dual benefits of welcoming natural light into the space and ensuring the safety of members when exiting the gym during nighttime hours. This was only made possible due to the Federal Governments LRCI program. The official opening of the upgraded facilities was presided over by the Hon. Mark Coulton.



During the 2022 / 2023 fiscal year, both facilities maintained a stable membership base of over 50 individuals at any given time. Unfortunately, due to renovation requirements, the Warialda facilities had to temporarily suspend operations. Memberships were placed on hold during this period and were promptly reactivated once works were completed. Despite these challenges, membership numbers remained robust for the remainder of the fiscal year. Notably, the Gwydir Fitness Centre achieved its highest-ever membership revenue since its opening.

Free workout programs remain available on the Gwydir Fitness Centre Website and a free Fitness Journal available at the Fitness Centres.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMMUNITY ASSETS



Caravan Parks

During the reporting period the Warialda Caravan Park office was renovated with the installation of new cupboards and replacement of white goods, along with replenishment of other small items to maintain aesthetics and hygiene.

At the Bingara Caravan Park the electricity, water, sewerage, and gas were installed at the new residence. The electricity installation was a prolonged and frustrating process having taken over 14 months. This delay was due to design, certification and site works waiting times.

Swimming Pools

Following an advertised Expression of Interest period to operate and manage five Council sites which included Cranky Rock Recreation Reserve (Cranky Rock), both Bingara and Warialda Caravan Parks and Swimming Pools. Short term licensees were appointed to manage each pool. Council did not receive any suitable responses to manage either caravan park, or Cranky Rock. The interior of the Warialda 50 metre pool and wading pool were painted in September 2022. The contractor was called back to repaint sections of both pools, delaying the opening of the season until Saturday 22 October 2022. Please note that soon after these repair paint works were undertaken the paint surface failed again and the whole of both pools needed to be sand blasted and painted again, this took place over September and October 2023. The entire cost of repair work was covered by the contractor.

During the 2022/23 season free entry was again offered to Gwydir Shire Council residents and rate payers. Both pools were very busy due to the closure of the Moree swimming pools. Early Bird and Mums and Bubs sessions, and Aquafit classes were offered at the Bingara Swimming Pool.

Both Centres saw Swimming Club and Squad members have a successful season with over twenty Gwydir Shire students qualifying to compete at the NSW State Swimming Championships in April 2023.



Swimming lessons were not delivered in some neighbouring towns. This saw a great number of children travelling with their families to the Shire to have swimming lessons with local children.

Cranky Rock

The Caretaker of Cranky Rock Recreation Reserve vacated in October 2022, and the residence was renovated. Even though a new onsite caretaker did not move in until April 2023 the Reserve continued to operate and welcome day visitors and campers. This was due to daily attendances by a temporary caretaker who became a permanent onsite resident.

The Reserve continues to be well presented, neat and tidy and is a popular destination for both locals and visitors.

Myall Creek

Council staff continue to liaise with and support the Friends of Myall Creek Massacre Memorial Committee by attending quarterly meetings, assisting with the annual ceremony and concert. The annual June long weekend events saw over 250 people enjoy a concert on the Saturday at The Roxy, and over 600 people attend the Sunday ceremony.

The site is presented in a consistent, tidy, and clean manner which is acknowledged by the Committee.

Updated plaques have been installed on the Myall Creek memorial pathway.

Council gained \$85,000 funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment under its Murray-Darling Healthy River program. This funding saw a land management and restoration ecological plan being drafted, an onsite flora survey being completed and several onsite 'discovery' days with the Committee, including Elders. The Elders had great delight in rediscovering plants that they once foraged, ate, and used. It is quite remarkable how many plants are growing naturally onsite; this is most likely because the site is a Travelling Stock Route and over time has not been consistently grazed.

Visitor comments during the reporting period included people from the United States of America, London, Italy, Indonesia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria, Canberra, South Australia, Queensland, and across New South Wales.

Comments included:

“I really liked how in depth the audio was and it was very respectful.” (Lucy, Sydney)

“Great reflection on myself as a foreigner in this country, beautiful yet heavy reminder, what can I do?” (Iriea, Cook Islands).

“A walk of significance at a memorial that is magnificently done.” (Soroven, Brisbane)

“Powerful, moving and touching. Thank you to all involved in making this happen.” (Sandro, Italy)

“The heartbreaking true history of this continent. Lest We Forget.” (Lydia, London)

Gwydir Libraries



Gwydir libraries continue as the true hubs of our community. They are busy, noisy, and very enjoyable spaces to interact with one another, learn and grow.

Continuing programs and events include:

- After school programs consisting of craft activities, Homework Help, Halloween, Easter, and Christmas parties
- STEM activities
- Project assistance and research
- School holiday activities such as Lego Challenges, Earthquake Survival, Secret Agent Mysteries
- Homeschooler weekly sessions
- Book Club
- Seniors' Craft Group
- Pen pals with Naroo and Whiddon residents
- Writers' Club
- Library Lovers' Day
- Get Online Week
- Be Connected

Families' Week Walk to School Safely Day

Librarians had scheduled visits to local schools and preschools.

Bulk home deliveries were made to individual household members, Touriandi, Naroo, CHSP, Toy Libraries, villages, and Bingara and Warialda MPS residents. This was supplemented with extra visits for craft and library information sessions.

The library continues to be a very popular place with tourists. People who visit for extended periods sign up for a visitor's membership to the library, allowing them to borrow resources for the duration of their stay. The library was involved in the CMCA Rally in October 2022, hosting an information session for the visitors to discuss the library and resources available.

University students and local HSC students used the library and study rooms to study and prepare for exams.

The full New South Wales Public Library Association (NSWPLA) North East Zone meeting was held on Thursday 11 May at the Roxy Conference Room with 16 attending from across the zone

(Inverell, Tweed/Richmond, Narrabri, Tenterfield, Tamworth, Bellingen, Richmond Upper-Clarence), including representatives from the State Library of NSW. Furthermore, many members who were unable to make the meeting in person elected to connect digitally. Lunch was provided by Friends of Touriandi in the Roxy Café. The attendees were most impressed with the Café's history and atmosphere. Following the meeting, attendees were given a guided tour of the Roxy Theatre, Living Classroom and Bingara Library. The entire group were very impressed with the facilities in Bingara and have suggested another meeting here again in 2024.

The Bingara Library hosted two Opportunity Shop (Op Shop) Fashion Parades throughout the year. The library spaces were used for meetings by organisation and community groups including the Bingara Op Shop, Anglicare, Arts North West and Council staff continue to use the libraries as bases to assist with Development Applications.



Gwydir Learning Region (GLR)

Audit

GLR Training engaged the services of a forensic auditor to conduct a full audit on the training and assessment procedures of the heavy vehicle registered training organisation. The auditor was onsite at the GLR Training Office and Automotive Trade Training Centre on 7 and 8 September 2022.

The following rectification actions were recommended to ensure GLR Training is compliant with the 2015 RTO Standards and the NVR Act:

- Development of a Continuous Improvement Register
- Development of a Completion System
- Development of a Self-assurance System
- Update Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Development of an Audit Plan
- Development of an Industry Consultation Strategy
- Development of a Trainer and Assessor Credentials System
- Development of a Validator Credentials System
- Review/update of Training and Assessment Strategies for Unit of Competency:
 - TLILIC2014 Licence to Drive Light Rigid Vehicle
 - TLILIC2015 Licence to Drive Medium Rigid Vehicle
 - TLILIC2016 Licence to Drive Heavy Rigid Vehicle
 - TLILIC3017 Licence to Drive Heavy Combination Vehicle
 - TLILIC3018 Licence to Drive Multi Combination Vehicle.

All recommendations have either been completed or will be actioned before the end of November 2023.

Job Readiness Workshop

Council staff attended the employer networking session of the Job Readiness workshop on Monday 19 September 2022.

The workshops were an initiative of the Department of Education and Training Services NSW and were presented as part of the Education Pathways Program.

The workshops taking place within high schools throughout the New England Region are a platform to address the gaps between student perceptions and employer expectations.

This was a great opportunity to promote Council's Gwydir Career Start Program to prospective school-based trainees, as well as the full-time traineeships and apprenticeships for school leavers.

Gwydir Career Start Program

Over the 2022/23 period Council's Career Start Program included 23 employees which is 12% of Council's total employee number.

The 23 employees are:

School Based Trainees - 9	Trainees - 7	Apprentices - 7
Water Operations	Childcare	Plant Operation
Childcare	Horticulture	Carpentry
Aged Care	IT	Plumbing
Kitchen Operations	Business	Mechanical
Automotive	Water Operations	
Carpentry		
Horticulture		

Council's 'Gwydir Career Start Program' was nominated in the 'Career Starter' category of the 2022 National Awards for Local Government.

The National Awards for Local Government are an annual celebration of the best Australian Local Government achievements. The awards highlight innovative and resourceful solutions implemented by local governments that make a difference to their local communities.

Although not being named the winner, the program received an honourable mention from The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories.

Subsidies claimed by Gwydir Shire Council for trainees and apprentices for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 Jun 2023 amounted to \$222,396.50. This figure includes Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy, Completing Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy, commencement and completion incentives.



GLR Training Learner Driver Car Lessons

Council staff delivered 46 hours of driver training – car – from 1 July 2022 to 20 June 2023. These were delivered in both Bingara and Warialda.

Heavy Vehicle Training and Assessment

Over the 2022/23 period Council gained \$70,110.78 by training and assessing 43 clients.

GLR Training requests that all learners complete a feedback form at the completion of their training. Below are some of the recent comments received from clients:

- "Received amazing service throughout my course".
- "Excellent way of teaching. Very efficient, helpful with any queries"
- "Loved it"
- "Really learnt a lot. Great knowledge and happy to share with me".
- "Great trainer who explained everything".
- "Instructor was very thorough in all aspects".
- "Great course. Would recommend the training to anyone".
- "Training was professional".

Certificate III Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

To address the lack of childcare services in our shire area the Council offered residents the opportunity to complete an ECEC. Eight participants commenced the Certificate III ECEC on the Peak Training learning portal and participated in the first learning session held via Zoom on 21 July 2022.

All candidates were supported throughout their learning and were offered work placement activities with either Bingara Preschool, Tharawonga Mobile Preschool or Warialda Preschool. Please note as of October 2023 only one candidate has completed the course.

Bush Bursary Scholarship Program for 2022

Council again participated in the Bush Bursary Scholarship program sponsoring and welcoming two medical students to the Shire from 28 November to 10 December 2022. The students stayed at the Bingara Caravan Park and attended the Bingara Multi-Purpose Service. They were to spend a week in Warialda but were unable due to the illness of Warialda medical staff.

This important program is organised through the NSW Rural Doctors Network. Gwydir Shire is only one of eleven rural Councils that support this important program. The program allows medical students to experience a range of clinical services and provides them with a positive vision of rural life.



The Living Classroom (TLC)

TLC changed a great deal within the 12 month period; the site itself, the management and how it is utilised.

TLC continued as a popular place for meetings and workshops. In addition, it has become a community asset with many local people booking TLC for family functions and social events. The feedback from users has been very positive with repeat visitors expressing how well presented and clean the facilities are. This is a big turnaround and is a big credit to TLC staff. The table below:

Description	No. of Bookings
Family Gatherings	9
School Day Trips	8
School multi night	2
Retreats/Festivals	4
Meetings	37
Training/Field Days	12
Special Interest Day Visits	3
Social events including use of classroom and/or bunkhouse	12
Total Happenings	87

Included in the above figures is the Pulse of the Earth Festival which was held at The Roxy and TLC. This was a very wet, yet successful event with over 200 people enjoying the Friday night family concert, and 150 people attending sessions Saturday and Sunday.

A public meeting was held at The Living Classroom on 8 July 2022 to discuss the possibility of a community garden with 15 people attending (including representatives of Northern Slopes Landcare Association (NSLA)). From this meeting a gardening group was not formed, but from Council's partnership with NSLA funding was obtained. This funding saw the utilisation of the

existing nursery infrastructure, and the formation of a volunteers group led by NSLA staff. The group will propagate seeds and grow out seedlings for the NSLA to use at their field days; for Council to use in its parks; and if there is any surplus then these seedlings will be sold to the public. Please note that this initiative commenced in September 2023.

The Disaster Recovery Satellite NBN was installed on 29 July 2022.

In July 2022 more than 40 students from the University of Technology Sydney visited and stayed a night in the bunkhouse. The students are part of a university volunteer group called the Big Lift Bus. During their visit, students trimmed water shoots from the olive trees, assembled the veggie pods, removed the corrugated iron mandala gardens, weeded gardens and had a great time.

Council have succeeded in establishing tangible partnerships with the University of Sydney and the Southern Cross University.

Council staff met with representatives of the universities of Sydney and Cambodia with a view to create course content that will be delivered by the universities onsite and virtually. From this initial meeting the unit - AGEN3008 Indigenous Land and Food Knowledge – has been created and is now offered by the University of Sydney. This is a selective unit for students majoring in Geography, Environmental Studies or Indigenous Studies doing a Bachelor of Science. It is also an elective for all other students doing Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Agricultural Science. Please note that the unit was delivered to students for the first time at TLC and Myall Creek Massacre Memorial Site in July 2023 by University and Council staff.

An additional project with the University of Sydney is being developed. This involves an Application that is currently used on the Sydney campus which identifies plants and provides information about them. This platform may be replicated at TLC and the Myall Creek Massacre site by university students as part of their learning to identify and name plant species.

The council has developed further its alliance with Southern Cross University - Regenerative Ag Alliance. The university is so committed to this relationship with the Council and the community they have employed an Adoption and Extension Officer with the Drought Innovation Hub who is based at TLC classroom. This Officer is coordinating the delivery of drought related workshops and information sessions and is reaching out to those who could be affected by future droughts.

Council staff and volunteers undertook mass plantings in the north western corner of the site in Spring 2022. More than 600 native trees and shrubs from TLC's nursery were planted to create a habitat. This initiative was in response to feedback Council had received from user groups requesting the creation of more habitat for small animals, reptiles, and insects.

Council staff planted over 130 new trees in rip lines throughout the north western corner of the site. A further 120 trees were planted by the local group Gwydir Ark.

Leading into the cooler months feral pigs moved into TLC and caused damage to gardens and grounds. Approved baits, obtained by Northern Slopes Landcare Association (NSLA), were laid to control the pigs. Cameras were supplied by NSLA and installed to gauge the number of pigs in the area. The problem, was abated after two months. In addition, rabbits and hares caused damage to a number of small plants.

A significant management change during the reporting period involved TLC staff assisting other Council departments with various tasks including tree removal and wood chipping after storm events in Bingara and Warialda, fixing a variety of equipment, the propagation of seedlings for the Maitland Street gardens, the construction of the Roxy's stage, tending to animals at Cranky Rock, spraying sites for the control of St John's Wort, preparing fire breaks, test and tagging items for the Bingara Op Shop and various Council offices and workshops.



Regional Lifestyle Magazine Launch

In partnership with the Bingara Business Group, Council secured a feature in the 2022 Spring issue of the Regional Lifestyle Magazine showcasing the attractions, events, people and spirit of Gwydir Shire. The Gwydir Media & Communications (GMC) team worked closely with the editor of the magazine on story ideas, content creation and photographic contributions.

Originally a 40-page arrangement, the feature ended up being 100 pages.

Since its launch, the publication has been extremely well received.

Inverell Shire was featured earlier that year and the editor had been delighted with sales of close to 500 copies in Inverell. That equated to one copy for every 33 people in the Inverell Shire. The Gwydir feature saw 387 copies sold in just two weeks. This equated to one copy sold for every 13 people in the Shire.

This initiative was an exciting opportunity for the Shire, and an excellent example of Council working with community groups to achieve a positive outcome for the whole community.

Bingara Community Practice

In September 2022 Rural and Remote Medical Services (RaRMS) advised its staff and Council that it would be withdrawing its services from its Bingara branch at the end of October 2022.

Council staff liaised with the Primary Health Network, Rural Doctors' Network, doctors and the practice's staff to ensure that the Gwydir community enjoyed continuity of medical services.

An agreement was drafted, and later executed, to the effect that all patient records were returned to Council, together with all medical and administration equipment and items, at no cost to Council or the new Practice.

Council provided assistance with the creation and set up of the new entity, Bingara Community Practice. It was hoped that the transfer would be effective on 31 October 2022, however this was not achieved, and the actual transfer occurred at 5:00pm on Friday 4 November 2022.

Property Management

Council leases and manages 52 properties including St Mary's School in Riddell Street, Bingara. St Mary's School is sub-let to different tenants so as to ensure community and legal services are available locally. Council also leases the Bingara Fitness Centre facility.

Council staff continued to be in regular contact with aged unit residents throughout the year. This contact has proven to be mutually beneficial, as not only do they receive a regular friendly call, but Council obtains information and requests so that assistance and any necessary repairs can be given in a timely and effective manner.

Rental increase notices were issued to Council's residential and commercial tenants in March, which will come into effect from July 2023. Council sold and transferred ownership of 10 Olive Pyrke Terrace, Warialda on 19 December 2022.

Events

Staff and Councillor Farewell Dinner

Council's Media and Communications team successfully hosted a Farewell Dinner to honour long serving staff and Councillors at the Warialda Town Hall on Friday, 25 November 2022. The dinner honoured Tim Smith, Steve Power, Chris Riley, Stuart Dick, and Frances Young.

Seventy-four guests attended with a number of apologies being received. Deputy Mayor, Catherine Egan paid tribute to former Councillor, Frances Young, Mayor John Coulton reflected on Stuart Dick's time as a Councillor. Max Eastcott, Leeah Daley and Helen Thomas each thanked and spoke about Steve Power, Tim Smith, and Chris Riley respectively. Alex Eddy led the evening as compere.

Students from Warialda High School assisted with waiting duties for the evening.

The entertainment for the evening was standup comedian, Lindsay Webb, who was well received by the audience.

Flood Affected Communities Initiative

The 'Helping Flood Affected Families' initiative was a joint venture between Gwydir Shire Council, the Warialda Chapter of Inverell RSL Sub-Branch and the Northern NSW Harley Owners Group (NNSWHOG) Chapter.

The initiative grew from Warialda's relationship with the NNSWHOG Chapter, who visited Warialda for the 2022 ANZAC Day ceremony.

The social riding chapter covers an area from Tweed Heads to Grafton and had many members who were victims of the devastating floods that affected the Northern Rivers region earlier in the year.

Ali Payne, Director of NNSWHOG, was approached by members of the Gwydir community asking what they could do to help. It took no time at all for word to get around, with people from neighbouring towns putting up their hand to donate items.

Council's GMC team coordinated the initiative by collecting donations of blankets, plates, cutlery, cups, toasters, electric jugs, chairs, tables, cooking utensils, televisions, and fridges for delivery to families in Coraki, Woodburn and Wardell.

The GMC team also secured publicity for the initiative with a story on Prime7 News which aired on 18 August 2022.

Thanks to the generosity of the wider community, a truck departed Warialda with an almost full load, with additional items collected along the way. The support received was incredible and thanks go to those who contributed to this wonderful cause.

Snow White and The Seven Cool Dudes

An audience of 140 were entertained by the cast from Jally Entertainment when they performed Snow White and the Seven Cool Dudes at the Warialda Memorial Hall on 21 September 2022. A timely piece of live theatre for children about making better food choices, while keeping themselves fit and healthy.

During the interactive production, children from the audience enjoyed the opportunity to role-play as they were invited on to the stage to become a variety of characters, including The Cool Dudes. The off-stage interaction was just as entertaining with the rest of the audience singing and dancing.

The cast were very impressed with the attentiveness and enthusiasm of the Warialda audience.

Business Growth in Challenging Times

A highly recommended action coach, Mark Blume, ran business workshops in Bingara and Warialda to assist Gwydir Shire residents with all things business related.

The coaching program comprised:

- 2 x 1 day group coaching sessions conducted face-to-face.
- 2 x 1 hour one on one coaching session conducted by Zoom.

Sessions ran from 9am – 5pm daily. There were nine registrations for Bingara and eleven for Warialda. Initial feedback from attendees is very positive.

CMCA Rally

Council staff assisted the CMCA Rally Coordinator with drafting traffic and event management plans and coordinating the Rally's street carnival held in the main street of Bingara on Saturday 22 October 2022.

The annual Bingara Orange Festival, Warialda Honey Festival and Myall Creek Memorial Concert and Ceremony weekends were all well attended and each a success.

Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program

Council gained \$301,708 funding from the NSW Government under the Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program. The funding saw the purchase of a transportable stage which will be used across the Shire for community events and covered the costs of 14 community events held throughout the Shire. These included:

- Grazing on the Gwydir
- North Star's Art in Ag Workshops
- Naroo Open Day
- Gwydir in the Pink
- Bingara Christmas Carnival
- Warialda Christmas Carnival
- Warialda Rail Christmas Carnival
- Pulse Festival
- Warialda Health Night - Mind the Madness
- Community family events in Crooble, Croppa Creek, Yallaroi, Coolatai and Upper Horton.

Roxy Complex

The Roxy once again became the go to for many local events throughout the period, some of which are:

- Unleash the Gwydir Black Dog Ball made a welcome return to the Roxy, July 2022 after several years due to COVID-19.
- The Bingara Jockey Club hosted a very successful Ball on Saturday 6 August. The Ball was used as a fundraiser after some trying times for the Club in recent years. The Trade Training Kitchen was also utilized for this event.
- The Barwon and Namoi Principals' Network Day was held on Thursday, 18 August. Council took this opportunity to set up a display table at the regional conference, featuring Gwydir Shire's local attractions. Council staff also made a presentation to the Principals about The



Living Classroom and the learning opportunities available during day trips or camps.

- Jason Owen performed at the Roxy on 23 September to an audience of 111 people. Instead of buying in this show, Council staff booked the venue out to Jason Owen's management, and they took the proceedings from the door and paid a hire fee. This was a successful trial, and a formula which staff hope to use more as the performer bears the risk and not Council.
- During the week of 17 October, CMCA Rally organisers conducted rock 'n' roll daily dance lessons in The Roxy for its members. And extra tours of the Roxy Complex were conducted throughout the Rally.
- Bingara Central School Presentation evening was held at the Roxy Complex on 9 November. A large crowd was in attendance.
- The Roxy complex hosted the annual Bingara Australia Day Awards ceremony, breakfast and High Tea utilising all the Complex has to offer.
- In addition to the kitchen being used for various shows and functions, it is now used regularly by a local business owner for food preparation to be sold at her Bingara roadside café.
- The collaboration between Council and the North West Theatre Company (NWTC) continues with NWTC hosting regular play readings and showcasing classic movies through its Film Club.
- NWTC's production of the year Melodrama and Passion proved a hit and drew a regional audience. The Company also hosted two touring children's shows, The Owl's Apprentice and The Box Show.
- NWTC held a trivia night, and a movie night for those who attended the CMCA Rally.

Communications and Media

Staff continue to keep the community informed through the use of Council's digital platforms including Facebook, Instagram and the website www.gwydir.nsw.gov.au.

The Gwydir News

2022/23 saw many changes with The Gwydir News. At the start of the year The Gwydir News commenced inserting features into the monthly editions, as well as running competitions and actively seeking content by attending many community events. A detailed 'What's On' was produced, and the classifieds section was completely revamped.

In April the monthly issue was supplemented by two online weekly versions. At the request of the elected Council this format was then changed to a weekly publication. The final monthly issue of The Gwydir News was published in May 2023.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN WORK HEALTH & SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT

Work Health and Safety

Work Health and Safety Management System review

Safety management systems can make a big difference to any business. Using a safety management system however, no matter how thorough and systematic it may be, is not sufficient to guarantee sustained safety performance.

A review of Council's WHS Management System continued during this reporting period. For a system to work properly it is necessary to develop organisational cultures such as 'thinking the unthinkable' and being intrinsically motivated to be safe, even when there seems no obvious reason to do this.

The review will involve redrafting the Management System and consultation to develop Management Plans for all business units so that it aligns to the current Australian Standard, AS/NZS 4801.

This type of management system is used to demonstrate, internally and externally (via third party certification), that Council is systematically and effectively controlling the risks to all persons affected by Council's activities.

Risk

Statewide Mutual

Council's insurer, Statewide Mutual was created in 1993 in response to NSW Councils' volatile risk portfolio which lead to spiraling insurance premiums and ultimately resulting in underwriters withdrawing their support to Local Government.

The Mutual is owned by 115 NSW Councils and run-in accordance with the NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme. It is managed by the Statewide Board of Management (the Board). The Board comprises senior level managers from Member Councils representing 11 regions in NSW and the Mutual is managed by Jardine Lloyd Thompson.

Insurance Costs

Insurance Class	2023 / 2024	2022 / 2023
Environmental Impairment Liability	\$61,030.01	\$59,423.60
Workers Compensation (estimate only)	\$546,599.87	\$800,000.00 under review
Personal Accident	\$4,307.28	\$3,986.68
Workers Compensation Top Up	\$7,073.68	\$5,970.11
Accumulated Sick Leave	\$0.00	\$10,004.77
Casual Hirers Liability	\$6,891.95	\$6,411.12
Councillors and Officers Liability	\$49,670.13	\$46,204.77
Crime	\$19,382.69	\$17,036.83
Motor Vehicle	\$222,777.81	\$190,764.26
Motor Vehicle Adjustment	\$19,748.03	-\$4,840.28
Property	\$502,378.44	\$399,384.03
Property Adjustment	\$51,497.20	\$0.00
Public Liability - Professional Indemnity	\$282,906.16	\$263,168.53
Total inc. GST	\$1,774,263.25	\$1,797,514.42

SECTION 2

STATUTORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



AMOUNT OF RATES & CHARGES WRITTEN OFF DURING THE YEAR

Pension Rebate Breakdown Claim 126		Pension Rebate 2022/2023		
Rate Classification	Rebate Given	Council	Govt	Total (\$)
General Rates	Pensioner Farmland	\$5,527.28	\$6,755.58	\$12,282.86
	Pensioner General	\$33,361.50	\$40,775.83	\$74,137.33
		\$38,888.78	\$47,531.41	\$86,420.19
Water & Sewer Rebate	Pensioner Water	\$18,626.74	\$22,760.76	\$41,387.50
	Pensioner Sewer	\$15,988.28	\$19,536.72	\$35,525.00
Waste Charges	Pension Demestic Waste & Disposal	\$15,321.02	\$18,726.00	\$34,047.02
	Pension Waste Management	\$11,914.02	\$14,559.75	\$26,473.77
	Total Rebate	\$100,738.84	\$123,114.64	\$223,853.48
		\$100,738.84		
Conservation Agreements Base Date 01/07/2022				
	2023/2024 Levy			
	Total Write Off Cons	General Rates	\$4,051.88	
		Base Amounts	\$581.80	
		Total	\$4,633.68	

Councillor Expenses

Total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to councillors in relation to their civic functions.

Provision of dedicated office equipment and telephone calls allocated to Councillors

Provision of dedicated office equipment and telephone costs during the reporting period totalled \$3,022.52

Provision of induction training and professional development for Mayor and other Councillors

There was no additional induction training or additional expenditure incurred for professional development for Mayor and other Councillors during the reporting period.

Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor in the performance of his or her civic functions

The expenses incurred for any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor in the performance of his or her civic function during the reporting period \$2,776.00

Expense involved in the provision of care for a child of, or an immediate family member of a Councillor

There were no expenses involved in the provision of care relating to a Councillor during the reporting period.

Details of overseas visits by Councillors, Council staff or other persons representing Council (including visits sponsored by other organisations)

There were no overseas visits by Councillors, Council staff or other persons representing Council during this reporting period.

Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars. Training of Councillors and provision of skill development (including interstate visits) A breakup of these costs is provided in the table below left:

Details	Amount (\$)
Air Travel	10,315.89
Course Seminar & Conference Registration	14,464.65
Other Travel Related Costs	6,999.96
Overnight Travel Expenses	11,335.37
Plant Hire for travel to Seminars & Conferences	16,889.90
Travel Accommodation	22,899.68
Civic Events	183.56
Grand Total	83,089.01

List of interstate visits and number attending in table below:

State	Purpose	Attending
Tas	National Local Roads & Transport Congress	2
ACT	LG National General Assembly	3
ACT	Australian Local Government Forum	1

Councillor induction training and Ongoing Professional Development in table below:

Professional Development & Ongoing Training	Sessions	Name of Councillors in Attendance
Professional Development for Councillors	1	Cr Christopher Matthews
Councillor Workshops (Budget)	1	Cr John Coulton, Cr Catherine Egan, Cr David Coulton, Cr Geoff Smith, Cr James Moore, Cr Tiffany Galvin, Cr M Dixon (OAM), Cr Christopher Matthews, Cr Lyndon Mulligan

Details of contracts awarded by Council

Gwydir Shire Council awarded fourteen (14) contracts exceeding \$150,000 during 2022-23.

Name of Contractor Project	Goods or Services to be Provided Under the Contract	Estimated Amount of Contract Ex GST
Finn Valley Plant and Civil Pty Ltd	County Boundary Road Pallamallawa - drainage construction	\$4,297,158.12
Stabilcorp	Heavy patching of sealed roads	\$429,062
Cleanaway	Waste collection and processing	\$350k - \$450k p/a
AGL	Small Sites Electricity	\$350k - \$450k
Shell Energy Retail Pty Ltd	Large Sites Electricity	\$150,000 est.
Roger Moore PTY Ltd	Supply of Fuel	
Pattison Technology - Darren Pattison	Multiple security upgrades Bif 1 & Bif 2	\$276,027.71
Constructive Dialogue Architects	Planning & architecture stages, Building upgrades to Naroo Aged Care facility	\$97,566.00 still in progress
Fulton Hogan Industries	Bitumen Resurfacing Program	\$1.6m
Uniplan	Construction & Installation of emergency facilities - 1 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom	\$750,000
Engineering & Civil Contractors	Footpath and Concreting Works	\$730,000
Irwin Fencing	Guardrail and Terminal Upgrades	\$650,000
Enviro One Services & Installations Pty Ltd	Bingara Pressure Sewer System Product SUPply and Service Tender	\$500,000
Ledonne Constructions Pty Ltd	Bingara North and East Pressure Sewer Construction	\$3m
Uniplan Group ABN 64 602 475 574	Construction & installation of eight emergency housing facilities	\$1,953,120

Modern Slavery Act

Modern Slavery Act 2018

There were no issues raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the reporting period concerning the operations of the council.

This Modern Slavery Statement is provided by Gwydir Shire Council in accordance with Section 428 (4) of the NSW Local Government Act 1993.

This statement outlines Gwydir Shire Council's commitment to combatting modern slavery and the measures we have implemented during this reporting period to reduce the risk of our procurement activities resulting in or contributing to human rights violations.

Organisation and Supply Chain

The Gwydir Shire is located on the northwestern slopes and plains of the New England region in NSW, approximately 560km north of Sydney and 430km southwest of Brisbane. The Shire has two small towns - Bingara and Warialda with Council offices in each. We recognise the importance of taking steps to ensure that goods and services procured by and for our council are not the product of modern slavery. Council relies largely on the administrative arrangements put in place by entities including Local Government Procurement when procuring goods and services.

Our supply chain includes local businesses, consultants, contractors, and suppliers. Council's highest categories of spend include bulk fuel supply, purchase of road base materials and plant equipment.

Policy

Gwydir Shire Council has a procurement policy outlining Council's commitment to preventing and addressing modern slavery in all its procurement activities.

Summary of the amounts incurred by the Council in relation to legal proceedings

There were three (3) separate legal proceedings during the reporting period incurring a total cost of \$3,478.68. Two (2) of these proceedings are ongoing and one (1) has been finalised.

Summary	Details	Expenditure
3	Earthwork/Construction	\$5,746.94
5	Grading Access Road	\$2,393.83
7	Miscellaneous	\$14,943.30
15	Plant Hire	\$15,940.14
1	Sale of Gravel	\$883.71
2	Slashing	\$828.44
7	Water Delivery	\$1,936.56
2	Weed Control	\$1,115.50
42	Total	\$43,788.42

Donations Paid for 2022-23

Total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 (financially assist others)
 There was a total of \$210,734.00 donated under Section 356. The table below includes information on the donations granted:

Donations Summary		
Classification	Donation Requests	Donations' Allocated (inc. oncosts)*
Donations less than \$1,000*	\$14,900	\$10,040
Donations greater than \$1,000*	\$41,500	\$93,912
Foregone Income*	\$58,279	\$57,492
Internal allocation	\$35,000	\$49,290
Totals	\$149,679	\$210,734
In-Kind contributions allocated across other expenditure areas	\$42,250	\$48,035

FOREGONE INCOME

Organisation	Donation requested	Donation Allocated (inc. oncosts)
All junior and school sports plus community groups	Waiving of all hire fees	\$5,000
Anglican Church, North Star	Waiving water & waste charges	\$215
Bingara Radiance Club	Rates and other charges subsidy	\$2,965
Catholic Church, Presbytery, St Joseph's Primary School and Convent	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$10,605
CWA North Star	Rates and other charges subsidy	\$1,427
CWA Warialda	Rates and other charges subsidy	\$1,999
Gravesend Showground	Waste charges	\$959
Gwydir Oval User Groups	Use of oval facilities and lighting	\$2,562
Warialda Recreation Ground & Nicholson Oval User Groups	Use of oval facilities and lighting	\$1,293
Presbyterian Church Warialda	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$1,811
Scots Presbyterian Church, Bingara	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$1,298
St Johns Anglican Church, Bingara	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$3,068
St Mary's Catholic Church, Bingara	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$4,284
St Simon and Jude's Anglican Church, Warialda	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$2,168
Bingara Central School	Partial waiving of water charges (up to)	\$5,000
Uniting Church, Bingara	Water, sewerage and waste charges	\$1,325
Waiving Development Appln and other fees	For community group activities requiring a development application (up to \$3,000)	\$1,251
Warialda P & A Association	Rates, water, sewerage and waste charges	\$7,889
Gravesend Hall	Electricity & Gas charges	\$1,448
Warialda Rail Recreation Reserve	Waste charges	\$924
Definite		\$57,492

DONATIONS < \$1,000

Organisation	Donation requested	Donation Allocated (inc. oncosts)
Upper Horton Rodeo and Campdraft	Annual sponsorship	\$0
Warialda Rugby League Football Club	Annual sponsorship	\$500
Warialda Ladies League Tag	Annual sponsorship	\$300
Bingara Rugby League Football Club	Annual sponsorship	\$500
Bingara Ladies League Tag	Annual sponsorship	\$300
Bingara Australia Day Celebration	Annual Sponsorship	\$943
Warialda Sports Council Awards	Annual sponsorship	\$324
Warialda High School	Annual academic prizes	\$540
Bingara Central School	Annual academic prizes	\$918
Warialda Primary School	Annual academic prizes	\$378
St Josephs Primary School	Annual academic prizes	\$378
Gravesend Primary School	Annual academic prizes	\$378
North Star Primary School	Annual academic prizes	\$378
Croppa Creek Primary School	Annual academic prizes	\$378
Unallocated	Donations requests received during the year	\$3,285
Tharawonga Fundraising Committee	Start up costs	\$540
Totals		\$10,040

DONATIONS > \$1,000

Organisation	Donation requested	Donation Allocated (inc. oncosts)
Warialda P & A Association	Annual donation	\$0
Bingara Orange Festival	Annual sponsorship	\$16,136
Warialda Honey Festival	Annual sponsorship	grant funded in 2023 FY
“A Night at the Star” Event	Event Assistance	\$2,376
Warialda Rotary - Australia Day Celebrations	Annual sponsorship	\$1,080
Gwydir Shire Schools	One off donation - Excursions	\$7,560
Barwon Medical Scholarship	Annual sponsorship	\$2,000
Croppa Creek Recreation Ground	Water Tank Installation	\$6,087
Warialda Historical Society (Previous commitment by Council to 5 year project)	Who, when, where Cemetery Project (5 Year Project - Year 3)	\$5,400
Bingara Community Practice	Assistance with transition from RaRms	\$31,727
Warialda Family Practice	Assistance with transition from RaRms	\$21,546
Totals		\$93,912

IN KIND SUPPORT

Organisation	Donation requested	Recommended Allocation (exc. oncosts)
Bingara events unallocated	Support for community events	\$10,000
Bingara Jockey Club	Preparation for annual race day	\$2,000
Bingara RSL Club and Sub Branch	Upkeep of memorial gardens in Bingara	\$1,000
Bingara Show Society	Maintenance of showground	\$3,000
Carinda House Committee	Maintenance requests	\$1,000
Myall Creek Memorial Committee	Ground maintenance for annual commemoration	\$5,000
Warialda Apex Committee	Support during events	\$500
Warialda Events unallocated	Support for community events	\$10,000
Warialda Jockey Club	Preparation for annual race day	\$2,000
Warialda Preschool	Building Maintenance	\$2,000
Warialda P&A Association	Support during events	\$3,000
Warialda Tennis Club	Ground maintenance	\$750
Warialda Family Practice	Assistance with transition from RaRms	\$6,503
Community Groups	Printing and photocopy	\$1,282

'COUNCIL INTERNAL 'DONATIONS''

Organisation	Donation requested	Actual Allocation (exc. oncosts)
Willoughby-Gwydir exchange program	Annual allocation	\$19,290
Gwydir Learning Region	Annual allocation	\$25,000
Gwydir Learning Region's Country Education Foundation Committee	Annual allocation	\$5,000
Industry awards	Prizes and assistance during annual business award event	\$0
Totals		\$49,290

Statements of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest

Gwydir Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporation, private company, partnership, trust, joint venture, syndicate or any other body in the year ending June 30, 2023.

Statements of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which council participated during the year

The council is involved in several arrangements with a non-controlling interest in the following entities:

- Fossickers' Way Promotion Committee
- Local Government NSW
- Local RTA Traffic Committee
- Regional Tourism Committee
- Bush Fire Liaison (Service Level Agreement) Committee
- Border Regional Organisations of Councils
- Arts North West
- Namoi Joint Organisation
- New England Joint Organisation (Association Membership)
- New England North West Regional Advisory Committee
- Country Mayor's Association
- StateCover Mutual
- Statewide Mutual
- Central Northern Regional Library and Information Service
- Warialda and District Chamber
- Bingara and District Vision 20/20
- Northwest Regional Community Care Project Advisory Committee
- CHSP and Disability Services Advisory Committee
- Northern Slopes Landcare Association
- Murray Darling Association Inc.

Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council

To better engage the community and reflect local community views and needs, Gwydir Shire Council delegates a range of its functions to volunteer committees:

- Bingara District Historical Society
- Gravesend Community Group
- Naroo Hostel Advisory Committee
- Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Bingara Angler's Club
- Bingara Showground Advisory Committee
- Bingara Special Events Committee
- Warialda Tourism Committee
- Warialda Historical Society
- Coolatai Sportsground Committee
- North Star Hall Committee
- Croppa Creek Hall Committee
- Yallaroi Hall Committee
- Crooble Hall Committee
- Warialda Rail Community Committee
- Warialda Cultural Community Centre – Carinda House
- Warialda Sports Council
- Warialda Preschool
- Gwydir Community Health Alliance
- Gwydir Learning Region Committee
- Bingara Op Shop

Equal Employment Management (EEO)

Gwydir Shire Council is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity. It aims to provide a work environment that fosters fairness, equity and respect for social and cultural diversity, and is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and vilification as determined by the legislation.

In fulfilling this commitment, Council:

- Fosters an organisational culture which recognises the diversity in the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers
- Provides equal opportunity by removing barriers to participation or progression in employment
- Safeguards merit-based systems of transparency so that decisions are made without bias
- Provides training to create an environment that promotes and supports transparent decision making

- Strives to ensure fair outcomes in all areas of employment, including recruitment, training and development, promotion, transfer, supervision and management of staff, access to information and conditions of employment
- Provides a workplace where all staff and customers are treated with respect and courtesy
- Clearly defines what is regarded as acceptable and unacceptable workplace behaviour

Gwydir Shire Council demonstrates its commitment to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity through development process to eliminate any potential discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace. Existing policies and induction programs highlight the importance of treating all staff and customers with respect and reinforce that discrimination in any form will not be tolerated.

Gwydir Shire Council also demonstrates a commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity principles through the development of systems and processes for recruitment and promotion. All decisions made regarding recruitment and promotion are based on merit not influenced by gender, disability, race, age, religion or any other attribute.

For existing employees, Gwydir Shire Council is committed to providing a supporting and inclusive workplace where decisions are made equitably without any discrimination.

Council has several trained EEO Contact Officers who have been trained by the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW to assist with the application of policies and procedures and provide support and guidance to staff.

Council will continue to monitor and reassess its Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan ensuring that all actions within the plan are implemented and that the Plan is monitored, reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis, liaising with key stakeholders where required to ensure successful integration within the organisation.

Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the General Manager table right.

General Manager Remuneration Package	
Item	Amount (\$)
Salary	306,281.71
Superannuation	32,159.57
Non-Cash Benefits	28,600
FBT	0.00
Total Package	367,041.28

Senior Staff Members Remuneration Package
Not applicable. The only staff member classified as Senior Staff is the General Manager.

Statement of the total number of persons who performed paid work on 23 November 2022 for Gwydir Shire Council Shire Council table below.

Description	Total no.
Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time basis	136
Persons employed by the council on a permanent part-time basis	61
Persons employed by the council on a casual basis	29
Persons employed by the council under a fixed-term contract	0
Persons employed by the council as senior staff members for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993	1
Persons engaged by the council under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person	1
Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	0
Total	227

Coastal Protection Services Provided

Not applicable. Council did not levy any charges for coastal protection services.

Report on Capital Works Projects

There were nil capital works project reports submitted during the reporting period.

Swimming Pool Inspections

Building Services have a private swimming pool inspection program in place where all known swimming pools in Gwydir Shire are inspected once every three years. The program is designed to ensure owners of private swimming pools maintain their pools and pool barriers in an effective manner to ensure the safety of all pool users. In the 2022/23 financial year Council inspectors carried out 33 inspections. 27 pools were compliant on initial inspection, 2 were decommissioned and 4 were deemed compliant on second inspection.

Government Information Public Access (GIPA) activity

In 2022-23 reporting period Council received 8 requests under the Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009. All were dealt with and the information requested was provided where it was possible to do so.

Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Act 1994 and Regulation

No disclosures were made during the reporting period. Council's Privacy Management Plan is available at www.gwydir.nsw.gov.au to view or download.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Regulation 2000 Information

Planning agreements

There were no Planning Agreements in force during this reporting period.

Developer Contributions

No development contributions and development levies have been used or expended for projects during the reporting period. Each contribution is to go to expenditure on the particular roads identified in the specific Development Consents.

Value of all contributions and levies received during the reporting period totaled \$182,456.34

Fisheries Management Act 1994

Gwydir Shire Council has not been identified as responsible for the implementation of measures in any Recovery Threat Abatement Plan.

Environmental Upgrade Agreements

There were no environmental upgrade agreements entered into during the 2022-23 reporting period.

Stormwater Management Services

Council levied a Stormwater Management Service Charge (SWSC) of \$25 per residential property, \$12.50 for residential strata lots and \$25 per 350sqm for business properties capped at a maximum charge of \$1,000. The total received funds for the 2022/23 financial year was \$39,739.61. Council's stormwater works program for the financial year included routine repairs, cleaning of gross pollutant traps and removal of debris from grates and inlets, along with the emergent replacement of a collapsed underground stormwater pipe in Riddell Street, Bingara and a concept design for improved stormwater drainage around Ridley, Cunningham and Bombelli Street intersections as part of the prioritised improvements raised in the recent stormwater consultation finalised in the 2022/23 financial year.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES COMPANION ANIMALS ACT 1998 AND REGULATION 2008

Companion Animals management

Gwydir Shire Council employs two Regulatory Officers who are responsible for administering the Companion Animals Act 1998. The Officers patrol the region to provide companion animal owners with support, education and regulation. A summary of the activities undertaken in 2022/23 are listed below.

Animal Enclosure (Pound)

Council received funding through the Stronger Country Communities fund to construct a new animal enclosure facility. The facility is located on the industrial estate in Warialda situated behind the Essential Energy Depot. It consists of 5 large kennels with runs that can be reconfigured into 10 separate kennels with the closing of internal doors. It also features a multipurpose Veterinary/Laundry/Storage room, an office with a foyer for receiving the public and an enclosed outdoor animal exercise area. The construction was finalised early in the year and the Council's regulatory officer's commenced working from the building.

Pound data / Collection returns

Council reports annually on impounded animals in the Gwydir Shire region. This information is provided to the Department of Local Government, and forms part of the Survey of Council Seizures of Cats and Dogs. Council lodged its pound data collection return in July 2023. A brief summary of the pound data collections for the year and comparison to the previous period is presented in the table below.

ACTIVITY	CATS		% change	DOGS		% change
	2022	2023		2022	2023	
Total Animals Seized	44	32	-27%	18	21	17%
Returned to owner	2	2	-	13	14	8%
Impounded	42	0	-	5	7	40%
Surrendered	0	0	-	5	0	-100%
Released to Owners	1	0	-100%	3	0	-100%
Rehoming within Gwydir Shire	0	0	-	0	4	-
Released to rehoming organisation	1	0	-100%	8	3	-63%
Euthanised unsuitable for rehoming	0	0	-	0	0	-
Euthanised unable to rehomed	0	0	-	0	0	-
Euthanised feral	40	30	-25%	0	0	-

Menacing Dog Declarations

Nuisance Orders

No dogs were put on nuisance orders this year.

Menacing Dog Declarations

No dogs were placed on menacing dog declarations.

Nine dogs remain on a menacing dog declaration from previous years.

Dangerous Dog Declaration

No dogs were placed on dangerous dog declarations this year.
Six dogs remain on dangerous dog declarations from the previous years.

Microchipping and Registrations

245 Dogs and 4 Cats were microchipped in the period.
47 Dogs and 3 Cats were registered in the period for a total of \$3,667.00.

Microchipping and Registration Totals

	ID Microchip Only		Change	Registered		Change	Total	Total	
	2022	2023	%	2022	2023	2023	2022	2023	
Cat	334	334	0%	178	180	1%	512	514	<1%
Dog	3901	4222	8%	1486	1553	5%	5387	5775	7%
Total:	4235	4556	8%	1664	1773	6%	5899	6329	7%

The top ten identified registered breeds in Gwydir Shire

The top ten identified registered **Dog** breeds in The Shire

Breed	2022	Breed	2023
Australian Kelpie	303	Australian Kelpie	314
Jack Russell Terrier	264	Jack Russell Terrier	292
Labrador Retriever	155	Labrador Retriever	176
Australian Cattle Dog (Blue)	142	Border Collie	153
Border Collie	134	Australian Cattle Dog (Blue)	147
Maltese	108	Cavoodle	130
Unknown	97	Maltese	111
Cocker Spaniel	94	Dachshund (miniature)	111
Chihuahua (Smooth)	94	Unknown	100

The top ten identified registered **Cat** breeds in The Shire

2022 Breed	Registered	2023 Breed	Registered
Domestic	314	Domestic	319
Ragdoll	43	Ragdoll	50
Birman	30	Birman	29
(Other)	15	(Other)	15
Burmese	10	Burmese	10
Domestic	10	Domestic	10
Russian Blue	9	Russian Blue	9
Siamese	7	Ragdoll	8
Ragdoll	7	Siamese	7
Unknown	7	Unknown	7
Persian	7	Persian	7

Dog Attack Statistics

Known dog attacks reported and investigated by Council's Regulatory officers are entered into the Companion Animals Database, in accordance with the requirements of the Companion Animals Act 1998. During 2022/23 there was one incident involving one dog reported to Council which was investigated and reported on the Companion Animals Database portal. All incidents were resolved.

Funds spent on Companion Animal management and activities
Funding spent by Council in 2022/23 totalled \$136,738.00.

This figure includes the employment of Regulatory officers, and the operation and maintenance of Council's Companion Animal Impounding facility and its associated administrative functions. These are the rehoming of companion animals, microchipping and registration and maintaining the companion animals register, as well as educational and awareness activities.

Educational activities

The Strategic Companion Animal Management Plan (SCAMP) contains objectives for undertaking companion animal awareness and educational activities. This year saw a continuing use of social media for a range of Companion Animal Management Activities including education, reuniting lost pets and rehoming pets. The Shire also produces a range of factsheets for companion animal owners which are distributed physically, and the information is available online at Council's website.

Strategies to promote the desexing and permanent Identification of companion animals
It is recognised that the desexing of cats and dogs helps to reduce nuisance behaviours such as roaming, aggression and the production of unwanted litters. We promote desexing to our customers highlighting these advantages both socially and financially.

Strategies to reduce euthanasia rates

An amendment to the Companion Animals Act requires a rehoming organisation, such as the Council, to satisfy required steps for the rehoming of seized and surrendered dogs. The amendment came into effect on the 4 March 2022. Fortunately, the Council's processes were already operating to minimise euthanasia. This meant that the Council were already compliant with the requirements. Gwydir Shire Council operates a Facebook page and eligible impounded animals are advertised for rehoming. This allows the community to view and share that information and reach a wider audience. Partnerships have been developed across the region with rehoming organisations such as Lucky Paws, Animal Welfare League (Moree), PetRescue - Macintyre Pet and Animal Rescue - Goondiwindi. The companion animals that are not rehomed locally are shared with these organisations and available to a wider population for rehoming. This year again we saw no dog were euthanised, a credit to the Regulatory Officers and the systems and relationships that they have developed. All the euthanised cats were feral cats.

Off leash areas

Council provides four designated off leash areas in the Shire. Regulatory signage is erected at all sites detailing the behaviours that are permitted and prohibited.

The off-leash areas continue to be maintained by the Council's Regulatory and Parks and Gardens staff with regular mowing, tree watering and maintenance.

The four areas are: Bicentennial Park, including part of the Bingara River Common Crown Reserve area under council management. This area is unfenced. All Nations Hill, Hill Street, Bingara is fenced and has a dog bubbler, dog obstacles and seating. In Warialda at the Long Street Triangle Park on the corner of Long and Mosquito Creek Road. This area is also fenced and has a dog bubbler, dog obstacles, litter bags and bin as well as seating. The Off-leash Reserve Gwydir Street Gravesend is fenced and has dog obstacles and seating.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE NSW CARERS (RECOGNITION) ACT 2010

The inclusion and support to Carers of Aged Care residents is a high priority within the Gwydir Shire Council. Planning and assessment of our aged care residents always involves carers, if applicable taking into consideration the supports of the carer and their perception of the caring relationship. Irrespective of the age, function and place of residence such as a Residential Aged Care Facility, carers are often heavily involved in decision making with regards to the resident's needs, assessment and support planning. The ongoing involvement of carers is often essential to the wellbeing of residents residing in residential aged care and this is promoted and supported at Naroo Frail Aged Care. Allowing and supporting Carers to be involved reduces depression, provides continuity of relationships, and sustains connection to home and family to the resident. It also enables the carer to feel needed, useful, and appreciated.

The new Aged Care Standards incorporate the importance of Carers in the industry, and it is expected that organisations partner with the consumer and their carer/s. Consumers Dignity and Choice is supported by allowing consumers to make decisions about when family, friend's carers or others should be involved in their care. Consumers often continue to receive care and support from unpaid carers when entering residential care such as family and friends. These people have been supporting the consumer over a period before they accessed care and services and continue to be recognised by the Gwydir Shire Council. Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) services celebrate Carers Week annually. Carers Week is about recognising and celebrating the outstanding contribution family, friends and carers make to our Shire.

Naroo Aged Care Hostel Facility also continues to recognise family and carers monthly, holding a BBQ each month to celebrate the resident's birthdays and inviting them to attend.

Carers are also involved in our Disability Inclusion Committee undertaking a consultative role.

Educational Strategies

Staff awareness and education is available through various programs such as Dementia Australia and Golden Carers. Staff also have access to webinars providing information and education on programs such as the Integrated Carer Support Service Model.

A copy of the NSW Carers charter is displayed in the Gwydir Shire Council units within the Shire. Carers play an integral role within the Gwydir Shire Council and are recognised and involved in the day-to-day care of resident residing in the Naroo

Aged Care Hostel Facility owned by Gwydir Shire Council, as well as services provided through Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and NSW Transport.

Consultation and liaison with Carers

Consultation and liaison with Carers occur within Naroo Aged Care Hostel Facility and Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) services on a daily basis. Carers are identified and kept informed with any changes or deterioration of their loved ones.

Gwydir Shire seeks input and feedback from consumers and their carers and has access to various methods for raising and resolving complaints in a timely manner. This feedback is actively reviewed, and the services are improved where appropriate.

The Disability Inclusion Access Committee is made up of people in the community who are interested in helping to make their community or town more disability and dementia friendly. Work continues on the implementation of Dementia Friendly communities within the Shire.

Staff who are Carers

Carers leave is available to all staff working for Gwydir Shire Council and is supported by the Gwydir Shire Council Sick and Carers Leave Policy.

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 – including information on the implementation of council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The Gwydir Shire Council recognises that people with a disability have the right to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their support and services. The aim is to provide people with disability opportunities for access and participation, consistent with that provided to other community members.

The Gwydir Shire Council has an active Disability Inclusions Advisory Committee that meets regularly. The committee includes both carers and persons living with a disability and Council representatives and medical professionals. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) went to the June 2023 Council meeting and was displayed for 28 days before being adopted and publicly available to the community as of July 1st, 2023. Actions from this Plan will continue to be integrated into Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. Council continues to plan and work toward addressing the issues that we need to as an organisation to ensure that people with a disability in our community are not disadvantaged and can live comfortably in their chosen community.

During the reporting period Council has installed doorbells at the entry way to the Bingara library to alert staff when someone who may need assistance entering the facility can get it. Sections of footpath in Bingara and Warialda have been upgraded or installed to allow for easier access for people with mobility issues.

The current disabled parking spaces in Bingara and Warialda have been reviewed and determined as the most practical spaces available that do not compromise safety to those using them. The Committee and staff will continue to monitor these spaces along with the opportunity to add more if the need arises.