

our place our future

END OF TERM REPORT 2016-2021



End of Term Report

The NSW Local Government Act requires that at the last meeting of an outgoing Council a report be tabled that outlines how the Council has worked towards implementing its Community Strategic Plan.

This End of Term Report sets out the Council's progress towards achieving outcomes aligned to the Principle Activity Areas of the Lithgow City Council Community Strategic Plan 2030 (CSP 2030) with reference to Actions and Performance Measures in the 2017-21 Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plans.

Alignment with the Community Strategic Plan 2030

Throughout this document you will see a colour coded table which identifies the measures identified in the CSP 2030. All projects, programs and activities undertaken by Council and the community achieve one or more measures across the 5 themes of the CSP 2030.

Caring for our Community

Strengthening our Economy

Developing our Built Environment

Enhancing our Natural Environment

Responsible Governance & Civic Leadership



Financial Sustainability

A financially sustainable council is one that has the ability to fund ongoing service delivery and the renewal and replacement of assets without imposing excessive debt or large rate increases on future generations. This definition has been translated into the following four key financial sustainability principles which Council is committed to:





1. Council must achieve a fully funded operating position reflecting that Council collects enough revenue to fund operational expenditure, repayment of debt and asset depreciation;
2. Council must maintain sufficient cash reserves to ensure it can meet short term working capital requirements;
3. Council must have an appropriately funded capital program where the source of funding is identified and secured for capital renewal, upgrade and new capital works;
4. Council must maintain its asset base by renewing aging infrastructure which is identified, and by ensuring cash reserves are set aside for future works which are yet to be identified

The Office of Local Government (OLG) includes a number of financial performance measures in the Code of Accounting Practice. Council reports its performance against these measures in the annual financial statements. These indicators assist to assess the financial sustainability of councils.

Council has reviewed its Long Term Financial Plan against the OLG indicators as part of assessing the long term financial health of the organisation and its capacity to fund the proposed delivery program. Council's Long Term Financial Plan is updated annually. More information is available in the Governance & Civic Leadership section of this report p.177.

Financial Ratios

The financial performance measures and benchmarks have been set by the Office of Local Government to assess the financial health of Councils. It is a requirement for Councils to report their results against each performance measure in the annual financial statements.

	Benchmark	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Progress
Operating performance ratio						
Measures Council's achievement of containing operating expenditure within operating revenue.	0%	-1.99%	-3.08%	-5.01%	-2.19%	
Unrestricted current ratio						
Measures the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term as they fall due	1.5	1.81	1.93	1.68	2.23	
Own source operating revenue ratio						
Measures Council's degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.	60%	73.97%	75.47%	76.01%	70.84%	
Debt Service Ratio						
Measures availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments.	2	4.49	3.71	3.21	5.66	

Building Strong Sustainable Finances

The current term of Council has continued responsible spending to deliver more on infrastructure renewal and to provide quality Council services. Council has utilised grant opportunities to the maximum extent to fund the infrastructure renewal backlog. See p. 115

Our community vision

“A Centre of Regional Excellence that:
Encourages community growth and
development

Contributes to the efficient and
effective management of the
environment, community and
economy for
present and future generations.”

Our mission

<p>We retain, respect and strengthen both our overall sense of community and the unique linked communities of groups, rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow Local Government Area.</p>	COMMUNITY
<p>Providing for sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.</p>	ECONOMY
<p>Providing a choice of effective public and private transport options, suitable entertainment and recreational facilities and lifestyle choices while enhancing the existing rural areas, villages and towns that make up the Lithgow Local Government Area.</p>	BUILT ENVIRONMENT
<p>Balancing, protecting and enhancing our diverse environmental elements, both natural and built, for the enjoyment and support of both current and future generations.</p>	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
<p>Developing community confidence in the organisation by the way it is directed, controlled and managed.</p>	CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Building resilience

CLARENCE DARGAN

NSW RFS



Since 2016 the Lithgow LGA has been impacted by a number of natural disasters and economic downturns:

- Instability in the mining and power industries
- Instability in the aged care sector
- Closure of the University of Western Sydney
- Natural Disasters
- Covid - 19

This document explores the impacts on the Lithgow local government area and actions that have been taken by Council and the community to transition our economy and build a resilient community.

Building Resilience - Challenges

Since 2016, the cumulative effects of natural disasters and COVID-19 have placed enormous economic, environmental and social pressure on both Council and its community. The following highlights the cumulative effects that these ongoing disasters are having as one event rolls into the next.



Mayor Ray Thompson visited Council's Wallerawang depot accompanied by the General Manager to address the workers involved in repairing the water mains on Pipers Flat Road on the 8th of June 2021.

The conditions in which the team including traffic control, plant operators, plumbers and supervisors worked through were amongst some of the worst that have been seen in 2021 with temperatures reaching low single digits and rain, sleet, and snow incoming. The team were working to repair a water main that had burst on Piper's Flat Road. The team worked into the night to complete the repair and return service to residents.

Environmental impacts

- Periodic heavy rainfall has caused further erosion and landslides where vegetation had been lost following the Gospers Mountain Megafire
 - Remediation required for roads and driveway access.
- Extreme weather events caused significant damage to local infrastructure cutting off many residents access; roads, bridges, landslips and sewerage issues.
- Major traffic impacts and calls to emergency services and towing companies were experienced over the Easter 2021 long weekend due to deteriorated road conditions following extreme weather:
 - Map diversions and people using access tracks, forestry and private roads without knowledge or experience.
- Weeds are an ongoing issue with landscape recovery.
 - Weed and vegetation management particularly erosion, growth of grasses are impacted by summer heat and storms combined with strong winds.
 - Sticky Nightshade is a priority for the Central Tablelands along highways, fire trails and where hazard reduction grading had been done.
- Council received requests from:
 - Residents for slashing public and private lands to reduce bushfire risk
 - Residents regarding outstanding tree and clean-up issues
 - New buyers of impacted properties requesting assistance for clean-up and weed infestations
- Issues experienced with the EPA Bushfire Green Waste Program hindered clean-up works for rebuilding and recovery needs for residents impacted by the Gospers Mountain Megafire.

Animals

- Fencing infrastructure and replacement fencing for properties not meeting the eligibility requirements of the Public Land Boundary Fence Program - based on RU1-4 zoning, or if E2-4 zoning needing to pass a substantial rural character test which includes, being an Local Land Service (LLS) rateable property (over 10 ha), having stock on their property (that is registered with LLS), or being a primary producer.
- Reports on increased spider and rodent activity.
- April (Easter 2021) increased veterinary callouts to livestock due to wet weather. Primary producers experienced stock loss and loss of fencing, flood gates and vegetation over fences due to the extreme weather event hindered recovery efforts.
- Recovery of the environment –
 - Strong interest in revegetation and establishing habitats for native wildlife. Increasing participation from community members in wildlife programs and environmental recovery as residents started to identify native animals and species returning/not returning to the area.
 - Report from Local Land Services of a pest Brumby population in Newnes and sensitivities in trying to protect natural habitats and environmental assets.

Building Resilience - Challenges

Social impacts

- Community fatigue in response to concurrent disasters (bushfire, covid, rebuilding and lagging insurance and tree issues).
- Council continues to receive requests from impacted properties for the Rates Relief Program. This has been ad hoc and a challenge to assess their eligibility due to the resources required to validate information and cross reference with other agencies.
- Groups interested in establishing Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) experienced issues understanding and setting up to meet the NSP Criteria.
- Increased mental health issues.
- Community Groups reported experiencing a decline in volunteer members.
- Older residents self-isolating (and not contactable by email) and not attending recovery events where they can connect with other residents, receive vouchers and key information.
- Council received requests from:
 - Residents of Dargan to have the postcode changed to Lithgow as it is currently included in the Katoomba postcode.
 - Residents of Dargan for development of a Council owned parcel of land for a community space.
 - Community expectation that Council will "take care of it" resulting in misdirected frustration by residents dealing with other agencies and departments directed at Council.
 - Apathy from residents in recovery events.
- Community groups/members applying for Funding experienced difficulty in compiling applications:
 - The level of financial support available to bushfire victims has been of great assistance, many found navigating multiple funding streams from many agencies too difficult and even an additional trauma having to recount information for each application to suit the question/criteria.
 - Community groups suggested to overcome this problem requires an agency to play a stewardship role in the system. This critical role would involve working with a network of people, communities and organisations to understand the need and connect it to the most appropriate resource to achieve the best possible outcome. Community suggested this should not be the role of the RFS as it took away vital resources in active bushfire case management.

Built recovery

- Insurance
 - Insurance premiums for impacted bushfire communities and postcode classification in “bushfire prone areas” causing significant premium increases.
 - Issues were experienced with insurance companies where subcontracting of work to trades did not pass approval and sign off.
 - Residents moving into partially complete rebuilds without occupational certifications due to insurance accommodation coverage expired.
- Enquiries from rural areas for support relating to access, transport and telecommunications.
- Illegal building activities – In May 2021, Council was in the process of issuing a POEO notice and Notice of Intent to issue an order (First step to issuing an order) to a resident in Dargan following complaints of unauthorized building (s) and septic. The property was bushfire affected, however had no structures on the property prior to the fires.

Economic recovery

- Rebuild costs the leading barrier to Rebuild/Restart/Relocate.
- Job losses due to Covid have caused further financial hardship for residents.
- Property turnover increased (after a lull in sales over the Christmas 2020 period).
- Businesses have experienced difficulty attracting and leasing business premises.
- Easter 2021 weekend saw loss of business to tourism providers with full bookings due to extreme weather conditions and road access issues.
- Damage to natural amenity, disruptions to operations caused by access issues, smoke, ongoing perceptions and Covid have impacted tourism.
- Primary producers experienced difficulty in restocking (cost to buy back in and manage regrowth to not pose a fire risk).

Drought Communities

The Drought Communities Program is an Australian Government initiative to support communities in the drought affected regions of Australia.

In August 2018, the Australian Government boosted the Drought Communities Program by \$75m to provide initial support of \$1m to 60 eligible Councils in 2018/19 for local infrastructure and other projects for communities and businesses who have been impacted by drought.

Lithgow City Council was included among the 60 eligible Councils and received funding in 2018/19 and 2019/20 (a total of \$2m) to carry out a number of projects across the Lithgow local government area to most effectively provide support for drought recovery, and address the social, health and wellness needs of the community.

Council recognises that within the Lithgow LGA we have a number of communities that are isolated and vulnerable. This program allowed Council to work directly with small communities to help meet their identified needs and collaborate on projects close to the heart of the villages that make up the Lithgow LGA.

The project was designed to promote a sense of community and encourage investment, business activity and economic benefits for the community now and into the future.

In accordance with the funding guidelines, Council was the project manager only, with project funding to be spent within the community (employing local businesses, suppliers and services). Where possible, Council worked with local contractors with expertise in:

- Sustainable agriculture practices
- Irrigation and water harvesting
- Building maintenance
- Concreting
- Weed control

All activities resulted in direct and/or indirect creation of employment of local businesses, suppliers and services.

Long-term economic activity in the community and the region will be generated by:

- Attracting more tourism to the area
- Improved venues and public lands.
- Community focal points and amenities were upgraded to allow utilisation by a diverse range of people/groups throughout the year at various points within the LGA.

By stimulating the local economy to encourage investment and business activity it is anticipated this will provide opportunities for young people to stay in the LGA.

A more resilient community is able to adapt to a transitioning local economy. Projects such as this will encourage people and families to stay and prosper in the LGA. This, in turn, will lead to businesses, services, tourism & facilities being maintained in the Lithgow LGA.

Drought Communities

Community Hall Upgrades

Council was able to undertake maintenance and upgrades to a number of community buildings across the LGA:

- Capertee Memorial Hall - roof painting and installation of a false ceiling
- Wallerawang Netball Stadium - Floor renewal
- Lithgow Girl Guides Hall - exterior painting
- Hermitage and Vale Halls - Removal of asbestos sheeting and recladding of walls with colour bond.
- Wallerawang Memorial Hall - internal renovation, replacement of walls and ceiling, repainting and strip and reseal timber floors.
- Upgrade to the 'Front of House' at the Union Theatre
This has extended the life of all of these buildings which are actively used by the community.

The works have modernised the halls, and improved their suitability and safety for community use. The works also reduce the level of future costs for maintenance.

Children's Playground Upgrades and Improvements to Community Parks

Council was able to undertake maintenance and upgrades community parks and recreational areas across the LGA to:

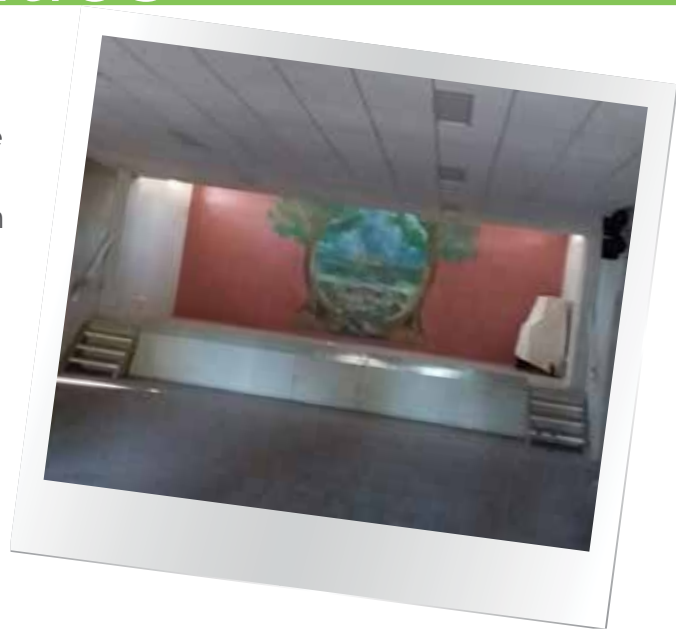
- Marrangaroo Park - playground upgrade
- Tweedie Park, Wallerawang - construction of playground and toilets.
- Wallerawang Skatepark - Shade structure installed over the skatepark.
- Portland Skatepark - Construction of toilets and shade structure installed over the skatepark.
- Renewal of garden beds at Rotary Park, Portland.

These works revitalise community recreation hubs bringing visitors and increased visitor spend into these rural centres.

Footpath Construction

The drought communities program has allowed for:

- The replacement of the 750m footpath that runs along Willewa St, from the High St intersection to the level crossing near the railway station linking East Portland to the shopping precinct and amenities..
- Construction of 620m of 1.2m wide footpath along James Parade, Wallerawang providing a direct link between Lake Wallace recreation area and Wallerawang shopping precinct. Lake Wallace is a popular recreation, fishing, sailing and camping destination.



Sporting Field Irrigation Systems

Installation of Automated Watering Systems at Sporting Fields in Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland enabled all season amenity making the facilities more attractive to local and regional sporting events, thereby providing on-going benefits to the local economy.

As part of the Drought Affected Communities Program Irrigation upgrades occurred to the following fields,

- Lithgow - Tony Luchetti fields 1 and 2
- Wallerawang - Fields 1 and 2
- Portland - Kremer park
- Conran Oval
- Marjorie Jackson Oval

This has improved the playing surface and reduced the staffing required to otherwise irrigate manually. The system waters at night reducing the amount of water used or lost to evaporation. As it is fully automated, it can be remotely controlled by a mobile app and during times of heavy rainfall the amount of water applied can be adjusted accordingly.

Fire Fighting Water Access - Capertee

Improvements to existing standpipes and water storage tanks to enable access to fire-fighting water during emergencies and bush fire events.

Stormwater Harvesting - Portland Golf Club

Installation of a stormwater storage and reticulation system for harvested water for use at the Portland Golf Club to improve the amenity of this facility which is a focal point for the community.

“Council has been able to complete a number of fantastic projects with this funding with great benefits to local communities for years to come. Wherever possible local businesses were engaged to complete the works, helping to ensure that the economic benefits of the works were delivered within our community.”

Mayor, Ray Thompson



Drought Communities Program

Community Events were developed with the following aims

- To build skills and resilience of young residents under the age of 29 who have been impacted by the economic downturn caused by drought.
- To build capacity and resilience of the community to address mental health and well-being across all sectors.
- To address the impact of the drought on the community. Particular focus was on the economic impact of the drought and the structural factors that contribute to mental health and wellbeing in the Lithgow LGA.
- To develop strategies to build the economic and social diversity of the Lithgow LGA.
- To strengthen community awareness of services and their roles and address the risk factors associated with the economic and social impact of drought.
- To promote agricultural sustainability focusing on the needs of drought affected farmers in soil, farm and agricultural management.

Tarana

Bunting Day

In collaboration with the Tarana Valley Community Group, council hosted a Bunting Day workshop. 15 local women and 1 local man gathered at Mumma Snow's Café and made bunting to decorate the Tarana Station for the 'Back on Track Train event.

Participants were from around the Tarana Valley and even further with one community member travelling from Sunny Corner. There was a range of ages and abilities; some just learning to sew while others cut and pinned the flags together, turned them inside out and ironed them.

The community benefits of the day were immediate as well as ongoing. This was an easily attainable project with a tangible result; the day also brought together a diverse range of community members for a time of connection and social inclusion. The connections made that day have inspired the possibility of an ongoing sewing/crafting/social group within the village which will have long term positive effects on the social connection and mental health benefits for the residents of this village.

Back on Track Train Event

In collaboration with the Tarana Valley Community Group, council hosted a 'Back on Track' community breakfast event to celebrate the new train service connecting Tarana and Rydal to the Bathurst Bullet services. 200 locals and visitors braved the very cold weather to come down and meet the train at 7:30am. The local café owner catered the breakfast while the team from the Lithgow Tin Shed came to supply coffee. A big brass band from Mitchell Conservatorium were in attendance to welcome the train, send it on its way again and entertain the community. This was a celebration of increased opportunities and connection for the residents of Tarana and Rydal.

Hartley

Hartley Picnic under the Stars

More than 130 people gathered at the historic Old Hartley School for an evening of fun. The community shared a spit roast and spent time catching up with friends and neighbours from the Hartley community and as far away as Katoomba, the Megalong and Kanimbla valleys, Hampton and several of the isolated hamlets that make up our LGA.

Adults spent the evening entertained by 10 comedians. Meanwhile the children were entertained and entranced by the local circus troupe "Carnivale" who were on hand to teach circus skills and ensure the youngest members of our community were happy and safe while the parents had a chance to relax and enjoy each others company.

The community expressed a desire to continue with similar social events which bring people together and give children a safe and inclusive forum for participating in events.

“In recent years, Lithgow has been heavily impacted by drought, bushfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout these trials, the Lithgow community rallied, tackling the tough times together

Andrew Gee, Federal Member for Calare and Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel



Drought Communities Program

Capertee

Capertee Farmers Long Lunch

Over 70 local residents gathered at the Royal Hotel, Capertee for a day of celebrating community; sharing a meal, spending time listening to a local band and the children enjoyed face painting and a jumping castle for the afternoon.

Mental health organisations were represented by RAHMP and the NBMPHN which enabled our vulnerable community members to access information and make connections which support their own and the communities mental health and wellbeing.

As part of the program, regenerative farmer Colin Seis conducted a workshop with an interactive paddock walk and a Q&A session for local farmers about surviving the drought, transitioning their farms to sustainable practises and managing their land through regenerative practises.

The ongoing benefits to the community lies in community connections made at a gathering of like-minded individuals who continue to equip, empower and encourage each other. Participants came from Capertee as well as other regions in the LGA. Several farmers who attended the long lunch have also registered to attend the Full day Sustainable Farming Workshop run by Colin Seis and hosted by council.

Capertee Valley Landcare event

As part of the program, Council made a contribution to the Capertee Valley Landcare Event; An Evening Under the Stars. Which included a talk on regenerative farming by Peter Hazell - project coordinator of The Mullooon Institute, a musical performance, family movie and picnic under the stars. A substantial cross section of the Capertee Valley community attended the event which was the first step in their journey to understanding and applying regenerative land management principles to the valley landscape to improve its capacity to hold water. This was part of a larger project being undertaken by the Valley community to enhance the experience and knowledge of participants in regard to landcare and farming. The project provides an opportunity for residents in the valley to explore the possibility of building drought resilience strategies into our farming and Landcare practices.



Hampton

Farmers Long Arvo - Hampton Hotel.

More than 80 local residents gathered at the Hampton Halfway Hotel Motel. Some came early to hear local regenerative farmer Colin Seis talk about his land management and some came late to dance the night away.

Everyone came together to build community, to make connections and catch up with mates in the region who have been isolated by the unrelenting nature of the drought.

Children were entertained by Carnivale Circus while the adults got to relax, chat, share a meal and talk through some of the issues that are of concern.



Throughout the events program, Council partnered with the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP). Local RAMHP Coordinator, Sonia Cox, attended events and was on hand to talk with locals and let everyone know about the many services available in the community to deal with the stresses of farming during the drought.

Colin Seis Sustainable Farming

Workshop.

20 local farmers and residents from the Lithgow LGA gathered to learn from Colin Seis about sustainable agriculture, pasture cropping, weed management, grazing techniques and diversifying income.

Colin Seis taught the principles of pasture cropping and sustainable farming and took participants through the experiences that have changed his approach to land management over time and encouraged participants to explore alternatives to some common practices. Local farmers had a chance to talk in depth with Colin about their experiences of living and farming through the drought and to ask questions about his methods.

It was an excellent day with time for supporting each other and looking into the future while acknowledging the current drought and the hardships it brings.

On farm consultations

As part of the Drought Relief communities program Lithgow City Council offered 4 individual on farm visits to be won by ballot by local farmers.

Colin was able to provide advice and direction on a range of issues of importance to these individual farmers. This included advice on grazing and stock management, weed control, diversifying crop and regenerating soil and native grasslands. There was also an opportunity to consult regarding diversifying income from farming and stacking systems onto the land as well as small business and potential start-up companies.

The response from the winners of these farm consultations was overwhelming. Each of the winners had particular and diverse needs and were thrilled to be able to spend that time one on one with Colin.

Drought Communities Program

Lithgow Blast, was a Free Concert conducted under the Drought-affected Communities program at Blast Furnace Park, Lithgow.

An alcohol-free all-ages event for young people and their families which featured a smashing line up of stellar artists from across the musical spectrum.

Odette, The Delta Riggs, Yours Truly, Citizen Kay, Claude Hay and a slew of local emerging talent performed between 2:00 pm and 9:00 pm on the day. The venue along with Food stalls created a picnic style event in a safe friendly space to let off some steam and dig some brilliant tunes.

To ease into the day and connect with the local surrounds, Lithgow Walk 'n' Talk for Life led a walk around Lake Pillans prior to the entertainment commencing.

A FREE CONCERT FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
BLAST FURNACE PARK, LITHIUM
SATURDAY 16 NOV | 2-9

ODETTE
THE DELTA RIGGS

YOURS TRULY CITIZEN KAY CLAUDE HAY
HOLLOW POINT PHAT BRASS AND MORE

FOOD AND MARKET STALLS
FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE FROM THE CBD

This event is funded through the Community Development and Drought Communities Program



Drought Communities Program

Farmers Creek Weed Management

Council engaged Blue Tongue Ecosystems P/L to undertake environmental weed treatment on Council owned land along Farmers Creek, State Mine Creek, and Lake Pillans Creek and Wetlands. The aim of this program was to:

1. provide an initial control of weeds along the creek and tributaries to drastically reduce them in number.
2. achieve localised eradications of Priority Listed Willow species.
3. Treat African Love Grass infestation at Coalbrook Street and install native trees.
4. Install native trees to replace weed infestations that were removed.

The following weed treatment was achieved:

- All the **Blackberry** was treated on Council land on Farmers Creek, as well as on the tributary creeks; State Mine Creek and Pillans Creek. This were sprayed with selective herbicides that don't damage the nearby grasses and rushes. Where any Blackberry was not completely treated. Follow up was undertaken in March 2020.
- All the **Black Willows, Tortured Willows, Pussy Willows and Grey Willows** were treated on site. The **Weeping Willows** were left however as they have cultural significance and are not a highly invasive weed. Several Willows were identified as 'high risk' – once dead they could fall on structures or public areas. These Willows were cut back or removed by Elevated Tree Care - a sub-contracted arborist to eliminate the risk. Willows were treated using a variety of techniques – including: stem injection with drills or chainsaw; hand pulling; and some were foliar sprayed.
- Large stands of **Privets** were treated at several sites. The largest were at State Mine Creek. The Privets were initially treated through a combination of chainsawing and brushcutting. Herbicide was applied to the cut trunks to prevent re-growth. The cut material was then dealt with by: brushcutting the fine material to form a mulch; and the stumps were used to build erosion abatement structures (we determined this was needed to clad areas of the creek's banks where a great deal of vegetation was removed).
- **English Broom and Montpellier Broom** were treated in all areas. They are, however, unable to be eradicated due to their long seed life and the uphill infestations that are not on Council Land. A combination of cut and paint, as well as foliar spray techniques were used.
- Holly and Japanese Honeysuckle were treated in most zones. They were skirted from vegetation and large trunks were scraped. After waiting for some regrowth, they foliar sprayed the weeds on the ground.
- **Cotoneaster and Hawthorne** were chainsaw cut and paint treated.
- **African Love Grass** on the corner of Coalbrook Street and Sandford Avenue was highlighted as a concern. It is a 2-hectare area that is highly disturbed, the soil is coal waste, and it is unable to be developed. It was dominated by the Priority Weed, African Love Grass. The African Love Grass was sprayed with a highly selective herbicide called Fusilade. This treats only certain grasses, and binds to the soil and continues to act on the African Love Grass for a period of 5 years. This treatment is still taking effect; however it will treat the Love Grass and allow other species to do well in its place.

Plantings

Coalbrook Street Eucalypts

150 large stock Eucalyptus trees were planted in this area. Unfortunately, 90 of these were burnt in the Gospers Mountain Megafire, and we are waiting to see if they re-sprout. All of the trees were guarded and watered until they established. The hope is that these trees will grow very rapidly which will confer these benefits:

- Provide shade and reduce the heat island effect
- Improve the aesthetic of the area.
- The shade will suppress the African Love Grass in the future.
- The roots will assist to stabilise the soil and prevent leaching of the coal chitter into the creek.
- Provide a tree corridor from the bushland to the north, to Farmers Creek. Tree corridors are utilised by native birds, glider and other wildlife.

Other native plantings

A total of 1250 plants were installed along a section of Farmers Creek and State Mine Creek: These were installed to:

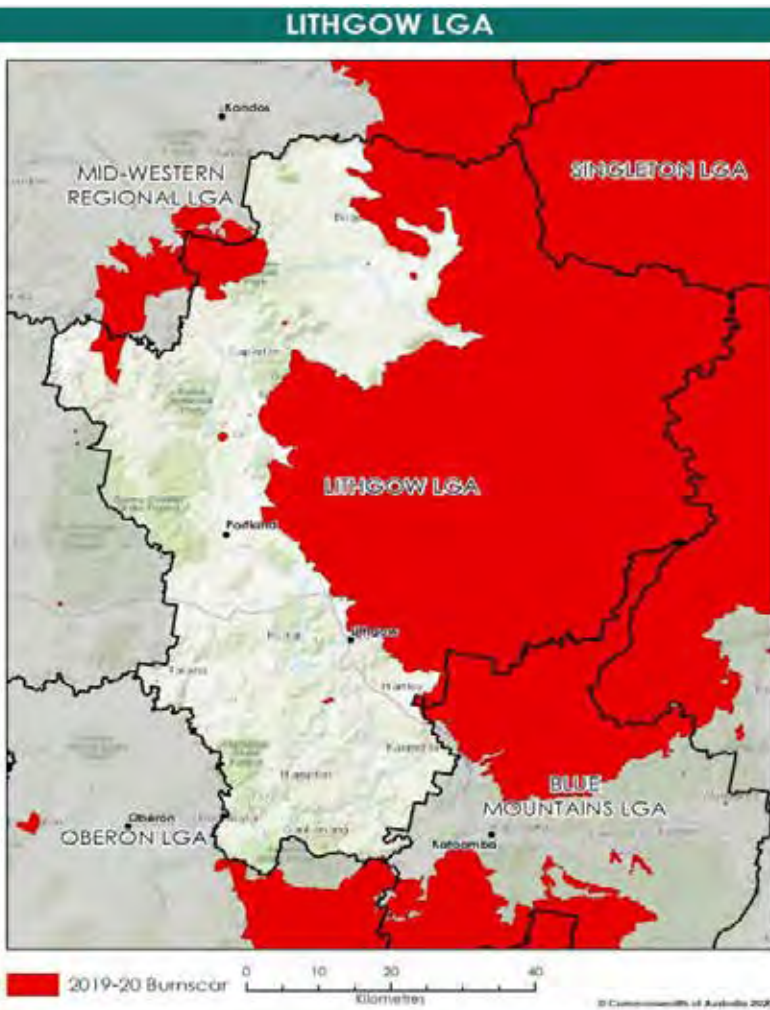
- Prevent future weed growth
- Increase native flora diversity and abundance, and provide habitat for native fauna.



Community Recovery Program

2019/20 Bushfires

From September 2019, fires heavily impacted various regions of the state of New South Wales, including Lidsdale and the Wolgan Valley. On 26 October, the largest fire ever recorded in Australia started. A second fire which commenced in the Palmers Oakey area traveled north east through Running Stream, Ilford, Clandulla and threatened to join up with the Gospers Mountain Fire in the Capertee Valley.



"The Gospers Mountain fire was the largest forest fire ever recorded in Australia, burning more than 500,000 hectares. 81% of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area burned. As of 27 December, the Gospers Mountain fire had burnt over 500,000 hectares (1,200,000 acres) and, after burning approximately 512,000 hectares (1,270,000 acres) across the Lithgow, Hawkesbury and Central Coast local government areas, the NSW Rural Fire Service reported the fire as contained on 12 January 2020, stating that the fire was caused by a lightning strike on 26 October. On 10 February 2020, NSW Rural Fire Service announced a torrential rain event over the preceding week had extinguished the Gospers Mountain fire."

25 Development applications received

23 Development applications approved

26

National Bushfire Recovery Agency
Data current as of 10 September 2020

3

FACILITIES DESTROYED

122

OUTBUILDINGS DESTROYED

2,371 km²

BURNT
53%

OF LGA

Lithgow

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AREA

54

HOUSES DESTROYED

10

FACILITIES DAMAGED

64

OUTBUILDINGS DAMAGED

ESTIMATED

\$11.5m

IN DAMAGE TO THE LOCAL
ECONOMY

10.8%

OF TOTAL LOCAL ECONOMY

21

HOUSES DAMAGED

64 km²

PRIMARY PRODUCTION
LAND BURNT

4%

OF PRIMARY
PRODUCTION LAND

2,046 km²

BUSHLAND & FORESTS
BURNT

91%

OF BUSHLANDS &
FORESTS

Community Recovery Program

Supporting our community to recover

As the 2019/20 fire season progressed and the fire became more intense in the Lithgow LGA, Council's staff worked tirelessly beside local emergency services to ensure the safety of our community and minimise loss through:

- Provision of administrative support to the Local Emergency Operations Controller,
- Coordination of Council resources in the collaborative response to the immediate bushfire emergency,
- 24 hour mechanical support in the repair and maintenance of RFS and NPWS vehicles, including those originating outside the LGA,
- Supply of water to RFS through both reticulation and remote servicing,
- Support and staffing of Neighbourhood Safer Place Assessment of buildings immediately post-disaster for the purpose of damage assessment.
- Provision of the Tony Luchetti Showground and Civic Ballroom dedicated Emergency Evacuation Centre.

Following the devastating fires that destroyed a number of homes and properties in our area, Council immediately commenced operations to assist community members who had suffered losses and make safe our environment. This was been greatly assisted with \$1,416,667 in funding received under the NSW Government's Bushfire Recovery – Exception Assistance Immediate Support Package to enable bushfire recovery in the Lithgow LGA. Council's response has been as follows:

- Established a central register to record the details of every resident who suffered damage to trees on their property as a result of the fire,
- Contacted Bathurst Regional Council and enlisted Arborists and machinery to assist in recovery efforts.
- Coordinated the Australian Defence Force & Indonesian Military Troops to assist residents with clean up and tree removal.
 - Clearing of over 2,000 dangerous trees on private property in Clarence, Dargan and Lithgow. This act meant that houses not damaged were made safe and people were able to return to their homes without fear or harm.
 - Enabled NSW Public Works to safely access damaged properties for asbestos assessment and demolition.
- Hosted an RFS sponsored community event and a thank you lunch for ADF and Indonesian Army personnel.
- Established a Bushfire & Community Recovery Website
- Made safe on-site sewer systems.
- Removal of burnt out vehicles
- Clearing and clean-up of Petra Avenue, Clarence, playgroup facility which was destroyed by fire.
- A Bushfire Recovery Coordinator was appointed to ensure that Council had a dedicated resource to directly assist community members with bushfire recovery inquiries and to staff a Recovery Centre, Community Meetings and a Mobile Recovery Service.

Over
240
COMMUNITY
REGISTRATIONS FOR
POST-BUSHFIRE
ASSISTANCE

- A Town Planner was appointed to attend the Mobile Recovery Service to assist community members seeking to re-build.
- Purchase/hire of
 - NearMaps to identify bushfire impacted areas),
 - Office equipment for the Recovery Centre
 - Portable toilets (to replace burnt out toilets) at the Zig Zag Railway / Newnes Junction site
- Produced 4 short "Welcome back to Lithgow" videos highlighting the Lithgow region as a tourist destination showcasing attractions, experiences and events.
- Stormwater clean-up works were conducted in the following bushfire impacted areas: Wolgan Valley, Vale of Clwydd (Lithgow), Farmers Creek (Lithgow), Glen Davis, Glen Alice, Clarence and Palmers Oakey. Clean up works include the clearing of roadside drainage, removal of debris from under bridges and rectification of damaged unsealed road assets.
- As a result of significant rainfall immediately after the December bushfires, a bridge in the Wolgan Valley was subject to flooding and inundation by large volumes of ash and debris. Council contractors and ADF assistance were required to urgently clear the area to restore access to Newnes. While the initial clearing works have been completed, works remain to re-stabilise adjacent creek embankments.
- Slope stability assessment and resultant actions for the mountainsides and embankments on Wolgan Road in the Wolgan Valley and Macauley Street & Sandford Avenue, Lithgow to protect residents from the aftermath of the event.

\$1,416,667
BUSHFIRE
RECOVERY
FUNDING

2,000+
DANGEROUS
TREES
CLEARED

\$1,483,446
COST OF TREE
REMOVAL

\$1,283,126
GRANT FUNDING
\$200,320
COUNCIL
CONTRIBUTION

EPA Bushfire Green Waste Program

Council participated in the program negotiating with assessors, local suppliers and groups on greenwaste recycling.

80

REGISTRATIONS
ACROSS

12

LOCALITIES

Community Recovery Program

Promotion of Lithgow LGA

- Resilience NSW filmed recovering business – Zig Zag Railway
- Part 2 of the video series 'Open for Business' filmed featuring Wolgan Valley, Nic & Susan Alexander from Dargan and footage within Lithgow surrounds.

Community
eNewsletters
Distributed
Monthly

LITHGOW BUSHFIRE &
COMMUNITY RECOVERY
DAY

35 services & agencies
325 attendees across the
weekend

30 RESIDENTS &
PUBLIC LANDOWNERS
PARTICIPATED IN THE
TRANSPORT FOR NSW
BUSHFIRE RECOVERY
PROGRAM

45 PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
IN THE GET READY
SENIORS EVENTS.

24 COUNCIL STAFF
PARTICIPATE IN THE CRISIS
TO RELIEF TO RECOVERY
SEMINAR & PULSE SURVEY

Co-hosted community meetings with NSW Office of Emergency Management for the community which included the opportunity to meet and talk with local community support organisations regarding clean-up, financial support and wellbeing:

- Lithgow - 9 January (streamed live on Facebook)
- Capertee - 23 January
- Hartley - 24 January
- Wolgan Valley - 23 February
- Glen Davis - 23 February

Launched a weekly Mobile Recovery Service at Lithgow Library Learning Centre to connect members of the community with services and Council Officers to assist with rebuilding. The service was temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions and recommenced on 9 July 2020.

- Barn raising weekend at Dargan
- RFS Get Ready Weekend
- TAFE Chainsaw training with Habitat for Humanity.
- Dargan Coffee Date (free plant giveaway)
- Lithgow Bushfire & Community Recovery Day (5-6 December 2020)
- 12-month anniversary events held by RFS Brigades
- Lithgow Council 'Drop-in' Youth Space for young people 12-17 years weekly gathering.
- Community Recovery Officer (CRO) presented on the Lithgow Bushfire Recovery Community Day to the CRO Forum.
- Participated in Transport for NSW Bushfire Recovery Program across NSW - planting 13,500 trees and supply & install 1500 nest boxes and constructed hollows. 30 residents and public land managers in the Lithgow LGA registered to participate in the program.
- Supported recovery events in Clarence and Dargan
- Supported Lithgow Show
- 45 people participated in the Get Ready Seniors events. Following on Council assisted with REDiKit Resources and Grab & Go Checklists for further presentations to be delivered by the Lithgow Red Cross to seniors.
- 24 Council staff participated in the Crisis to Relief to Recovery Seminar and Pulse Survey.
- Lithgow VIC, Miners Lamp on the Great Western Highway was lit in orange in support of WOW Day.
- Approx. 25 residents from Bell, Clarence, Dargan and Newnes Junction attended the Clarence Community Land Workshop.
- Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) Drs in the Paddock was delivered at events in Meadow Flat & Glen Davis.
- Lithgow Council convened a Community Resilience Network Meeting.
- Participated in the Greater Sydney Region Recovery Action Plan Workshop.

Wolgan Valley Recovery Group transitioned to Wolgan Valley Association to act as a liaison on behalf of Wolgan Valley residents.

Adjoining neighbours in Hartley formed a WhatsApp chat group to communicate and share information.

Community Recovery Program

Grants and community funding

Bushfire Community Resource Recovery Fund - \$250,000

In December 2020, council received funding from the Resilience NSW BCRRF - Stream 1 to undertake the following activities in partnership with LINC and NSW RFS:

- Bushfire Recovery and Community Day
- Crisis to Relief to Recovery Mental Health program
- Get Ready Series, Emergency Resources, Evacuation Centre information
- The Day After Yesterday
- Bushfire recovery exhibit
- Community Heritage Garden project
- Girls on Fire 'Virtually Possible' Girls Fire and Resilience Program
- Youth Project
- Get Grubby Program (funded through BCRRF)
 - Centres program – 12 primary schools, 8 Early Learning Centres and Libraries participated
 - 50 Families participated in the families program.
- Live 'n' Local
- 25% Council-led community grants program. As per BCRF Stream 2 Guidelines
- 15 applications received for Council-led community grants program. 10 projects were successful.
- Administration, coaching and reporting assistance for Council-led community grants program.

Public Land Boundary Fence Program

\$400,000
funded

46

PROJECTS
ACROSS LGA

78

KM'S OF
FENCING

- Several residents received funding under Equine Fire Relief Grants
- Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal council was successful in \$300,000 through the NSW Government's Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund (BCRRF) to promote community wellbeing and disaster resilience. Mingaan also received \$10,000 under the Council-led Community Grants Program for bushfire recovery activities.
- Lithgow City Council received \$300,000 through BCRRF to upgrade the Civic Ballroom for the Lithgow Emergency Access & Resilience Network project. This project will be undertaken in 2021/22.

- Lewis Bezzina, Lithgow City Council Transport Manager – Public Service Medal
- Captain Darcy McCann, Cullen Bullen RFS – NSW Government Community Service Award
- Clarence Dargan RFS Brigade – NSW Government Service to the Community Award
- Sharron Bowman – Live 'n' Local After the Fires – Outstanding Event of the Year
- Local RFS Members – Owen Sharwood, Adam Sharwood and David Peters – Mayors Special Recognition Awards (Australia Day).
- Chifley/Lithgow David Peters and Geoffrey Ryan were recognised among the Seven NSW Rural Fire Service members receiving Australian Fire Service Medals (AFSM) in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours List.





Caring for our community

Lithgow Salvaged Sounds workshop at Eskbank House Museum - 2019

Working together to support, celebrate and expand the social and cultural diversity of our community whilst promoting healthy, active lifestyles in a safe environment.

To provide for the long term sustainability and growth of the LGA, Council has had to continually adapt to the changing needs of an evolving community whilst retaining the unique character of our rural areas, villages and towns.

This Principle Activity Area is responsible for planning and providing for the needs of the community by:

- Ensuring equity and social inclusion;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Cultural Activities;
- Excellence in provision of facilities and services;
- The development and support of communities;
- Enhanced lifestyle opportunities.

Community Strategic Plan 2036

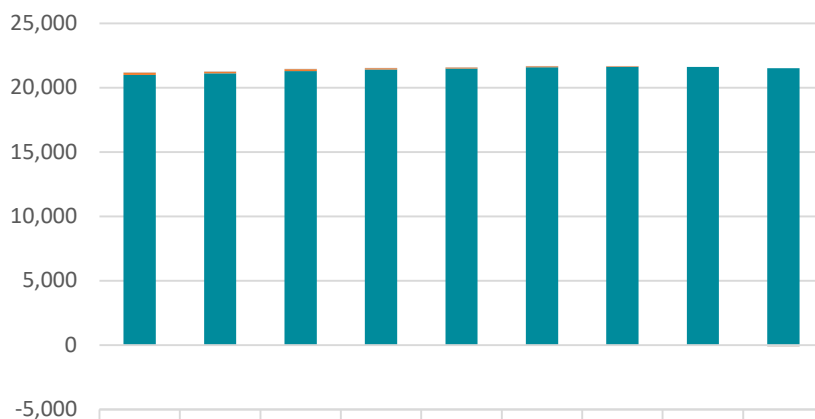
In 2012, the population of the Lithgow LGA to 2031 was projected as being in a state of 'stagnation to decline'. The NSW Department of Planning projections predicted a 0.06% decline in population between 2011 (20,850 persons) and 2031 (20,600 persons) for the Lithgow LGA although ERP figures provided by the ABS showed a steady increase in the population to 22,315 (2031).

This alternate view of the population projection is slightly lower than the Lithgow Land Use Strategy 2010-2030 recommendation of a population target of between 0.5% and 1%. ERP data shows a projected annual population increase of 0.34% - which is 0.16% less than the lowest projection of 0.5%.

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) figures dated June 2020 indicate that between 2012 and 2020 the estimated resident population of the Lithgow LGA grew by 2.4% reaching 21,516 persons.

The Lithgow 2040 Strategic Planning Statement notes that "Council believes that through proactive leadership, Lithgow's population will continue to grow at 0.89% p.a., reaching 25,500 residents by 2040. This is in contrast to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) population projections 2019 which predicts a small population climb continuing on to 2021 followed by a steady decline in population onwards to 2042; a common trend shared with other regional LGA's".

Estimated Residential Population 2012 - 2020

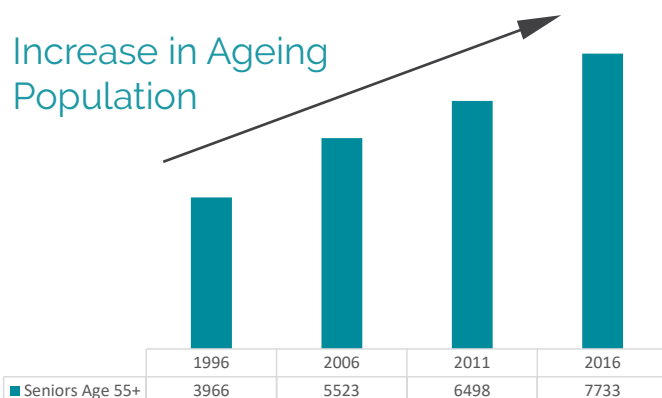


Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/lithgow/population-estimate>

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Change in percent	+0.7	+0.6	+0.8	+0.5	+0.4	+0.4	+0.2	-0.1	-0.4
Change in number	+150	+118	+165	+117	+84	+93	+39	-13	-87
Number	21,000	21,118	21,283	21,400	21,484	21,577	21,616	21,603	21,516

■ Number ■ Change in number ■ Change in percent

Increase in Ageing Population



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURE

Increased population	✓
Number of aged care placed	✓

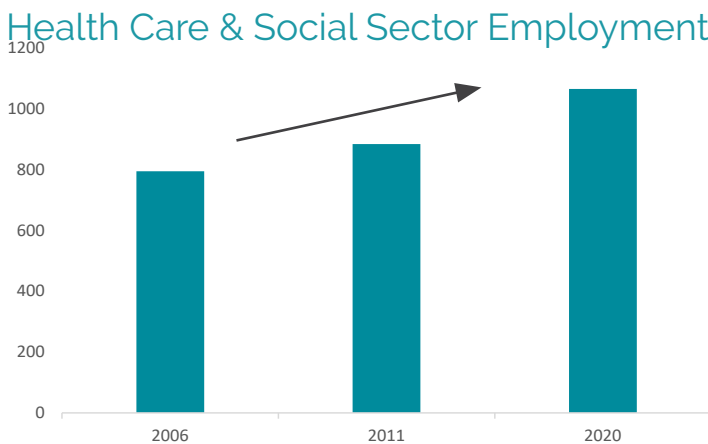
- From 2011 to 2016, Lithgow City's population increased by 915 people (4.5%). This represents an average annual population change of 0.89% per year over the period.
- 22.0% were aged 65 years and over, compared with 18.4% and 20.6% respectively for Regional NSW.

Community Opportunity 1

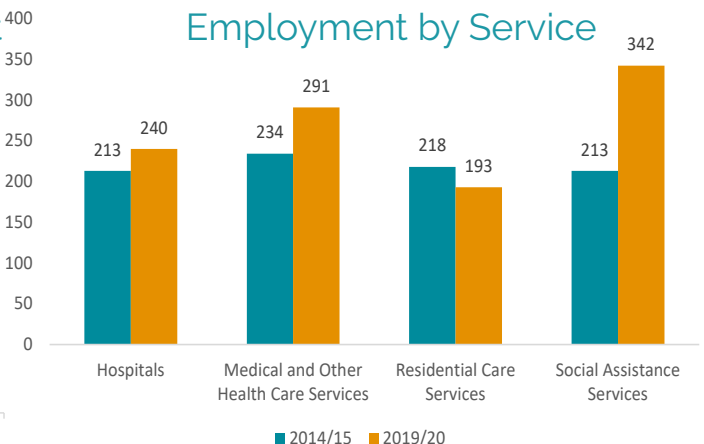
Review aged care services to deal with ageing population - in doing so, Lithgow may be able to develop expertise in aged care (and other health areas, including mental health) and build an industry around that comparative advantage.

The Community Strategic Plan 2030 (CSP 2030) and Lithgow Ageing Strategy 2010 identified Lithgow as an 'ageing population'. From the Increase in Ageing graph (p36) we can see a continuing trend towards growth in this sector of the community. The graphs below indicate that the Health Care and Social Assistance Sector continues to grow and is now the highest employer in the LGA having increased by 181 positions to 1066 people. Employing 795 people in 2006 the sector grew by 120 positions to 885 in 2011. However, the proportion of people providing unpaid care for the aged and disabled in the Lithgow Lga has also increased by 251 to 2,170 unpaid carers since 2011. This may be an important indicator of the level of demand for aged care services and facilities in the area which needs to be further explored to identify whether aged care provision in the Lithgow Lga is adequate. Is there is a need for in-home support? And/or do the carers themselves require support?

Health Care & Social Sector Employment



Employment by Service



The 2014 Lithgow Local Environmental Plan (LEP) provides a landuse planning framework that allows for a diversity of housing in a more compact form in and around the town centres and near the Lithgow Hospital precinct. This provides an opportunity for the ageing population to downsize and age in place for longer.

The LEP supports the operation of two key State Planning Policies (Infrastructure and Housing for Seniors) that provide a more flexible planning system for key infrastructure such as medical facilities and all forms of seniors and disability housing ranging from self care to full supported living.

The Lithgow 2040 Strategic Planning Statement has identified the need to develop a Local Housing Strategy to identify the LGA'S specific housing needs including seniors and affordable housing and to plan for a range of housing types and the infrastructure required to support local communities. In response, Council has included the preparation of a Local Housing Strategy in the 2021/22 Operational Plan.

Health Care and Social Assistance Sector Approved Development Applications 2017-2021		
2017	Treeview Estates	State 7A - 8 villas & Associated Civics
2018	James Clark	Change of use from office to Medical Centre (Chiropractic, Chinese Herbal Medicine & Acupuncture)
	Anisa Malahoff	Health Consulting Rooms (Conversion of garage & additions for use as Chiropractic, Acupuncture & Homoeopathic Clinic)
	Lithgow Aged Care	Construction of Aged Care Facility
2019	Obed Mensah (Lives Lived Well)	Change of use - Counselling Service
	Marathon Health	Retrospective approval of Health Services Facility and new entrance.
	Treeview Estates	Final Stage of 14 Villas and civil construction works
2020	Michael Wallace	Proposed change of use - 17 Specialist disability accommodation units.
	Treeview Estates	Modification - State 8 (Final Stage) - modification to dwelling and new administration building
2021	Treeview Estates	Administration building and maintenance workshop.

This table shows how the industry is rising to meet demand in this area.

Community Priorities

The table below provides progress with community and councillor priorities identified as part of the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

Priority	Page reference
Volunteers	
Support volunteer groups and encourage the younger generation to get involved to inject new ideas, e.g. fire, SES, youth groups, PCYC and sporting groups.	50-51
Aged Care	
Better home care and more aged care facilities	37
Make information easier to access and understand for aged care services and facilities.	-
Provide community transport	
Note: Lithgow Community Transport (Translinc) provides transport for:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frail aged, over 65 • Younger people with a disability • Their carers • People who are transport disadvantaged 	See note
Services, depending on individual needs include social outings, individual transport for appointments and taxi vouchers.	
http://westernregioncommunitytransportforum.org.au/	
Mental Health	
Create a mental health forum	42, 52-57
Provide options for mental health services	
Link the older and younger generations together via a mentoring program	
Activities for youth	
Affordable sport	
Note: The NSW Government has now introduced the Active Kids Voucher	See note
https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-active-kids-voucher	
Open air cinema	-
Ice rink	-
Adventure playground	141
Partnership/active promotion for music festivals	22, 100-104
Promoting the activities and assets that are available to the community.	Identified throughout the document

Challenges

Moving Forward

Under the key theme of 'Caring for the Community' the most valued aspect of the Lithgow area is considered to be the 'friendliness and spirit of the community'. Community services such as health were seen as strengths while the aging population and supporting youth and keeping them in Lithgow were seen as challenges.

In early 2020, it was announced that Lithgow Aged Care (LAC) would not be re-accredited in April after it had failed 38 of 42 industry standards. Council and Lithgow Aged Care Board of Directors, along with the support of Federal Minister Andrew Gee, lobbied government on behalf of the 73 residents, their families and staff that would be impacted by the closure of this facility. The home was placed into voluntary administration to enable a buyer to be secured. Respect Aged Care purchased the facility In April 2020 and the Aged Care Commission extended the homes licence to 16 July 2021.

Since commencing operation Respect has:

- Completed the expansion of the facility to include 108 rooms and a specialist dementia area with 30 rooms.

Although an ageing population provides opportunity for increased employment, as the sector grows to accommodate the needs of senior citizens moving forward Council must take into consideration the impacts on:

1. Current services and facilities.
2. Rate income due to increased demand for pensioner rebates.
3. Availability of appropriate infrastructure to enable easy access to services and facilities.
4. Telecommunications networks
5. Sustainable growth throughout the LGA.
6. Retention of young people in the area
7. Provision of Care Services - paid or unpaid care.
8. Provision of Child Care facilities

Mayor, Ray Thompson had the privilege of wishing Dulcie Kearns a Happy 103rd Birthday in November 2020.



We feel connected and supported

Recognising Aboriginal Custodians

Lithgow City Council recognises that the Indigenous people and communities have a special connection with the land in ways that are often not fully appreciated nor fully understood by the wider community.

Lithgow City Council will use consultative and participatory processes that are appropriate and relevant to Indigenous people in order that the views of Indigenous people are heard in relation to matters that may have an impact on their culture and heritage.

Lithgow City Council recognises the contribution that Indigenous people may make and of the damage that may be caused to Indigenous culture and heritage from planning decisions and resultant actions.

The objectives of Policy 4.8 - Consultation with Indigenous People aim to.. :

- Establish a policy for Council's consultation process in relation to matters that affect the Indigenous communities and groups, Indigenous heritage values and places of Indigenous significance.
- Have documented policies and procedures for managing strategic planning and development assessment processes and other community engagement processes in relation to Indigenous cultural heritage values.
- Improve the protection and management of identified Indigenous sites and cultural values within Lithgow LGA so that the relationship between the Indigenous people and those values is maintained.
- Improve the recording of Indigenous cultural heritage values within Lithgow LGA.
- Engage Indigenous people in relation to Council planning processes that have an impact on Indigenous cultural heritage values.
- Ensure communication and coordination between the Indigenous community, Council and others involved in matters that affect the Indigenous community and Indigenous cultural values.
- Improve awareness within Council of the Indigenous community and their cultural heritage and to improve awareness within the Indigenous community of Council processes and the planning process in general.
- High standards of Indigenous cultural heritage assessment are established within Council.

Council supports the local Indigenous peoples and communities in the following ways:

- Assists MINGAAN Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation to identify and access grant funding.
- Assists with the development and promotion of NAIDOC week celebrations.

2016 ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIGHT ISLANDER POPULATION

9.1%

HAVE A TERTIARY
QUALIFICATION

1,209

LIVING IN 550 DWELLINGS

In response to COVID-19 restrictions NAIDOC Week was not conducted in 2020. However the Mayor, Councillor Ray Thompson and Aunty Helen Riley conducted a small flag-raising event at Council which was acknowledged with a media release.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN
MEASURES

Number of programs and policies developed and implemented.



Lithgow Declared Refugee Welcome



On 23 October 2017, Council declared the Lithgow LGA a Refugee Welcome Zone. In his speech at the signing of the declaration, Mayor Lesslie said "The declaration reflects a recognition that there are many people across the world, including in our own neighborhood, who through no fault of their own, are in desperate need of asylum and new opportunities for themselves and their families"

The Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration is a commitment to:

- Welcoming refugees into our community,
- Upholding the Human Rights of refugees,
- Demonstrating Compassion for refugees and
- Enhancing cultural and religious Diversity in our community.

Council supports refugees and new arrivals in the following ways:

- Council hosts multiple citizenship ceremonies throughout the year, including on Australia Day.
- Council organises events and festivals to celebrate Harmony Day, Refugee Week and Social Inclusion each year.
 - In June 2018, the Library promoted a display to provide residents with more information on the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and the work that they do. As part of the exhibition a model of the Baitul Huda Mosque (House of Guidance) in Sydney was displayed in the foyer cabinet.
 - An art exhibition, organised by the Lithgow Asylum Seeker and Refugee Support Group was held throughout June.
- Council provides funding to community organisations through its Financial Assistance Scheme to support refugees and emerging communities.
- Council works in partnership with community organisations to deliver local services that support the multicultural community in Lithgow.

1,971

PEOPLE LIVING IN LITHGOW
CITY WERE BORN OVERSEAS

7%

arrived in
Australia 5
years prior to
2016

3.4%

SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER
THAN ENGLISH AT HOME

41

We feel connected and supported

Promoting Positive Ageing

Accessible Library Service

In 2013, the Lithgow Library Learning Centre commenced a **Home Library Service** to ensure equity and social inclusion for those in the community who find themselves isolated for various reasons. The Home Library Service Officer, delivers books and other library resources to housebound members of the community in Portland and Wallerawang and residents of local nursing homes.

The Library has continued to develop and grow its **eBook collection**. This service provides:

- Access to the Library for rural and remote members of the community.
- An accessible option for frail aged and elderly people, as well as people who are housebound for other reasons.
- Commuters with access to eBooks and eAudiobooks which are easily accessed through laptops, tablets and smartphones, and downloaded over good wifi service.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Lithgow Library Learning Centre offered a number of programs promoting social inclusion for seniors including:

- Technology One-on-One which partners students from Lithgow High School with older residents to provide one-on-one assistance and advice on the use of computers, tablets, mobile phones etc.
- Social groups such as the Knitters Group.
- Lithgow Leles - a Ukulele group at the Library which regularly performs at Library events and local nursing homes
- Tech Savvy Seniors in collaboration with NSW State Library and Telstra is conducted annually at Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland Branches to provide seniors with basic skills to navigate and explore the internet and electronic devices (see page 33).
- Wallerawang Library weekly sewing group
- Grandparents Day storytime at the Library

The **JM Robson Aquatic Centre** provides Gentle Aqua Aerobics Classes and reduced fees for Concession Card Holders and for Seniors over the age of 75.

Men's and Women's Shed Programs

Men's Sheds play a significant role in addressing isolation, loneliness and depression in men of all ages. Men's sheds help connect men with their communities and at the same time act as a catalyst in stimulating their community's activities.

Over recent years, Council has supported the development of Men's Sheds in Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland which are all located in Council facilities.

Operating from the old amenities block at the Lithgow Aquatic Centre, Lithgow Men's Shed is a thriving centre of activity where local men meet each week to work on a variety of projects.

Portland Men's Shed has also operated for several years in a Council building at Kremer Park Portland. In 2018/19, Council assisted the Portland Men's Shed Group with a grant submission to undertake improvements to the facilities at Kremer Park, Portland.

The Wallerawang Men's Shed commenced operations during 2016/17 in the Wallerawang Memorial Hall.

Council also provides support including financial assistance to the Lithgow Women's Shed Group when required.

Seniors Week Festivities

To recognise the contributions of older people in our community, Lithgow City Council celebrates the Seniors Festival on an annual basis. The Seniors Festival is an opportunity to enhance community connections and intergenerational relationships.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved access to services and facilities for senior residents.	✓
Number of Men's Shed projects supported.	✓



The Mayor's Christmas Appeal is conducted in October-November to provide presents, which are delivered by the Mayor to our aged care residents in the four local nursing homes.

We feel connected and supported

Family Friendly Community

From 2011 to 2016, Lithgow City's population increased by 916 people (4.5%). This represents an average annual population change of 0.89% per year over the period.

- The largest changes in the age structure in the Lithgow LGA between 2011 and 2016 were in the age groups:
 - Seniors (70 to 84) (+585 people)
 - Parents and home builders (35 to 49) (-319 people)
 - Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69) (+292 people)
 - Young workforce (25 to 34) (+278 people)
- The number of households in Lithgow City increased by 523 between 2011 and 2016.
- The largest changes in family/household types in Lithgow City between 2011 and 2016 were:
 - Lone person (+167 households)
 - Couples with children (-97 households)
- In 2016, Lithgow City had lower proportion of children (under 18) and a higher proportion of persons aged 60 or older than Regional NSW.
- In Lithgow City, 22.4% of households were made up of couples with children in 2016, compared with 25.4% in Regional NSW.
- There were 976 couples with young children in Lithgow City in 2016, comprising 11.3% of households. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of households with children decreased by 58 households or 2.0%.
- In Lithgow City, older couples without children account for 11% of total households in 2016. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of households without children increased by 161.

Unpaid care

In Lithgow City 4,362 people (24.9% of people aged 15+) provided unpaid care to children in 2016. Of these, 1,513 people were caring for children other than their own.

The role of unpaid childcare in Lithgow City is determined by many different factors. For example areas with high levels of unpaid child care may have a dominance of single income families with one significant earner, or there could be a lack of provision of paid child care in the area. The level to which people care for others children can also indicate the role of extended family (eg. grandparents caring for grandchildren, family day care).

The number of people who provided unpaid child care for their own and/or other people's children in Lithgow City decreased by 12 between 2011 and 2016.

The largest changes in the number of people performing unpaid child care in Lithgow LGA, between 2011 and 2016 were those who:

- No unpaid child care provided (+252 persons)
- Cared for other child/ren (+125 persons)
- Cared for own child/ren (-88 persons)

Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/lithgow>

Council Coordinated Children's Programs

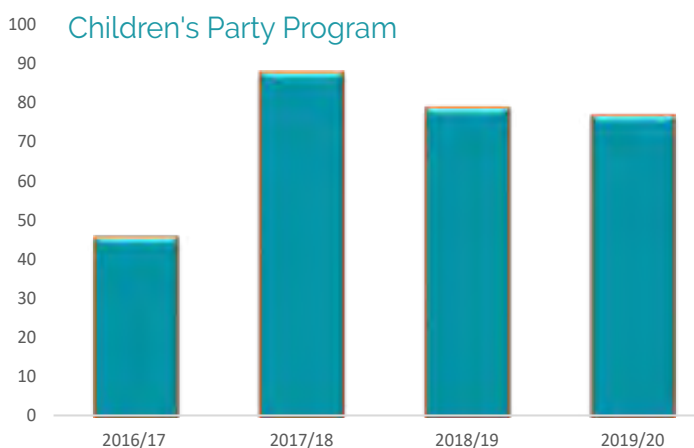
Council coordinates a wide range of community events and activities throughout the year for families including major community events such as Australia Day, Halloween and LithGlow.

Council's Community Development Officer's provide assistance and support to MINGAAN Aboriginal Corporation for their NAIDOC Week celebrations. Financial assistance is provided to Lithgow Cares to host the annual Portland Family Fun Day and the Community Development Officer attends Interagency Committee and Lithgow Cares Meetings.

JM Robson Aquatic Centre

Since the opening of the Indoor Pool on 16 May 2015, Council has introduced a year-round Learn to Swim Program including a Mum's and Bub's Learn to Swim Program. In 2016, the Aquatic Centre became registered as a Sporting School enabling local schools to utilise Swim Programs offered through the Centre. In 2016/17, the Centre commenced offering Children's Birthday Parties and School Holiday activities.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the Aquatic Centre was closed from 17 March re-opening under restricted access on 15 June. However, community programs did not recommence during 2019/20



Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Children's Party Program was not conducted during 2020/21.

Children's Learn to Swim Program continues to grow averaging between 260 - 360 enrolments per term.

We feel connected and supported

Intergenerational Playgroup

in 2018/19 Council worked with Portland's Tabulam Cottages and Blinky Bill Childcare Centre to pilot an Intergenerational Playgroup that aimed to reduce the social isolation of older people living in Portland Tabulam aged.

This ground breaking program provided enrichment opportunities to residents and pre-schoolers. Once a fortnight on a Monday, Tabulam residents' went on an excursion to Blinky Bill (down the road), to visit their friends and take part in teaching and learning experiences. Following completion of the pilot program, Communities & Kids have decided to continue hosting playgroups at Tabulam every other alternate Monday, which enables the broader community to connect with the residents.

- Intergenerational connections between participants
 - Increased self-esteem amongst older people
 - Older people forged new friendships
 - Enhanced wellbeing of the residents at Portland Tabulam Health Centre
 - Older people participated more fully in society
 - Enhanced dignity of older people, particularly people with dementia
 - Enhanced social inclusion
 - Promoted a positive image of ageing
 - Older people reported that they felt like they are contributing and adding value to society again.
- The Intergenerational Playgroup won a 2019 Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District Quality Award in the Collaborative Care category.



“One of our favourite songs to sing is 'The More We Get Together' – a nursery rhyme about friendship and happiness
(Ms Commins - Blinky Bill Childcare Centre)

16

Playgroup sessions held

46

21

Residents at Tabulam Aged Care Facility participated

12

Adults/ carers with

24

Children participated



Lithgow Library Learning Centre

The Libraries, provide a range of activities for children including:

- Weekly children's storytime
- Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time
- School Holiday activities.
- Interactive games
- Computer gaming group
- Tabletop Games
- eLearning programs
- Grandparents day
- Annual Easter and Christmas Storytime

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Increased awareness and participation in activities by children and young people



Increased awareness of programs and services available for sole parents



We feel connected and supported

Assisting the Community

Council assistance is provided to community groups and organisations in a variety of ways:

- \$1,273,297 was provided by Council from the Financial Assistance (2016/17 - 2019/20) to non-for-profit community organisations location with the Lithgow LGA to support local projects and activities which benefit the Lithgow community - see Policy 4.2 - Financial Assistance - Section 356 of the Local Government Act. This includes:
 - Annual contributions to Portland Pool and Arts Outwest;
 - Local schools for end of year academic prizes for schools;
 - Sporting-related activities including the waiving of sports ground hire fees and charges; and
 - Junior sporting representatives.
- Identifying grant funding opportunities and assisting with the application process and grant administration on behalf of community groups.
- Participating in community networks and providing support to organisations to develop and host community programs
- Provision of 'seed' funding (\$500 - \$2,000) to attract events to the Lithgow LGA which commenced in 2016/17 - see Policy 4.9 - Events Attraction Package - Section 356 of the Local Government Act.
- Providing support and assistance to local event coordinators to develop and promote events.

\$7,4000

\$1,2m

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance was provided to ¹⁹ local athletes to participate in special sporting events between 2016/17 and 2019/20. This program is administered by the Sports Advisory Committee

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of community organisations supported through the Financial Assistance Program	✓
Support of recreational activities and organisations provided in accordance with Council's Financial Assistance Policy.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓



“We know recovery from significant events is a long-term project, and Council is very pleased to be able to provide this funding to support communities working to meet local needs and in local recovery.”
Mayor Ray Thompson

\$62,500 Awarded to local community groups under Bushfire Recovery Community Grants Program

In March 2021, the following community organisations were successful in their applications to support local recovery after the 2019/20 summer bushfires through projects that contribute to bushfire recovery, preparedness and building on our resilience into the future:

- MINGAAN, awarded \$10,000 to develop and deliver cultural healing and education workshops
- WOLGAN VALLEY ASSOC INC, awarded \$4,859 for the development of a community-based website
- RYDAL SHOWGROUND LAND MANAGERS, awarded \$10,000 to achieve showground upgrades
- LITHGOW INFORMATION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE, awarded \$10,000 for a community capacity builders program
- HARTLEY RESERVE LAND MANAGERS, awarded \$5,641 to install a water tank and connections
- LITHGOW SMALL ARMS FACTORY MUSEUM, awarded \$4,000 toward an outdoor recreation area and improvements
- LITHGOW GREYHOUND RACING CLUB, awarded \$5,000 for Club upgrades and sustainability
- AUSTRALIAN ECOSYSTEMS FOUNDATION, awarded \$4,000 toward working bee weekends
- LITHGOW & DISTRICT COMMUNITY NURSERY, awarded \$4,000 for enhancement of Nursery premises
- LITHGOW VALLEY ARCHERS INC, awarded \$5,000 to purchase a water tank and upgrades in fire recovery

These grants were funded by the Federal Government, National Bushfire Recovery Agency and the NSW State Government through Resilience NSW as part of the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund.

We feel connected and supported

Celebrate and grow volunteering

"The voluntary work sector is an important part of Australia's economy. The level of volunteering can indicate the cohesiveness of the community and how readily individuals are able to contribute to that community. Factors impacting on the level of volunteering in Lithgow City include the Age Structure of the population, the level of Proficiency in English, Income and Education levels."

source <https://profile.id.com.au/lithgow/volunteering?WebID=10>

Despite the factors impacting on volunteering identified above in the Lithgow LGA, in 2016, the number of people who reported doing some voluntary work in the Lithgow LGA had increased by 353. Overall 18.4% of our population undertake voluntary work which is slightly lower than regional NSW - 20.8%.

Council's Volunteer Program

Council continues to develop and grow its volunteers program at Eskbank House & Museum and Lithgow Library Learning Centre. The program provides members of the community with an opportunity to gain new skills in areas of Museum and Library Practices.

Celebrating Our Local Volunteers

Local volunteers are celebrated annually as part of Australia Day and also National Volunteer Week. In 2016/17, as part of National Volunteer Week Council organised a free movie night at the local cinema to say "Thank You" to volunteers for all that they do in our community. A free film screening of "Florence Foster Jenkins" was shown at Lithgow Valley Cinema on Main Street, followed by a sundowner, which included drinks and cheese platters.

Volunteers were warmly welcomed by the former Mayor of Lithgow, Cllr Stephen Lesslie, who also spoke to

volunteers about their contribution and the important role they play in our community

In 2017-18 The Lithgow Volunteering Network had disbanded, however, the Council's Community Development Officer continued to support local volunteers and organisations through celebrating National Volunteer Week on an annual basis and promoting volunteering opportunities in the local community

2018/19 A volunteer appreciation morning tea was held at Lithgow Library the first week of June with approximately 25 people in attendance.

In 2020/21 Council was pleased to be able to host a Volunteers Morning Tea at the Library again to thank the many volunteers who contribute to our community. The audience was entertained by the Lithgow City Orchestra, a volunteer organisation.

RECOGNISE
CELEBRATE AND THANK VOLUNTEERS FOR THE VITAL ROLE THEY PLAY IN OUR LIVES.

RECONNECT
TO WHAT IS IMPORTANT BY GIVING OUR TIME TO HELP OTHERS AND OURSELVES.

REIMAGINE
HOW WE BETTER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITIES THEY HELP.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURE

Participation in International
Volunteers Day Celebrations



Due to COVID-19 restrictions Council's 2020 Volunteer Week celebrations were canceled. The community was instead invited to nominate volunteers who are "making a contribution" to the life and success of our region. 57 volunteers were nominated, each receiving a certificate of appreciation from Council and a voucher to support a small business in our region. The nominees came from a range of sectors in the community including LINC and its various arms (Meals on Wheels, the Commonwealth home support program and the Food Rescue service), the Women's Shed, St Vincent de Paul, the Bowenfels Hub, the Rural Fire Service, Beehive, Tidy Towns and Planet Ark.

- Bryan Williamson – Volunteer Driver - Community Lunch
- Mal Boyden –Volunteer Driver - Community Lunch
- Dominic Inzitari – Volunteer Driver - Community Lunch
- Paul Richards –Volunteer Driver - Community Lunch
- Loretta Albert –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Anita Cohen –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Julie Steele –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Sandi Banks-Smith –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Gayle Zorz –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Julie Winnard –Flo's Kitchen Volunteer
- Fay Best –Meals on Wheels
- Bob Winnard –Meals on Wheels
- Cisca Wheatley –Meals on Wheels
- David Terry –Meals on Wheels
- Kathleen Terry –Meals on Wheels
- Deb Taylor –Meals on Wheels
- Carol Farrar –Meals on Wheels
- John Hills –Meals on wheels
- David Hills –Meals on Wheels
- Paula McGaulley –Meals on Wheels
- Paul McGaulley –Meals on Wheels
- Peter McDougall –Meals on Wheels
- Liz Conroy –Meals on Wheels
- Joy George –Meals on Wheels
- Allen Taylor –Garden Maintenance
- Mallory Allen – Bowenfels Community Hub
- Jean Stamper –Reception LINC
- Deb Dixon –Reception LINC
- Lynne Bender –Second Bite Food Rescue
- Desiree Hardie –Second Bite Food Rescue
- Linda Hefferan –Second Bite Food rescue
- Marinella Marquez -Bowenfels Community Hub
- Attia Mahmood -Bowenfels Community Hub
- James Knox -Lithgow Community Garden
- Sue Murdoch -Walk n Talk
- Bev Wiggins -Walk n Talk
- Peta O'Meley -Walk n Talk
- Julianne Vlores -Walk n Talk
- Leanne Walding -Walk n Talk
- Kevin Walding -Walk n Talk
- Craig Walding -Walk n Talk
- Sue Graves -Tidy Towns
- Cath Compton – Tidy Towns
- Helen Drewe -Beehive, Community Nursery
- Joan Deeley -Lions Club, Beehive
- Yvonne Oldfield -St Vincent de Paul
- Leanne Hopkins -Lithgow Area Women's Shed
- Allyn Jory -Vinnies
- Noelene Moore -Lithgow Library
- Vanessa Lowe - Portland Library
- Margaret Hart – Portland Library
- Miriam Palmer -Portland Library
- Bev Bailey - Portland Library
- Sue Rose -Portland Library
- Julie Boucher - Lithgow-leles.
- Nick Field - RFS
- Lucille Hoy - Planet Ark.



It's the volunteers that keep our community running, from sports, to music, to caring for the vulnerable and each other. Without the work of our many volunteers, the Lithgow community would grind to a halt
 Mayor, Ray Thompson (2021)



Mental Health Summit & Taskforce

In December 2016, Lithgow City Council in partnership with other agencies called a Lithgow Mental Health Summit.

The summit provided an opportunity for the community, those affected by mental health issues and service providers to come together to discuss this very important issue and to identify what is needed to improve people's access to and experience of mental health services. Those at the summit heard that the mental health service system is complex and people don't always know where to turn for help, especially at a time of crisis. Furthermore, some services are not physically located in Lithgow meaning that people have to travel considerable distances and they may not be open at the times they are needed.

An outcome of the Mental Health Summit was the formation of a Mayor's Mental Health Taskforce which aims to bring together the expertise and experience of people in the mental health sphere, with the backing of Council, to develop practical and effective initiatives, both short and long term.

Key concerns identified

- Lack of services, especially for youth
- Lack of access (30% of LGA residents living in isolated hamlets, lack of transport)
- Lack of understanding of what services are available including workforce capacity
- Lack of coordination between services

The Lithgow Mental Health Summit took place on 12 February 2018 at Notre Dame University. There were approximately 60 people in attendance from various sectors including the hospital, community health, the NGO sector, local government, state government agencies in health and education, and consumer representatives. This was a concept sharing forum to identify current issues as perceived by industry professionals and consumers regarding mental health. However, further work is required to map the strengths and assets of the local industry and community to work towards sustainable change.

The discussions that took place at the forum broadly fit into three main categories, including:

1. Prevention
2. Management
3. Crisis

While the discussion that took place at the forum shifted between prevention, management and crisis, the majority of the points raised focussed on prevention strategies.

Prevention

- Lack of knowledge within the mental health industry and the community regarding service delivery, availability, roles and parameters.
- Need to actively promote mental health issues and engage in community education to reduce ignorance and stigma.
- Referral pathways are difficult to navigate and there is a need to make these more streamlined.
- A number of mental health services in Lithgow operate here on an outreach basis, with no regular Lithgow presence.
- The need for capacity and resilience building to prepare for times of economic downturn and job loss.

Management

- Need for better aftercare of mental health consumers once discharged from hospital.
- Greater provision of social and peer support programs, such as Walk and Talk.
- Lithgow could benefit from the establishment of a hub or drop in wellness centre.

Crisis

- Need for acute bed/s in the local hospital, as recovery is greatly enhanced through the support of family and friends.
- Access to assistance during crisis is imperative, with many stating that the long wait times for helplines negatively affecting consumers.

Achievements

- Walk and Talk and Out of the Shadows events have been important for raising awareness of suicide and for providing opportunities for people to better understand and support each other. There has undoubtedly been a raised community awareness of suicide and of the need to improve service access. In relation to the level of services, not a lot has changed and a lot more work is needed to address service gaps.
- Through Council lobbying and community support a new Headspace service is now available to the young people in and around the Lithgow area.
- Wesley LifeForce held Suicide Prevention training sessions in Lithgow to equip people with a number of skills and assist locals with understanding risk and protective factors.
- The Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre engaged Mental Health First Aid Australia who have delivered a series of Mental Health First Aid sessions, which were very successful in the community.
- Council partnered with the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health to conduct research and make evidence-based recommendations for future programs and services in Lithgow.
- The Mayor's Mental Health Taskforce has made a submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Youth Suicide.
- Many local initiatives were held including the Suicide Awareness Let's Talk group at Lithgow Library, Grow peer support program, the Village Voice newspaper has a regular mental health space and the Resilience music festival in October 2018 had a focus on mental well-being.

“Our aim is to encourage the community and individuals to talk about suicide and demystify what is often a hidden issue in our society and to raise issues relating to prevention and wellbeing
Former Mayor, Cllr Stephen Lesslie. (2017)

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved networking and communication between agencies & with the community.	✓
Increased community awareness of local health services	✓
Number of healthy lifestyle programs developed and implemented.	✓
Increased mental health services.	✓

Mental Health Services - Achievements



31 May 2018
Lithgow City Council,
Nepean Blue Mountains
Local Health District,
NDIA & the Mental Health
Coordinating Council
invite organisations and
individuals with an interest
in mental health and
wellbeing to the Lithgow
Meet Your Neighbour
networking event

June 2018
Lithgow Community
Mental health & Wellbeing
Report finalised .by Centre
for Rural & Remote Health

11 October 2018
Mental Health Expo
held at Lithgow Library
Learning Centre

December 2018
Lithgow Community
Mental health &
Wellbeing workshop
conducted by Centre
for Rural & Remote
Health

12 August 2019
Hearspace Lithgow
officially opened at 23
Main Street, Lithgow

2019 & 2020
Drought Communities
Funding announced.
Council works with
Rural & Remote Mental
Health Program to
deliver programs that
respond to the impacts
of drought and build
resilience within our
farming communities.

23 February 2021
Lithgow Council,
Planet Youth Lithgow
and Hearspace
Lithgow launch a
new-drop in space for
young people. Every
Tuesday of the school
term from 3:30pm
at Hometown Cafe
Lithgow

Mental Health Services - Achievements

Planet youth

In February 2020, The Lithgow Local Drug Action Team and Lithgow City Council, in association with the Alcohol and Drug Foundation hosted the world renowned Planet Youth Team at a workshop where the findings of research undertaken in Lithgow on behaviours and attitudes of local school students towards drug and alcohol use were presented.

Planet Youth is an evidence-based model from Iceland that is internationally renowned for its work in significantly reducing alcohol and other drug use among young people.

The workshop was an opportunity for the Planet Youth team to share the findings from research conducted in Lithgow, as part of its participation in the Planet Youth Australia pilot program. Year 10 students in Lithgow and four other local government areas around Australia were surveyed on a range of attitudes and behaviours around the use of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco.

Approximately 50 people attended the workshop to hear the findings. The workshop helped community representatives strengthen their understanding of the issues and opportunities associated with local teenagers' experiences around alcohol and other drugs; acting as a great starting point to set directions for future alcohol and other drug harm prevention activities.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation is trialling an Australian version of Planet Youth through the existing Local Drug Action Team Program (LDAT), which is funded by the Federal Government and managed by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation. The Lithgow LDAT is chaired by Council and has representation from a large number of organisations, including LINC, Lithgow Community Projects, TAFE, Health, schools and police. The Local Drug Action Team is taking part in the Australian Planet Youth trial have been selected for their strong local partnerships and commitment to preventing alcohol and drug-related harms.

Since the introduction of Planet Youth in Iceland in 1998, youth alcohol and other drug use rates have transformed from some of the highest in Europe, to among the lowest. The country has also seen reductions in bullying and juvenile crime. Planet Youth shows that long term investment in community-led prevention leads to significant reductions in alcohol and other drug use.

Council's Community Development Team collaborates with LDAT and the Alcohol and Drug Foundation to deliver education programs to parents and community engagement activities for Young people as part of the Planet Youth pilot program which includes:

- Employed a Project Officer
- Started a Parent Consultation Group
- Designed and produced magnets promoting Planet Youth
- Consulted with young people in the LGA around their needs and gaps in the community
- Launched a social media campaign to inform and educate the community around drugs and alcohol, risk and protective factors.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved networking and communication between agencies & with the community.	✓
Increased community awareness of local health services	✓
Number of healthy lifestyle programs developed and implemented.	✓
Increased mental health services.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓
Work together to interweave and optimise the sharing and coordination of Council resources and information.	✓



Pictured: Sam Williams Youth Drop in Space Mentor, Ashleigh Sakkouri Headspace, Ali Kim and Cris Portilla Lithgow City Council

Youth Drop-in space

In February 2021, Lithgow Council, Planet Youth Lithgow and Headspace Lithgow launched a new drop in space for young people every Tuesday afternoon during school term at Hometown Café, 48 Main Street, Lithgow.

Funded by the Federal Government's Bushfire Recovery Fund, the space is open to young people from 12-17 years of age. It provides an opportunity for young people to collaborate with other artists and musicians, as well as a place to just hang out.

Services & facilities to meet our needs

Quality library service

Our Libraries (Lithgow, Wallerawang & Portland) provide a wide range of free programs which promote equitable access and increase community awareness of the resources, services and information available at the Library.

On 13 March 2017, former Mayor Stephen Lesslie, Paul Toole MP and Ellen Forsythe (State Library of NSW) opened the newly refurbished Lithgow Library Learning Centre. The \$118,027 refurbishment (funded by the State Library Service of NSW) included:

- New carpet featuring a bright and colourful design to delineate new seating spaces created by the redesigned shelving layout
- New technologies
 - A Print Magnifier,
 - New Self-checking Station for customers to issue their own items.
 - Print Release Station enabling customers to pay and release their own photocopies and printing.
- A welcoming and accessible Customer Service Desk
- Bright colourful shelving boxes, modern curved shelving, and practical seating options were installed in the Children's section.
- Two bright Pod Chairs were purchased for the Teens space.

Home Library Service

Access to new technologies and an increased demand from isolated communities and housebound residents has created an opportunity for the Library to look at new ways to provide access to the Library collections and resources. The Home Library Service (HLS) provides a vital service to the communities of Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland, providing library resources to members of the community who are unable access the local branch of their library. Library resources include books, talking books, CDs, DVDs and magazines.

The service also provides reading resources to Lithgow Aged Care for elderly and frail aged residents of the facility.

This service ensures that, regardless of age, incapacity, illness or carer's responsibilities, every member of the community has equitable access

to the library. As well as the access to library resources, the HLS also provides an important social link between the community and some of our most isolated members, ensuring that those most vulnerable are valued and included in the life of the community.

Library Programs

The Library offers a wide range of educational programs that promote social inclusion. The library also offers a place of hobbyist groups to meet and promote their activities.

- Books and Bites Bookclub - a bimonthly program conducted via Zoom.
- Ukelele Group - the Lithgow Lele's at both Lithgow and Portland libraries.
- Weekly Knitting Group
- Table Top Games - World War 2 battle games, Warhammer and Star Wars Games (open to all ages).
- Colouring Group
- Community Drumming and Sewing/Craft Groups are held at Wallerawang Library.
- Children's library activities (see page 35).
- Book launches
- Local Studies - History Week Events, Assistance with local and family history research requests and work with local history providers.

The fast paced development of digital technologies has opened up a range of opportunities for the Library to expand its services to the community. It is also making the library more accessible to members of our community who live in the rural areas of the LGA and providing 24/7 service.

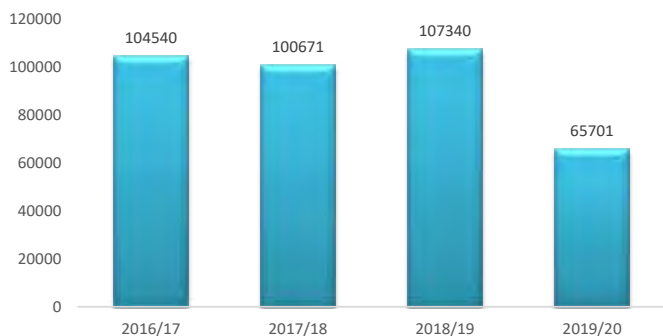
- Libby - free access to the most recent audiobooks, magazines and eBooks.
- Indyreads - enables public libraries to provide free access to over 9,000 eBooks and eAudio books.
- Databases
- Beamafilm - movies and documentaries
- eLearning - LinkedInLearning and Transparent Language Online.



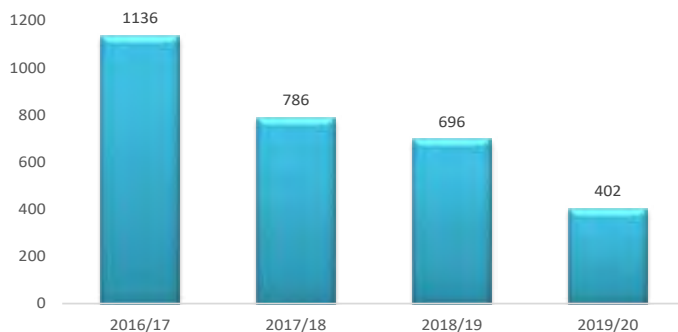
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Services & facilities to meet our needs

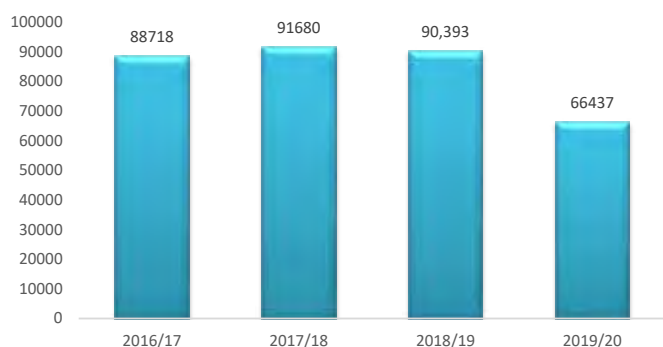
Library Visitation



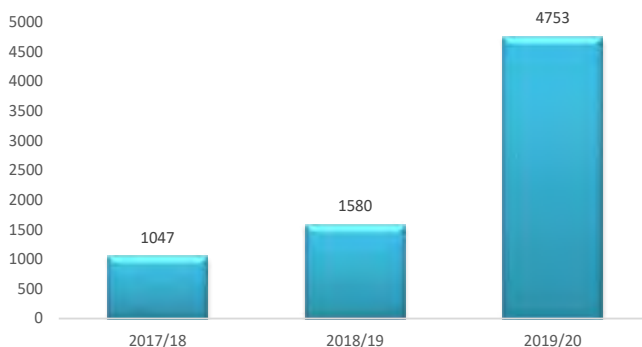
New Members



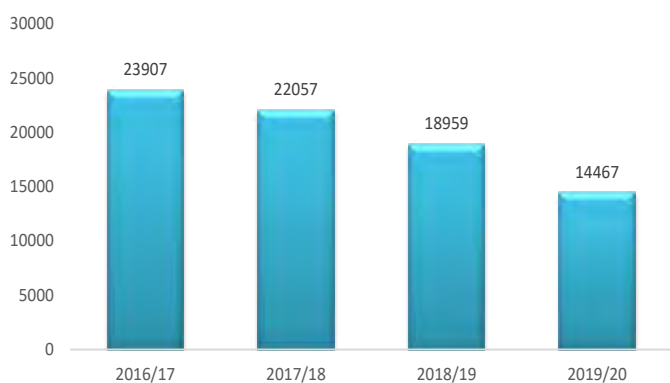
Library Loans



eResources Loans



Computer Bookings



WIFI



The above graphs represent total numbers for Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland Library services for the 2016/17 - 2019/20 period.

During 2019/20 library services were disrupted due to a number of reasons:

Building Works

In late 2019, Council had to undertake urgent building works at the Lithgow Library Learning Centre to remove the awning and make "safe" the parapet of the building following a structural failure. From the 4 November to 20 December scaffolding was erected over the front of the Library which was intermittently closed to the public whilst the awning was removed. Disruption to Library services was kept to a minimum.

Construction will be undertaken in 2021/22 to replace the parapet and awning with an architect designed light weight structure which will make a striking addition to Main Street and reduce the need for future maintenance.

Bushfires

Smoke emanating from the bushfires in the area impacted the Lithgow Library during December. The smoky conditions in the area and in the facility resulted in a significant reduction in visitation to the Library with residents preferring to remain indoors away from the smoke and severe summer heat.

COVID-19

In response to COVID-19 the Libraries were closed from 18 March to 1 June when they re-opened with limited access and within NSW Health COVID Safe Guidelines.

During the closure however, Library staff were split between working in the Library and working from home. Undertaking tasks such as cataloging the local history collection.

Staff developed innovative ways to continue with public programs utilising Facebook and eResources as a way to engage the community as follows:

- Weekly children's storytime videos
- Promoting eResources including eBooks and Beam-a-Films
- Online Author Talks
- Books & Bites online bookclub
- Lynda.com - online learning platform

During this time the Home Library Service continued to operate. The service delivers books and resources to frail aged, isolated and disadvantaged members of the community. In 2019/20, the Home Library Officer assisted clients to utilise eResources.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Operate the Lithgow Library Learning Centre, Portland and Wallerawang Libraries.	✓
Housebound and isolated residents within the Lithgow LGA have access to library services.	✓
Expansion of the Local History Collection	✓
Provision of a community and education information service through events, displays and the learning shop	✓
Number of quality community programs that offer education and social opportunities for all members of the community.	✓

Learning opportunities

Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra - Lithgow Transformation Hub

At the beginning of 2019, the Western Sydney University - Lithgow College Campus in the former Hoskins Building suspended courses. The College commenced operations in 2014, and until 2018 operated primarily as a teaching facility for the College's Diploma of Nursing programs.

Following two years of extensive consultation with business and community stakeholders the facility has re-opened as the Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra – Lithgow Transformation Hub on 29 April 2021. In Wiradjuri language, Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra translates as "workmanship together, side by side."

The Transformation Hub provides an opportunity for the site to be used as a shared space with a focus on collaboration with industry, education and community partners.

The Lithgow Pluriversity - Permaculture Design Course

One of the first activities in the new Hub is the Lithgow Pluriversity's Permaculture Design Course for 16-24ish year olds. The course, which ran for a 6 week period was a shining example of the spirit of the Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra

- Transformation Hub showing how business and community organisations can work together to provide learning opportunities. Students participated in a wide range of activities:

- Lithgow City Council - Compost workshop with the Waste & Recycling Officer during Compost Awareness Week. Council also provided cardboard and mulch for the creation of permaculture gardens at PCYC Lithgow.
- Lithgow City Council - Eskbank House & Museum, Heritage Garden Project.
- Visited Umbiella in the Capertee Valley and learnt about sustainable farming, soil regeneration, ecosystems and floodplain rehydration.
- Visited Gang Gang Gallery - Exhibition Pagoda
- Union Theatre Gallery - Waste to Art Exhibition
- Visited an old quarry at Blackheath that has been rehabilitated into a permaculture paradise to learn how these practices could be used to transform old mine sites in Lithgow.

The program was funded by Wentworth Healthcare through the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network as part of the Australian Government's Empowering Communities Initiative.

Through the Transformation Hub this program is not only transforming community spaces,



but also lives. At the end of the program one graduate commenced a plumbing apprenticeship.

Small Business Training

Research indicates that 1.5 per cent of Australian businesses close within their first year. According to the 2011-12 report into corporate insolvencies by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission "44 per cent suffered poor strategic management" (Source SMH 0409214).

Council continues to work with small business operators to provide them with the tools they need to succeed in business. Local businesses are able to subscribe to Council's monthly eNewsletter Lithgow Business and Tourism Matters to be kept informed of opportunities and Council activities which may have an impact on or be of interest to business and tourism operators. Council works closely with the Central NSW Business Enterprise Centre to provide training opportunities for small business operators including:

- Coordinating regular visits to Lithgow of the Small Biz Bus which provides information and

support to small business operators and those considering starting a business.

Childcare Centres

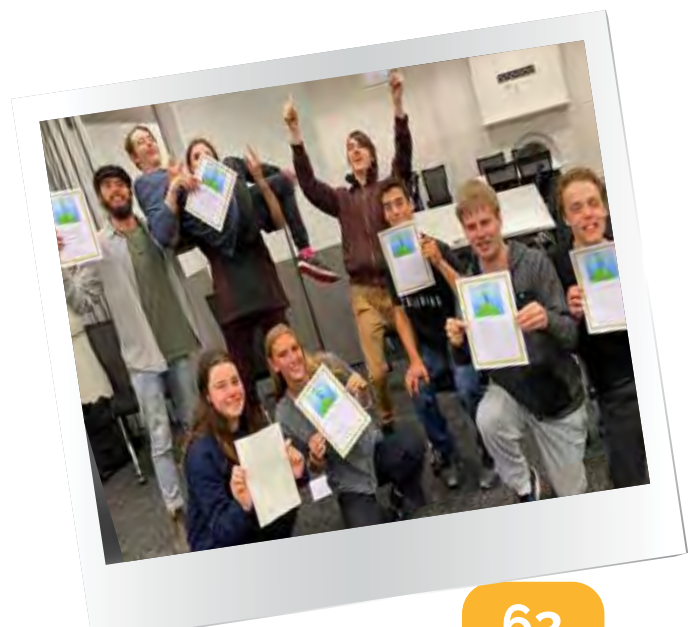
During the 2016/17-2020/21 period, four new Childcare and Early Learning Centres have opened in Lithgow:

- Gowrie NSW Early Education & Childcare Centre
- Learning Kids Montessori Lithgow
- Lithgow OSHC (after school care at Coerwull Public School)

Education Sector Approved Development Applications 2017-2021		
2017	Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust	DA066/16 – Child Care Centre & Subdivision 1 lot into 2.
2017	Mr N Kumar	DA193/16 - 208 Mort Street, Lithgow and S96016/17 Modification to relocate accessible ramp.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURE

Increased access to education opportunities in the LGA.	✓
Number of waste reduction education programs undertaken.	✓



Animal control

Lithgow Animal Shelter Improvements

The Animal Shelter plays a vital role in the community. Council acknowledges that the ownership of companion animals can contribute to improved physical and mental health of owners and plays an important role in the development of young children. Council strives to develop a family friendly community, and as such, is committed to provision of a high standard of animal care, community education and a safe community.

Council continues to undertake Improvements to the Animal Shelter in accordance with the standards required for the welfare of animals. Since 2016/17, the shelter has been expanded to provide

- Additional kennels, floors have all been repainted.
- A section of the shelter was renovated to improve, heating and cooling of the facility.
- New fencing was installed to provide additional exercise areas for the animals and a shade sail was installed to provide shade in the heat of the day.
- New insulated animal drop boxes have also installed to keep stray animals safe till they can be re-united with their owners or found new homes.

During 2019/20, the Lithgow Animal Shelter was temporarily closed in February due to an outbreak of Parvovirus to allow full cleaning and disinfection with a specialist anti-viral disinfectant. This required Council to temporarily re-house animals and no animals were allowed to be received through the stray animal drop at the facility.

Throughout 2019/20 - 2020/21 COVID 19 limited access restrictions were put in place in accordance with the Public Health Order. Members of the public were able to attend the shelter between 3 - 4 pm weekdays by appointment with Councils Rangers. Appointments for the collection of lost animals or the adoption of a new pets were also required. During these exchanges person to person contact was reduced through the use of the animal drop box.

As an interim arrangement during this period the animal drop boxes were closed to the public after hours and on weekends. No voluntary surrenders of animals were accepted during this period.

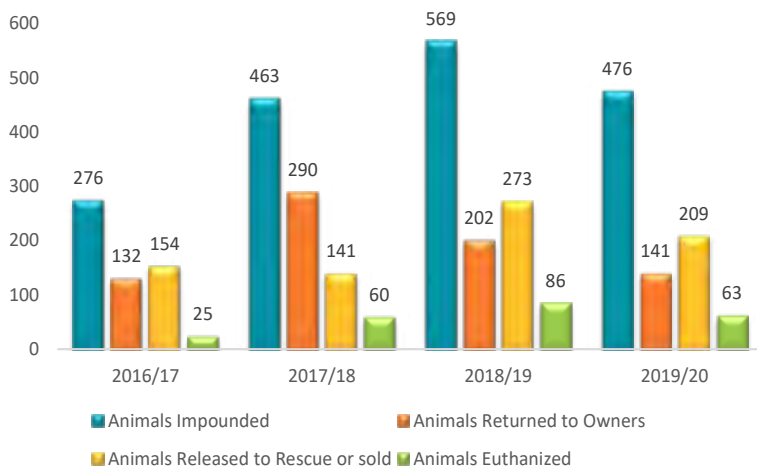
Community programs

Programs such as free microchipping days and Operation Cat aim to provide education opportunities to the community about responsible companion animal ownership. Council Rangers in partnership with local veterinarians developed a Lithgow Animal Shelter calendar in 2017/18, highlighting successful animal rescues while providing helpful tips and reminders in responsible pet ownership.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Maintain animal control in accordance with legislation and policy	✓
Maintain the Lithgow Animal Shelter	✓

The main aim of Council's Animal Shelter is to re-unite owners with their lost animals and find homes for surrendered or unclaimed companion animals.



Note: Animals Euthanised includes:

- Animals Euthanised - Not suitable to rehome
- Animals Euthanised - Unable to rehome
- Animals Euthanised - Sick/Died at Animal Shelter
- Animals Euthanised at owners request
- Animals Euthanised - Feral

A number of animals retained at end of reporting period (month) and carried forward therefore totals do not equal 100%.

Since 2016/17 Council has utilised Facebook to communicate with the public about lost animals. Notification about lost animals through the Lithgow Animal Shelter Facebook Page @LithgowAnimalShelter has improved the number of animals returned to owners or rehomed.

@LithgowAnimalShelter

5,116

Followers at 31 May

30,322

People reached

8,300

People engaged

During the 28 day period 2 May - 29 May 2021



Local primary schools students who participated in the Responsible Pet Ownership Program provided drawings of their pets which were made into the centre piece of new decorative signs at the front of the shelter as a testament to the 'significant role animals play in our lives'.

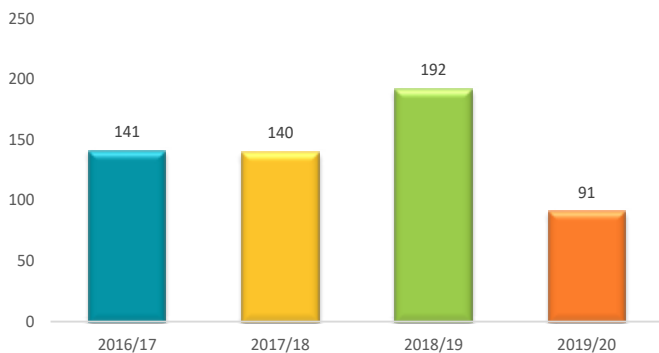
We feel safe

Community compliance

Council undertakes routine Environmental Health Inspections to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. This involves inspections over a number of industries which could present a risk to public health such as skin penetration premises, swimming pools, caravan parks and cooling tower's within the LGA.

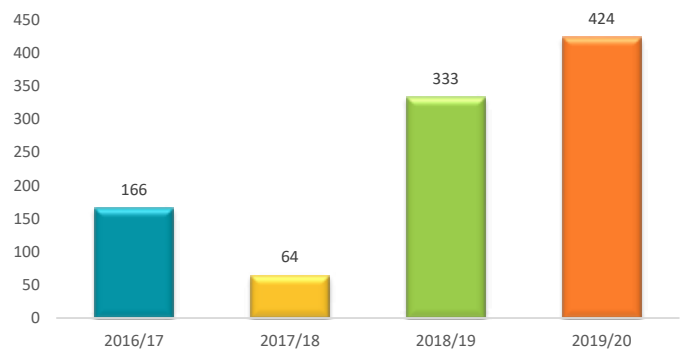
Inspections of swimming pools and spas open to the public are conducted to assess compliance with the public requirements. This ensures the operations and surrounds are satisfactory and concurrent with the Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health Regulation 2012. Cooling towers are inspected in accordance with the Public Health (Microbial Control) Regulation 2010 to maintain an up to date register of all cooling towers within our Local Government Area.

Food Premises Inspected



Food inspections are conducted on food premises within the Lithgow Local Government Area in accordance with the Food Regulation Partnership with the NSW Food Authority to ensure public safety and compliance with the Food Act 2003. During Mar-May 2020, inspections of food premises were reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions.

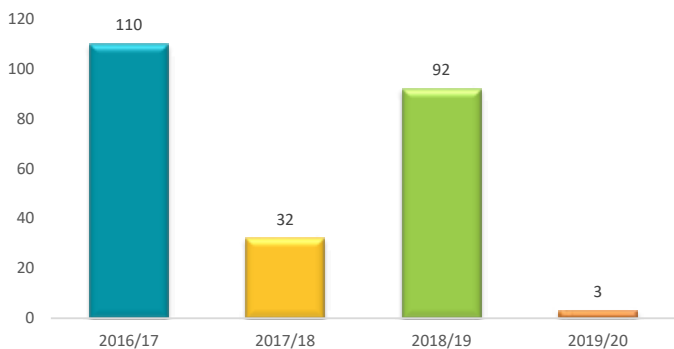
Septic System Inspections



Annual inspections and approval of on-site sewerage systems occurs for all un-sewered properties in the Local Government Area to ensure compliance with environmental and public health performance standards and the Local government Act s68 Part c, Items 5 & 6. Council also monitors 120 service records for Aerated Waste Water Systems per annum.

Note: The significant increase in inspections in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 is due to staff changes. Inspections were impacted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Trade Waste System Inspections



The Liquid Trade Waste Program ensures all trade waste discharges are in accordance with Council's Lithgow Trade Waste Policy, NSW Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Guidelines and the Liquid Trade Waste regulation Guidelines.

Note: In 2019/20 Council's Trade Waste Program stalled as part of a departmental restructure.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of parking patrols per annum	✓
Number of school zone patrols per annum	✓
Number of actions taken against non-compliance with the environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Local Government Act.	✓
Number of food premises inspected.	✓
Number of skin penetration premises inspected.	✓

Wallerawang Sewerage Treatment Plant Incident & Enforceable Undertaking

In late August 2019, workers at the Wallerawang STP were caused to replace a pump, which serviced a tank containing caustic soda. A fitting broke and the material leaked to a bund. The bund is provided to contain materials in such an event. Safework NSW and Council agreed that the response would be to leave the material contained in the bund until it was drawn down for use in the plant. Days later it was observed that the bund was nearly empty (this draw down was more rapid than usual). Around this time, it became apparent that there was some discolouration on the surface of a nearby paddock. Workers assumed that the material was draining back into the STP works via a pump station and so did not relate these to each other.

Around six weeks later the EPA was called to the site by the owner of the nearby property. It was found that the material had left the bund and was on that property and had entered a small watercourse. It was found that the material had not spread to other land or to other watercourses. Upon

closer examination, it was found that historically a valve had been installed so that it turned opposite to normal and that this allowed the material to leave the site of the STP. Council worked closely with the EPA to deal with this incident. This included –

- Implementing the Site Pollution Incident Response Management Plan,
- Removing the material from drains,
- Engaging experts to prepare a remedial action plan,
- Restoring the waters and land affected by the material, (Ordinary Meeting of Council 26 October 2020 Page 6 of 42)
- Progress reporting, and
- Providing information and records.

Notwithstanding the above, in the Enforceable Undertaking (EU) Council acknowledged that the incident was a contravention of the Act. Council undertook to bear all costs, fully remediate all affected lands and waters, to improve operating procedures and undertake a number of offset- type environmental projects.

ENFORCEABLE UNDERTAKING

Under section 253A of the Act, Council has given and the EPA has accepted the following:

Review and implementation of Pollution Incident Response Management Plans for all Sewage Treatment Plants by 30 June 2020.	These were delayed by the Covid-19 lock down but were completed by 31/12/2020.
Handling Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Materials training for all staff involved in the operation and maintenance of all sewage treatment plants by 30 September 2020.	This training was completed for all operational staff by 30/06/2020, 3 months ahead of the requested date
Appointment of 3 new positions; Asset Maintenance Planner, Water and Sewer Engineer and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator by 31 July 2021.	WHS Officer Water & Wastewater, Asset Maintenance Coordinator and Water & Wastewater Engineer appointed.
Revision of the Operations Manual and development and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures for current facilities by 31 July 2021.	The Operation and Maintenance Manual has been revised for release by 31 July 2021.
\$100,000 to undertake weed eradication along the Farmers Creek Corridor delivering benefits to the environment and local community as part of the implementation of the Farmers Creek Management Plan	Jan - Jun 2021 - weed treatment undertaken by Blue Tongue Ecosystems along Farmers Creek, State Mine Creek, Lake Pillans Wetlands and Vale of Clwydd.
To present a paper on current wastewater industry skill levels, attraction, retention, training opportunity and skills development for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators at the 2021 Water Industry Operators Association.	Work has commenced on this paper.

Crime prevention

Crime Prevention Committee

In 2009, Council established the Crime Prevention Committee to assist with the development and implementation of the Crime Prevention Plan (2010). At that time there was a lot of concern in Council and the community regarding rates of street crime, alcohol related crime and perceived reductions in Policing levels.

In the early years the Committee implemented initiative programs such as night time safety audits in the CBD and the introduction of a "booze bus" to get people home safely from hotels.

It is noted from Police representation on the committee that street crime and alcohol related crime have fallen over recent years although rates of domestic violence, malicious damage and fraud related crimes haven't.

In it's current capacity, the committee provides an opportunity for the Police to meet with Councillors and community/business representatives providing an opportunity to update on statistical data and crime mitigation activities. However, it is considered appropriate that a review of the Plan or development of an action plan be undertaken to provide a focus for the committee which currently meets quarterly.

The role of the Committee is to:

- Advise Council on crime issues in Lithgow.
- Assist in the identification and implementation of crime prevention strategies.
- Monitor and provide input into the implementation of Lithgow Crime.
- Implement the Crime Prevention Plan.
- Actively contribute and participate in local crime prevention initiatives.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of programs successfully implemented from the Crime Prevention Plan	✓
Number of road safety education campaigns and programs undertaken annually	✓

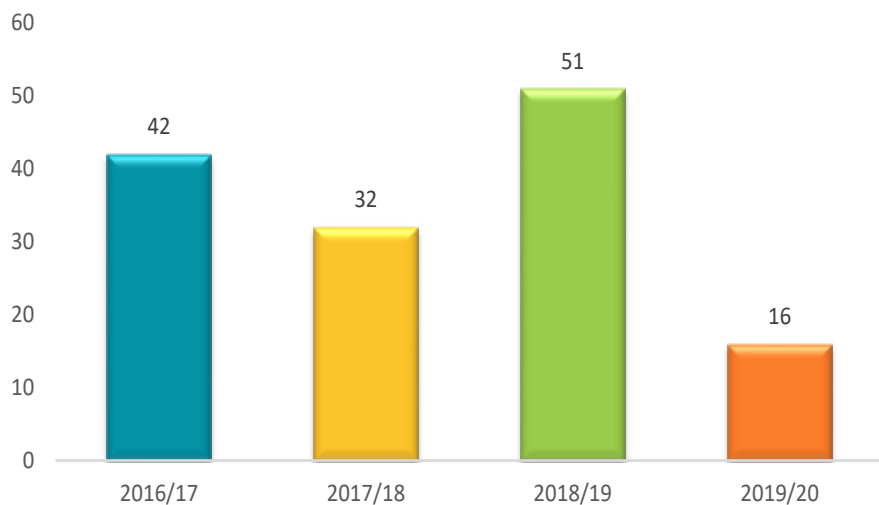
Committee Membership

- Two Councillors – Clr Coleman and Clr Goodwin.
- Lithgow City Council General Manager or his nominee
- Lithgow Police
- Lithgow District Chamber of Commerce
- Lithgow Liquor Accord
- Housing NSW
- Two community representatives

Lithgow Council Crime Prevention Activities

- All reports of graffiti are removed from public areas within 5 working days.
- The CCTV System is monitored and maintained to ensure the monitoring of the CBD, parks and Council assets as follows:
 - A solar camera was installed as part of the construction of the Adventure Playground.
 - Systems were installed at Wallerawang and Lithgow Sewerage Treatment Plants and Wallerawang Waste Treatment Plant.
 - CCTV cameras are located in Queen Elizabeth Park near the children's playground and Charles Lewins Bandstand.
- All requests from the Police for CCTV footage are processed and police are able to view cameras at the Station.
- In order to comply with legislative requirements for impoundments the truck at the depot has now been converted to a Tilt Tray, suitable for picking up abandoned vehicles.
- The Community Development Officer collaborates with Lithgow Cares Partnership to increase awareness and understanding of domestic violence issues.
- Playground equipment, funded by a Social Housing Improvement Fund grant was installed in Emora Park, Lithgow to assist with building community cohesion.
- Lithgow Library has incorporated financial and cyber security matters into its Tech Savvy Seniors Program to ensure awareness of this type of crime.

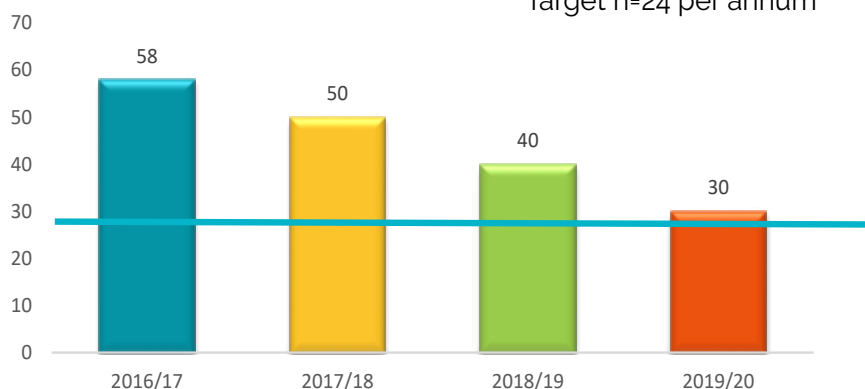
Abandoned Articles Impounded



Council continues to facilitate a safe community in public places through the removal and impounding of abandoned articles including vehicles in accordance with the Impounding Act 1993

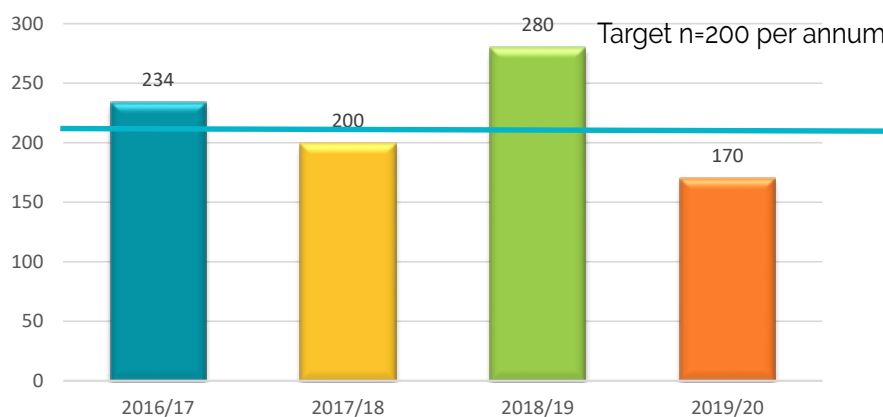
On-street parking enforcement - School Zones

Target n=24 per annum



On-street parking enforcement - CBD

Target n=200 per annum





1P
8:00-6:00
MON-FRI
8:00-12:00
SAT
← →

Pies
612

Salon

WALKWAY

Exploring and discovering the richness in our society through the pursuit of educational, creative and cultural opportunities to diversify our economy, skills base and employment opportunities.

To support a changing and growing community, Council and the community must work together to build a sustainable, diverse and competitive economy.

This Principle Activity Area focuses on creating an economy that:

- Is linked to the unique character and advantages of the Lithgow region.
- Ensures that a variety of employment and training opportunities are available.
- Has a workforce that is supportive of innovation and business excellence.
- Is skills-based.
- Provides for a broad range of formal and non-formal education services.
- Is underpinned by sound land use planning that provides a range of employment lands and lifestyle choices while protecting environmental values.

Community Strategic Plan

In 2016, Council conducted a Community Satisfaction Survey to identify the level of satisfaction with Council Services and Facilities. 407 residents across the LGA were surveyed. 30% of respondents identified "generating local employment opportunities" as a key challenge for the area. This was closely followed by "encouraging new business to the area" (28%).

In 2014, the Lithgow LGA experienced a significant downturn in industry with the permanent closure of Wallerawang Power Station and Cullen Valley Coal Mine and mothballing of Angus Place Colliery. External factors such as foreign ownership and international coal pricing influenced fluctuations in both the mining and newly privatised local power industries. The coal mining industry in the Lithgow LGA continues to be unstable indicating the need to transition our economy. However, there have also recently been other setbacks in the education and aged care sector;

- The suspension of operations at University of Western Sydney in 2018 has recently seen this facility re-open as Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra - Lithgow Transformation Hub in 2021 (see page 62).
- In February 2021 it was announced that the Lithgow Aged Care facility would not be re-accredited to operate after failing to meet 38 of 42 requirements under the eight Aged Care Quality Standards and would close in April. In April 2021, ownership of the facility was transferred to Respect Aged Care and it remains open.

The number of local workers in Lithgow City Council decreased by -74 between 2014/15 and 2019/20.

- Health Care and Social Assistance (+189 local workers)
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (+146 local workers)
- Manufacturing (+103 local workers)
- Financial and Insurance Services (+56 local workers)

An analysis of the jobs held by the local workers in Lithgow City Council in 2019/20 shows the three largest industries were:

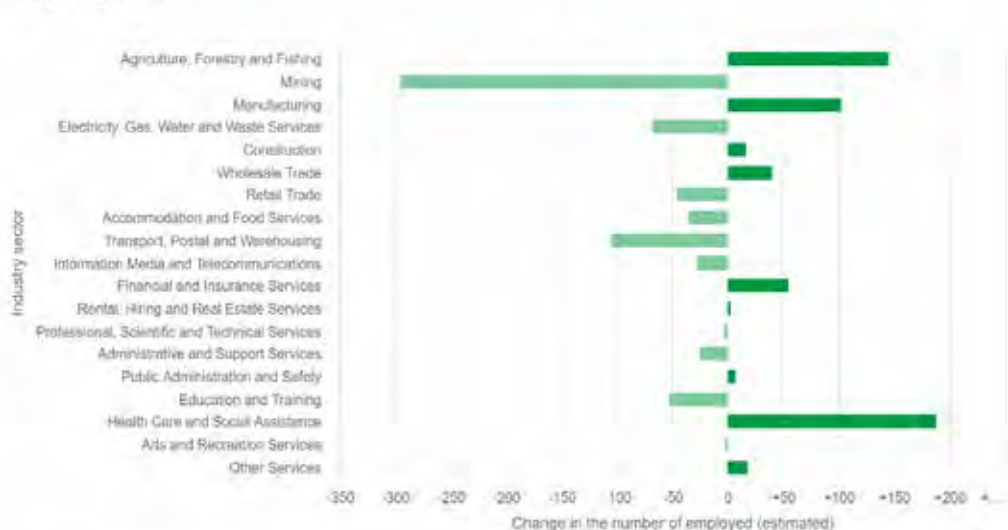
- Health Care and Social Assistance (1,066 people or 12.8%)
- Public Administration and Safety (925 people or 11.1%)
- Mining (762 people or 9.1%)

In combination, these three fields accounted for 2,753 people in total or 33.0% of local workers.

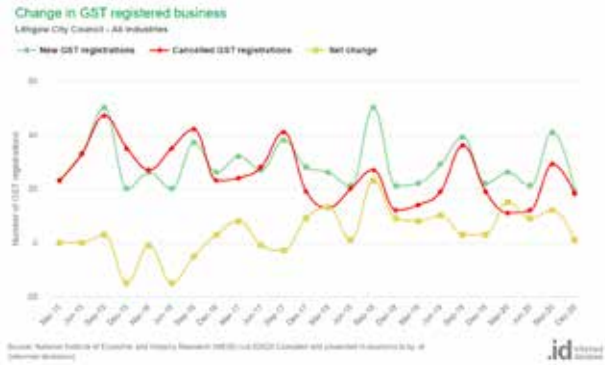
In comparison, New South Wales employed 13.0% in Health Care and Social Assistance; 6.0% in Public Administration and Safety and 0.9% in Mining.

Source: <http://economy.id.com.au/lithgow/employment-by-industry>

Change in employment (total) by industry, 2014/15 to 2019/20
Lithgow City Council



Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2021. Compiled and presented in economy.id by Jd informed decisions.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

<http://economy.id.com.au/lithgow> (NIEIR2020)

New or expanded businesses in the region



Community Strategic Plan

COVID 19 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Sector impacts - Top 3 (without the JobKeeper scheme)

- Accommodation and Food Services (-319 local jobs)
- Manufacturing (-49 local jobs)
- Retail Trade (-46 local jobs)

Key Insights

- GRP is forecast to be 5.7% lower in the September quarter 2020 than the same quarter in 2019. This fall is greater than that experienced by the state as a whole.
- Local Jobs are forecast to fall by -3.3% in the September Quarter 2020. This equates to a fall of 308 local jobs.
- In the absence of JobKeeper payments, the employment fall is estimated at -4.9% (447 jobs)
- The impact on employed residents (2.5%) was lower than the

GRP CHANGE

-5.7%
Lithgow LGA

-3.9%
NSW

LOCAL JOB CHANGE

-3.3%
Lithgow LGA

-4.9%
without job keeper
scheme

EMPLOYED RESIDENT CHANGE

2.5%
Lithgow LGA

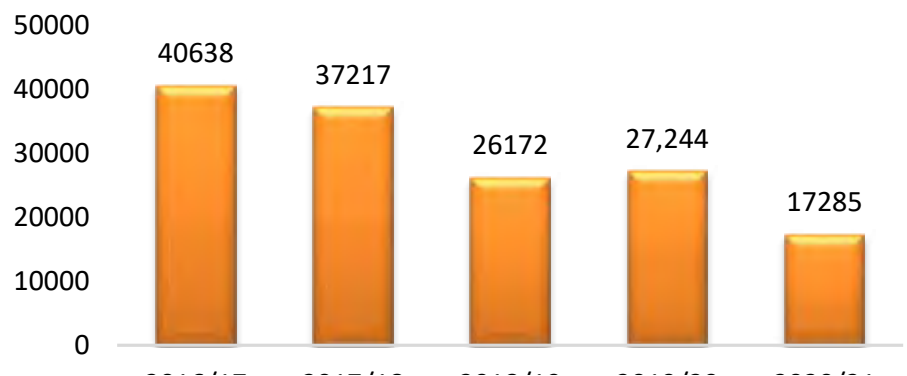
0.7%
without job keeper
scheme

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

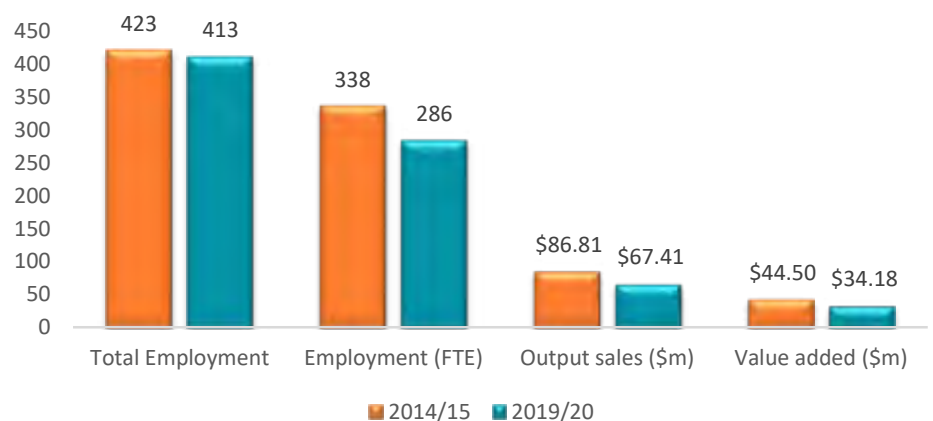
In 2019/20, the total tourism and hospitality sales in the Lithgow LGA was \$67.4m, the total value added was \$34.2 million.

The graphs show a decline in tourism and hospitality between 2014/15 and 2020/21. The impacts of the Gospers Mountain Mega Bushfire. Initial COVID-19 restrictions saw an increase in domestic tourism in the area. However, ongoing restrictions has resulted in state border closures and decreased regional travel due Greater Sydney and LGA lockdowns.

Lithgow VIC Visitors



Value of Tourism & Hospitality to local economy



<http://economy.id.com.au/lithgow/tourism>

Community Priorities

The table below provides progress with community and councillor priorities identified as part of the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

Priority	Page reference
Tourism	
Increase tourism to increase jobs	75
Provide more options for accommodation, such as B&Bs and camping/caravan facilities.	
Create a marketing plan for the area, for both local and state promotion.	78-80
Development	
Revitalisation of the business precinct, possibly promoting rewards for development and presentation.	91-100
Sell surplus properties/land owned by Council to build up a reserve of funds. Assess whether the Local Environmental Plan 2014 is flexible enough, allowing developers to 'get their first foot in the door'.	86
Improved infrastructure.	118-158
Lithgow Hub	
Market Lithgow as a hub that visitors come to before heading off to other areas, or stay at whilst visiting the Blue Mountains region.	78-80
Encourage visitors to stay for long weekends, not just day trips.	78-80
Businesses	
Develop and implement a plan to encourage a wide diversity of businesses to the area.	82-84
Follow up on expression of interest from power station.	84
Approach large retailers to set up a store in Lithgow	-
Promote innovation among businesses.	-
Partnership/active promotion for music festivals	22
Promoting the activities and assets that are available to the community.	Identified throughout the document
Youth	
Encourage youth employment	84-105
More tertiary education opportunities/options.	62

Challenges

Moving Forward

Under the key theme of 'Strengthening our Economy' the most valued aspect of the Lithgow area is considered to be the 'location providing a rural lifestyle in a beautiful area whilst still being within relatively close proximity to Sydney. Growth potential, tourism, education, transport connections and location were seen as strengths'.

Community services such as health were seen as strengths while the aging population and supporting youth and keeping them in Lithgow were seen as challenges.

Since 2014/15, the Lithgow LGA has suffered major blows to the local power and coal generation industries which in turn have had major flow-on effects to business relying on these industries. In order to build a more economically diverse and sustainable region, Council and the community must plan for a future beyond coal. As part of long-term planning to ensure a sustainable future for the Lithgow Local Government Area:

1. To provide leadership and communications that foster collaboration which maximises Lithgow's economic potential.
2. To ensure population stabilisation and sustainable growth that supports population and business growth.
3. To ensure the long-term sustainability of infrastructure and land that underpins and supports current and future industry and business.
4. To facilitate and encourage the ongoing development, diversification and sustainability of the local business and industry base.
5. To encourage and facilitate the provision of appropriate business support services to assist growth.
6. To encourage employment and skills development to address industry needs and promote self development.
7. To manage land use conflict.
8. To provide employment and learning opportunities for young people in the LGA.
9. The impacts of natural disasters and COVID-19 on business and tourism.



An attractive place to visit

Community Opportunity 1

Develop a marketing strategy on how Lithgow plans to attract more tourists to the area and create a hub for visitors to the Blue Mountains region. This could include a survey of non-residents to gauge the perceptions that people have of Lithgow, and what events and incentives would encourage them to visit.

Destination Marketing

Tourism in the Lithgow destination has always had enormous potential, yet until 2018/19 has seen very limited activity in the destination marketing area. This has meant that tourism marketing of the Lithgow destination had fallen behind neighbouring areas. There needed to be a priority placed on destination branding and marketing.

In response, Lithgow Tourism developed seven Lithgow Destination Movies and sourced an "expert" digital marketing company to create the '360° of Lithgow' Digital/Online Destination Marketing Campaign. The campaign was specifically structured to give local tourism operators the opportunity to buy in at varying levels.

The campaign gave Lithgow Tourism and tourism operators' unprecedented online marketing exposure via a number of key digital media, including; website banner, the Google display network, electronic mail outs, and listings on a purpose-built campaign microsite. The industry buy-in into the campaign matched Council's budget – meaning increased online advertising spots were secured.

The Digital Marketing campaign was a first of its type for the Lithgow tourism industry. In its first two months it generated a sizable increase in traffic to Lithgow Tourism social media sites and the website. This destination marketing initiative brought the local tourism industry together to deliver a collaborative digital/online marketing campaign. The campaign was innovative and allowed Council to deliver a strong piece of tourism marketing, an area very important to the community resulting in:

- Tourism industry collaborative destination marketing initiative.
- First solely digital/online campaign.
- Increase in social media and website traffic to Lithgow Tourism and industry partners.

In 2019/20 Council, via Lithgow Tourism, continued to develop and execute a number of destination marketing initiatives to ensure that the Lithgow destination is well promoted to potential visitors, with the aim of optimising digital and online media channels the campaign focused on the New South Wales 3-hour drive market.

In a year where local tourism businesses faced extreme challenges attracting visitors due to the combined impact of the bushfires and COVID19, the destination marketing initiatives implemented created a strong market presence and a significant growth in visitors accessing the Lithgow Tourism and Events website. The campaign consisted of:

- Execution of a 6 month NSW market digital/ social media marketing campaign from July to December 2019 (55,000 movie views, website visitors' growth of 25%, website duration of visitor session growth of 18%).
- Integration and growth of Lithgow Tourism and Events Social media channels (doubling Facebook followers' growth from 3,400 to 7,000).
- Refresh and update of Lithgow Tourism and Events Website (significant growth of unique visitors to the website, from 3,500 per month to an average of 12,000 per month in June 2020).
- Post bushfires and the first phase of COVID19 production and launch of 3 'Welcome back' Destination Movies to attract visitors back to Lithgow (over 80,000 movie views).

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Consistent branding of signage & promotional/marketing materials	✓
Increased brand recognition	✓
Number of enquiries in response to marketing/promotional materials and activities	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Tourism Strategy/Destination Management Plan	✓



FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

2019/2020
7,357

2019/2020
6,940

2018/19
3,400

2017/18
1,800



25%
GROWTH IN
VISITORS TO
WEBSITE

80,000+
'WELCOME BACK'
DESTINATION MOVIE
VIEWS

12,000
UNIQUE VISITORS
TO WEBSITE PER
MONTH

An attractive place to visit



Following liaison between Council and Wallerawang Lidsdale Progress Association, a local graphic designer was engaged to tie the design of the information bay to the same theme as other tourism signs in the Lithgow LGA. Wallerawang Lidsdale Progress Association provided historical and contemporary information for the sign. Strengthening our local tourism industry The information bay now provides visitors to Wallerawang with an all encompassing narrative on the history of the area with what to see and do and how to get there. The project is a great example of the co-operation between Lithgow City Council and local community organisations which led to a vital piece of tourism infrastructure being installed in Wallerawang.



23 Lithgow Adventure Trail signposts were installed across the Lithgow LGA. Each sign features a QR code that directs visitors to the Lithgow Tourism Website to gather more information on all our destination attractions on offer. The signs have a stylised map with icons that feature the destination location. Funded under the Drought Affected Communities Program Round 1, the signs are great addition to our destination's marketing as we look to continue to drive and grow visitor numbers in the Lithgow LGA.



www.tourism.lithgow.com is regularly reviewed and updated. The new website, promotes Lithgow as the "Heart of the Greater Blue Mountains" which is in line with Council's priority to "Market Lithgow as a hub that visitors come to before heading off to other areas, or stay at whilst visiting the Blue Mountains region".

An attractive place to live &



It's a great opportunity for the village of Tarana. Not only can people now access the village more easily by train but it gives the residents of Tarana and the region the chance to more easily access services and employment and a range of other opportunities elsewhere.

Mayor Ray Thompson

Tarana Station Back on Track

On 16 September 2019 a community event was held at Tarana Station to celebrate the arrival of the new Bathurst Bullet service to Tarana

Council worked closely with the Tarana Valley Community Group to coordinate a community breakfast to commemorate the occasion which included a New Orleans style band performance by Mitchell Conservatorium and representatives from other community agencies including the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP).

This project, funded through the Commonwealth Government Drought Communities Program, provided an opportunity to bring together, the community with professional services to assist rural families dealing with drought and hardship.

Bells Line Expressway

- February 2021 - Major storm damage to local and regional roads including the Bells Line of Road at Mt Tomah.
- 2020 - Western Link, a consortium of business and community interests focusing on the benefits of an increased level of modern access over the Blue Mountains to ensure improved transport links with Western Sydney and the Central West develop website and petition to lobby state government. <https://westernlink.org.au/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/TheWesternLinkCommunity>
- February 2018 - Special meeting of Central West Region of Councils (CENTROC) to discuss plans for the Bells Line Expressway in response to the Draft Future Transport 2056

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved networking and communications between agencies & with the community	✓
Increased community awareness of local health services.	✓
Number of healthy lifestyle programs developed and implemented.	✓
Increased mental health services	✓
Progress in Bells Line Expressway campaign	✓
Internet accessibility for commuter trains 26 June 2020 - Transport NSW commenced a trial implemented WIFI connectivity to 19 stations on the Central Coast Line as part of a trial to deliver greater connectivity between Hornsby and W'yong. The trial has not been extended to other commuter trains.	✗
Increased passenger and freight train services terminating at Lithgow.	✓
Accessibility to public transport	✓

Lithgow regional economic development strategy

In 2017/18, the NSW Government assisted local councils and their communities to develop Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across Regional NSW. Council worked collaboratively with the Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop the Lithgow Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 (Lithgow REDS).

Lithgow is a regional economy that is currently transitioning away from historic coal-mining industry leadership.

The Lithgow REDS enables Lithgow to significantly advance the future diversification and growth of its industry and business base, which is forecast to be strong as Lithgow has a high number of regional strengths and endowments that this project will be underpinned by:

1. Proximity – the Gateway to Sydney and the Central West
2. Natural Environment & Recreational Amenity
3. Climate & Rainfall
4. Aboriginal & Industrial heritage
5. Mineral resources
6. Affordable Land
7. Rail & Energy Infrastructure
8. Private & Public Institutions

In order for residents and businesses to enjoy a sustained level of growth and prosperity, the Lithgow region must become a preferred location for living, working and business investment.

Our greatest long-term economic challenge is to grow businesses while increasing job opportunities for our resident workforce, which will, in turn, as more dollars are retained locally, grow the local economy (and population).

Council recognises the valuable role local businesses play in contributing to a sustainable location and has placed a high priority on proactive strategies, policies and actions to improve investment, employment and business performance across the Lithgow region.

The Lithgow REDS:

1. Provided context and directions for local economic development across the Lithgow Local Government Area,
2. Is an important part of Council's decision making framework and has regard to other key policy documents,
3. Has established a whole of Council approach to the delivery of services which advance local economic development, and
4. Has a clear and measurable implementation plan to monitor Council's efforts and progress towards future economic vitality and prosperous communities.

Implementing the Community Strategic Plan 2030

The Lithgow Community Strategic Plan 2030 (the CSP) sets out the community's vision for the strategic direction of the Lithgow local government area. The Plan is divided into 5 key themes and one of the 5 themes is: 'Strengthening our Economy'. Under the Economy theme the vision is to provide for sustainable and planned growth through the diversification of the economic base, the development of diverse job opportunities and the provision of a broad range of formal and non-formal educational services.

The CSP identifies to support a changing and growing community, Council and the community must work together to build a sustainable, diverse and competitive economy. It notes the need to develop and implement a plan to encourage a wide diversity of businesses to the area acknowledging the need for an increased availability of employment generating lands.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

New plans and strategies are developing in line with the community's needs.	✓
Work together to interweave and optimise the sharing and coordination of Council resources and information.	✓

Community Opportunity 3

Identify education, employment and lifestyle options that would attract and retain young adults/families to the area.

Six strategic elements underpin the REDS

The REDS has provided context and direction for local economic development across the Lithgow Local Government Area. It is an important part of Council's decision-making framework and has regard to other key policy documents. A whole of Council approach has been established to deliver services which advance local economic development.

Below are the 6 strategic elements which underpin the REDS and the actions taken to implement them:

- 1. Activate and cultivate a community of economic development leadership.**
 - Participated in the Western Sydney University Lithgow "Just Transition" strategy on campus use.
 - Support provided to the Portland Foundations.
 - Council support funding for Main Streets facades work (Main Street Facades Policy).
- 2. Create labour force capability in line with future business needs.**
 - Developed "Invest Lithgow" Website.
 - Assembly of Lithgow Workforce Capability Cluster.
 - Marrangaroo Employment lands business case developed.
- 3. Prioritise lifestyle infrastructure and local place-making.**
 - Lithgow Adventure Playground.
 - Lake Wallace Plan of Management underway.
 - Lithgow CBD Revitalisation underway
 - Mountain Biking Trails Strategy for Hassans Walls Reserve commissioned.
 - Endeavour Park Bicycle Pump Track construction commenced - April 2021.
- 4. Foster a collaborative and vibrant community led by a diverse and inclusive culture.**
 - Business Leaders Luncheon on 'Creative Industries'.
- 5. Develop tourism and marketing opportunities.**
 - Relaunch of Lithgow Visitor Centre,
 - New Gateway Billboards installed
 - Integration and growth of Lithgow Tourism and Events Social media channels.
 - Refresh and update of Lithgow Tourism and Events Website (significant growth of unique visitors averaging 12,000 per month (2019/20)).
 - Commissioned Lithgow Tourist Signposting Adventure Trail under the Drought Communities Program.
 - Destination movies and digital marketing campaign delivered.
 - Post Bushfires/COVID19 Support – No cost BrandLocal online digital marketing course for local businesses to support development of digital marketing and online sales practices. Production and launch of 3 'Welcome back' Destination Movies
 - NSW market digital/social media marketing campaign July-December 2019.
 - Events
 - Resilience Music Festival
 - Jet-Black Mountain Bike 2HR
 - Halloween Festival
 - Lithglow
 - Sponsorship provided to Ironfest
- 6. Drive local business capability and inward business investment.**
 - Established Home-based Business Network.
 - Lithgow Business Accelerator Program developed and executed. 15 local businesses attended.
 - 12 Monthly Economic Development E-Newsletters to a database of over 1,400 profiling business grants and support programs.
 - Conducted Business Leaders Luncheons (pre-COVID-19).
 - Regular Connect Bus visits to Lithgow.

An attractive place to live &

Community Opportunity 2

Actively approach businesses, such as a larger retailer and government organisations, to discuss new stores and offices within the Lithgow LGA. A plan could be developed for how Lithgow Council could facilitate and provide incentives for companies that set up within the area.

The Foundations

Since purchasing the former Portland Cement Works site in 2014, AWJ Civil has worked with the community of Portland to develop The Foundations site. The site, has been evolving into a significant cultural centre in the Lithgow LGA. Re-activation of the site has seen "The heritage buildings being activated with artists spaces, monthly and seasonal growers markets and workshops".

- Silo Murals painted by artist Guido van Helten in 2018.
- Commencement of monthly pop-up markets in 2018.
- Sculptural artist, Harrie Fasher commenced onsite at the permanent Artist in Residence in 2019.
- The Glen Museum (formerly the Charlie Pinch Museum) moved to The Foundations site.
- The Annex Building has been restored and will house the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MOCZA).
- Horticulturist and garden designer Stuart McGhie opened a nursery on site and also commenced landscaping the grounds of The Foundations.
- The Mill Pond has been stocked and is opened as part of events to Sports Fisherman.
- Activation of the site includes:
 - School Holiday Programs
 - STEAMWORKS a new education program to be run during school holidays will commence in July 2021 for students focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths.
 - Working in conjunction with Council to host events such as Halloween, Lithgow etc.
 - Wedding and function hire
 - Long-weekend events to attract locals and tourists.

Further expansion of the site will include a residential housing development.

Greenspot 2845 Activity Hub

In September 2020, Greenspot, a joint venture between the owners of Borg and Bettergrow, two leading Australian businesses headquartered in New South Wales, completed the purchase of the Old Wallerawang Power Station (WPS) site. The vision for the site which comprises approx. 450 hectares is to repurpose the WPS site to attract a range of businesses, serving to generate economic activity and employment growth in the local community and the broader NSW Central- West region.

Stage 1, decommissioning, demolition and rehabilitation (DDR) has commenced and will take approximately 18 months to complete.

A medium to long-term Master Plan for the WPS site and buffer zone is being developed which will retain the heritage chimney stack, turbine hall, administration building, cooling tower and the coal dome.

It is anticipated that the peak workforce during DDR will be approximately 60, with an average workforce of 30. Additional jobs will be generated by the repurposing of the site.

The planning approvals process has been commenced seeking development consent for the construction, operation and maintenance of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) of 500 MW capacity that would provide 1,000 MWh of energy storage. Construction for this stage of the project is expected to begin in early 2022 for a period of 12-18 months. The BESS is anticipated to be operational in 2023 and has a design life of approximately 20 years.

Source: www.greenspot.com.au

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

New or expanded businesses in the region	✓
Increased employment opportunities	✓
Availability of employment generating lands	✓
Provision of suitable and serviceable land for business and residential growth	✓
Development control criteria are applied to assess any new areas proposed for residential, commercial, employment generation and rural lifestyle development.	✓
Number of community arts projects	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan	✓
Number of sustainable festivals and events.	✓
Increased awareness and availability of 'Made in Lithgow' products.	✓
Number of events, exhibitions & public arts projects.	✓
Continuation of the Museums Advisors Program	✓
Number of people assisted through the Heritage Advisors Program	✓
Increased usage of civic spaces & public places	✓
Increased access to education opportunities in the LGA.	✓
Number of quality community programs that offer education and social opportunities for all members of the community.	✓



The Foundations
Silo Murals by artist
Guido van Helten

Community Opportunity 4

Assess Council assets to see whether development opportunities could be created by selling unused land within the LGA. The sale of surplus land/properties would also create a reserve of funds for the LGA that could be used to support the projects and plans highlighted within the CSP.

On 25 September 2017, Council considered a report of the review of the internally restricted reserves and resolved (17 – 280 RESOLVED) to release the identified reserves to be used to establish the following funds:

Efficiency Fund

Allocate \$500,000 of these funds for the establishment of an internal restricted reserve for the purpose of an efficiency fund for capital projects which will provide recurrent operating savings and contribute to fit for the future goals.

Remediation Fund

Allocate \$1,689,078 of these funds for the establishment of an internal restricted reserve for the purpose of a remediation fund. This will fund the remediation provision of \$7.718m, which is currently unfunded. The remediation relates to the AGL gas works site and landfill sites which have useful lives from 2 – 20 years and contributions will be made annually from waste management and environment budgets to fund the provision.

Land Fund

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the need to attract new business and investment as an objective to strengthen our economy with the outcome defined as "Facilitate and provide infrastructure and land to support residential, rural and economic growth." The benefits identified include:

- Increased availability of employment generating lands.
- Increased number of serviceable land parcels available.
- New or expanded business development in the Lithgow LGA.
- Increased growth.

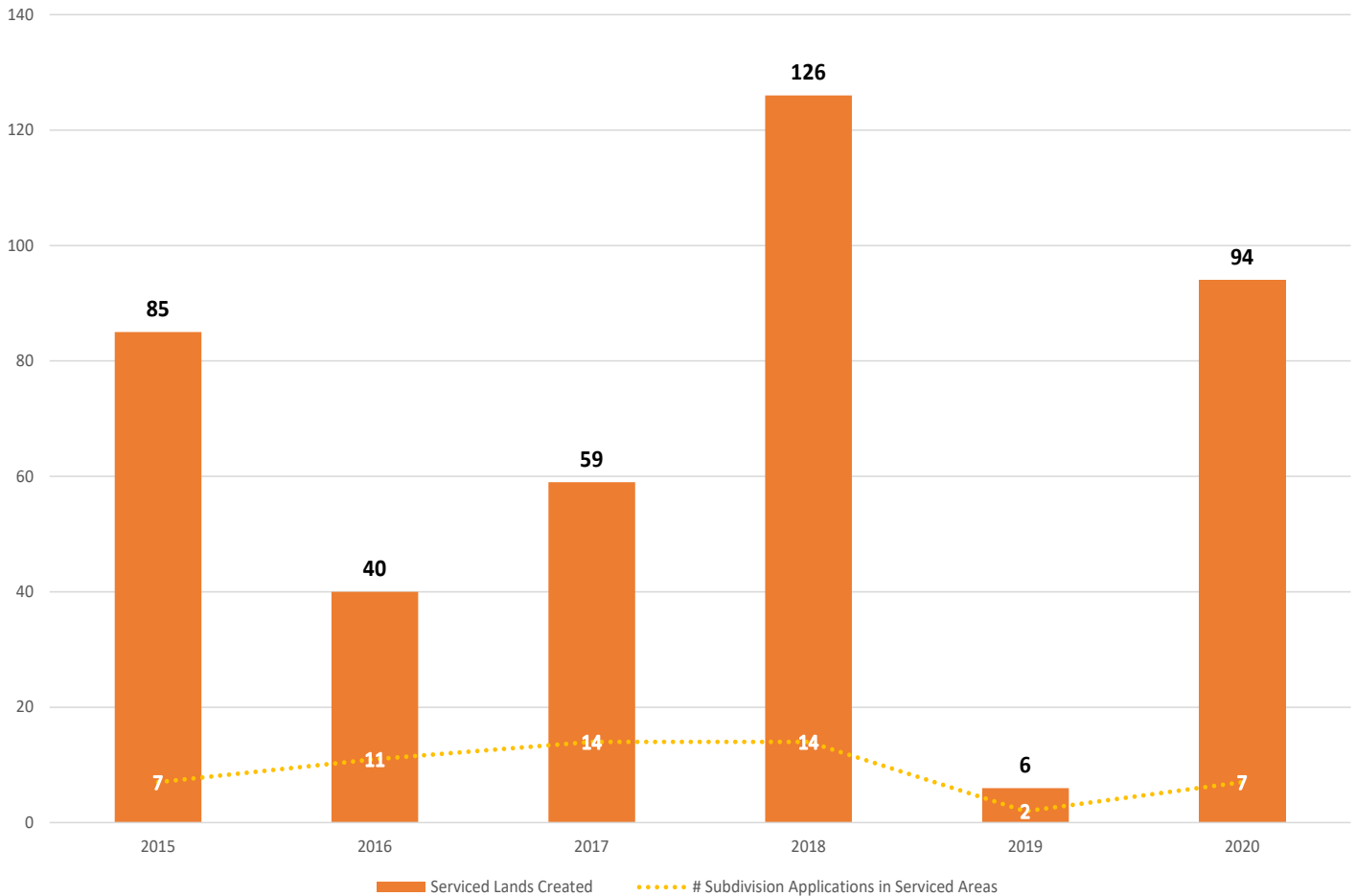
A financial management principle listed in the Long Term Financial Management Plan for Council states "Council aims to invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community".

1. Allocate \$3,626,130.30 of these funds for the establishment of an internally restricted reserve for the purpose of a Land fund.
2. Proceeds from future sales of land assets to be placed in this fund.
3. Land fund reserves are only to be expended on other fixed assets with income generating capability (or potential in the long term).

Sale of Land - Barton Avenue, Wallerawang

On 25 September 2017, Council unanimously agreed to enter into negotiation with Timberfix Pty Ltd for the disposal of land at Barton Avenue, Wallerawang (Min. No. 17 – 293) for the purchase price of \$1,100,000. All proceeds from the sale of the land are held in the Land Fund as a restricted asset for future strategic asset acquisition.

Provision of suitable and serviceable land for business and residential growth.



The data in the table above is based on subdivision applications between 2015 and 2020, not subdivision certificates. This means the data only shows theoretical supply of land (to which Council has approved) as the land would only be subdivided upon the completion of a subdivision certificate. Due to this fact, the data has been built from the attributes of the parent lot to which the subdivision application was based. Therefore if the parent lot was rated for Sewer and Water, then any child lot would have the same attributes as put forward by the subdivision application.

The data shows the number of subdivision applications Council has approved LGA wide from 2015-2020, including the number of lots that could be created from the approved subdivisions.

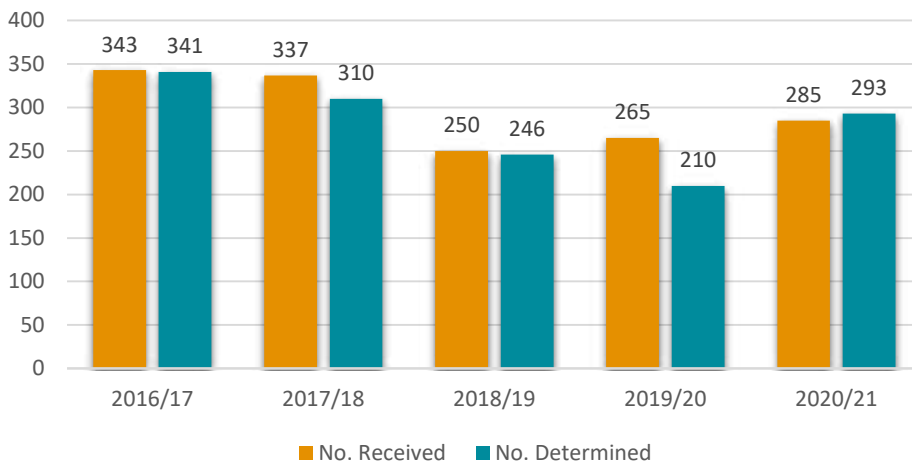
NOTE: In 2015, a substantial amount of lots were amalgamated in the regional areas for the purpose of gaining a dwelling entitlement.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

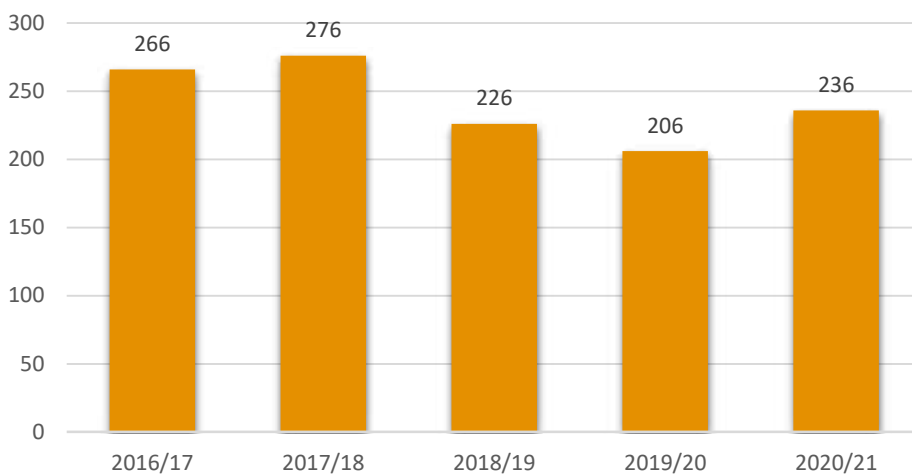
Provision of suitable and serviceable land for business and residential growth	✓
Number of serviceable land parcels available	✓

An attractive place to live and invest

Development Applications

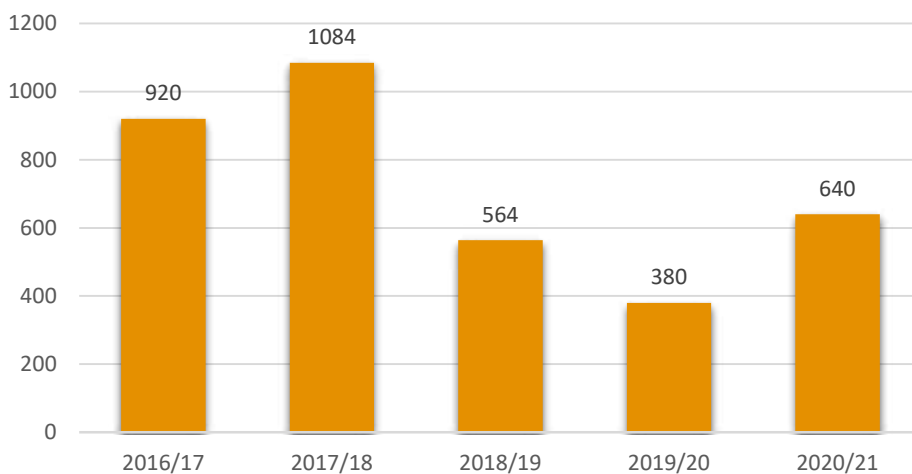


No. of Construction Certificates Received



Note: As a developer has 5 years to activate a Development Application, Construction Certificates can be for development applications received in a previous year.

Estimated no. of Building Inspections



Note: Based on the average number of inspections per application

- Following completion of a 34-day public exhibition period the Lithgow 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement was endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Meeting on 22 June 2020.
- Work on the Rural Lands Study was deferred by Council awaiting the release of the Lithgow Agricultural Lands Mapping and Report Project by the Department of Planning Industry and Environment. Council, through Action 3.1 of the Lithgow 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement has prioritised the completion of the Rural and Rural Residential Strategy in 2020/21.
- Council is continuing to review and revise the Draft Comprehensive Development Control Plan for the LGA. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions the internal review process which involves a series of internal staff and consultant workshop sessions was delayed. This plan will now be finalised in early 2020/21.
- Council has executed a funding agreement with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for the completion of the Floodplain Risk Management Project.
 - A competitive procurement process to evaluate and appoint an appropriately qualified consultant to complete the project has been completed.
 - An inception meeting was held in late June 2020 to launch the project.
 - A Floodplain Risk Management Committee has been established to assist with the delivery of the project and transparent communication with the community and relative authorities.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of development applications processed	✓
Number of development applications and construction certificates	✓
Number of building/development inspections undertaken	✓

"Made in Lithgow"

Lithgow Library Learning Centre

In 2017, Lithgow Library developed a program of exhibiting artworks by local artists in the library on a monthly basis.

The Library also develops educational displays in response to local issues and matters of interest, History and Heritage Week events are held in conjunction with community groups and members of the community. Launches of displays are conducted and include talks by experts in their respective fields with performances by the Lithgow City Band, Lithgow Orchestra or the Lithgow Leles.

The exhibitions and displays have drawn people into the library who might otherwise not visit and has resulted in some lovely comments from visitors including one from a New York visitor in April 2018. "This is a beautiful space to display art – genius! There is enough room to view the work properly. It must be good to work in an ever changing

66
This is a beautiful space to display art - genius! There is enough room to view the work properly. It must be good to work in an ever changing environment.

K. New York. (2018)

environment. Well done Lithgow Library. K. New York".

Libraries are valuable community spaces which should be utilised by the wider community.

All exhibitions are community focussed and highlight the artistic talent of local organisations and the general history of the Lithgow area. The exhibitions and displays are due to the help of local people and organisations which fosters a sense of community.

During 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions the Library discontinued its regular exhibition program. However, it has continued to develop window displays to highlight topics of interest and celebrate significant events such as ANZAC Day. The Library has also adapted its program and embraced online technologies to host author talks and conduct events such as History Week.

Lithgow Visitor Information Centre

In 2018/19, Council refurbished the ground floor of the Lithgow Visitor to provide an area to showcase the local artistic talent of the area. In addition to this, the centre stocks local products including pottery, honey, alpaca products, craft works distillery branded t-shirts mugs and shot glasses, jams and chutneys and Ferrero products. In 2021/22 the centre is looking to stock Goats Cheese and milk products from award winning Jannei Goat Dairy.

The following markets are conducted monthly promoting local produce, arts and craft are held at:

- Tarana Farmers Markets
- The Portland Foundations
- Capertee Progress Association

Market stalls are also included as part of local events such as Australia Day, Halloween, Ironfest and local shows at Lithgow & Rydal.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of events, exhibitions and public arts projects.	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan and the Cultural Precinct Strategy	✓



Portland Wallnuts
Traditional signwriters in the Old CoOp Building

A burgeoning arts scene

In recent years the creative industries in the Lithgow region have begun to flourish.

In 2017, following major renovation of the Old Refreshments Building of the Theatre Royal in Main Street, Lithgow, Gang Gang Gallery opened. The gallery features a variety of Australian contemporary art and promotes opportunities for local artists including hosting workshops and musical performances.

The Art School at the Old Lithgow Pottery opened in January 2020 breathing new life into this heritage site. The School offers a range of courses for all ages and skill levels, includes a gallery and hosts regular events.

Portland has embraced arts tourism with the establishment of small shop front galleries, framing and arts supplies, cafes, advertising signage (murals) on buildings and the development of The Foundations on the site of the former Portland Cement Works (see page 84).

The State Mine Heritage Park Museum showcases the industrial history of the New South Wales Western Coalfields. However, like The Foundations, the Museum Directors also recognise the need to activate the site through the hire of facilities for events and functions and by providing studio space for local artisans; surrealist artist Le Grizz, well known sculpture artist, Tim Johnman and blacksmith, Phil Sparks.

Lithgow Hartley Artists in Action is a group of artists and artisans in the Lithgow Area who open their studios to the public on the first weekend in November each year. The group features a diverse range of creators from blacksmiths and textile artists to painters and sketchers.

The Capertee Royal Hotel, used the closure period during the peak of the COVID - 19 pandemic to redevelop the building and its facilities including the painting of a mural on the concrete water tank featuring local flora and fauna by a Capertee artist. The Pub now provides gallery space for local artists from Capertee and surrounds.

CBD Revitalisation

Lithgow Tidy Towns

Lithgow Tidy Towns works collaboratively with Council and local artists to develop permanent and temporary art installations on buildings in the CBD laneways linking Main Street & Main Street Lane, Pioneer Park and on fences within Lithgow city.



Pioneer Heritage Park Redevelopment

The redevelopment of Pioneer Heritage Park to transform the park into a space for community re-connection was funded under the NSW Government Streets as Shared Spaces.

Enhancement of the public space included:

- Installation of a new bus shelter
- Removal of walls and damaged brick path surfaces
- Installation of temporary furniture
- Installation of a new twin accessible toilet block with an exterior photographic wrap featuring artwork by Belinda Prestwidge of a Regent Honeyeater and Large- Fruited Tea Tree (*Leptospermum macroparum*)

The design of the new Pioneer Park toilet thematically connects to Ludwina Roebuck's artwork, Bird Houses (2018), commissioned by Lithgow Tidy Towns, and promotes the natural beauty of our region. The Regent Honeyeater, one of the most important avian pollinators of native plant species, is found in the Capertee Valley and is the focus of a large conservation program led by Taronga Zoo and BirdLife Australia.

The Large-Fruited Tea Tree, officially adopted as the Lithgow's town flower in 1998, is native to the high plateau around Clarence.

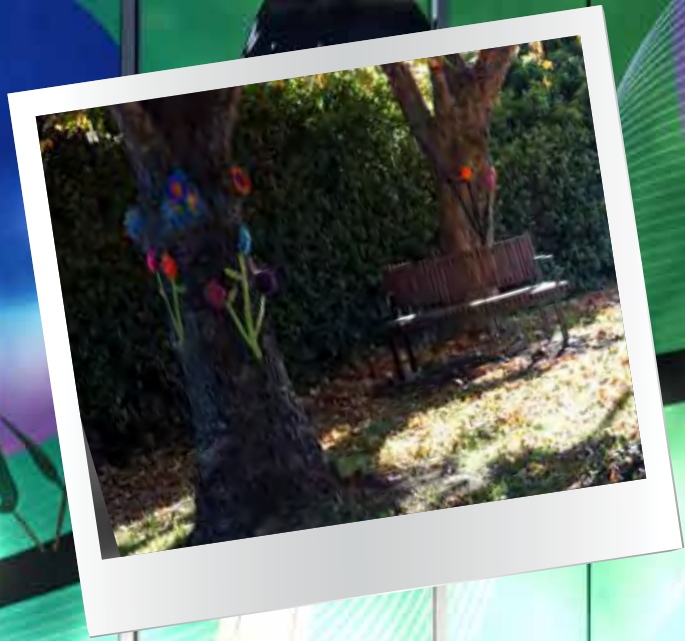
Ludwina Roebuck was commissioned to create new plates for Birdhouse Wall in response to the plantings and other design elements installed in the park. New flowers created from found objects depict the locally native Large-Fruited Tea Tree which can also be found in the design on the amenities block and planted in the surrounding garden beds.

- Landscaping of the park was undertaken by Jessica Lawn and features Lithgow's town flower in a meadow style planting with ornamental grasses and strategically place trees to provide natural shade once matured.

A free Family Fun Day to launch the redeveloped park was held on Saturday 27 March:

- 10am - 3pm Family fun day with kids Easter and gardening activities, craft, games & live music.
- 6pm - 9.30pm Open- air screening of Spies in Disguise with pre-show entertainment by jazz trio Le Hot Club.
- Members of the community were encouraged to support local business and purchase food from Main Street Cafes, pubs, and restaurants or food vendors.





CBD REVITALISATION

The Lithgow CBD Revitalisation Action Plan was developed to provide Council with strategic direction for the enhancement of public domain spaces and improve the economic life of the town centre.

Following the completion of the Lithgow CBD Revitalisation Action Plan in 2015/16, Council received funding from the Australian Government's National Stronger Regions Fund to commence the implementation of the Action Plan.

The Plan will enable Council to revitalise Lithgow's public domain spaces and to ensure the viability of Lithgow's Central Business District into the future through a series of staged major civil projects which will see:

- Improved accessibility and car parking
- Enhanced streetscape character
- Activated public domains
- Embracing community driven place making
- Upgraded and provide additional public amenities
- Increased community safety

Community events such as Halloween have been highly successful in bringing large gatherings to the town centre, and developing community character and connections.

Creating vibrant and engaging public spaces will provide an opportunity for this role to be expanded and developed as a key aspect of the town's identity.

The redevelopment of Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Street Square will enable these spaces to be better utilised for both large and small events designed to encourage tourism and shop local initiatives which will in turn attract and retain retailers in the CBD.

To serve as a catalyst for the revitalisation of the CBD Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Street Square were chosen as the first stage of the project.

The key objectives of the Stage 1 works at Cook St Plaza and Eskbank St Square were to:

- Improve the functionality of the public domain spaces for events of various scales
- Enhance streetscape character
- Improve pedestrian amenity and safety

Cook Street Plaza

The physical works at Cook Street Plaza involved:

- The renewal of the footpath surface through the plaza.
- The existing raised pedestrian threshold on Main Street was redesigned and extended in length.
- A new raised pedestrian threshold was constructed at the intersection of Main St Lane, Cook St and Cook Plaza.
- Wall trellis gardens were installed along the edges of the plaza along with new bench seating.
- Movable custom planter box/seat systems were installed to allow for flexibility in the use of the plaza. These planter/seats provide greening and additional seating day-to-day but can be moved during large events to provide a more functional space.
- Event power is supplied to the plaza to support a variety of events.

The works in Cook Street Plaza were designed to:

- Improve capacity and facilities for small and large scale events.
- Reinforce Cook St Plaza as a community focal point and key public domain space in the CBD
- Improve amenity for day-to-day use as a gathering place and as a place for eating off Main St
- Improve pedestrian access between the Eskbank St Carpark, Main St and the Lithgow Rail Interchange.
- Improved amenity through simplification of ground level elements

Marjorie Jackson Statue

Since its unveiling in 2000 the Marjorie Jackson Statue has been of significant importance to the local community and the focal point of Cook St Plaza. As part of the redesign of the Plaza it was important to maintain the prominence of the statue, while achieving the outcomes listed in the Lithgow CBD Revitalisation Action Plan.

Early in the construction phase it was decided that the best way to protect the statue during the works was to carefully remove and store it. All works associated with the statue (including removal and storage) were undertaken under the supervision of a specialist fine arts consultant.

Once the bulk of works were completed within the plaza, and the risk of damage was over, the statue was reinstalled with a new plinth located centrally and moved slightly closer to the Main St.

Eskbank Street Square

The physical works at the intersection of Main Street and Eskbank Street involved the renewal of the road and footpath surface. Some of the kerbs at the intersection were extended to provide more pedestrian space and create an additional public domain square for the CBD. Seating around the existing trees was introduced and event power outlets were provided to facilitate small and large scale events.

The work at the intersection was designed to:

- Improve pedestrian amenity and provide better connectivity to Railway Parade and Mort Street.
- Improve connectivity to Alexandra Park on Railway Parade allowing it to be used during large events.
- Provide a node for smaller scale events (e.g. busking)
- During full Main Street closures provide a node for large scale events (e.g. markets, concerts)
- In the larger context of the revitalisation works the square provides passive traffic calming to further reinforce Main St as a pedestrian friendly zone

Traffic Calming - Intersection of Main and Bridge Streets - Trial

In response to high numbers of traffic accidents and near misses at the intersection of Main & Bridge Streets linemarking and temporary kerbing was installed to demonstrate the value of increased safety measures.

The project has effectively funnelled traffic into a more appropriate 90 degree intersection between both streets, enhancing sight distance and response times to traffic hazards. Additionally, by narrowing the intersection and removing the wide, sweeping bend permitting traffic to take the right turn out of Main Street at high speed, the potential for traffic accidents has also been reduced.

This project has been delivered as part of the Streets as Shared Spaces Program.

Main Street banner program

Council launched its Main Street Banner Program in November 2020 with the Local Heroes campaign. 28 banners lined Main Street between Lithgow and Bridge Streets celebrating our community's resilience.

The campaign was an opportunity to say thank you to the many organisations, services and individuals that have gone above and beyond to support the community through the challenges of bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This campaign was supported by NSW State Government funding through Resilience NSW. The banners are rotated regularly promoting the regions attractions, events such as Halloween, Christmas, LithGlow, ANZAC Day, Mothers Day and Shop Local.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of events, exhibitions and public arts projects.	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan and the Cultural Precinct Strategy	✓
Increased awareness and availability of 'Made in Lithgow' products.	✓
Number of community arts projects per year.	✓
Increased usage of civic spaces and public spaces	✓
Number of parks and gardens upgraded	✓
Incorporation of creative design elements into open space areas, playgrounds, street furnishings, BBQ areas, picnic areas and gardens.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓

Cultural Precinct Development

UNION THEATRE REDEVELOPMENT

Lithgow Union Theatre is an important heritage building that opened in 1891 as an Oddfellows Hall. Following community consultation it was determined that there was a need for a multipurpose cultural facility in Lithgow.

Although used by local organisations such as the Lithgow Musical Society and occasional function hire the theatre lacked dressing room facilities which limited use of the facility. Performers were required to use temporary portable dressing rooms external to the building during productions. Access to toilet facilities also required performers to use an external uncovered walkway. As a result, what should have been an important cultural facility was unsuitable for use by both local and visiting performers.

The Union Theatre now has first rate facilities to attract a greater number of local and visiting performers and artists. In 2019/20 a new two level back of stage wing was constructed incorporating new change, storage and amenity rooms and elevators making much of the theatre wheelchair accessible. New industry standard technical systems were installed making the venue able to support the needs of contemporary performances and diverse events. These works were funded by the NSW Regional Cultural Fund and Lithgow City Council.

In 2020/21 further upgrade works were undertaken including painting the auditorium, mezzanine, upstairs meeting room and front building façade; resurfacing floors; air-conditioning the new back of stage wing; amenity improvements. A new gallery space activating the street frontage was also completed. These works were funded under the Australian Government Drought Communities Round 2 Program.

On 15 May 2021 following completion of the front of house renovations and construction of new back of house facilities Lithgow City Council launched the renewed Union Theatre.

The Theatre now has first rate facilities to attract a greater number of local and visiting performers.

Since re-opening a number of events have been held at the Theatre including:

- 15 May 2021, The Hon Paul Toole MP and the Hon Andrew Gee MP officially opened the theatre and announced the winners of the Waste 2 Art competition which was on exhibition at the Union Theatre Gallery until 23 May.
- 26 May 2021, Paul Toole MP, Member for Bathurst and Mayor Councillor Ray Thompson recognised 7 people who became Australian citizens.
- Local musician Jacques Alamod hosted an album launch.
- DJ workshops with renowned Indigenous musician Dobby for local youth in partnership with Mitchel Conservatorium.
- The Lithgow Regions Waste 2 Art competition and exhibition was held in the Union Theatre Gallery

Number of events, exhibitions and public arts projects.	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan and the Cultural Precinct Strategy	✓
Increased awareness and availability of 'Made in Lithgow' products.	✓
Improved liaison with the local indigenous and CALD communities.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓



The redevelopment of the Union Theatre into a multi-use cultural space will support the local creative sector as well as offer increased cultural experiences for the community, Mayor Ray Thompson - Launch 15 May 2021

Sustainable Festivals & Events

LITHGOW HALLOWEEN

Lithgow Halloween is family friendly Tourism event aimed at increasing visitation to the region to drive business into the tourism sector. Lithgow Halloween is staged in the heart of Lithgow's main shopping and dining precinct.

Local businesses, including cafes and restaurants actively engage in the event offering safe trick-or-treat along with themed Halloween window displays and special menus. Cafes, restaurants and Hotels report a big increase in revenue and extend their regular trading hours due to the increase in demand. Many of the restaurants are booked out in advance of the event with some of the cafes and restaurants along Main Street trading out into the street offering special quick food options for the night.

The event is also supported by The Foundations at Portland who host a Halloween Ball and project lighting onto the buildings and structures within The Foundations Precinct.

Lithgow Local Government Area is known as a region that hosts a broad range of dynamic festivals and events, whilst supporting and developing local creative and cultural talent for maximum social and economic benefit for the community. The Halloween Festival offers opportunities for local market stallholders and creatives to promote their products to the broader community.

Creative and skills based opportunities are one of the key objectives of the event with engagement of creative talent and school age students from the region. Council encourages schools, bands (including youth bands), theatre groups and dance schools to perform at Halloween.

Marketing of the event includes the Sydney Train network, print media advertisements in Sydney's outer west through community newspapers, Sydney Daily Telegraph Newspaper, television commercials and social media with boosted Facebook ads.

In 2017, Lithgow High School students were engaged to document and produce a video that was used in the television commercials for Lithgow Halloween 2018.

The delivery of Lithgow Halloween is a priority action in the Lithgow Regional Economic Development Strategy. The ongoing challenge is to constantly evolve and grow such an established and significant event in an increasingly competitive events market.

In 2018, the activation of the redeveloped Cook Street Plaza (see CBD Revitalisation pages 96-97) with the main stage was a tremendous success and securing iconic band the Cockroaches met with rave reviews. The redevelopment of the street plan removed "dead" zones and the rides, stalls and entertainment all meant Halloween 2018 was a resounding success.

Lithgow Halloween 2018 was regarded by return visitors as the best yet. Involvement of local school students and performance groups provided a saving on theming costs and cafes reported strong trade on the night. Cook Street Plaza was utilised as the main performance area to showcase its redevelopment. Media coverage was widespread positioning the LGA as a vibrant and innovative destination. Lithgow High School filmed the event for their ongoing learning in film and events. There was an increase in numbers on the previous year with event staff counting numbers each hour during the event duration.

2019 saw the inclusion of the Lithgow Halloween Smartphone Film Competition in partnership with SF3- "SmartFone Flick Fest" (Australia's international smartphone film festival) which received over 480 entries from countries all over the world. It was profiled on the website 'Film Freeway' alongside Cannes, Sundance and other established film festivals the work providing great exposure for Lithgow and the Lithgow Halloween.

Unfortunately due to COVID-19 restrictions the 2020 Halloween Event was unable to go ahead in the usual format as a "Street Party" in the CBD. However, due to the foundations built in 2019, the Halloween 2020 was conducted online:

- The Best Dressed competition received over 90 costume entries for a total prize pool of \$11,000 in voucher prizes (redeemable at local businesses) over 7 categories.
- The Smartphone Film Competition was conducted for the second year in partnership with SF3; "SmartFone Flick Fest" and received 469 film entries across 3 categories plus a people's choice award each with \$500 prize money.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of sustainable festivals and events.	✓
Increased employment opportunities	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials.	✓
Increased brand recognition	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Tourism Strategy/Destination Management Plan.	✓
Number of community arts projects	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan	✓
Increased awareness and availability of 'Made in Lithgow' products.	✓
Number of events, exhibitions & public arts projects.	✓
Increased usage of civic spaces & public places	✓
Increased access to education opportunities in the LGA.	✓

Halloween 2019

Sustainable Festivals & Events

LithGlow tells the story of Blast Furnace with Video Mapping
Utilising projection video mapping, audio and lasers, LASERVISION created a unique and entertaining Projection, Laser and Light Show celebrating the rich history of the Blast Furnace and the people that forged the town of Lithgow.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of sustainable festivals and events.	✓
Increased employment opportunities	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials.	✓
Increased brand recognition	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Tourism Strategy/Destination Management Plan.	✓
Number of community arts projects	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan	✓
Number of sustainable festivals and events.	✓
Increased awareness and availability of 'Made in Lithgow' products.	✓
Number of events, exhibitions & public arts projects.	✓
Increased usage of civic spaces & public places	✓
Increased access to education opportunities in the LGA.	✓

Lithglow 2021

LITHGLOW FORGED BY FIRE

Planning for LithGlow 2018 began in July 2017 when the decision was taken to reposition Lithglo from what it had become, a Market in Queen Elizabeth Park with a small amount of lighting and entertainment. The regression of Lithglo from a heritage lighting festival in its first year, to a market in the park had been gradual over the years but had resulted in the original focus of LithGlo being lost.

Lithgow Tourism made the decision, after careful consultation, to align Lithglo with the Australian Heritage Festival held in May each year, and to involve stakeholders to produce a multi-site, multi-activity event at a more family friendly time of the year, after the end of daylight savings. LithGlow was redeveloped as a community-wide light and laser entertainment event lighting up of a number of significant local assets across the LGA and the activation of the Blast Furnace Park on the Saturday night incorporating; food trucks, light and laser shows, children's entertainment and community stalls.

Lithglo was also rebranded to LithGlow to give the festival an air of being new and getting away from preconceptions about the last year and that Lithglo was a misspelling.

LithGlow had a very evident community impact and resulted in most stakeholders seeing the largest visitation numbers in recent memory. Lithgow Blast Furnace saw approximately 5,000 people visiting and taking advantage of the food trucks and live entertainment.

Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum reported having to put on extra tours to accommodate the interest, tours of the Old Wallerawang Power Station were full. Gang Gang Gallery, Blue Mountains Mystery Tours, National Trust Scottish Heritage Talk and State Mine Heritage Park all reported being fully booked or close to capacity.

Many visitors to local motels were prompted to visit LithGlow and reported they would return next year and attend other Lithgow events.

Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive with the only negative comments coming about the cold (this event was held in May), the car parking at Blast Furnace, something that can be alleviated by greater use of the free shuttle service, and local participation in the food markets.

The positives far outweighed the negatives of holding LithGlow in May and the logistics of holding it at another time that still falls within the Australian Heritage Festival window and not clashing or landing too close to other events is almost insurmountable.

State Government funding was secured for LithGlow 2019 and that funding along with Council funds was used to further grow and develop the event. New initiatives in 2019 included; free buses from Lithgow's Main Street to Blast Furnace Park, video mapping light and laser shows delivered by internationally awarded company Laservision, lighting up and activation of Lake Pillans (extending and Blast Furnace Park to the wetlands below) and increased marketing of the event across traditional and digital media channels.

Blast Furnace Park was a spectacular lighting and soundscape precinct. The event was a huge success with hundreds of people visiting the sites on the night. Media coverage of the event on the night was widespread generating key messaging about Lithgow being a premier event destination. Professional research was conducted at the event and key learnings were; 15% of attendees used the free buses, 46% attended for the first time, 47% rated the event 9 & 10 out of 10 and 90% said they would attend again in 2020.

Unfortunately the 2020 event was unable to proceed due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, 2021 proved to be extremely successful. A free ticketed event for 3,000 people will all tickets booked within 4 weeks of sales opening and a wait-list for cancellations.

Lessons learnt from Lithglow 2018 were taken into consideration with the implementation of a shuttle bus service. Buses ran between the festival and CBD at 7 minute intervals both to and departing the event. The logistics of the event including COVID safe measures such as ticketing, QR Codes and Marshalls were extremely successful and will be implemented again for 2022.

Sustainable Festivals & Events

Festival & Events Attraction Package

In 2016/17, Council adopted the Festival & Events Attraction Package (Policy 4.9) with the aim of providing financial assistance to event producers and organisations under Section 356 of Local Government Act, 1993. Financial assistance is provided on the basis of the relative merits of each application and the economic and social capital benefits to the community provided by the project/activities of the organisation.

Since its adoption, the Festivals & Events Attraction Package (Policy 4.9) has been successful in attracting a number of events to the Lithgow LGA:

- RedAss Downhill Mountain Bike Enduro State Series Finale at Hassans Walls Reserve - 2017
- JetBlack 24 Hour Mountain Bike Race - Rydal Showground - 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- Resilience Music Festival at Tony Luchetti Showground

During 2020/21, although many events were cancelled in response to COVID-19, the Events Coordinator continued to research, identify and secure larger scale events that will deliver visitation and economic benefit to the LGA including:

- Positioning Lithgow as the first choice for the Australian Caravan Club (ACC) National Muster which will be held in October 2022

following public exhibition of the Lease Agreement.

- Liaised with NSW Gymnastics providing them with venue plans which they are reviewing for future events.

Council's tourism, events and cultural development team also work together to develop smaller scale localised events for the community such as:

- Christmas festivities in Cook Street Plaza to encourage locals to get out and spend in local businesses in the lead up to Christmas. Support is also provided to the Portland Development Association and Wallerawang/Lidsdale Progress Association to assist with street decorations in the CBD.
- Australia Day Celebrations are held in Queen Elizabeth Park and support is provided to celebrations in Wallerawang, Portland, Rydal and villages.

Council also assists the Lithgow Show, Ironfest and Lake Wallace New Years Eve Organising Committee to promote and deliver their events. However, during COVID-19 all of these events were postponed

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of sustainable festivals and events.



Cultural heritage

Bowenfels Anti-Aircraft gun Restoration

The Lithgow Heavy Anti-Aircraft Gun Station (at South Bowenfels) and Dummy Station (off Chifley Road at Scenic Hill) have state heritage significance as the only known inland heavy anti-aircraft gun stations of their type in NSW. The emplacements were established during World War Two following the entry of Japan into the war to protect Lithgow's important mining, manufacturing and transport industries and the Lithgow Small Arms Factory. During the second half of 2013, Council contracted Lithgow State Mine Railway Ltd in partnership with Verto Employment agency to undertake remediation works to the South Bowenfels guns including removal of rust, resealing, repainting to the original colours and replacing missing parts. Interpretative signage was installed in early 2016, telling the story of the gun emplacement and public access has been restored to the site.

The Lithgow Anti Aircraft Gun Stations, an important part of Lithgow's wartime history, have been given a face lift thanks to a partnership between Council, a dedicated group of young workers from a local employment agency and local community groups.

The restoration work has been of a very high quality and involved the use of specialist restoration skills.

Council has now installed interpretative signage and improved access to the site so that the community and visitors can fully enjoy and

Interpretive signage Project

Council recognises the contributions made to the development of the area by local entrepreneurs and significant figures in Australian history. Signage has been installed in Main Street and local parks recognising the contributions made to the development of the area by Sir Joseph Cook - a former Prime Minister; the Bracey family; Jim Robson; Thomas Brown and the Eskbank Estate; Robert and William Pitt, and; international Squash Champion, David Palmer.

Council has also been working with Community groups in the villages and environmental groups to develop interpretive signage as part

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURE

Improvements to the conservation and management of the South Bowenfels Gun Emplacements.	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials	✓



BLAST FURNACE PARK

Recognising the historical significance of the Blast Furnace, Council has continued to develop this premier tourism asset and the surrounding parklands and wetlands in the centre of Lithgow.

The project aims to bring major cultural, recreational, tourism and economic benefits to Lithgow by establishing the Blast Furnace site as a performance, exhibition, film and events venue and the centrepiece of the Lithgow Cultural Precinct which links a number of key heritage sites including Lithgow State Mine, Eskbank House and Museum, Historic Eskbank Station and Lake Pillans wetland.

Blast Furnace Park is the focal point for many events in Lithgow including Lithgow Blast, LithGlow and regular Walk 'n' Talk gatherings.

The historic ruins also provide a popular backdrop for photographers and it is regularly booked for photo shoots

Council made substantial progress implementing the Lithgow Blast Furnace Park Management Plan. Works undertaken are intended to manage safety risks for the public by low impact works which will control access to high risk areas while also enabling visitors to enjoy the ability to visit, view and interpret most parts of the site. High risk areas will continue to be accessible to accredited tour, film, photography and other events by arrangement.

Works undertaken include:

- Repair and remediation of the major structures on the site to make them safe for close visitation and to improve their structural integrity.
- Construction of raised walkways, viewing platforms, fenced pathways and interpretive signage to allow safe visitor access to and appreciation of this iconic heritage site.
- Low fencing around high risk areas
- Fenced platform walks and viewing platforms to enable visitors to pass through the Davy Engine room and the engine house furnace foundations.
- Grates over pits and holes that can be unlocked by arrangement.
- Carpark and entrance upgrades
- Installation of lighting
- Connection to sewer and installation of an Exeloo
- Construction of a shared pathway from the ruins to Inch Street providing a safer and more enjoyable path for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Overgrown vegetation on the historic railway line that connected the Blast Furnace to the Inch Street railway over-bridge to expose the embankment structure which was constructed from slag waste from the Blast Furnace.
- Installation of public artworks.

BLAST FURNACE PARK GRANT FUNDING	
2016/17	\$70,373.25
2017/18	\$2,244,325.25
2018/19	\$55,033.84
2019/20	\$96,596.06
TOTAL	\$2,466,328



LITHGOW BLAST

A FREE CONCERT FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
BLAST FURNACE PARK, LITHGOW

SATURDAY 16 NOV | 2-9 PM
ODETTE
THE DELTA RIGGS
YOURS TRULY CITIZEN KAY CLAUDE HAY
HOLLOW POINT PHAT BRASS AND MORE
FOOD AND MARKET STALLS
FREE SHUTTLE BUSES FROM THE CBD

Lithgow City Council EXTREMESPORTS
All-ages alcohol free event. For info go to lithgowblast.com.au
A project funded through the Commonwealth Government Drought Communities Program

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN
MEASURE

Improvements to the conservation and management of the Blast Furnace Park	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Tourism Strategy/Destination Management Plan.	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan	✓
Number of events, exhibitions & public arts projects	✓
Number of sustainable festivals and events	✓

ESKBANK HOUSE MUSEUM

Eskbank House Museum, built for Thomas Brown in 1841/42 is the Lithgow district's regional museum. Set within a historic estate it mainly aims to collect, preserve and interpret the histories associated with the early settlement and development of the region.

Initially opened to the public on 21 November 1966, as one of the earliest house museums in Australia, the collection quickly expanded to include objects of state and national significance, including the important Iron Black Roses, Sutton Family Crazy Patchwork Quilt, Sir Joseph Cook Collection, and the Lithgow Valley Colliery Company Collection (Lithgow Pottery).

Eskbank House Museum is opened 5 days per week for visitors and is also the venue for exhibitions, performances and events.

Collection Management

The Museum houses an extensive collection of Lithgow region objects. This collection is currently being conserved, catalogued, exhibited and interpreted to ensure access to local history for the community and visitors.

Following research undertaken for the 175th Anniversary exhibition and publication produced in

2017 (see pp 98-99), a major collection reassessment project commenced to improve best practice museum standards. This substantial project required a review of the museums objectives, current collection definitions, and supporting management policies. The outcomes will make parts of the collection available online, renewal of collection displays, and identification of gaps in the collection to focus the museums acquisition policy. This has resulted in:

- Specifically designed object display were obtained for the Black Roses and Thomas Brown's trowel.
- A Collection Review Plan was developed to contribute to undertaking a complete collection inventory.
- A plan for assessing and condition checking the object collection.
- An integrated Interpretation & Design Strategy was developed.

Conservation Management

The Conservation Management Plan which provides a strategic direction for maintaining the buildings and grounds with a focus on ensuring the historical integrity of the original property. Since 2016 maintenance works have been incrementally carried out in line with recommendations. In 2020, a heritage assessment and drawings for development works, including the concept for a cafe were completed.

State Heritage Listing

In 2018 Eskbank House Museum was listed on the State Heritage Register, including the principal dwelling, outbuildings, and collections. This reflects the importance of the Eskbank Estate and its connection to the early development of the region and the growth of the iron and steel industry in Australia.

State Heritage listing means that the museum and its collections are protected under the NSW Heritage Act. This also provides an important opportunity for Council to seek funding in order to undertake essential capital works to protect the fabric of the buildings and improve museum conditions.

Exhibitions and events program

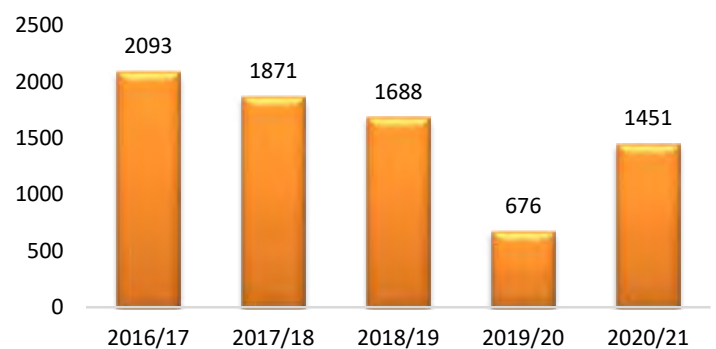
A number of events and exhibitions have been hosted at the Museum including:

- 175th Anniversary exhibition and talks program.
- Scarecrow workshops for Halloween with local artist Ludwina Roebuck.
- Subliminal exhibition as part of the inaugural mental health arts festival
- Annual Waste 2 Art competition & exhibition.
- Lithgow Contemporary Arts Prize
- A number of changing collection displays were delivered in the foyer and gallery spaces including 'telephones', 'washing day', 'souvenir ceramics' and 'racing'.
- Australia Day Celebrations
- Touring ANZAC Exhibition.
- A major retrospective of prominent local artist Bob Cunningham.
- A collaborative installation of light-based works; Penumbra, presented in association with LithGlow, was an exhibition that explored the use and implications of light in contemporary practice. Penumbra refers to the peripheral or indeterminate space cast by light. For participating artists Julie Williams, Sarah Michell, Philip Spark and Tim Johnman, the term penumbra aptly describes their new collaboration as well as the experimentation with light as both medium and concept.
- No Turning Back presented the work of Robert (Bob) Cunningham, the first contemporary artist to work out of the Lithgow Pottery site. Cunningham founded a continuing tradition of contemporary art production in this historic building.

Marketing & promotion

- A marketing flyer and new museum guide were produced.
- Eskbank House Museum is included in the Main Street rotational banners as a key regional destination.
- A Museums and Heritage Map was produced which highlights key heritage destinations across the region including Eskbank House Museum.
- The museum was allocated a dedicated Facebook page and a number of content posts are being developed including collection highlights, behind the scenes and social history stories.
- A new Museum Brochure was developed and research on local figures was undertaken for interpretation and marketing.

Visitation



Despite COVID-19 Restrictions on tourism with intermittent border closures and restricted travel the museum has continued to receive visitors during the reporting period.

In the first half of 2020/21, the Museum did not accept tour groups (including school groups). However, there was 1 school visit in June 2021. New resources were developed to assist the tour guides with this visit.

Voices OF ESKBANK

THE STORY OF ESKBANK HOUSE & MUSEUM

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of events, exhibitions & public arts projects.	✓
Continuation of the Museums Advisors Program	✓
Number of people assisted through the Heritage Advisors Program	✓
Increased usage of civic spaces & public places	✓
Operate Eskbank House Museum	✓
Upgrade display & Exhibition equipment at Eskbank House Museum.	✓
Develop marketing materials for Eskbank House Museum.	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials	✓
Number of sustainable festivals and events	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Cultural Plan	✓

The Anniversary of Eskbank House opening to the community as a public museum was celebrated in November 2016. Audiences enjoyed music by the Mitchell Conservatorium, a talk on house museums by Toner Stevenson, Curator at Sydney Living Museums, and Dr. Naomi Parry, Historian and previous Manager of Eskbank House Museum.

In 2017, Eskbank House reached another significant milestone – 175 years since the house was built by Alexander Binning for Thomas and Mary Brown. As part of this special anniversary, Eskbank House Museum received a significant Heritage Near Me grant from the NSW Government to deliver a series of engagement outcomes including:

- Constructing new garden paths and fencing as the first stage to developing an historic garden.
- A new publication capturing key historical information and oral histories - Voices of Eskbank; the Story of Eskbank House & Museum.
- The development of digital interpretation platforms, a new website, an exhibition
- An event celebrating the anniversary

Voices of Eskbank, a new publication and exhibition was launched on Saturday 25 November to mark the 175th Anniversary of Eskbank House. Sixty guests at the celebration enjoyed a series of expert talks on local architecture, historical gardens, and capturing oral histories, as well as performances by Mitchell Conservatorium. The exhibition and publication capture the reasons why this historic site remains an important cultural space. Eskbank Voices tells the stories of those who have helped shape this region through industry and also captures the everyday experience of life in the region through oral histories collected over many years.



Developing our built environment

Ensuring sustainable and planned growth through the provision of effective public and private transport options and suitable entertainment and recreational facilities to enhance the lifestyle choices of the community.

Adapting to the changing needs of an evolving community whilst retaining the unique character of our rural areas, villages and towns will enable Council to provide for the growth and sustainability of the local government area. This theme is responsible for:

- Providing for future community needs;
- Ensuring equity and social inclusion;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Cultural activities;
- Excellence in the provision of facilities and services;
- The development and support of communities; And
- Enhanced lifestyle opportunities.

Community Strategic Plan 2036

In 2016, Micromex Research surveyed 405 residents across the Lithgow LGA to ascertain support for the themes within the Community Strategic Plan. "Support for this theme of 'Developing our built environment' was very high, with 97% indicating a positive level of support - 54% giving the top rating and 75% claiming 'more' resources are needed.

Council owns and maintains over \$573m of infrastructure assets, including roads, parks, buildings, stormwater drainage, bridges and footpaths.

The current value of these assets includes the following:

- Roads: \$286.3m
- Buildings: \$47.8m
- Stormwater drainage: \$26,5m
- Footpaths: \$10,6m
- Bridges: \$19m
- Swimming pool: \$2,6m

Council actively seeks funding from State and Federal Governments to assist in renewing and maintaining community infrastructure.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Funding from other levels of government.	✓
Council properties and assets are managed to maximise economic benefit	✓

Building Strong Sustainable Finances

The current term of Council has continued responsible spending to deliver more on infrastructure renewal and to provide quality Council services. Council has utilised grant opportunities to the greatest extent to fund the infrastructure renewal backlog.

Infrastructure funding 2016/17 - 2020/21

PROJECT	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant Upgrade	7,147,259	652,714	568,522		
Landfill Consolidation Grant NSW Environmental Trust (EPA)	6,493				
Community Recycling Centre (CRC) - NSW Environmental Trust	133,706			22,000	
Community Building Partnership - All Abilities Round-a-bout	16,000				
Roads to Recovery Program	1,585,252		817,138		
NSW War Memorial Grant Program	8,595				
CBD Revitalisation		652,275	521,800		
BlackSpot - Hartley Valley Road		362,643	35,264		
CCTV Tony Luchetti Showground		10,000			
Blast Furnace		1,298,050			
Adventure Playground		343,962	698,346		
Lithgow Tennis Courts		36,006			
Lithgow Basketball Courts		74,315			
Barton Avenue - Repair Grant			145,000		
Wallerawang Skatepark			66,000	66,000	68,000
Portland Skatepark			66,000	66,000	68,000
Lithgow Croquet Club			52,934		
Lithgow Golf Club			69,608	32,032	
Marjorie Jackson Oval			55,406		
Union Theatre			698,098		77,566
Farmers Creek Cycleway				243,000	
Closure of Glen Davis Landfill				52,525	
Closure of Cullen Bullen Landfill				178,020	
Lithgow Croquet Club				110,471	
Tony Luchetti Showground Irrigation				47,319	

Community Priorities

The table below provides progress with community and councillor priorities identified as part of the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

Priority	Page reference
Land availability	
Examine land sizes and subdivide to allow for housing growth	86-88
Ensure land is available for both residential and commercial development	86-88
Revitalise	
Create innovation awards to address shop facades	-
Refurbish Union Theatre, Wallerawang Memorial Hall, the Grandstand and the Civic Ballroom.	98-99
More shopping facilities	See
Cinema in the area	Enhancing
There are two community cinemas in the Lithgow LGA - Lithgow Community Cinema in Main Street, Lithgow and the Crystal Theatre Community Cinema in Portland.	our Economy
Develop more industrial areas	pp71-111
More job opportunities	
Asset development	
Road maintenance	118-123
Streets need to be beautified	92-9,128-130
Improved infrastructure	124-158
More recreational areas	124-145
Youth	
More facilities/activities for youth	22, 56-57, 136-141

Challenges

Moving Forward

Under the key theme of 'Developing our Built Environment' the most valued aspect of the Lithgow area is considered to be the location, providing a rural lifestyle in a beautiful area whilst still being within relatively close proximity to Sydney.

Growth potential (availability of land), tourism, education, transport connections and location were seen as strengths. Managing change - that is, ensuring that any changes are made whilst retaining the natural heritage and rural community spirit of the area was seen to be the greatest challenge for Lithgow over the next 10 years.

Challenges which will impact this include:

1. Creating employment and business opportunities.
2. Improving standards within the community e.g.
3. Main Street Revitalisation and infrastructure.
4. Coping with an aging population.
5. Managing and sustaining the environment
6. Population growth.
7. Maintaining infrastructure within Council's means whilst meeting community expectations
8. Increased community expectations for infrastructure and services
9. The impacts of natural disasters on Council's infrastructure.
10. Expectations of the community during and post natural disaster for Council to manage and restore services, facilities and infrastructure.



Transport Infrastructure

In 2016/17 Council undertook a review of its works program with the aim of reducing Council's ongoing asset depreciation costs.

Percentages of maintenance funding were reallocated to renewals projects. The allocation is based on the expected percentages of renewal works required over a 12 month period based on analysis of the previous 5 years of maintenance expenditure data. Included in this analysis is a breakdown of salary, plant and materials expenses to more accurately break down the requirements.

The purpose of this renewal budgeting in addition to maintenance funding is to ensure allocation of recurrent maintenance funds to works that extend the life of an asset rather than simply maintain an asset to its expected end-of-life. Typically, these works would be conducted based on best practice intervention points, ensuring works are performed prior to capital reconstruction being required. This process

comes with two main benefits, the first being a reduction in capital expenditure over time due to extended asset lifespans and the second a reduction in ongoing asset depreciation rates if intervention points are followed. It is worth noting that this process is still in its infancy and renewals projects are identified based on inspection then budgeted accordingly. Intervention points, criteria for renewals funding and typical remedial solutions are included in the Roads Asset Management Plan.

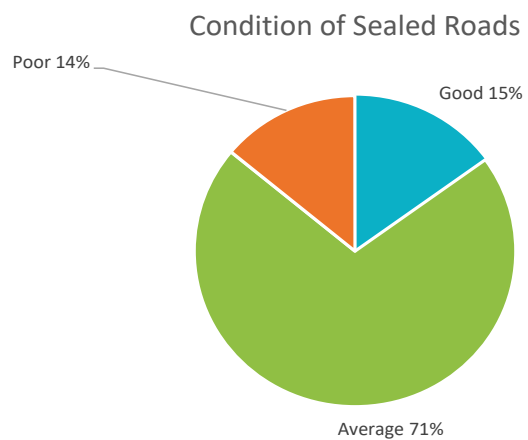
Moving forward, commencing in 2021/22, Lithgow City Council will be improving on the method with which it makes decisions to upgrade and renew transport assets. Firstly, a comprehensive asset management system is being built to record the condition, usage and category of each individual asset (including roads, footpaths, buildings, stormwater etc.) with the view to introduce consistent and objective decision making to the Operational Plan process. This will occur alongside the development of asset management plans for each class of asset, in consultation with the community. Secondly, with the understanding that Local Government organisations have limited resources, it is important that the asset base does not grow without commensurate increases in income. If this occurs, service levels must drop across the network to cater for the increase and ensure Council remains sustainable. To best ensure Council delivers asset renewal and reconstruction services in a sustainable manner, a focus on grant funding opportunities has been introduced alongside a temporary cessation of unsealed road sealing. This will ensure Council dedicates assets to the renewal of existing sealed and unsealed roads, and its costs do not grow beyond that which is considered sustainable.

Asset	2019/20	2020/21
Urban, rural sealed, regional and rural unsealed road	871km	907km
Sealed roads	533km	561km
• Regional	• 23km	• 23km
• Urban	• 175km	• 175km
• Rural	• 334km	• 362km
Unsealed roads	343km	315km
• Urban	• 16km	• 16km
• Rural	• 327km	• 299km
Glen Davis and Glen Alice Roads		
• Unsealed	• 15,956m	• 0
• Sealed	• 64,694m	• 80,650m
Bridges	42	42
• Concrete	• 32	• 34
• Timber	• 10	• 8



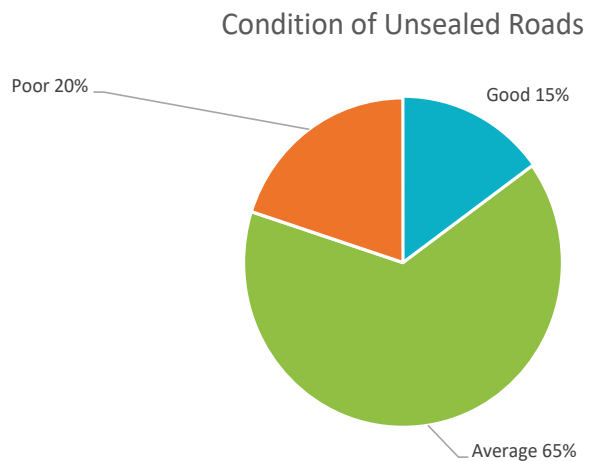
Sealed Roads

Council is responsible for 561km of sealed roads which costs \$1.1 million per year to maintain and renew. Generally our sealed roads are in average condition, however, 14% are in poor condition. Roads in poor condition need additional maintenance or renewal works to prevent them from further degrading.



Unsealed Roads

Council currently spends \$1.4 million each year to maintain 315km of unsealed roads in the LGA. Our road condition is assessed as road segments, e.g. from one intersection to another. Our unsealed roads are in generally average condition overall. 20% are considered to be in poor condition. Unsealed roads in poor condition need additional maintenance and/or renewal to prevent them from further degrading.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Length of unsealed roads



Wolgan Valley Causeway

In 2016/17, while completing a large-scale gravel resheeting of Wolgan Road, Wolgan Valley, the causeway traversing Barton Creek, Wolgan Valley collapsed. A thorough inspection after the incident has indicated that the inclement weather experienced at the time resulted in increased flow through and over the existing structure. Combined with the advanced age of the asset, major erosion of the foundation of the causeway occurred and resulted in complete failure of the asset once loaded with trucks fully laden with gravel.

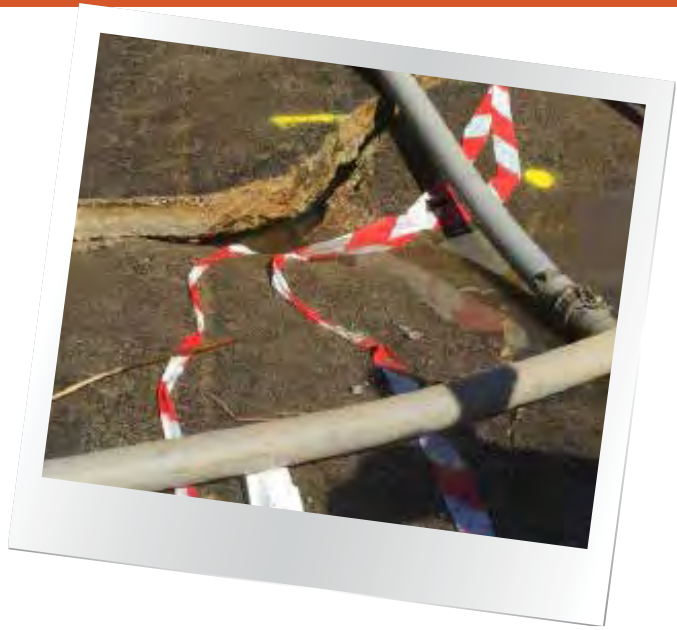
This complete loss of structural integrity and resultant collapse posed a major issue as the causeway was the primary access and egress for a number of landowners, including the township of Newnes and its camping facilities. This potential lack of access and safety resulted in this project becoming an immediate priority for Lithgow City Council to ensure that the economic and social benefits that the Wolgan Valley impart on our community were not disrupted.

The old causeway was constructed of a low-level concrete deck above an array of six 300mm pipes. Due to the age of the asset and a lack of regular maintenance over the years, the pipes were blocked and due to the increased rainfall, the creek bed below the causeway was eroded. At no point was this structure intended to be unsupported and for this reason, over 50% of the causeway failed and collapsed into the creek. Immediately after the failure, Council managed to temporarily mitigate any further damage by clearing the pipes and stabilizing and supporting the concrete deck with clean ballast. However, the rectification works performed by Council were temporary at best and as such, traffic could not travel over half the bridge as the total usable deck width had reduced to less than 4.0m total.

In order to rectify the situation, Council engineers organized and prioritised what was expected to be the cheapest possible solution to repair the Wolgan causeway, maintain compliance with DPI Fisheries and ensure that the public had adequate access and egress into Newnes into the future. This solution required a complete replacement of the existing causeway with a single span bridge. The new design featured a 150mm thick concrete deck that was cast in-situ above a steel I-beam frame at intervals of 4 metres by length and 1.5 metres by width for a total length of 12 metres and a total width of 4.5 metres. The frame is supported by spread footings anchored to bedrock at a depth of 2 metres. This option was chosen over traditional piles in order to reduce the total cost of the bridge. The footings achieved a height of 1 meter over the water level of the creek. This design achieves greater than a T44 load rating (44 tonne) and as such is in excess of what is considered necessary for a rural, single lane bridge.

The new bridge needed to be constructed in the same location as the old causeway in order to utilise the current alignment of Wolgan Road. For this reason, Council arranged for the installation of a temporary timber bridge directly adjacent to the causeway to allow traffic flow during the construction process. This required a slight, temporary realignment of Wolgan Road during this time.

This asset was constructed at a cost of \$93,500.00



Wallerawang Road, Portland

Lithgow City Council completed large-scale capital resealing works on Wallerawang Road, Portland between Bell Street and Wolgan Street, Portland.

This project was joint funded by the Roads and Maritime Services and Lithgow City Council in a 50:50 ratio. The total cost of this project was just over \$400,000.00.

This project included the stabilisation of the existing concrete slabs through the sealing of all joints using a flexible crack sealant that consists of a hot polymer rubberised bitumen. Council performed this work in order to minimise or completely eliminate future degradation of this important asset as a result of crack reflection resulting from the movement of the concrete slabs over time.

Once these works were complete, the asphalt shoulders adjacent to the concrete carriageway were milled and replaced with a 20mm aggregate rubberised asphalt to a depth of 60mm. This was performed to ensure the longevity of the road shoulder taking into account the potential for the long-term parking of medium to heavy vehicles in this location. Council undertook these preliminary works to guarantee that residents can utilise this asset for on-street parking into the future with little expectation of asset failure.

Upon completion of this work, works commenced on the overlay of the entire asset (including shoulders) with a 14mm aggregate rubberised asphalt at a depth of 50mm. By placing this overlay of the pre-prepared asphalt shoulders and existing concrete carriageway, this asset has the characteristics of a deeply stabilised pavement.

This is of great benefit to the Portland community as the stability of this asset will continue to provide the required capacity to serve road users that frequently move heavy vehicles in and out of Portland, without the expectation of resultant surface defects.

Upon completion of these works, the increased levels necessitated the raising of the shoulders and manholes for the length of these works. This works ensures the safety of motorists travelling through the area.

Ultimately, Council acknowledges the high level of traffic through the area and the importance of providing assets to the community that are fit for purpose in terms of ride-ability, vehicular safety, visual amenity and asset stability and strength. It is strongly believed by Council that by providing high quality road assets that achieve these standards, localities will see associated social and economic benefits. Council spared no expense in ensuring that this asset was renewed to the highest possible standard to ensure that Wallerawang Road continues to benefit not just the residents of Portland but the entire community of Lithgow and its surrounds.

Hartley Vale Bridge Restoration

In April 2020, during the course of routine structural assessments undertaken yearly on bridge assets throughout the Lithgow LGA, it was identified that the bridge immediately north-east of the Hartley Vale village required urgent works. To facilitate the necessary abutment reconstruction, the bridge was immediately closed to traffic and a temporary bridge and approaches were installed to cater to through traffic.

Annual inspections of Council's bridge assets are undertaken to assess their structural integrity and prioritise any required improvements or renewals. Due to concerns for public safety, the bridge was immediately closed, a temporary bridge was installed within a week and design work commenced to upgrade structure.

The Hartley Vale bridge is one of those unique assets, built by convicts in the 19th century, and forming one of the significant lines of road coming down into the valley known as the Old Bells Line of Road. This bridge and its connecting roads were essential in opening up western NSW.

Council worked with the Hartley Vale community, specialist heritage consultants, bridge construction experts and relevant state authorities to protect the heritage value of the bridge while also updating it to modern standards.

The works completed saw the original sandstone abutments removed, a new concrete and steel bridge constructed, and the original sandstone abutments replaced to maintain the heritage value of the original structure. Timber logs and handrails have also been installed to disguise the modern structure and retain the impression of a historic, nation-building asset.



Recreational facilities

for a healthy, vibrant community

Promoting healthy, active lifestyles in a safe environment through the provision of Innovative play spaces, walkways and cycle paths, interactive outdoor learning environments and creative landscapes is part of Council's plan to enhance the lifestyle choices of the Lithgow Community.

44

Parks &
Reserves

3

Picnic/BBQ
areas

Garden maintenance
& weekly mowing

213ha

of public
space

In April 2016, Council engaged Micromex Consulting to undertake a random telephone sampling of 407 residents across the Lithgow LGA. Overall, Queen Elizabeth Park, Hassans Walls Lookout and Lake Wallace Recreation Area received a 'High' satisfaction rating. The following 5 Parks and reserves were rated as being 'significantly higher' in importance by female respondents:

- Queen Elizabeth Park
- Blast Furnace Park/Lake Pillans Wetland
- Endeavour Park
- Other Parks/Playgrounds
- Hassans Walls Lookout.

Village Improvements Program

Working in partnership with our rural communities to implement a shared direction for the future.

The Village Improvements Program aims to address community priorities and strengthen partnerships with rural communities. Since the inception of the Village Improvement Program, Council has consulted with a number of communities and developed the following Village Improvement Plans:

- Capertee
- Rydal
- Hartley
- Tarana and Sodwalls
- Cullen Bullen

The Program is funded from s94A contributions and has an annual budget of up to \$30,000 to address the identified priorities of our rural communities. In addition, Council works with state and federal governments to progress community priorities in cases that exceed the annual Council budget.

The program has assisted with the creation of “place-making”, which has increased community identity, spirit and sense of belonging for many of the people that reside in the villages of the Lithgow LGA.

The following projects have been completed under the Village Improvements Program:

- Installed a picnic table and shelter at Londonderry Reserve Hartley
- Installed a shade covering over Cullen Bullen Playground
- Installed a Community noticeboard at Historic Hartley School
- Installed playground equipment at Historic Hartley School
- Installed a shelter and tables at Cullen Bullen playground

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Incorporation of creative design elements into open space areas, playgrounds, street furnishings, BBQ areas, picnic areas and gardens.



Walkway/Cycleway Renewals

Council currently owns and maintains 127km of footpaths across the LGA. We spend approximately \$37,000 per year on maintaining footpaths although this amount may vary from year to year.

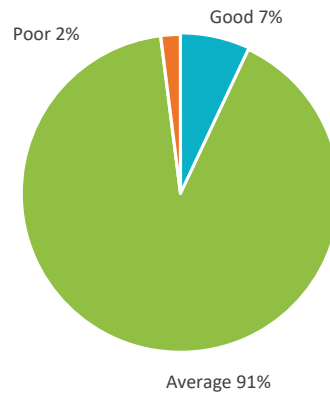
The majority of our footpaths are in an average condition with only 2% in poor condition. Some footpaths currently in average or poor condition will need additional maintenance and/or renewal work to ensure that they do not deteriorate into a poor and unsafe condition.

While it is acknowledged that the construction of new assets assists Council to meet the needs of the community, it is also accepted that the condition of many concrete footpath assets require intervention from Council in order to satisfy the service requirements of the wider community. For this reason, Council inspects every segment of footpath in response to requests from the community. In some instances, simple maintenance is not enough, and Council allocates the highest priority to this work – capital renewal. This work typically involves the identification of the underlying issue, removal of the issue and reconstruction of the footpath. Where required, footpaths were maintained and renewed throughout Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland.

In addition to this new construction, Council is committed to the renewal of existing footpaths to ensure their longevity. This includes the removal of underlying issues such as tree roots and broken stormwater infrastructure that contributes to the issue.

The impacts of this work are primarily social and economic in nature. By providing the community with the safe and functional recreational infrastructure that meets its needs, Council is effectively encouraging its community to lead the healthiest and enjoyable lifestyle they possibly can. In addition, these

Condition of Footpaths



assets attract people to our area, as tourists or permanent residents, does a great deal in attracting people to the area and providing economic benefits to our community.

Wallerawang / Lidsdale

Barton Avenue Pedestrian Refuge

In 2016/17 Council allocated funding to construct a footpath from Forest Ridge Drive to Wallerawang Public School on Barton Avenue, Wallerawang. It was determined that the funds allocated were insufficient for this project and funds were reallocated to the construction of a pedestrian refuge on Barton Avenue, Wallerawang.

Wallerawang Rail Overbridge and Pedestrian Refuge Project

Additional to the project above, through consultation with the community, Wallerawang Public School and the Roads and Maritime Services, it was identified that that community of Wallerawang required a pedestrian refuge and additional footpath infrastructure in the vicinity of Barton Avenue and the rail overbridge.

The Wallerawang footpath and pedestrian refuge construction project included the construction of 50m of footpath on Tweedie Street and 50m of footpath on Pipers Flat Road

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Length of pedestrian/cycleways



with the purpose of connecting the existing western footpath on the rail overbridge, for use by the community. Additionally, this project saw the design and construction of a new street light and pedestrian refuge in order to better ensure the safety of the public, in particular local school children, while using the area.

James Parade/Barton Avenue Footpath

Funded under the Federal Governments Drought Communities Program Round 2, Council engaged Central Industries, Marragaroo to construct 620 lineal metres of 1.2m wide footpath along James Parade from the Barton Avenue Intersection to the end in 2020/21.

Wolgan Road, Lidsdale

As a result of significant community feedback, a 1,000m roadside footpath at 1.8m width was constructed along Wolgan Road, Lidsdale from Skelly Road to Maddox Lane.

This project facilitated the provision of a range of community outcomes including promoting healthy lifestyles, improving quality of life for Lidsdale residents and providing recreational infrastructure to meet the needs of the community. To date, this project has been the subject of high praise by the community.

Undertaking this project, Council learnt a great deal regarding the importance of street trees to the amenity of the local Lithgow area. The removal of such trees, even when their removal assists in the longevity of footpath assets, needs to be in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Portland

Williwa Street Footpath

Funded under the Federal Governments Drought Communities Program Round 1 Council engaged Dallas Bennett Construction from Capertee to replace the footpath that runs along Willewa St, from the High St intersection to the level crossing near the railway station (750m).

Lithgow

Main Street Footpath

In 2020/21 Council commenced the reconstruction of the Main Street footpath. This \$60,000 project was funded by the Federal Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program to renew the Main Street footpath from Hassans Walls Road to Ordnance Avenue due to the asset reaching the end of its useable life. This project is now complete, with further work planned to continue through to the Great Western highway in 2021/22.

Lithgow Footpath Renewals

Priority locations identified for footpath renewal throughout the urban areas of Lithgow through customer requests and engineer inspection. Where applicable, the underlying or overlying cause of damage is removed in conjunction with the asset renewal.

Kirkley Street to Magpie Hollow Road on the Great Western Highway	
Rabaul Street	Roy Street
Read Avenue	Tank Street
Rabaul Street	Evelyn Street
Hayley Street	Barton Street
Bridge Street	Church Street
Laurence Street	Methven Street
Lithgow Street	Main Street

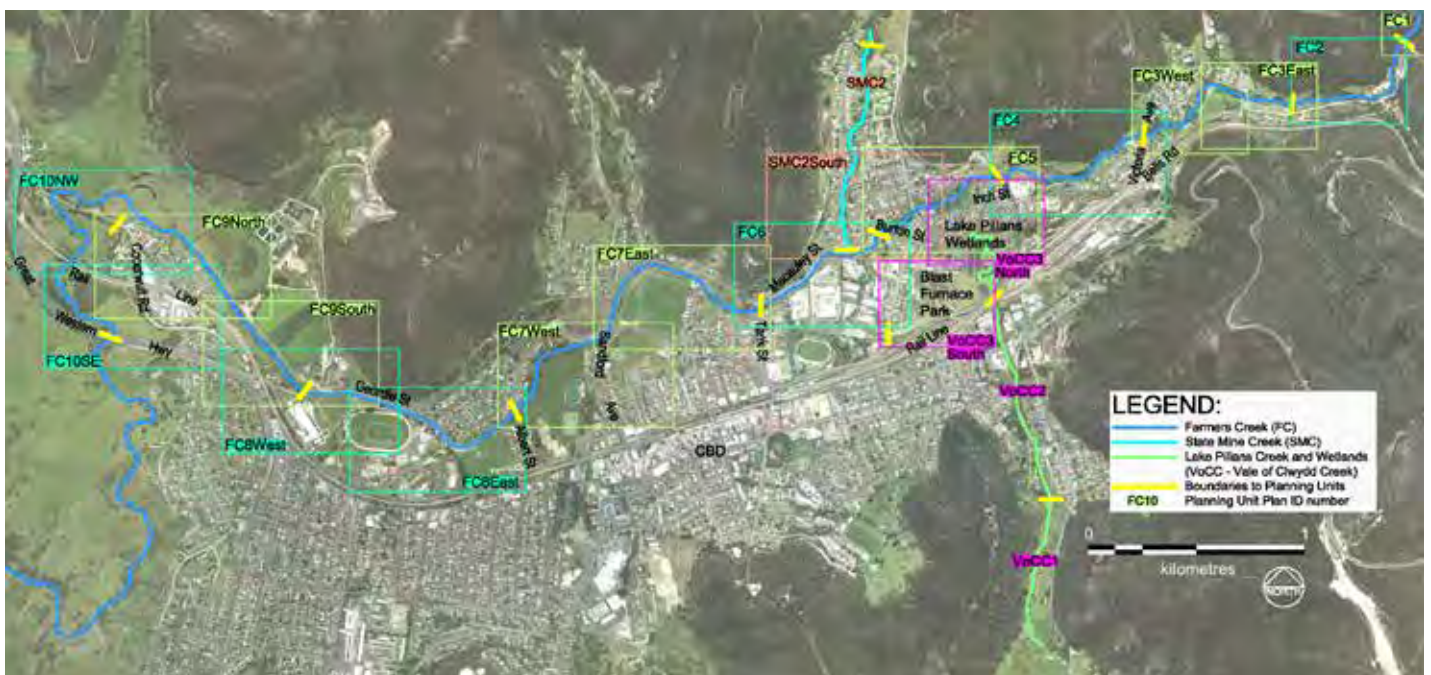
Farmers Creek Masterplan

As a result of significant community feedback a master plan detailing a program of environmental and civil works including a shared footpath along Farmers Creek was created to facilitate the provision of a range of community outcomes including promoting healthy lifestyles, improving quality of life for Lithgow residents and providing recreational infrastructure to meet the needs of the community. The Farmers Creek Masterplan project (the Plan) is an innovative and holistic approach to addressing the environmental and social challenges within the City of Lithgow and surrounds. A key feature of the plan is improving biodiversity with the restoration and revegetation of the degraded urban riparian corridor and formation of walking/cycle paths integrated with flood mitigation outcomes.

The Masterplan delivers a staged "blueprint" for a connected network of parks and public open space, ranging from highly managed parklands and playing fields to restored creekside bushlands, all linked and activated by a high-standard shared path plus other connections and offering a variety of leisure/recreation facilities and attractions along the entire corridor. All within easy reach of Lithgow's urban areas, FCMP will enable far greater community access and enjoyment to Farmers Creek and its tributaries.

The impacts of this work are primarily social and economic in nature. By providing the community with the recreational infrastructure that meets its needs, Council is effectively encouraging its community to lead the healthiest and most enjoyable lifestyle they possibly can. In addition, these assets attract people to our area, whether they be tourists or permanent residents, thus providing economic benefits to our community through increased growth.

Farmers Creek is the principal waterway flowing through the Lithgow urban area. The creek is highly modified, has been largely cleared of native vegetation, and poses a flood risk to nearby population. By developing the Farmers Creek Master Plan, Council has risen to the challenge of addressing considerable riparian zone issues while seamlessly assimilating opportunities to become a recreational and environmental asset for Lithgow residents and visitors alike. The full extent of the Project is roughly 18 km of Farmers Creek and associated tributaries with the majority of project objectives focused on the 10 km section within the urban area.



FARMERS CREEK Masterplan

Planning Units - Details Maps Guide
Gondwana Consulting

July 2016

0m 500m 1km

The plan identifies the value of the Farmers Creek area as a unifying green corridor through the Lithgow area. The implementation of the Farmers Creek Masterplan involves 3 stages and will result in a number of attributes including:

- Connecting and expanding the existing path network which will link areas of the community and promote increased health and recreation opportunities;
- Support the construction of WSUD measures (mainly creekside filter strip plantings), and undertake appropriate stormwater quality improvement measures along sections of creek corridor; and
- To undertake environmental works including weed control and native species plantings to the creek corridor and interpretative signage.

The continued implementation of the Plan has seen completion of stage 1 of the Plan with the installation of:

- a pedestrian footbridge from Glanmire oval to Coalbrook Street across Farmers Creek
- Installation of two additional footbridges over State Mine Creek and Farmers Creek between Burton and Guy Street's.

The installation of the bridges provides a link from Geordie Street through to Lake Pillans for walkers and cyclists primarily along the Creek.

Council is progressively constructing a shared footpath and cycleway along Farmers Creek. The 2.5m wide walkway/cycleway has been extended from the Geordie Street Rail Crossing at the Visitor Information Centre to Guy Street with amenity plantings and landscaping to improve street quality and function.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Length of pedestrian/cycleways	✓
Improved design and usability of dedicated open space and connectivity through the strategic town planning and development application process	✓

Our built environment

Weed Management

Farmers Creek has enormous unrealised potential as a leisure/recreation, scenic and environmental asset. Enjoyment of much of the corridor is now prevented by weeds, encroachments or other barriers, minimal management, and simply the absence of access and facilities.

Balancing and prioritising the dual project objectives of providing greater leisure/recreation opportunities and facilities, and connecting and enhancing public open space, while delivering environmental, biodiversity and water quality improvements was a focus in the development of the Plan.

Through the acquisition of additional external funding (\$279,260) as a result of the Environmental Protection Authority prosecution of Clarence Colliery, Council has achieved environmental improvements for the community through rehabilitation of the creek and implementation of the Plan. This has been enhanced by contributions from community volunteers in the participation of community planting days, adding value to the outcomes of the project. Community planting days provide the community with opportunities to participate in the implementation of the Plan and the rehabilitation of native vegetation on Farmers Creek. The participation of 40 volunteers for 3 hours over the two planting days at \$27 per hour equates to \$3,240 of additional value in the delivery of the project through community involvement.

In addition to the construction of the bridge, significant environmental works were completed along Sandford Avenue to improve habitat value and connectivity of the riparian corridor in Farmers Creek. Funded through external grants a professional bush regeneration contractor treated weeds, installed rock armouring to stabilise eroded drainage lines and established over 5000 native plants along Sandford Avenue Farmers Creek.

With the help of 25 willing participants as part of the Lithgow National Tree Day in September 2018, 330 plants were established near the Albert Street Bridge on Glanmire Oval. Again 15 volunteers participated in a community planting day in April 2019 to establish another 450 plants.

The implementation of the Plan will result in the restoration and revegetation of a degraded urban creek corridor. This will result in water quality improvement, enhanced scenic, environmental and biodiversity outcomes within the catchment.

Drought Communities Program - Round 1

In 2019 as part of the federally funded Drought Communities Program, council engaged Bluetongue Ecosystems Pty Ltd to undertake extensive weed eradication along the creek corridor with the aim of improving the amenity and bio security of public lands through noxious weed control. This will improve the quality of public lands adjacent and downstream of affected areas. The works targeted priority noxious species infesting both sides of the creek and included Farmers Creek, State Mine Creek, Ida Falls and Lake Pillans Creek and Wetlands. between September and December and included; Grey Willow, Black Willow, Blackberry, Cotoneaster, English Broom, Montpellier Broom, Small leaf Privet, Japanese Honeysuckle. The program also included:

- the treatment of African Love Grass infestation at Coalbrook Street and installation of native trees.
- Install native trees to replace weed infestations that had been removed. There were 4 native plantings, 3 are within FC9 and 1 was in State Mine Creek.

150

TREES

Large stock Eucalyptus trees planted at Coalbrook Street.

90 were burnt in the December 2019 Gospers

1250

PLANTS

Native plantings were installed to:

- Prevent future weed growth
- Increase native flora diversity and abundance, and provide habitat for native fauna.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Endangered Ecological Communities and National Endangered Ecologic Communities protected.	✓
Increased vegetation canopy and the quality of landscaping in the urban areas of the LGA.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓

(www.council.lithgow.com/farmers-creek)

Lake Pillans Wetland Reserve

Lake Pillans is a man-made constructed wetland formed on an unnamed creek, a tributary of Farmers Creek. The now impounded waterway was formerly a 3rd order stream being fed from the minor drainage lines flowing from Doctors Gap and Hassans Wall to the south. The original purpose of Lake Pillans was to service the now decommissioned Hoskins Blast Furnace created in 1911. The Blast Furnace was decommissioned around 1928 and the site, named after Lithgow's first Mayor, was rejuvenated into a functioning wetland during the 1990's.

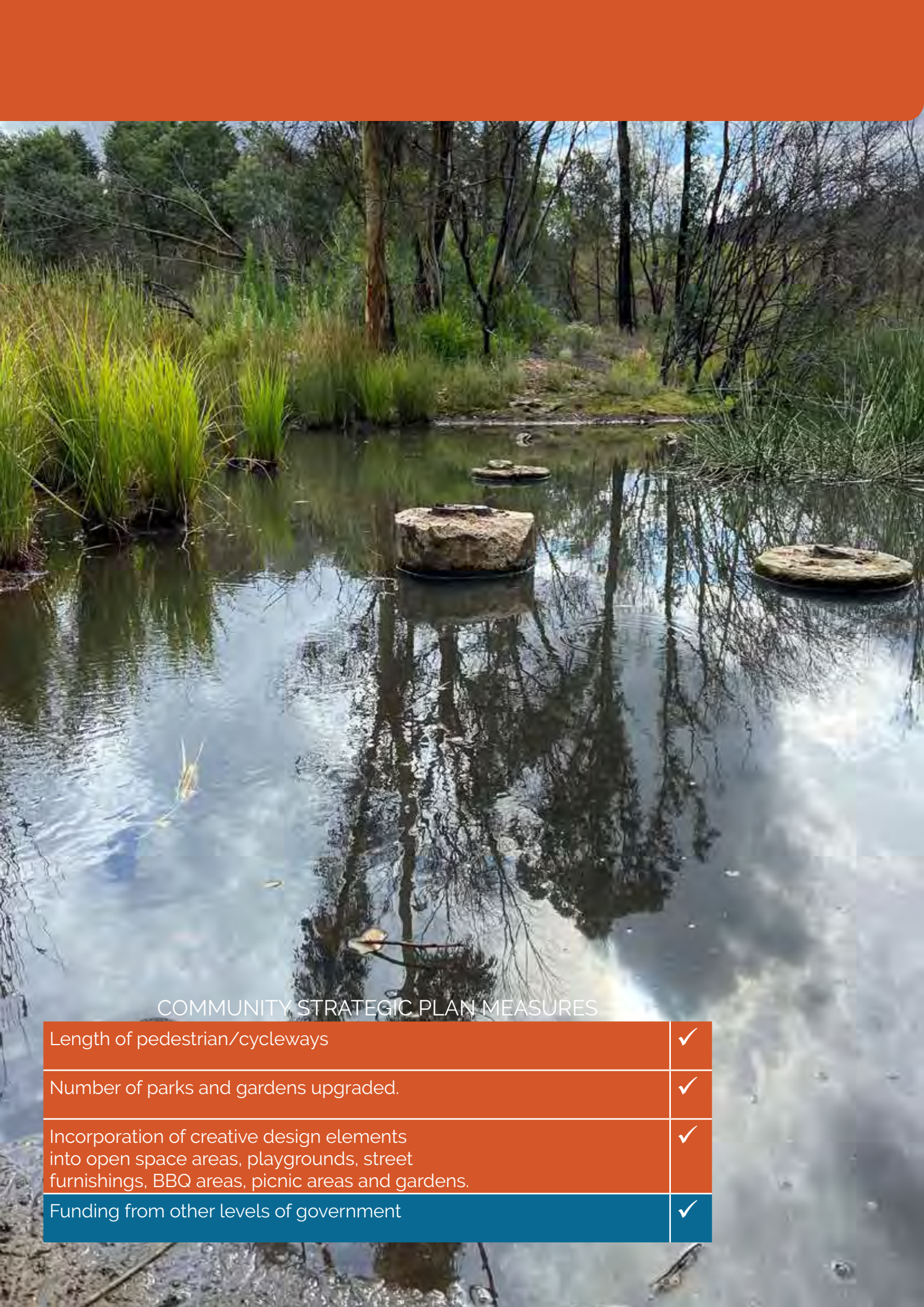
The site holds significance for the local community, who have invested their time and effort into the wetland over the years, including undertaking revegetation with native and threatened species, installation of community facilities and completing regular maintenance of the area. Project partners, including the Department of Land and Water Conservation, Landcare, the NSW Environmental Trust, Sydney Water and Lithgow Council have all contributed funding to the rehabilitation of the site over the years. The shared bike and footpath that traverses the Wetlands forms part of a longer community shared path around Blast Furnace Park and Farmers Creek.

The wetland consists of a chain of ponds style constructed wetland system, with a concrete walkway interspersed with two (2) bridges (10 m long by 2 m wide) and one (1) boardwalk (approximately 77 m long and 1 m wide). It is comprised of mown lawn areas with recreational infrastructure such as benches (also in need of replacement) and an exercise facility, with native vegetation planted along the banks of the ponds. It is situated within an urban residential area with numerous residential dwellings occurring within a 500 m radius and is directly adjacent to (or below) the historic Blast Furnace Ruins to the west. The wetlands are bounded to the south by the railway line, to the north and northwest by residential housing and a playground, and to the east by a collection of rail storage sheds and infrastructure (source: Review of Environmental Effects Study - The Environmental Factor).

On 21 December 2019, the timber bridge boardwalks and associated infrastructure at Lake Pillans Wetland Reserve was destroyed by the Gospers Mountain Bushfire.

Prior to awarding tenders for reconstruction, a Review of Environmental Factors was undertaken by The Environmental Factor, Bathurst to assess the environmental impacts associated with the construction of a boardwalk and bridge crossings and associated spillway repairs.

The construction contract was awarded to local company Central Industries in late 2020. Works commenced in early 2021 and are scheduled for completion by 31 July 2021. The community will once again be able to walk around and enjoy this wonderful environmental asset.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Length of pedestrian/cycleways	✓
Number of parks and gardens upgraded.	✓
Incorporation of creative design elements into open space areas, playgrounds, street furnishings, BBQ areas, picnic areas and gardens.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓

Hassans Walls Lookout & Reserve

Hassans Walls Reserve Plan of Management (PoM)

Prepared by Gondwana Consulting the PoM, was adopted by Council on the 17th July 2017.

The plan of management:

- Identifies a vision for Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Identifies the values of Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Sets out the strategic direction for future management of Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Outlines management actions for Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Proposes a concept masterplan for future development;
- Provides direction on the conservation and environmental management of natural resources within Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Provides direction on the conservation and protection of cultural heritage sites within Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Identifies risks within Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Consolidates information into a single document for ease of reference; and
- Identifies future studies that may be required to inform the management of the reserve and implementation of the plan.

Mountain Bike Trails Strategy

The development of recreation infrastructure such as mountain bike trails is a priority action of the Lithgow Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 (REDS) which identified that one of Lithgow's key endowments is an abundance of natural and recreational amenities.

Prepared by Rocky Trail Destination the Strategy, was adopted in principle by Council on the 28 June 2021. The Strategy details the infrastructure trails requirements, and the cost to develop 3 purpose-built mountain biking trails at Hassans Walls Reserve.

The development of the trails network in

Lithgow City would create strong inwards visitation in the adventure tourism field and significantly enhance the tourism offerings available in the Lithgow destination.

However, prior to proceeding with further planning and design, the following studies are required to protect the environment and heritage values of the reserve:

- A Flora and Fauna Study for Hassans Walls Reserve;
- Recreational Track Audit of Hassans Walls Reserve; and
- The completion of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment in the area where potential future tracks envisaged in the strategy could be constructed.

Weed Management

In 2017/18 Council was successful in securing \$30,000 grant funding from Public Reserve Management Fund Program for the control of environmental and noxious weeds within the reserve.

The focus of the program was to minimise the negative environmental impacts of weed infestation reducing the associated biosecurity risk and improving native habitat benefiting the greater Lithgow community.

The project treated a number of the high value areas within the reserve while also identifying other weed

sources for additional works in the future. This project built on previous works undertaken within the reserve increasing community participation with the aim of achieving lasting environmental outcomes. Through a collaborative approach with Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association and Lithgow Pony Club significantly greater capacity building and financial value was added to the project.

These works also improved recreational opportunities, visual amenity of the area and increased public perception and awareness of the environmental asset.

Interpretive signage

The following signage has been installed at Hassans Walls Lookout:

- A 'points of interest' panorama sign was installed at Hassans Walls Lookout.
- Padley's Memorial plaque was replaced.
- Lithgow Adventure Trail signage installed.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Hassans Walls Lookout and Reserve developed to encourage environmentally sustainable recreational & tourist use.	✓
Length of pedestrian/cyclways	✓
Consistent branding of signage and promotional/marketing materials.	✓
Number of actions implemented from the Tourism Strategy/Destination Management Plan.	✓
Number of sustainable festivals and events	✓
Consultation undertaken with local indigenous groups on indigenous heritage matters.	✓
Threatened plant and animal species identified.	✓
Endangered Ecological Communities and National Endangered Ecologic Communities protected.	✓
New plans and strategies are developed in line with the community's needs.	✓



RedAss Downhill Mountain Bike Enduro 2017

91 Riders

8% female 92% Male

- Attracted riders from Sydney, Mid-North Coast, Illawarra, Hunter Valley, Central West.
- 692 Photos taken on race day branded with Council's logo

Portland & Wallerawang Skateparks

Council recognises the importance of providing outdoor recreation facilities to our community to promote health, activity and connectivity. An identified barrier for many families and young people in Wallerawang and Portland was access to an appropriate facility, in the right location that provides a safe place for socialising and exercising.

In response to community requests and consultation, Council renewed the skate parks in both Wallerawang and Portland.

It is recognised that this kind of infrastructure helps to improve the lives of our youth and plays a key role in both retaining and attracting new residents in a way that makes a real and lasting positive difference.

Online and face-to-face consultation focused on usability of existing facilities, the location of facilities, the need for new facilities and the functionality required was undertaken in 2017/18. The responses were used to draft designs for the skate parks by NSW based Oasis Skate Parks, an organisation consisting of current and former skateboard professionals.

Portland and Wallerawang Skateparks were officially opened on Saturday 23 November 2019 by Mayor Ray Thompson and Member for Bathurst Paul Toole.

Shade sails and Exeloos (accessible, self-cleaning toilets) have been installed under the Drought Communities Program Round 2 completing the facilities and providing a sunsafe space for local youth.

“It was great to see such a large group of skaters, scooter riders and BMX riders at these events which tells me that Council got it right in the planning and construction of these two skate parks. I was really impressed by the large turn up and the skills of the young people from little kids up to young adult,”

Mayor Ray Thompson - Launch of Portland & Wallerawang Skateparks.

3 Quality Skateparks at Lithgow, Wallerawang & Portland



The provision of these quality recreational facilities provides the following social & economic impacts for the community:

- Each of the three skateparks is unique with different equipment/challenges at each location creating a 'skate circuit' for Lithgow, Wallerawang & Portland.
- Attraction of out-of-town visitors to the parks, who will likely spend money in the local government area.
- Skate parks provide physical activity for young people, helping to eliminate boredom and promote health.
- Community skate parks provide a safe and challenging place for skaters, scooter and BMX riders of all levels to develop as athletes.
- This project came at a time of great excitement as skate boarding has been included in the 2021 Tokyo Olympics. The Olympics will have an impact on the number of people who take up the sport.
- They are aesthetically pleasing, and a big improvement to the existing old steel modular facilities.
- They provide a youth and family friendly place where they can socialise, exercise and have ownership of.
- They support active lifestyles by young people and attract new residents to the community

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Incorporation of creative design elements into open space areas, playgrounds, street furnishings, BBQ areas, picnic areas and gardens.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓

Endeavour Park Precinct

Endeavour Park Precinct

6.55 ha

Lithgow CBD

With so many amazing local attractions it might be time to take a break and recharge your batteries. Take a stroll through the CBD and you will find plenty of places to stop, enjoy a coffee or treat a little to eat.



Blast Furnace Park

The Lithgow Blast Furnace is a monument to Lithgow's industrial past and has been a prominent local landmark for over 100 years. This iconic industrial ruin is the birthplace of the Australian iron and steel industry which had a profound impact on the community of Lithgow.

It is a fantastic place for a picnic, and to learn about the history of the area. The site has wheelchair accessible areas, toilets and drinking water.

Open: The park is open all year round and is free until 10:00pm.



Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum

Lithgow Small Arms Factory was Australia's first high precision mass production facility. The unique museum, situated on the factory site, is widely recognised for its comprehensive collection that showcases Australian manufacturing.

Discover the stories and people who shaped the factory - their aspirations, achievements and disappointments. Learn about new technology in an emerging nation and about how the factory survived and preserved the valuable skills of its workforce throughout the wars.

Open: 9:30am-2:00pm Tuesday-Thursday
10:00am-4:00pm
Weekends, school and public holidays



Eskbank House Museum



A regional museum set within one of Lithgow's oldest residences dating from the 1840s, Eskbank House Museum enhances the understanding and appreciation of the area's history.

Explore the collections including objects of state and national significance, including the important Iron Black Box, Simon Family Crazy Patchwork Quilt, Seaman Cook Collection, and items from the Lithgow Lithgow Park. The museum is open for guided tours and special events.



J M Robson Aquatic Centre

Lithgow's state of the art aquatic centre features a 50 metre outdoor pool, a 25 metre indoor pool and popular splash park for the children. The outdoor pool is heated to 26°C (open from October to April) while the indoor pool is heated to 31°C (open all year round).

Open: 6:00am-7:00pm Monday-Friday
8:00am-6:00pm weekends and 8:00am to 4:00pm public holidays.




Lithgow Visitor Information Centre

Head to Lithgow Visitor Information Centre to be inspired about the multitude of things to see and do in and around Lithgow.

Open: 9:00am-5:00pm every day except Christmas Day
Ph: 1800 760 775
1117 Great Western Hwy, Lithgow, in the Big White's Lane
www.tourism.lithgow.nsw.gov.au





“Council has been surprised at the very large number of people using the playground from the day of its opening. The community response has been fantastic... You would have to travel a long way to see anything as special as this. This all abilities playground will provide fun, safe, interesting and unstructured play areas for children to develop their creative, social and cognitive skills.”

Mayor Ray Thompson - at the Launch of the Adventure Playground

Endeavour Park Precinct

The Endeavour Park Precinct is a large park that services two distinct groups: residents and tourists. The 6.55ha precinct located between the Great Western Highway and Amiens Street, Lithgow features:

- The Adventure Playground
- Picnic facilities, seating and barbeques
- Toilet facilities
- A children's playground (on Amiens Street)
- A dog off-leash area
- Pump Track (under construction)
- Car parking (off GWH) with additional parking to be constructed off Amiens Street on completion of the Pump Track

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Incorporation of creative design elements into open space areas, playgrounds, street furnishings, BBQ areas, picnic areas and gardens.	✓
Number of parks and gardens upgraded	✓
Improved design and usability of dedicated open space and connectivity through the strategic town planning and development application process.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓

Adventure Playground

Lithgow Adventure Playground, opened in 2019, is a key part of Council's strategy to improve recreational infrastructure for the benefit of the local community and to attract visitors to the city to experience its range of recreational, sporting and cultural attractions.

Designed by award winning playground designer Ric McConaghy, it is one of the largest recreational developments for the children and families of Lithgow in recent years.

Designed with a mining theme, the playground is uniquely Lithgow. The centre piece is a 5.5 metre high climbing tower, much like a mine poppet-head with climbing ropes and tube slide. Many exciting and interesting features, not generally seen in typical playgrounds encourage children to explore and to develop a greater appreciation of the heritage and environment of Lithgow.

The playground has been designed to ensure that it is accessible for all children and families and includes accessible pathways, facilities and amenities; contrasting colour and texture in materials to aid navigation; and, extension of seating areas to accommodate wheelchairs, strollers and walking frames.

Accessible harnesses on the swings, the 22m long flying fox, the accessible carousel, cubby area and mouse wheel will ensure that these are available to all.

This regional level playground provides local families with an exciting play space to family time together. It will also provide economic benefits attracting visitors from regional areas to Lithgow to meet up and play in a unique space catering to all abilities.

Pump Track

In late 2020 Council engaged Common Ground Trails, one of Australia's foremost pump track designers and construction companies to design and construct the Lithgow Pump Track. Construction of the pump track which is located immediately below and to the north of the Adventure Playground footprint at Endeavour Park is scheduled for completion in mid August 2021.

A pump track is a circuit of rollers, banked turns and features designed to be ridden by riders "pumping" – generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedalling or pushing. Pump tracks are a worldwide phenomenon although only recently arriving in Australia. The Lithgow pump track responds to the needs identified in Lithgow Youth Strategy 2016-2020. The track is being constructed of precision earthworks with an asphalt overlay to build a progressive riding track. The flow and form achieved ensures absolute best riding experience for all ages and all abilities – all year round. The track will be moulded into the natural Endeavour Park slope near the newly constructed Adventure Playground.

The concept design is for a track with about 700 sqm of riding surface that is graded for beginner, intermediate and advanced riders. The relatively steep topography of the site has allowed for an exciting and challenging track that will please and challenge riders of all skill levels.

Like the adjoining Adventure Playground, this competition level facility will be a major drawcard for Lithgow tourism.

Sporting Field Irrigation Systems

Under the Drought Communities Program Rounds 1 and 2, Council has been able to upgrade Sporting fields in Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland with the Installation of Automated Watering systems.

The project, aimed at conserving water and ensuring the efficient watering of sporting fields to enhance the quality of the existing facilities has been greatly appreciated by the community. These improvements will enable all season amenity making the facilities more attractive to local and regional sporting events, thereby providing on-going benefits to the local economy.

Benefits of the new system which utilises smart phone technology to operate includes:

- Ability to set times to water playing fields overnight reducing water loss due to evaporation.
- Cost savings due to reduced water usage
- Better playing surfaces
- Increased productivity due to reduction in labour tasks.
- Reduced safety risks to staff.

The following fields have been upgraded under this program:

- Lithgow - Tony Luchetti Fields #1 and #2
- Wallerawang - Fields #1 and #2
- Portland - Kremer Park
- Marjorie Jackson Oval
- Watsford Oval
- Conran Oval

Council meets with sporting user groups monthly and the feedback received from this project is universally positive by local users and visitors alike.





COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved design and usability of dedicated open space and connectivity through the strategic town planning and development application process.	✓
Reduce consumption of potable water by 10% per capita.	✓
Council's status as a 'green employer' promoted.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓

Recreational Facilities

JM Robson Aquatic Centre

The JM Robson Aquatic Centre provides year round access to aquatic facilities,

Council's objective is to provide facilities that meet the needs of local people across all sectors and demographics, including people with disabilities, our indigenous community and youth.

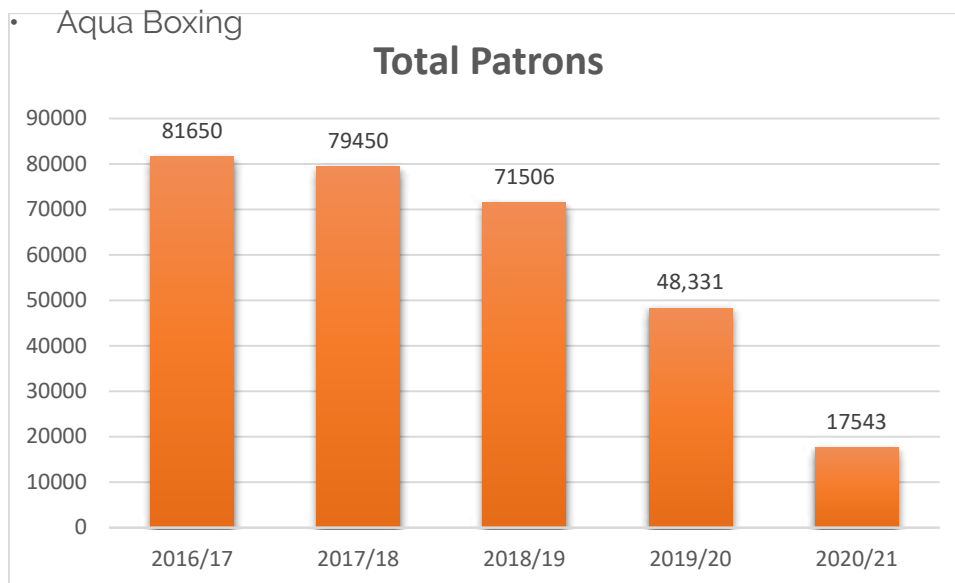
The J M Robson Aquatic Centre is a regional showcase of efficient design, which aims to minimize operational costs while still providing an exceptional service to the community. Innovative building design improves air circulation within the pool hall, and alongside radiant floor heating and substantial insulation of exterior walls, dramatically reduces heating and cooling costs in all weather conditions.

Public Programs include:

- Children's birthday parties
- Swim School (from infants to adult classes)
- Aqua Aerobics and bootcamp
- Deep, gentle, circuit and High Intensity Interval Training Aqua
- Swimfit
- Flipperfit
- Aqua Boxing

This multi-purpose facility includes:

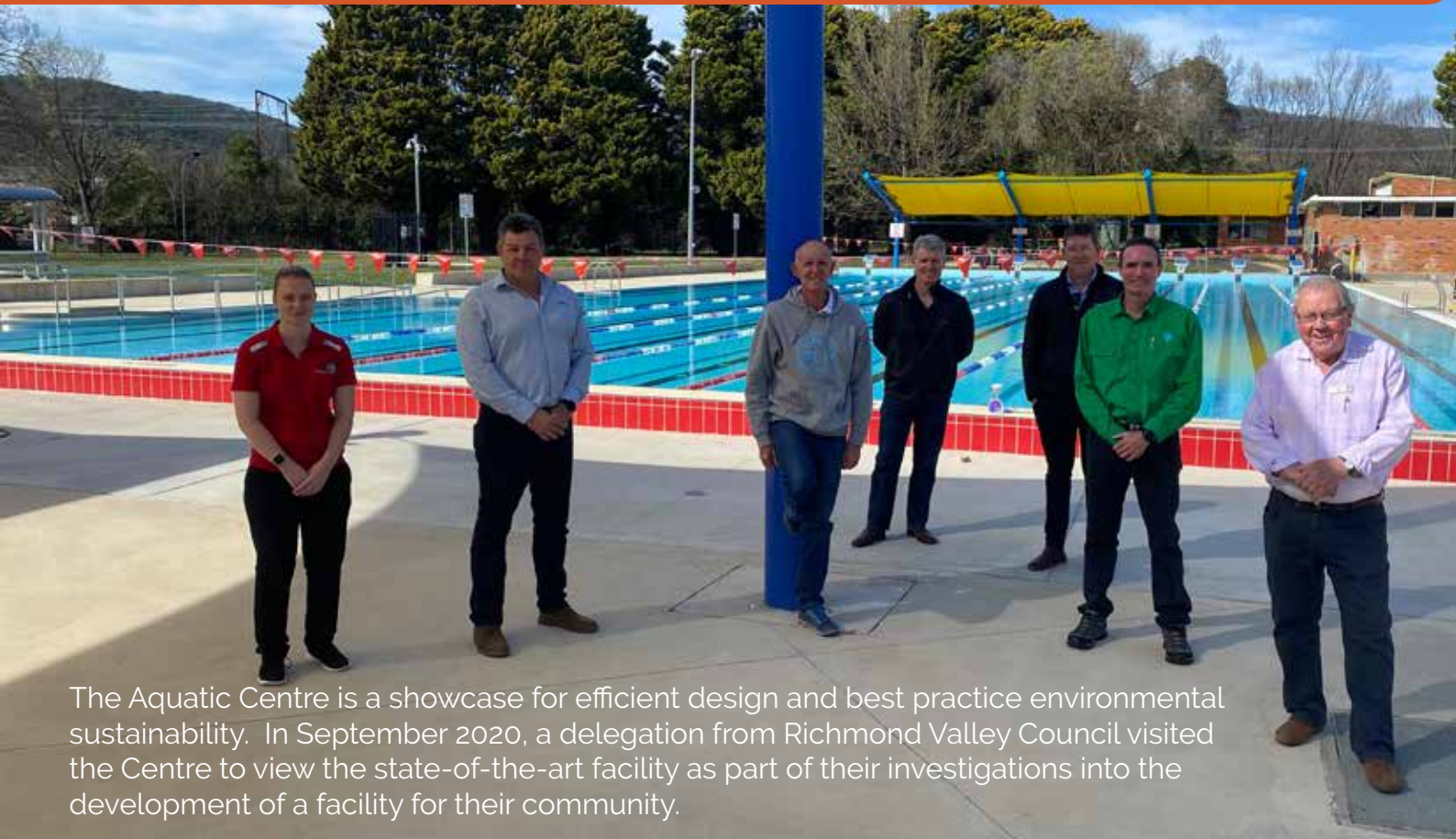
- Heated 50-metre olympic size outdoor pool
- Heated hydroplay pool
- Heated 25-metre indoor pool
- Kiosk and vending machines
- Swim shop.



COVID-19 restrictions continued to impact patronage of the Aquatic Centre during the 2019/20- 2020/21 reporting periods with patronage of the centre and public programs significantly reduced.

In 2018/19 to further improve accessibility, a hoist was installed next to the 50m indoor pool to enable swim patrons in wheelchairs to be lifted safely into the pool, thereby improving safety for swimmers and their carers.

A dedicated website and Facebook page have been developed to promote the Aquatic Centre and its programs to the community.



The Aquatic Centre is a showcase for efficient design and best practice environmental sustainability. In September 2020, a delegation from Richmond Valley Council visited the Centre to view the state-of-the-art facility as part of their investigations into the development of a facility for their community.

Since the facility was opened to the public in 2016, demand and patronage has continued to grow. This increased usage is testament to the state-of-the-art facilities and quality of customer service delivered at the J M Robson Aquatic Centre. In line with this demand, in order to ensure the safety of the public, the requirement for life guards and customer service officers increased. Hence, to reduce overtime and provide opportunities for casual labour to move to permanent employment, the Council advertised an additional 5 positions to ensure that the facility is able to cater to ongoing growth in patronage and services offered at the facility.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of healthy lifestyle programs developed and implemented.	✓
Increased employment opportunities	✓
Council's status as a 'green employer' promoted.	✓
Funding from other levels of government	✓
Council's risk is managed	✓
The level of service provided to internal and external customers is continually monitored and reviewed.	✓

Respectful cemetery services

Council's cemeteries team provides the following service:

- Coordinating the management, maintenance and development of the LGA's cemeteries including contractor and project management.
- Liaising with funeral directors, monumental masons and grave diggers in the delivery of services within the cemeteries.
- Ensuring that contractors and members of the public adhere to related policies and procedures.
- Maintaining accurate cemetery records and mapping.
- Assisting members of the public in plot reservations.
- Assisting members of the public with design and purchase of memorial plaques.
- Assisting members of the public with finding plots of family members.
- Processing and approving applications for burials and permits to erect monuments.
- Administration of all cemetery related activities.

In addition to general maintenance, an annual Cemetery Improvements Program is implemented for capital works to be undertaken. Since 1 July 2016, the following works have been undertaken:

Cemetery	Capital Works Program
Lithgow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpath installation • Dangerous trees were removed to protect infrastructure and assets. • Seal of the access road and Internal roads were formed and sealed and new kerb and guttering installed • Concrete kerbing installed • Installation of a new memorial garden • Stormwater improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200m of retaining wall and associated kerb & gutter works. • Reconsturction of a new bitumen sealed road.
Portland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 new beams were installed in the lawn cemetery • Dangerous trees were removed to protect infrastructure and assets. • Irrigation system installed
Glen Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Columbarium installed
Cullen Bullen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second columbarium installed

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Number of requests (complaints) received.	✓
Improvements to cemetery grounds	✓
Length of pedestrian/cycleways	✓

Council maintains and operates 14 cemeteries throughout the local government area at:

- Capertee
- Cullen Bullen
- Dark Corner
- Hartley Vale
- Lithgow
- Lowther
- South Bowenfels
- Old Bathurst Road - Private
- Great Western Highway - Closed
- Meadow Flat
- Palmers Oakey
- Portland
- Rydal
- Wallerawang (Pipers Flat)
- Glen Alice

Number of Requests



Requests from the community regarding general cemetery maintenance and incidents are received and processed. With two staff dedicated to cemetery management and 15 cemeteries across the LGA, Council appreciates this information provided by the community as it enables us to improve our service as we are not always able to visit rural cemeteries. During periods of high rainfall requests increase due to the need for increased mowing and weed control during the summer growing season.

Water & Waste Water Management

Ensuring the sewerage capacity of the region for sustainable growth and development.

3

Sewerage
Treatment
Plants

146,035m
Gravity Sewer

34

Sewerage
Pump Stations

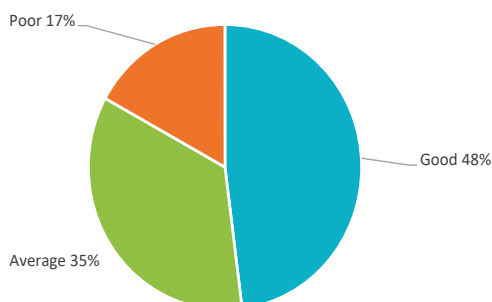
30,514m
Sewer Rising Mains

7,715

Sewerage
service
connections
(connecting houses &
businesses to the network)

14,965m
Sewer Trunk Mains

Condition of Sewerage Network



SEWERAGE NETWORK

Sewer assets are primarily in good to average condition, with 17% in the poor category. While our sewerage network is generally well maintained, population growth and service expansion requires the Council to plan significant investment in the network over the next 10 years. Sewerage treatment plant upgrades will result in corresponding increases in operation and maintenance costs. Council currently spends \$1.1 million per annum on maintaining the sewer network.



\$15m

Project

Capacity
increased
from

2,000

Equivalent persons



3,000

Equivalent persons

Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant

The newly upgraded Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) treats sewerage to a much higher standard which beneficial effect on the environment downstream. The new STP reduces the levels of potential pollutants released into the environment compared to the old STP. The increased size of the new STP also provides enough capacity in the system for the growth of the township of Portland.

The new STP was designed to be the same system as the Wallerawang STP thereby reducing stores costs for council to have an inventory of critical spares for both plants which are interchangeable. This also means that the effluent quality is at the same standard required for the Sydney Catchment area. Which was a vast improvement on the previous standards.

This project was co-funded by the NSW governments Resources for Regions project through Infrastructure NSW and Lithgow City Council.

Cullen Bullen Sewer Scheme

Council has been concerned for some time that a high proportion of existing on-site wastewater systems in Cullen Bullen are failing to meet the required operational and performance objectives.

Evidence of failure includes:

- Sewage from septic systems running onto neighbouring properties.
- Sewage on flat sites ponding, resulting in complaints of smell, mosquitoes and a public health and safety risk.
- The overflow from septic tank absorption trenches discharging into stormwater drainage systems resulting in contamination of watercourses.
- Discharge of grey water into stormwater drainage systems resulting in contamination of watercourses.

In order to address these issues, Council has opted to construct a low pressure sewerage transportation system to overcome the terrain. The low pressure system is a common method of sewerage transportation where the community has previously relied upon on-site systems such as septics. Construction of the plant will commence in 2021/22. The following actions have been completed.

- Concept designs of Sewerage Treatment Plant and the Low Pressure Scheme.
- A Review of Environmental Factors
- Acquisition of land for the sewerage treatment plant.
- Tenders for design and construct of the Low pressure sewerage design and Sewerage Treatment Plant.

This project is co-funded by the NSW governments Resources for Regions project through Infrastructure NSW and Lithgow City Council with \$4,800,000 coming from Resources for Regions

73% of onsite wastewater management systems inspected are failing

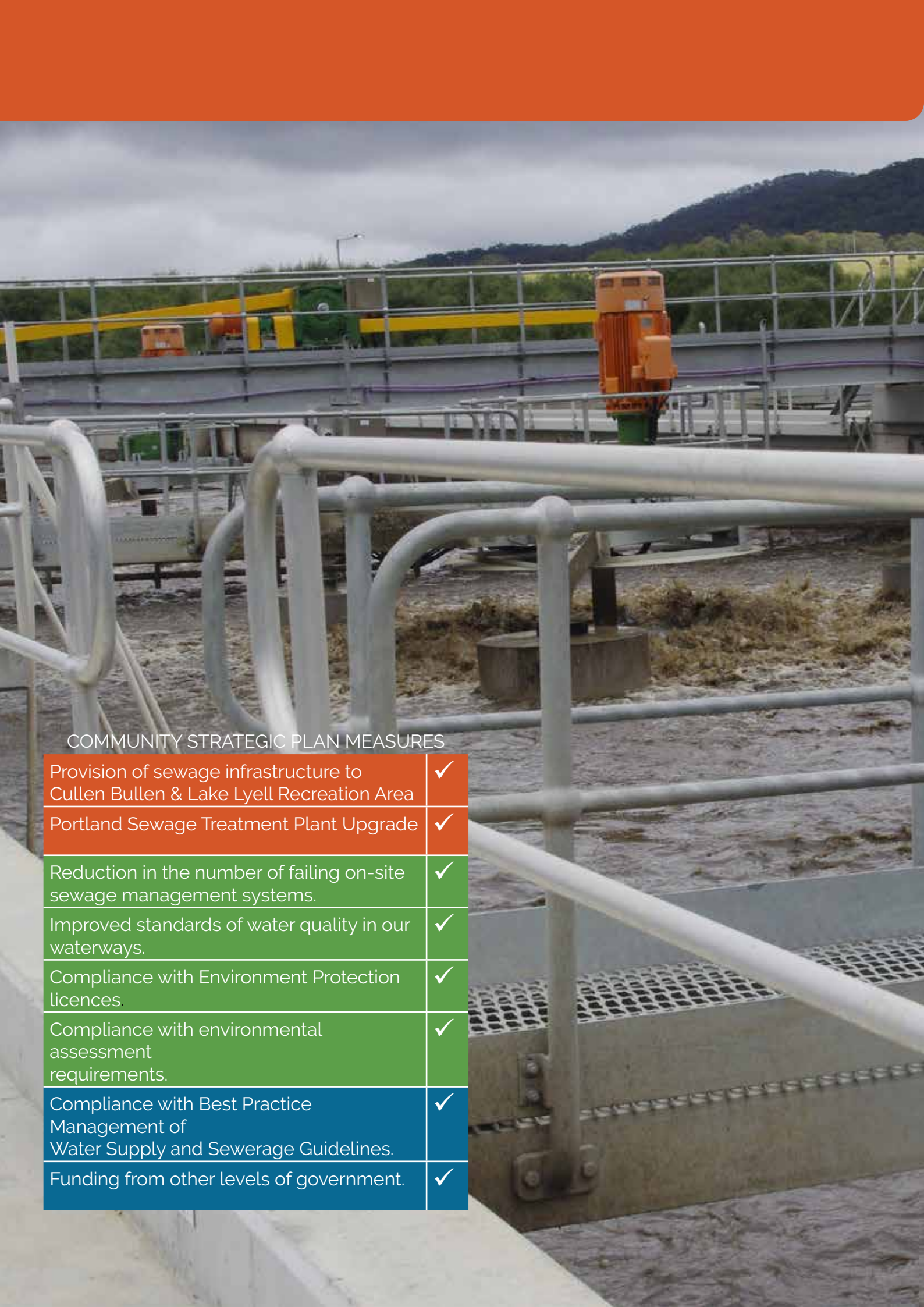
Will provide connection to over 90 residential properties

Using a real discount rate of 7%, the total project generates a new present value of over \$4.2m with a benefit cost ratio of

1.45

Lake Lyell Onsite Wastewater

Flow testing and data collection and an options study have been completed to ascertain the scope of works for the design of the onsite wastewater management system.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Provision of sewage infrastructure to Cullen Bullen & Lake Lyell Recreation Area	✓
Portland Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade	✓
Reduction in the number of failing on-site sewage management systems.	✓
Improved standards of water quality in our waterways.	✓
Compliance with Environment Protection licences.	✓
Compliance with environmental assessment requirements.	✓
Compliance with Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Guidelines.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓

Water & Waste Water Management



The Quality of Drinking Water

Council undertakes routine monitoring of the drinking water supply to ensure that it complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

The following plans and strategies have been developed and implemented to ensure the water security of the Lithgow LGA:

- Drought Management Plan
- Water Loss Management Plan
- Strategic Water and Sewer Business Plans
- Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan Evaluation Study
- Drinking Water Quality Management Plan.

The following plans and strategies are currently being developed:

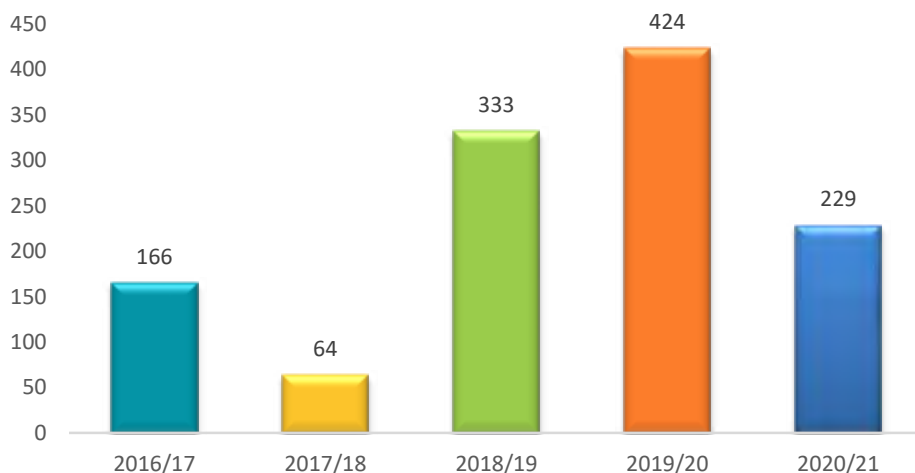
- Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan

Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity and Natural Watercourses

The Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 2014 has provided for the protection of biodiversity and natural land formations and watercourses through the implementation of environmentally sensitive overlays.

Council continues to apply and implement significant state government legislation such as Planning For Bushfire and the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment SEPP to manage bushfire threat to settlement and water quality of the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.

Septic System Inspections



Due to resourcing, the Septic System Inspections program stalled in 2017/18. COVID 19 Restrictions have also impacted the program in 2020/21.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Improved standards of water quality in our waterways	✓
Reduction in the number of failing on-site sewage management systems.	✓
Compliance with Environment Protection Licences.	✓
Fulfil Council's appropriate regulatory authority responsibilities under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act.	✓

Water & Waste Water Management

Ensuring water security and capacity of the region for sustainable growth and development.

2

Prescribed
Dams

1

Water
Treatment
Plant

8,326

Consumers
connected to
potable water

9

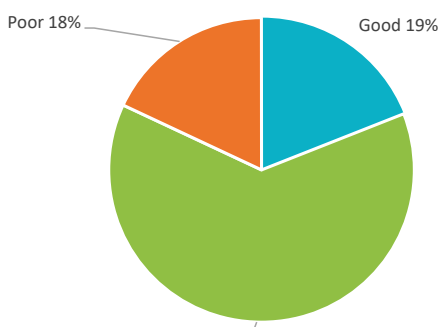
Reservoirs

3

Water Pump

242,671m
of water mains

Condition of Water Network



WATER NETWORK

The Council currently spends approximately \$2 million per annum on water supply network maintenance. The majority of the water network is in good to average condition. It is estimated that planned investments in the water network will allow Council to renew poor condition assets and ensure that adequate services are provided.

Lithgow City Council is a Local Water Utility providing water treatment and transportation to residents in the Lithgow, Wallerawang, Portland, Rydal, Cullen Bullen and Glen Davis. Council faces many challenges in the delivery of water delivery and sewerage transportation.

These challenges are experienced both from a service delivery and level of service perspective:

1. Meeting requirements of various regulators such as the Environment Protection Authority, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and New South Wales Health
2. Council administration is committed to consistent improvement across its water and sewer systems in both the operation of the systems as well as planning for the future growth and long-term water security.
3. Meeting community expectation.

In recent times, Lithgow City Council has experienced many issues with water quality of the supply coming from Oberon Dam which is controlled by WaterNSW. This Dam has been impacted by natural disasters. WaterNSW and Council worked diligently to provide water to residents during times where pipelines were broken, quality was low and the community needed treated water. Moving through this time and the various issues Council has faced with regard to managing the networks, Council has identified the following path forward.

Asset Management

The Water and Wastewater Directorate is working diligently on the delivery of an improved Asset Management scheme for water and sewerage networks, which will identify, assess and allow for comprehensive planning for infrastructure operation, maintenance, delivery of future works and renewal and continuation of current service. This will include condition assessments of infrastructure, planning strategies such as the Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy and creation of Asset Management Plans across the system to work in with Council's other plans.

Communication

The installation of a smart metering system continues to be improve our ability to track water usage, communicate with customers and detect potential leaks that could cause customers undue expense.

Council's Aqualus, previously MiWater, system allows property owners to sign up and track their water usage as well as be notified of leaks and if works are being carried out in their area.

Council will undertake to provide more updates on projects across the water and sewer network via its current channels of communication which includes social media updates, issuing media releases and utilising the Aqualus system.

Future Direction

Lithgow City Council looks to become a leader amongst Local Water Utilities with a focus on providing a sustainable, long-term and secure water source for the community. Council is striving for consistent improvement and efficiencies in its operation whilst ensuring Levels of Service are maintained for the present and into the future for potable water delivery and sewerage transportation and treatment. Council also looks to improve its water security now and into the future for the whole of the LGA by completing options assessments on the variety of sources we currently use and others that may be available in the future. This work is being carried out through the development of an Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy.

Water & Waste Water Management



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Water infrastructure upgraded	✓
Increased use of alternative energy sources	✓

Water Loss Management Program

Lithgow City Council is looking to lower energy consumed during water pumping by reducing water loss in the water reticulation network. Previous reports, have indicated a loss of up to 25% of the total system input.

In order to reduce water loss sustainably it is important to know where and when excess water is being consumed within the network.

This requires measurement of flows into smaller sectors of the network, often called district metered areas. This allows the identification of poorly performing areas and much better knowledge of bursts and leaks as they occur. Instead of annual reporting, this type of system can allow timely notification of burst and leak levels, reducing run times and therefore annual volume of water lost.

The Water Loss Program involves dividing the Lithgow network into a number of District Metered Areas (DMA's). Each zone has flow and pressure monitoring installed to not only track Minimum Night Flow which is the best indicator of leakage levels, but also system pressure and other anomalous flow patterns. A system which analyses this data in the background and indicates any anomalies through a web based platform has been installed. This type of automated system will reduce human analysis time and improve indication of anomalous data.

Installation works were completed by 30 June 2015. During 2015/16, Council recorded a water loss of 707.9ML. This amount is non-revenue water and includes council buildings, parks and sporting fields, fire fighting and mains flushing. Council's water loss management system has allowed council to better account for all water produced.

- In 2016/17 council installed meters on all council facilities which will result in a decrease in unaccounted water for Council.
- In 2017/18 Council rolled out new metered standpipes across the Local Government Area to allow easier access for all residents to bulk treated potable water.

Smart Meter

In 2018/19 Council commenced preparation for the replacement of water meters with Smart Meters as proposed in the Water Loss Management Plan to reduce the amount of non-revenue water which currently equates to between 30-36% of the amount of water that Council purchases and treats. Council's target is to reduce this to below 15% over the coming years. With the majority of water meters being over 10 years of age (some in excess of 20 years of age), this project was deemed necessary and works are funded through Council's water fund with no increase in water rates for residents.

In 2019/20 the Smart Metering Program was completed. Difficulties were experienced with the roll out and integration which caused a delay to the issuing of water accounts. Ongoing issues with receiving the data from meters which was addressed in 2020/21 as part of the ongoing operation and maintenance of Council's water meter fleet.

141

Meters installed
on council
properties

6

Metered
standpipes
installed

8,341

Smart Meters
installed

Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant

Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant was commissioned in 1985 and the existing sand media filters were at the end of their useful life. Council engaged Xylem Water Solutions to undertake an under drain and media filter replacement.

The works schedule was created to limit the potential impacts to the residents of Lithgow supplied by the Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant. This ensured that the plants capability to supply water was not reduced to levels that would impact on the ability of council to supply water to the community.

The upgrade works were internally funded by council at a cost of \$699,942. This project was completed under budget and on time with no interruptions to the supply of water to the community.

This upgrade was able to increase flow rates through each of the 6 media filters by 25% while decreasing the turbidity of water treated by 75%. The media replacement is able to achieve a cost saving of \$100,000 per annum on backwash water as well as saving 30,000 Kl of water per year.

This upgrade will ensure the water supplied to the residents of Lithgow is of the highest quality and will meet the Australian drinking water guidelines for many years to come. The quality of water able to be produced now that the filters have been upgraded is 0.05ntu. this equates to a 75% increase in relative clarity.

These works have increased the useful life of the existing facility by 25 years. This increase also allows council to better manage the supply of water to the whole of the LGA during times of limited supply off the Fish Riverwater supply scheme.

The reduction in frequency and volume of backwashing of the filter media will also have a positive effect on the environment by reducing the amount of sludge by producing a more concentrated sludge volume and reducing the amount of by product needing to be disposed of at landfill.

Project cost
\$699,942

Increase flow
rates to **6** media
filters by **25%**
each.

Decreased
turbidity of water
treated by **75%**.

Media replace will
achieve a cost
saving of

\$100,000
per annum.

30,000Kl
of water will be
saved per annum.

Water quality is
0.05ntu = 75%
increase in
relative clarity.

Increased the useful life of the facility by

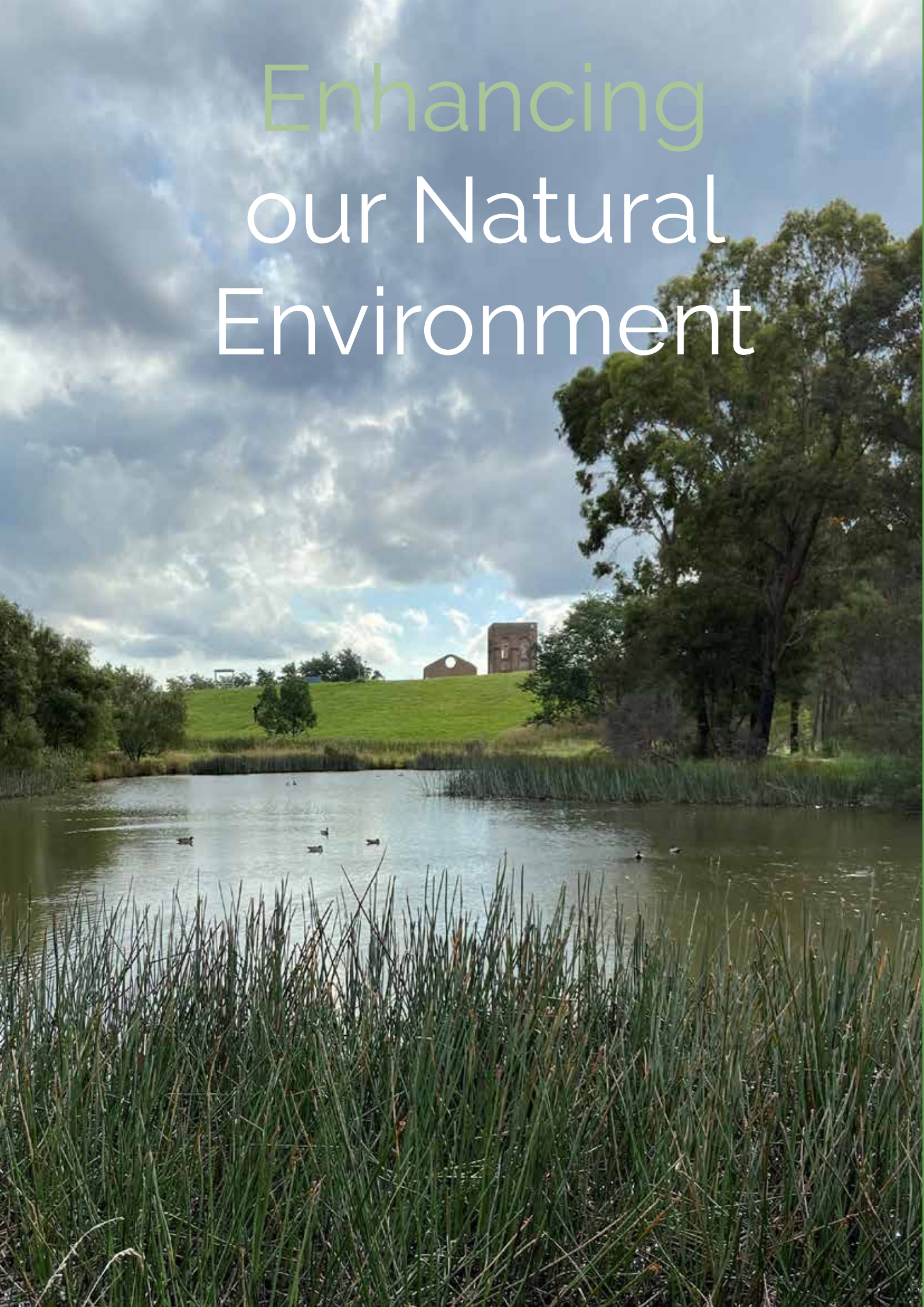
25 years.



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURE

Water infrastructure upgraded	✓
Improved standards of water quality in our waterways.	✓
Compliance with Environment Protection licences.	✓
Compliance with environmental assessment requirements.	✓
Compliance with Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Guidelines.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓

Enhancing our Natural Environment



The Lithgow local government area contains a unique and diverse environment that is a significant lifestyle, community and economy asset for the area. This Principle Activity Area focuses on enhancing, managing and maintaining the Lithgow region's distinct and exceptional natural environment by:

- Supporting biodiversity.
- Planning for future impacts of climate change and population expansion.
- Pursuing innovative and ecologically sustainable policies and approaches to development and community living.

Community Priorities

The table below provides progress with community and councillor priorities identified as part of the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

Priority	Page reference
Protection	
Identify vulnerable natural areas within Lithgow and ensure its protection	24,89,134
Protect the natural environment from any adverse effects from development within the area.	89,130,134
Plant more trees	130
Upkeep the more rural areas of the community	89
Promotion	
Complete and utilise the outcomes of the Hassans Walls Reserve Plan of Management.	134-135
Use Lithgow beautiful environment as a marketing tool for attracting tourists.	78-80
More walking/biking tracks	126-129, 135
More natural parks	132-135
Waste	
More waste control	166-177
Transport	
Keep the road network maintained	118-123
Built Heritage	
Preservation and maintenance of historical and heritage buildings	84,108-109



Challenges

Moving Forward

Under the key theme of 'Enhancing our Natural Environment' the most valued aspect of the Lithgow area is considered to be the location, providing a rural lifestyle in a beautiful area whilst still being within relatively close proximity to Sydney.

The Natural Environment and Heritage were listed in the top 4 values with "clean air, low noise, no traffic and location - scenic attraction being listed as attributes to be valued.

Growth potential (availability of land), tourism, education, transport connections and location were seen as strengths. However, environmental management was seen to be the greatest challenge for Lithgow over the next 10 years.

Challenges which will impact this include:

1. Managing and sustaining the environment
2. Population growth.
3. Transitioning from a coal based economy to renewable energy
4. Drought
5. Bushfire
6. Severe storms and flooding
7. Climate change
8. Parity of pricing for electric vehicles
9. Creating a "smart city" mentality within the LGA.

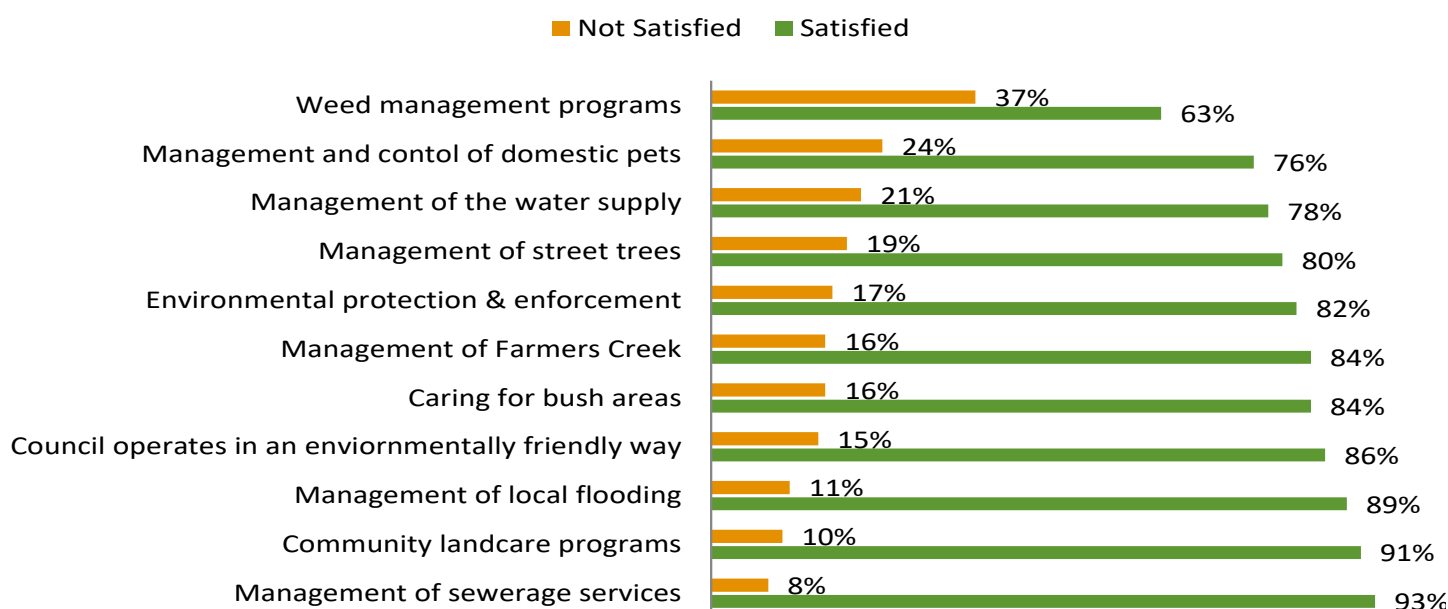


Community Strategic Plan 2036

In the 2016 Community Satisfaction Survey, 407 residents from across the local government area were surveyed and asked to rate their level of satisfaction with Environmental Services conducted by Council. The table below shows that residents are least satisfied with Council's Weed Management Programs. This is an area for further investigation to gain a greater understanding of community expectation in this area. In the Lithgow LGA, management of roadside weeds and noxious weed control on private property is predominately undertaken by Upper Macquarie County Council. Council's weed management program includes:

- Weed and willow control in Farmers Creek.
- Revegetation and weed removal as part of Reserve Management Programs

Environmental Services



Note 1: Satisfied measures the combined results for 'somewhat satisfied', 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied', while Not Satisfied measures the combined results of 'not very satisfied' and 'not at all satisfied' responses.

Note 2: Environmental protection and enforcement refers to activities such as building site inspections and rubbish dumping.

Environmental Monitoring

In 2011, the New South Wales Government passed legislation (The Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment Act 2011, or PEOLA Act), which requires Lithgow City Council to monitor its discharges to the environment (land, water or air) as part of its Environment Protection License conditions and publish that monitoring data within 14 days of receipt. Results are published on Council's website for the following locations:

- Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant
- Lithgow Sewage Treatment Plant
- Portland Sewage Treatment Plant
- Wallerawang Sewage Treatment Plant
- Lithgow Solid Waste Facility
- Portland Garbage Depot.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Increased use of alternative energy sources	✓
Council's status as a 'green employer' promoted.	✓



Minimise the effects of Climate Change

Energy Savings

Lithgow City Council Administration Building - Lithgow Council have successfully installed Solar panels to the Main Administration Building at 180 Mort Street, Lithgow. This will assist council to offset running costs, and also provide emergency back up to the building in the event of power outages

Aquatic Centre – The second project, was to have solar installed to the Aquatic Centre roof to offset running costs incurred by the facility, and reduce carbon emissions. Concerns arose when council engaged engineers to ensure the additional weight of the solar panels on the roof of the indoor facility, was not going to have an impact on the structural integrity of the roof.

Council, along with the installers have had to come up with an alternate plan to install the required amount of solar for this facility.

We are proposing to install solar panels on the bank / hill of the outdoor facility. This proposal, being the only alternative, increasing costs over projected budget. Council is currently seeking additional funding to secure this project

Water Savings

Infrastructure Services are currently working closely with our Water & Wastewater Department to monitor and **measure water consumption** in our high use areas. Water consumption figures are being established under normal operations, from here the organisation is looking for any infrastructure issues that can be rectified to reduce wastage we are also investigating water saving initiatives.

Lithgow Council obtained grant funding to install **irrigation systems** (see p142) to a large percentage of sports fields, many benefits come with obtaining this infrastructure, such as:

- Complete control over the water usage ,and quantities
- Irrigation can occur over night, reducing the amount of wasted water due to evaporation
- Irrigation can be turned off during wet weather events
- Productivity and resources are freed up to perform meaningful field preparation work

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Responsible Waste Management

Lithgow City Council is responsible for:

- Lithgow Solid Waste Facility
- Portland Landfill
- Wallerawang Landfill
- Capertee Landfill
- Waste Transfer Stations at: Tarana, Meadow Flat, Angus Place, Hampton and Glen Davis.

1

Household
Chemical
Collection

Service per year

2

Bulky waste
Collection
Services per year

4

Greenwaste
Collection
Services per

year

- Lithgow Council is part of the Netwaste Group - a voluntary regional waste group formed in 1995 to provide collaborative approaches to waste and resource management. Covering almost 40% of the state, benefits are delivered to 26 member councils in regional NSW.
- The Annual Household Chemical Collection service organised through Netwaste and funded by the EPA
- 2 bulky waste collection services per annum were provided for residents with a kerbside service.
- 4 green waste collection services per annum were provided for residents with a kerbside service.
- Waste trenches/cells are progressively developed and maintained as required at Portland, Wallerawang and Capertee Landfills.

The Lithgow City Council Waste Collection Contract is provided to a number of villages and Lithgow suburbs through a contract between Lithgow City Council and JR Richards.

The current domestic service includes the weekly collection of a 240litre MGB for household waste and 240litre MGB for fortnightly recycling collection of standard co-mingled recyclable items such as glass, aluminium, steel, plastics, paper and cardboard.



Waste Strategy Review

Following on from the Lithgow Council Waste Strategy 2011-2016, a feasibility study was undertaken to fully investigate all existing waste management services and facilities in the LGA and opportunities for the future development of waste management infrastructure.

The investigation resulted in an update to the Lithgow Waste Strategy in 2017 to help deliver an integrated facility network that is efficient and effective and provides a quality service to residents, ratepayers and businesses.

Council is continuing to review and improve waste infrastructure including:

1. Development of Resource Recovery Centre (RRC) at Lithgow Solid Waste Facility to increase resource recovery and reduce waste going to landfill.
2. Review of rural landfills with the aim of rationalising sites, meeting increasingly stringent regulatory requirements, improving resource recovery and maintaining a quality service to residents.
3. Review of existing landfill capacity at Lithgow landfill to determine a time frame for a new landfill.
4. Based on the life of Lithgow landfill and limitations of Blackmans Flat future landfill site, assessing potential alternative sites for a landfill and resource recovery facility.
5. Undertaking pre-feasibility assessment for a potential future site identified through step 4.

This work ensures that waste infrastructure meets the needs of the community and maximises resource recovery, minimises environmental impact and offers a high-quality level of service to residents.

Efficient waste management has many environmental benefits through diverting waste from landfill, maximising value of resources and minimising environmental impacts of waste facilities. Appropriately planned infrastructure is critical in achieving efficient waste management.

The ongoing waste infrastructure project ensures the Lithgow community has a local landfill facility for many years into the future and is not required to send waste outside the LGA.

Security of waste management has significant environmental and economic benefits to the community.

Landfill space is becoming increasingly valuable and security of waste infrastructure avoids future costs associated with waste management.

Lithgow Council is well positioned in terms of landfill capacity but importantly has the opportunity to use waste infrastructure to significantly improve resource recovery with possible economic development opportunities in the LGA.



WasteInfo App

Available from Google Play or the Apple App Store - search Lithgow Council Waste

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



Resource Recovery Centre

The construction of the Resource Recovery Centre (RRC) at the Lithgow Solid Waste Facility commenced on 10 May 2021. The Centre will provide the community with a number of significant advantages now and into the future including increased resource recovery, reduced waste to landfill and improved public safety.

In the short term this will improve the customer experience with all-weather access to waste and recycling disposal. Customers will no longer have to drive to the tip face improving safety and increasing resource recovery options. In the longer term it will provide the required infrastructure for the management of waste in Lithgow and will continue to operate as a transfer station following closure of Lithgow landfill.

Recyclable materials are currently transported by JR Richard to Visy in Smithfield for processing.

The RRC will consist of a recycling shed and transfer station to serve as a drop off location for small residential vehicles with separate areas to sort and place re-usable and recyclable items. Included will be a Community Recycling Centre (funded by the Environmental Protection Authority) where problem wastes can be dropped off including paint, oil, batteries, gas cylinders, fluorescent light tubes and smoke detectors.

Recovered materials will be sent off-site for further processing and/or beneficial re-use. A stockpile area will allow sorting and processing of construction and commercial waste to provide further resource recovery and increased diversion from landfill.

The project ensures Lithgow Solid Waste Facility:

- Can continue to operate as a landfill whilst providing improvements for resource recovery and customer service.
- Continues to meet environmental regulatory requirements plus implement improvements to meet modern standards.
- Continues to provide appropriate waste management services in the LGA.

Lithgow Solid Waste Facility

The Lithgow Solid Waste Facility (SWF) is the primary waste facility in the LGA and continued operation is critical in meeting waste disposal requirements for local residents and businesses. On 1 January 2021, Council commenced 'in-house' operation of the facility.

In-house operation follows more than 25 years of contract operation of the facility and allows Council to adapt to the ever-changing waste environment. The new operation provides the opportunity to improve resource recovery and provide the best value to ratepayers and the community. The Initial changes to the management of the facility included:

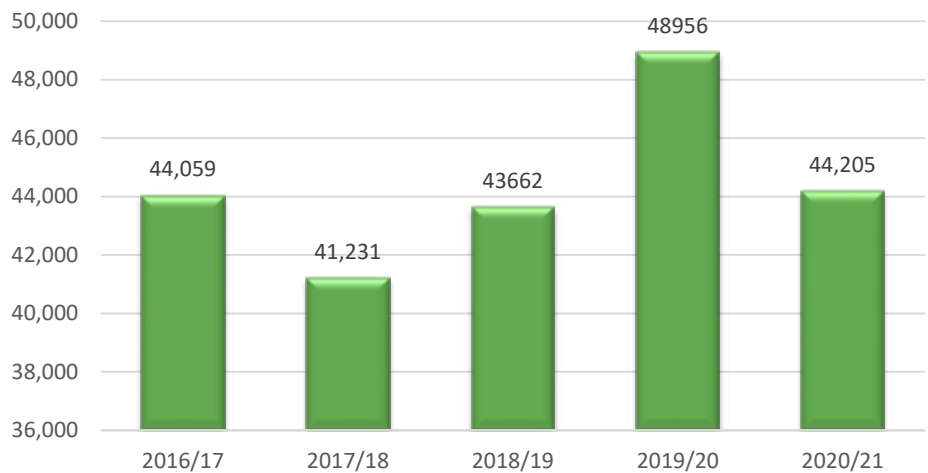
- Cashless operation
- Increased supervision of unloading from 1 January 2021, to ensure only permitted wastes are disposed on site and improve resource recovery by identifying materials that can be placed in resource recovery stockpiles

Council operation increased employment by engaging a full time Site Supervisor and full time General Labourer. The site now employs: 1 Site Supervisor, 3 Resource Recovery Operators, 1 General Labourer, 2 Gatehouse Controllers. An additional operator will be recruited in 2021/22. Importantly there were no job losses as a result of the changeover.

Whilst the priority has been ensuring a smooth transition and no interruption to services, Council is now in a position to improve site operations and resource recovery. The construction of the Resource Recovery Centre is an integral part of this process.

NOTE: In 2019/20 48,956t of waste was received. This included 6,000t of bushfire waste which was an extraordinary event. Excluding bushfire waste, 42,956t was received, This is a slight reduction from previous year of 43,662t, which is a good result.

Lithgow Waste Facility



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Reduction per capita of tonnes of waste to landfill	✓
Number of items deposited at the Recycling Centre for the e-Waste Program.	✓
Funding from other levels of government.	✓

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Lithgow Solid Waste Facility

In order to comply with increased regulatory requirements and industry standards at the Lithgow SWF Council has completed the following since 2016:

- Constructed clean water diversion drains to divert natural water around the site and avoid interaction with operational areas.
- Completed a long-term filling plan
- Implemented security improvements to the weighbridge and gatehouse including CCTV.
- Completed a Water Management Study to incorporate current landfill operations
- Completed a Landfill Capping Concept Design to prepare for progressive rehabilitation.
- Commenced construction of the Lithgow Resource Recovery Centre on the site.

These activities ensure Lithgow SWF:

- Can continue to operate as a landfill whilst providing improvements for resource recovery and customer service.
- Continues to meet environmental regulatory requirements
- Ensures the facility improvements meet modern standards
- Continues to provide appropriate waste management services in the LGA.

Appropriate planning and incremental development of Lithgow SWF removes the risk associated with the site resulting from either regulatory intervention or sudden changes in operation.

As the waste regulatory environment changes along with community expectations in terms of resource recovery and amenity, it is important that waste facilities are updated to ensure continuity of operations.



Lithgow SWF offers multiple improvements in terms of diversion from landfill to recycling programs.

Since 2016 Council has provided additional recycling services; paper/cardboard, waste oil, E-waste, tyres, mattresses and more recently solar panels. Scrap metal recycling and on-site processing and re-use of green waste has continued.

The following waste streams were notably successfully diverted from Lithgow landfill in 2020/2021.

59.06t

Mattresses

13.62t

Tyres

733.16t

Scrap Metal

63.74t

Cardboard

Rural Landfills

Angus Place

In 2016/17 following the closure of the Angus Place Waste Depot, Lithgow Council has rehabilitated the site with the aim of achieving the most environmentally beneficial outcomes.

The rehabilitation installed site capping and revegetation to ensure the final surface provides a barrier to the migration of water into the waste, controls emissions to water and atmosphere, promotes sound land management and conservation, and prevents hazards and protects amenity. In addition, a Waste Transfer Station (WTS) was constructed onsite to continue to provide waste collection service to the residents of the area.

The new WTS provides access for residents in all weather to waste and recycling disposal options. Back to Base security camera has been installed to ensure the facility is only frequented by local residents.

Cullen Bullen

Cullen Bullen landfill has exhausted all available landfilling space with current operations unsustainable and in order to comply with the legislative requirements and the Lithgow City Council Waste & Recycling Strategy the Cullen Bullen Landfill Closure Plan was implemented in 2019/21.

Due to the proximity of Portland garbage depot and the considerable construction and ongoing operational rehabilitation of the site does not include construction of a waste transfer station. Discontinuing all operations at the site has provided a number of additional benefits to the community including; improved resource recovery at a central facility such as Portland and a reduction in illegal dumping from out of area waste.

All water management controls, shaping and capping works were completed in 2019/20. Re-vegetation of the site commenced in 2020/21.

Access to Portland Landfill was redesigned to provide residents from Cullen Bullen safe access to the Landfill. This included bulk earthworks, asphaltting and new kerb and median line marking was undertaken to adequately direct traffic.



Cullen Bullen Landfill site rehabilitation 2021



Tarana

The Tarana Transfer Station provides the community with a place to dispose and transfer waste safely in an environmentally sensitive manner that complies with the guidelines recommended by Waste Services NSW.

The following considerations influenced the design of the new facility:

- Waste storage in larger skips bin,
- Provision of recycling options,
- Easy transfer of waste from vehicles,
- Enclosed storage area to reduce windblown litter,
- Secure area to minimise vandalism and illegal dumping,
- Options assessment on the most suitable land.

The site is located between the western railway line and the Rural Fire Service shed in the village of Tarana. Due to the recent success of the Tarana markets discussions with the community focused on achieving an aesthetic consistent with the transfer stations purpose and other community uses within the vicinity.

Tarana residents have been provided with access to the Waste Transfer Station and are responsible for ensuring the site is secure after use to prevent disposal of out of area waste. One aim of the project was to reduce the volume of windblown litter leaving the site. In response the waste transfer station was fenced accordingly. This has reduced the staff time required to collect windblown litter and has improved the amenity of the village.

Lithgow City Council Waste & Recycling Strategy adopted on 27th November 2017

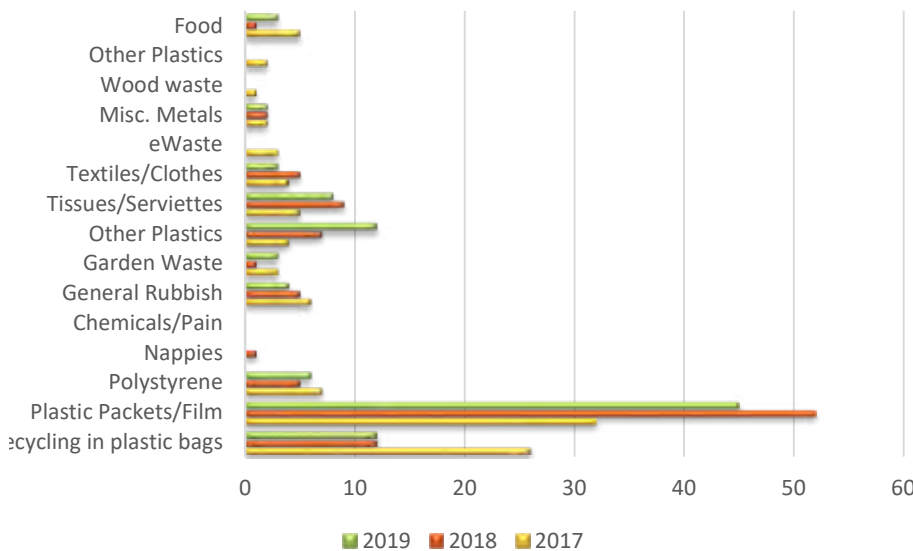
Recycling Bin Inspection Program

Council undertook a Recycling Bin Inspection Program (BIP) of 200 bins in Portland, Lithgow, Wallerawang and Bowenfels as a snapshot of current recycling behaviours from 2017 - 2019.

Contamination levels of recycling bins were recorded during the inspections and bins with no visible contamination received a 'Thank You' bin tag. Bins with contaminants received a 'Contamination' bin tag with the offending materials identified on the tag. The tags provided direct feedback to households about the contents of their recycling bin and 'recapped' what can and cannot be accepted to assist residents with their household recycling.

Both tags also aimed to raise awareness of Lithgow Council's Waste App, encouraging residents to download this from Google Play or the Apple Store to access waste information and updates.

Recycling Contamination %



69% OF INSPECTED RECYCLING BINS CONTAINED THREE OR LESS CONTAMINANTS IN 2017

84% OF INSPECTED RECYCLING BINS CONTAINED THREE OR LESS CONTAMINANTS IN 2018

86% OF INSPECTED RECYCLING BINS CONTAINED THREE OR LESS CONTAMINANTS IN 2019

Recycling Contamination Ratings %



RECYCLING CONTAMINATION RATINGS - LEGEND

- 0 = No contamination or 1 minor contaminant
- 1 = 2-3 contaminants (Low)
- 3 + 6-9 contaminants (High) or several bags of waste/recyclables
- 4 = 10+ contaminants (Extreme) or completely filled with bagged waste/recyclables

2020 Kerbside Waste Segregation Audit

What are we throwing in our **red** waste bin?



What are we throwing in our **yellow** recycling bin?



11 % of the bin contains items that could have been recycled through the yellow lidded recycling bin

56% of the bin contains waste that is compostable - with food/kitchen waste being the highest contributor (32%)

33% of the bin contains general



11% of the bin contains general waste contamination

2% of the bin contains compostable waste contamination

87 % of the bin contains recyclable items

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Reduction per capita of tonnes of waste to landfill	✓
Number of waste reduction education programs	✓

Waste Education Program

Council's waste education program encourages and endorses sustainable waste and resource behaviours, attitudes and practice and helps improve the community's knowledge of environmental issues.

The program is successfully promoted through local primary schools and early education centres.

Council's Primary School Education Outreach Program has included:

- 'Wonderful Wriggly Worms'
- 'Food Glorious Food, Litter, Litter Everywhere'
- 'Better Get It Sorted'
- We are Waste Wise - Art Competition



In 2018, Council worked with local businesses and stall holders to create a message of "rethink/avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle" at the annual Halloween Street Party.

In 2019/20, Council's Waste Services Team conducted the following activities to improve the community's knowledge of environmental issues:

- Organics recycling workshop at Lithgow Library Learning Centre.
- Waste Education Pop-up Display at the Lithgow Valley Plaza
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions a Primary School "We Are Waste Wise" Art Competition was held - Our Place, Our Future. The program was extremely successful with many entries received from schools across the LGA.
- Participated in the "Let's Recycle Right" campaign and posted a series of recycling videos developed by Western Sydney Region of Council's (WSROC) on Facebook and Council's website over 4 weeks in June.
- Promoted the Choose to Refuse campaign.





In 2020/21 Council participated in the Get Grubby Program and commenced rolling this successful program out to Schools & Early Learning Centres. The program, which was funded under the Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Fund, is affiliated with the popular children's show Get Grubby and consists of 'Get Grubby for centers' and 'Get grubby for families'



Council also supported the establishment of a compost hub by students of Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra - Lithgow Transformation Hub's Permaculture Design Course at the Lithgow PCYC in May 2021. This is to support the food waste reduction initiatives, as well as the Get Grubby education component of the program. See pp 62-63 for more information on the Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra - Lithgow Transformation Hub.

A close-up photograph of two individuals wearing white hard hats and high-visibility safety vests. They are looking down at a document or tablet. The person on the right is pointing at the document. The person on the left is wearing an orange safety vest, while the person on the right is wearing a yellow safety vest and a blue and white plaid scarf. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor construction or industrial setting.

Responsible Governance and Civic Leadership

Councillor Deanna Goodsell and Director Economic Development & Environment, Andrew Muir
inspecting the plans for the new Resource Recovery Centre

Leadership in practice must involve engagement and can involve making hard decisions, often balancing a number of different interests, including the role of the local government area in the wider regional and international communities. This Principal Activity Area focuses on:

- Excellence in leadership.
- Governance.
- Community engagement.
- Asset and resource management.
- In offering optimistic, united leadership, Council acknowledges the financial and legislative limitations within which it works.

Community Priorities

The table below provides progress with community and councillor priorities identified as part of the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

Priority	Page reference
<p>Open & Democratic Processes Ensure communication with the community is open and accessible Making council meetings more available to the public</p>	182-183
<p>Councillors Councillors skills should be appropriate for their role</p>	-
<p>Note: Councillor Training is recorded in the Annual Report.</p>	
<p>Efficient Council Better efficiency within the council</p>	Identified throughout this document
<p>Advocacy Advocate on behalf of Lithgow to the Federal government for improved transport and health services.</p>	52-57, 81
<p>Continue to present at the Regional Living Expo</p>	-
<p>Employment Make Lithgow Council one of the major employers of the area. Create internal employment opportunities such as traineeships and apprenticeships.</p>	- -
<p>Note: Council employment is recorded in the Annual Report</p>	

Challenges

Moving Forward

In 2016, Micromex Research surveyed 405 residents across the Lithgow LGA to ascertain support for the themes within the Community Strategic Plan. Under the key theme of 'Governance and Civic Leadership' 42% of those surveyed were 'very supportive' of this theme while 69% advocated for more focus in this area.

Leadership, in practice, must involve engagement and can involve making hard decisions, often balancing a number of different interests, including the role of the local government area in the wider regional and national communities. This theme is responsible for:

- Excellence in leadership
- Governance
- Community engagement
- Asset & Resource Management

Challenges which will impact this include:

1. Ensuring a financially sustainable Council that operates within its means.
2. Ensuring an open and inclusive Council
3. Embracing new methods of communicating with the community where they are at.
4. Government cost shifting
5. Developing service levels
6. Balancing community expectation and working within Council's means and resources



How we communicate and engage

council meetings

Information booth (display/exhibition)

We are talking to the community about...and we'd love to hear your views.

Fantastic, I have some great ideas about...

drop-in sessions

FACE TO FACE

events

workshops

Focus groups

Council has a high level of commitment to engaging with the community and actively seeks community input and advice into its strategic plans and processes on a regular basis.



Council's community engagement framework is based on the fundamental principles for engagement of social inquiry and justice

• Inclusiveness and diversity	• Openness, respect & accountability
• Leadership	• Purpose
• Information sharing	• Feedback and evaluation
• Resourcing and timing	

'Fit for the Future'

On 6 December 2016, Council received a 'Notice of intention to issue a Performance Improvement Order to Lithgow City Council under Section 438A of the Local Government Act 1993' from the, then Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Paul Toole, MP.

The Minister identified the following reasons for issuing the Notice:

1. The reassessment of Council's Fit for the Future (FFTF) proposal by the Office of Local Government identified a failure by Council to follow the principles of sound financial management with respect to ensuring that Council's forecast spending is responsible, sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses.
2. Council had reported annual deficits in its financial statements over the past five financial years, and consistently forecasted deficits in its Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for the next ten years until 2024-2025.
3. Council's FFTF reassessment proposal forecast to meet the financial sustainability criteria relied heavily on two proposed Special Rate Variations (SRV's). Council did not have a documented strategy to meet its forecast operating performance ratio to ensure its long term financial sustainability which did not include a SRV.
4. Following IPART's determination that Council is 'not fit', Council did not provide substantive evidence of strategies implemented since the IPART review to move Council towards long term financial sustainability.
5. Following re-assessment by the Office of Local Government against the IPART Criteria, it was identified that financial sustainability ratios forecast in Council's FFTF reassessment submission (General Fund) did not align with the ratios forecast in Council's LTFP (Consolidated Fund).

Performance Improvement Program

Moving Forward

In response, Council engaged the services of specialist consultants, Morrison Low to develop a Performance Improvement Plan that would position Council for a sustainable future. The work undertaken by Morrison Low to position Council for a sustainable future provides a range of long term benefits and value for Council and the community in the form of:

- 1 A robust financial plan with 37 improvement options for longer term sustainability.
- 2 Good practice financial management governance, procedures and processes.
- 3 It satisfied the additional Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements for Asset Management Plan and asset service levels.
- 4 Building confidence in the community that Council is financially sustainable to deliver on the Community Strategic Plan outcomes, key programs and projects.
- 5 Meeting all statutory obligations and being a position to maintain stewardship to the community's resources.
- 6 Ensuring transparent annual planning and quarterly reporting processes through the IPR Framework which shows the implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan.

35 of 37 actions complete

Note: the remaining actions are longer term actions which are ongoing.

Special rate variation

2017/18 Council undertook asset renewal expenditure across all asset classes as part of the Financial Management Improvement plan and Financial Management Maturity Assessment. Implementation

January 2019, Council resolved to proceed with making an application to IPART following consideration of the outcomes of an extensive community engagement process for a Special Rate Variation.

We reviewed the condition of our assets and detailed long term financial modelling and identified:

- \$19 million spent on the maintenance and renewal of community assets each year;
- A funding gap of \$1.1m per year
- Additional investment was needed to ensure that the number of assets in poor condition does not continue to grow.

The proposed SRV represented the continuation of the existing 4.77% SRV together with a further 4.23% plus rate peg (which was 2.7% for 2019/20);
in total

11.7% in 2019/20.

The 2017-2027 LTFP developed by Morrison Low identified the need for a new permanent SRV to commence upon the expiry of the existing SRV on 1 July 2019

13 May 2019
IPART announced that it had decided to approve the proposed SRV in part for an **increase of 9.0%**. The rate increase may be retained in the Council's general income base permanently.

What the council is doing to be efficient and address the Lithgow local government area's financial challenges.



1. Through sound financial planning, this strategy positions us to manage risks and cope with unexpected events, such as natural disasters and lower interest income.
2. Council's Resourcing Strategy implements and resources the vision of the Community Strategic Plan with clear priorities. For example, the Long Term Financial Plan identifies how additional assets will be funded, or existing assets renewed or upgraded and what provisions are made for changes to services.
3. Costs have been rising faster than revenue and Council must efficiently deliver the services which can be provided within our means. For example services reviews will need to consider available funding.
4. Council has commenced reviews of its service delivery to ensure it is meeting community needs and providing 'value for money'. Council will work with the community to set affordable levels of service. Areas recently reviewed include Waste Management, Library Services and Ranger Services.
5. Council will continue to advocate for a fair share of resources for the Lithgow area. We will continue to build partnerships with neighbouring and Western Sydney Councils as well as State and Federal Governments. For example, advocacy efforts have assisted Council to obtain over \$15M in grants in 2020/21 and to gain health support for the COVID-19 pandemic.

THREE OPTIONS FOR ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE

“The three scenarios which have been developed for community consideration will have varying impacts on our assets and service quality.

During 2021/22 & 2022/23, the community will be engaged on three scenarios for ensuring a sustainable future. In communicating these options, the Council will outline the following:

- The magnitude of the financial challenge and infrastructure funding shortfall facing the LGA over the next 10 years and its impact on service levels
- The need to consider community “capacity” to pay additional rates in determining the options to be presented.
- The need for residents to be able to have their say on whether or not they are prepared to pay additional rates to maintain and/ or improve service levels.

The three scenarios, which have been developed for community consideration, will have varying impacts on our assets and service quality.

Support for improved service levels

- **above 5% SRV + rate peg** (additional funds for improved levels of asset maintenance & renewal).

Scenario 2 - Service Levels Maintained

5% SRV + rate peg (sufficient funds for maintenance & renewal of assets in their current condition).

Scenario 3- Service Levels Reduced

0% SRV + rate peg only (we continue to constrain costs and reduce service levels over time to balance the budget).

There are local government specific financial benchmarks for assets. To meet these benchmarks, Council will need to increase the level of funding for the following assets:

- Transport (sealed roads, unsealed roads, footpaths, cycleways, bridges and road drainage)
- Stormwater Drainage
- Buildings

Increasing the level of funding for these assets will allow council to renew those which are currently in a poor condition. It will also ensure that the number of assets in poor condition does not continue to grow. It is essential that our community assets are safe, in working order and meet community expectations.

Scenario 1 will ensure that the Fit for the Future asset benchmarks are met over time.

Impact on Council Revenue

>\$1.1m p.a

Scenario 1

Service Levels improved

\$1.1m p.a

Scenario 2

Service Levels maintained

Rate peg
only

Scenario 3

Service Levels reduced

Business Improvement Program

Council recognises the importance of having an in-house service to develop, plan and facilitate business improvement across the organisation. By working together to identify 'agreed service levels at best value' we can ensure we are meeting the needs of the community.

The Service Planning and Process Improvement Framework identifies efficiencies, improves organisational performance and works towards ensuring that council is 'Fit for the Future'.

An Integrated Approach

The Service Planning & Business Improvement Framework is embedded in our Integrated Planning and Reporting process providing a connector between individual and organisational performance.

People

- Workforce, employee engagement, values, behaviours, performance management, learning and development, Work Health & safety.

Planning and Reporting

- Integrated Planning, reporting, measuring and engaging with the community.

Process Improvement

- Service focus, service reviews, continuous improvement.

Outcomes

- A service based approach to planning
- An integrated process for planning and budget development.
- Consideration of service delivery to inform budget needs.
- Increased community and employee engagement in relation to planning and delivery.



Service and Systems Reviews

The following activities have been undertaken:

- A review of the Operations Division by Blackadder & Associates which resulted in splitting the Operations Division into 2 Divisions; Infrastructure Services and Water & Wastewater Services.
- The Economic Development & Tourism Department was created and Community Working Parties convened to review Tourism, Events and the Retail Sector.
- Completed a Service Review of Rangers Department including the Animal Shelter and Compliance.
- Engaged consultants to undertake reviews of:
 - Library Services
 - Water & Wastewater
- Undertook Process Mapping for the Finance Department with over 100 processes mapped.
- Implemented MiWater, a public customer portal which allows consumers to monitor their water usage and billing.
- Installed over 80 GPS monitoring Units in councils' plant & equipment fleet.
- An internal audit has been completed of Council's payroll system.
- Achieved a reduction in printing/paper costs of greater than 20% through:
 - Implementation of electronic time sheets and purchasing
 - Installation of new multi-function printers and management software, Papercut.
 - Work from home arrangements during COVID-19 lockdown resulted in a reduction in printing costs due to staff relying less on hard copies of documents.
 - Increased number of staff with dual monitors is reducing the requirement to print.
 - Finance is progressing processes and procedures to attain efficiencies via implementation of electronic systems in rates, accounts payable, accounts receivable and accounting.
- The implementation of smart meters for water will also create efficiencies in the water billing process.

- Health checks on core business systems conducted to identify efficiencies in business processes included reviews of the Property and Rating, Finance, ECM and Payroll modules resulting in a program to implement changes and efficiencies.

Smart Water Meter Program

- Commenced installation of Smart Water Meters to reduce non-revenue water. Non-revenue water is water that has been treated and is then lost from the network infrastructure, through either unbilled (authorised) consumption, apparent losses (unauthorised consumption – water theft, meter inaccuracies) and real losses (leakage). This project seeks to address meter inaccuracies to reduce the amount non-revenue water which currently equates to between 30 – 36% of the amount of water that Council purchases and treats. Our target is to reduce this below 15% over the coming years.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Identified targets are implemented and achieved through the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.	✓
Internal auditing programs are implemented.	✓
Work together to interweave and optimise the sharing and coordination of Council resources and information.	✓
Information systems are secure and well managed.	✓
Council's fleet of plant and equipment is maintained.	✓

Planning for a sustainable future

Fees & Charges

Council undertakes a comprehensive review of its fees and charges on an annual basis. Since 2016, Council has utilised an improved fees and charges review methodology which includes:

- Rate peg is applied to all non-regulatory / non legislated fees and charges;
- Simplifying fee structures where possible; and
- Review of each fee and charge to identify:
 - conscious pricing principles,
 - new market opportunities and marketing of facilities,
 - cost to provide the service vs income generated;
- Regulatory / legislated fees and charges are applied on advice from relevant authorities.

Each year, a critical review of fees and charges is undertaken for a number of key areas including specific halls, development, waste, cemeteries, JM Robson Aquatic Centre, Council parks and sporting fields, and Water & Wastewater.

Internal Audit

The following internal audit programs have been completed:

- Contract and Project Management (2018/19),
- Payroll (2019), and
- Records Management (2020).

A three year Internal Audit Plan was endorsed by the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee in 2020 and is being implemented. Actions arising from internal audits are reported to the Audit Risk & Improvement Committee and the Finance Committee.

IT Solutions

IT solutions to optimise the sharing and coordination of Council resources and information

In 2020, Council initiated plans to migrate existing Technology One modules to a Cloud based solution.

The following IT solutions have been implemented and integrated with Council's enterprise solutions:

- Technology One Asset Management (2018 and ongoing)
- Worx Online – Council work orders (2020 and ongoing)
- Technology One Purchasing (2019)
- Bookable – facility bookings (2020)
- MiWater – smart water meter billing (2020)

Procurement Practices

In 2018, contract and project management was determined to be an area of extreme risk to Council. To address the risk, Council undertook a contract and project management internal audit project.

Identified improvement initiatives were included in new Project Management Guidelines which were rolled out across the organisation. The guidelines deliver a consistent, standardised and quality approach to the way projects are managed.

Participation in joint procurement contracts with Western Sydney Region of Councils (WSROC)

- Installed 74.1kW system atop of the Administration Building is charging up an 81kWh Tesla battery energy-storage system.
- 100% of residential streetlights are LEDs

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES

Annual review of fees and charges to ensure commercial competitiveness	✓
Financial and other alliances are developed with other local councils and CENTROC/WSROC	✓
Internal auditing programs are implemented.	✓
Council properties and assets are managed to maximise economic benefit.	✓
Council being recognised as a 'green' employer	✓

The [Enterprise Risk Committee](#) established teams to complete identified corrective actions to 4 areas of Council operation:

- Use of sporting fields
- Contractor Management
- Risk Culture
- Information Security.

Action plans were developed for all areas and implemented as follows:

- Processes and changes were implemented for sporting facilities.
- The capture of contractor company and workers has been refined and council is now using one system for contractor management - Vault.
- Management of council risks is being undertaken using a uniform and simplified risk framework.
- New policies and procedures have been developed for information technology security.

[Business Continuity Sub Plans](#) have been developed for areas effected by the COVID-19 Pandemic ie. Domestic Waste Services; Customer Service; Finance Bank Payment Transfers and Procurement; Infrastructure Street cleaning, Rural Roads Sealed and Urban Roads Sealed; People and Services payroll and Human Resources; Water and Wastewater Sewer Treatment and Sewer Pumping.

In accordance with the [Asset Management Improvement Plan](#), Council is currently collecting and verifying data to build the Enterprise Asset Management and WorxOnline Systems. Once implemented, these systems will enable Council to plan future asset development based on accurate data. During 2019/21:

- Data for Transport and Water & Sewer Assets were imported into the new system.
- A consultant was engaged to progress the project and development commenced on a trial sample site.
- Maintenance and inspection schedules have been prepared for testing in the WorxOnline system
- Relevant policies and standard working procedures have been prepared.



Lithgow City Council

180 Mort Street

PO Box 19

LITHGOW NSW 2790

Phone: 02 6354 9999

Email: council@lithgow.nsw.gov.au

www.council.lithgow.com