

Welcome to

LITHGOW



Lithgow  
CITY COUNCIL

Traditional home of the  
Wiradjuri People

2016/17  
A Year in  
Review



Lithgow  
CITY COUNCIL

Annual Report

# 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.



NAIDOC Week 2016 Celebrations in Queen Elizabeth Park.

# *Table of Contents*

Message from the Mayor	3
Message from the General Manager	4
Introduction	5
Caring for our Community	17
Strengthening our Economy	29
Developing our Built Environment	39
Enhancing our Natural Environment	53
Governance & Civic Leadership	63
Statements Against Reporting Requirements	69

# Message from The Mayor



Councillor Stephen Lesslie  
Mayor

As Mayor of Lithgow City Council, I am pleased to present the 2016/17 Annual Report. This report highlights the challenges Council has faced over the past year, the most significant of which was being pronounced 'not fit for the future'. However, I am proud to say that we have worked together and overcome this and other obstacles and that we are working towards ensuring the long term sustainability of the Lithgow local government area.

As you read through this document you will see that projects such as the Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant are nearing completion. Once complete the plant will allow for future growth in Portland.

Planning and design have been completed for the redevelopment of Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Square. Construction is scheduled to start on 6 November and estimated to be completed in late March 2018. Council will endeavour to ensure minimal disruption

to shoppers and retailers during this time. We look forward to the opportunities that the redevelopment of these spaces offer, creating a more vibrant and attractive Main Street for Lithgow.

Furthering the tourism potential of the area, Council awarded a tender in early 2017, for the construction of board walks, viewing platforms, pathways, landscaping and carpark works which will transform the Lithgow Blast Furnace into a major cultural heritage destination and venue for events, performances and exhibitions. Construction will commence in August 2017.

Council's roles and responsibilities within the community are many faceted and diverse, yet all of our projects and programs have one important thing which links them; they are all developed to ensure that the Lithgow local government area is a wonderful place to live, work, invest and play.

# *Message from The General Manager*

2016/2017 saw significant change in Council's top level administration. I commenced as the General Manger of Lithgow City Council in May 2017, toward the end of the reporting period. Following the departure of the previous General Manager a number of challenges were presented to the Acting Administration that required positive and decisive action. The most pressing of these was addressing concerns of the then Minister for Local Government on Council's long term financial sustainability and its 'Fit for the Future' status. This necessitated the engagement of independent experts and the preparation of a Fit For The Future Improvement Plan, Financial Maturity Assessment and revamped Long Term Financial Plan. Significant work was also done on revaluation of Council assets. All this will be vital in establishing the long term sustainability of the organisation which will place Council in the best position to continue in providing services to the community and concentrate on economic development initiatives to secure sustainable future for the Local Government Area.

Since I have started at Council a great deal more work has been done and the Office of Local Government is appraised on a monthly basis on Council's quest to be Fit for the Future. I am excited about overcoming these challenges and feel very positive about the future of the organisation. From a position of strength, long term economic development strategies can be built that can support our current business and industries and build on transitioning to other employment generating activities that will sustain the community for future generations.

Graeme Faulkner  
General Manager

# Introduction

Lithgow City Council is pleased to present its Annual Report for 2016-17. This report has been developed for our community, to share our progress over the past financial year. It provides a summary of the achievements we have made in working towards the Community Strategic Plan.

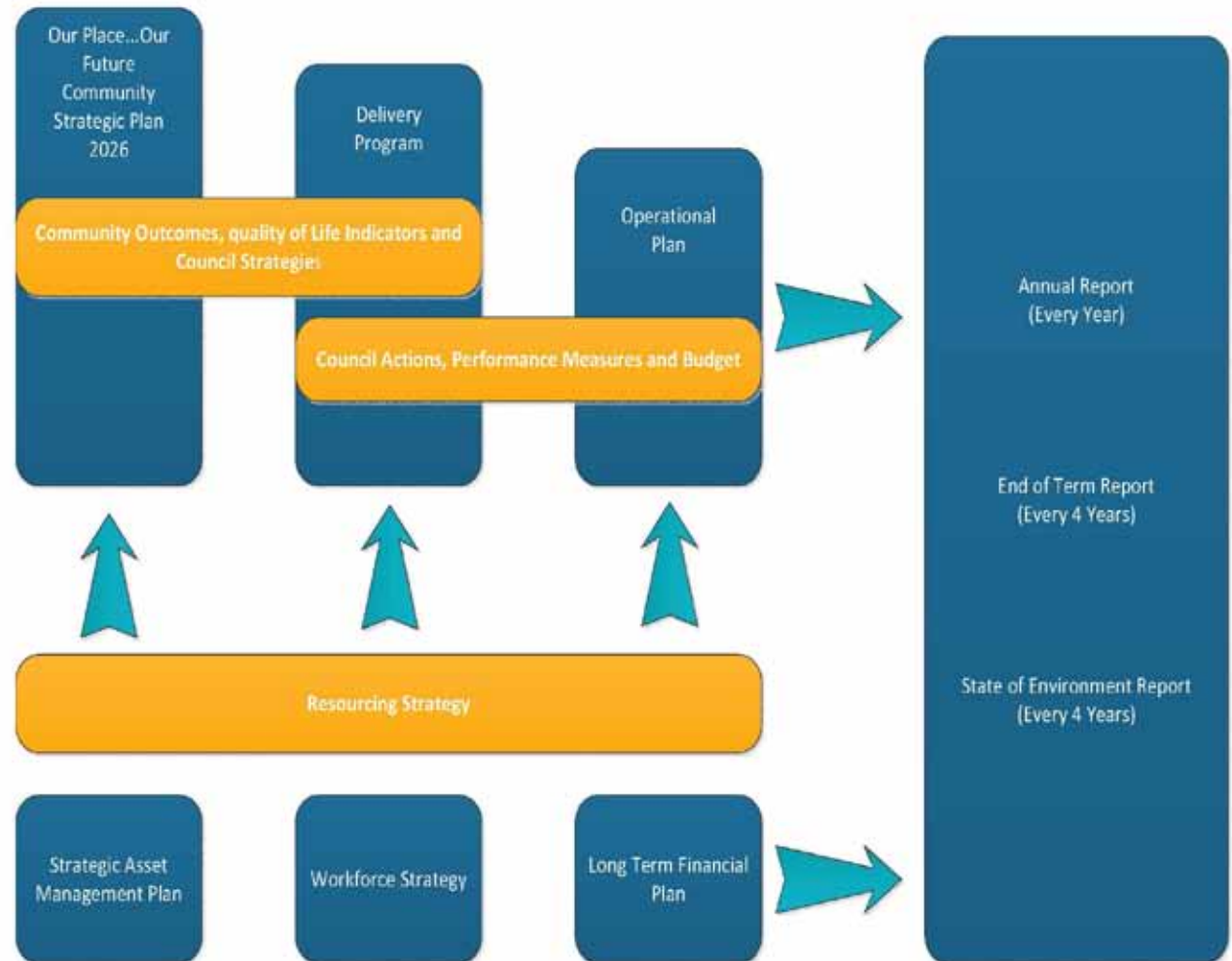
This report summarises our activities under each of our key themes:

- Caring for our Community
- Strengthening our Economy
- Developing our Built Environment
- Enhancing our Natural Environment
- Responsible Governance and Civic Leadership.

It provides an overview of Council's financial position, operations and progress, and is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act, 1993*.

A detailed report against our Delivery and Operational Plan and implementation of major capital and renewal projects is provided in our supplementary report in Attachment 1.

Audited financial statements are provided in Attachment 2.



# Strategic Direction

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the following shared community vision statement that the Lithgow local government area is

***“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.”***

## CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

- To plan and provide quality community and recreational facilities and services for a healthy, vibrant and harmonious community.
- Working together to support, celebrate and expand the social and cultural diversity of our community, whilst promoting healthy, active lifestyles in a safe environment.

COMMUNITY

## STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY

- Providing for sustainable and planned growth that supports a range of lifestyle choices and employment opportunities.
- 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.

ECONOMY

## DEVELOPING OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Planning for suitable infrastructure development to promote sustainable and planned growth, while enhancing the existing identity of the towns, villages and rural areas of the LGA.
- 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.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## ENHANCING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- To conserve and preserve the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure a sustainable and healthy community.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

## RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC LEADERSHIP

- A Council that focuses on strong civic leadership, organisational development and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

# Lithgow Regional Profile

The Lithgow local government area is located on the western ramparts of the Blue Mountains, 140 kilometres from Sydney. The Lithgow Local Government area totals 4,551 square kilometres from the Capertee and Wolgan Valleys in the north, Little Hartley in the east, Tarana in the south and Meadow Flat in the west.

The major urban centre of Lithgow nestles in a valley of that name, overlooked by the sandstone escarpments of the Blue Mountains.

In addition to the major urban centre of Lithgow, the Lithgow local government area has 12 villages/hamlets with mining or farming backgrounds. These smaller centres have proven to be attractive rural residential areas, along with the broader rural areas.

The Lithgow LGA lies almost wholly within the Wiradjuri Aboriginal nation, with the Gundungurra nation situated to the south and the Darug nation to the east.

Until recently Lithgow was perceived to be an inland mining and industrial centre, however, recent developments have seen Lithgow recognised as an important tourism destination, heritage centre and a desirable residential area as well.

The Lithgow local government area includes World Heritage Listed National Parks and State Forests, making Lithgow an important leisure destination for Sydney residents.

Lithgow has unlimited opportunities for outdoor activities such as bushwalking, mountaineering, camping, orienteering, hang gliding, horse riding, off road 4wd fishing, sailing and water skiing.

The estimated residential population at 30 June 2016 is 21,524.



Median Age: 45



Couples with Children: 23%



Older couples without Children: 20%



Non English speaking backgrounds: 4%



Unemployment: 8.41%



University attendance: 2%



Median weekly household income: \$987



Medium and high density housing: 10%



Households with a mortgage: 27%



Median weekly rent: \$231



Households renting: 23%

Source: <http://profile.id.com.au/lithgow/highlights-2016>

## How satisfied are you?

In April 2016, Council engaged Micromex Research to undertake a random telephone survey of residents in the Lithgow LGA to measure community attitudes and perceptions towards current and future services and facilities provided by Council. Key objectives of the research included:

- Current community priority issues
- Satisfaction with Council's performance overall
- Drivers of community satisfaction
- Importance and satisfaction with Council provided services and facilities
- Relative importance of Council provided services and facilities
- Satisfaction with customer service levels from Council staff.

This is the first time Council has engaged a consultant to undertake a Community Satisfaction Survey. It is intended that the survey will be undertaken biannually and that this initial survey will set a benchmark for future reference. The next survey is scheduled to be undertaken in 2018/19.

The data from this survey was used to inform the End of Term Report 2012-2016 and Community Strategic Plan 2030.



# 2016 Community Satisfaction Survey



Residents were concerned about current and future opportunities in regard to local employment, as well as attracting new business to the area.

There were also concerns around renewing and maintaining the local infrastructure, the management and process of development, as well as the provision of community facilities for residents.

Overall, 83% of residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's performance. This is in line with the NSW category benchmark. Significantly, residents living in the 'Rural North' region were palpably less satisfied with the overall performance of the Council.

Community satisfaction with Council staff and the elected members was 85% and 84% respectively.

Council is providing at least a moderate level of satisfaction for 56 out of 67 service areas.

The top 5 drivers of overall satisfaction account for just under 20% of overall satisfaction. These drivers included encouraging local business, town roads, community consultation, council responsiveness and the provision of community festivals and events.

# Our Council

## Councillors during the report period

Lithgow City Council is governed by nine Councillors who are elected in September every four years.

Councillors provide leadership and establish policy and direction for the Council and the local government area (LGA). There are no wards in the Lithgow LGA. The nine Councillors are elected by the community to represent the interests of all residents and to encourage communication between Council and the community.

From July 2016 - 11 September 2016 the following Councillors served the community of the Lithgow LGA:

- Councillor Maree Statham (Mayor)
- Councillor Ray Thompson (Deputy Mayor)
- Councillor Colin Hunter
- Councillor Wayne McAndrew
- Councillor Ross Higlett
- Councillor Frank Inzitari
- Councillor Joe McGinnes
- Councillor Peter Pilbeam
- Councillor Martin Ticehurst.

Following the 2016 local government elections, on 11 September a new Council was elected for the Lithgow Local Government Area:

- Councillor Stephen Lesslie, Mayor
- Councillor Wayne McAndrew, Deputy Mayor (from 23 January 2017)
- Councillor Ray Thompson
- Councillor Cassandra Coleman
- Councillor Joe Smith
- Councillor Maree Statham
- Councillor Steve Ring
- Councillor Martin Ticehurst Deputy Mayor (28 September 2016 - 13 December 2016).
- Councillor Geoff Cox.

In 23 January, Council reported the suspension of Councillor Martin Ticehurst and disqualification for a period of 5 years as of 13 December 2016.

Councillor Geoff Cox tendered his resignation from the role on 24 January effective immediately. As such, a by-election was held on 8 April 2017 and Councillors Deanna Goodsell and Darryl Goodwin were elected.



Clr Stephen Lesslie  
Mayor



Clr Wayne McAndrew  
Deputy Mayor



Clr Steve Ring



Clr Cassandra Coleman



Clr Maree Statham



Clr Darryl Goodwin



Clr Ray Thompson

## Council meetings

During the reporting period, Lithgow Council met every three weeks on a Monday, in the Council Chambers, 180 Mort Street, Lithgow to consider matters requiring a decision by Council. A total of 15 meetings were held.

Council meetings were open to the public except on occasion when there was a discussion of confidential items such as sensitive legal or commercial matters.

Business Papers were made available on the Friday before each Council meeting at Council's Customer Service Centre and on the website at [www.council.lithgow.com](http://www.council.lithgow.com).

### Participation in Decisions

Residents have the opportunity to address the Council at each council meeting as part of the Public Forum. This may include any matter listed for discussion at the meeting, or any other matter with appropriate notice.

Council's decisions are implemented by Council's staff under the leadership and direction of the General Manager.

### Section 355 Committees

Council has a number of committees made up of Councillors, Council Officers and members of the community who act in an official capacity on behalf of Council within the confines of the charter of the committee. Advisory committees provide advice to Council on specific subjects such as environmental or youth issues.

In addition to this Council appoints or convenes temporary working parties or task forces that assist in the development of short term projects, providing professional advice and community input. During the reporting period Council had one Taskforce, the Mining Taskforce.



Clr Joe Smith



Clr Deanna Goodsell

The Mining Taskforce is made of up Councillors, representatives of Centennial Coal, the Mining Unions and NSW Minerals Council and has been created to:

- Promote coal mining in our region; and
- Lobby State and Federal Governments around issues confronting coal mining in the region, including but not limited to, local coal supplies to Mt Piper and planning and environment concerns restricting mining.

## Council's role

To clarify the role and relationship with government and other bodies in providing infrastructure, facilities and services, the following descriptors apply:

Leader	Providing direction through planning policy.
Provider	Providing services and infrastructure.
Regulator	Of development, community health and safety and the environment.
Partner	With the community, government and private organisations.
Facilitator	To Bring together Local, State and Federal Governments, private and community objectives to achieve the best outcomes.
Advocator	on behalf of the local community.
Purchaser	or buyer of services or products.
Broker	Sourcing public or private funds to provide services or infrastructure.

# Our Organisation

## Organisation Structure

Lithgow City Council is structured into four Divisions:

- Executive
- Corporate and Community
- Environment and Development
- Operations.

**The services we provide include:**

- Asset Management
- Capital Works
- Community and cultural development
- Development assessment
- Environmental health and building control
- Recreation and open space management
- Urban Planning.

**Our internal services include:**

- Customer services
- Finance and Accounts
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Risk Management
- Information Systems
- Document Management
- Governance.

## What we do

**Provide and maintain facilities such as:**

- Parks and sports grounds
- Playgrounds and skate parks
- JM Robson Aquatic Centre
- Libraries in Lithgow, Wallerawang, Portland and Rydal
- Community buildings

**We care for the environment by:**

- Managing and enhancing bushland areas
- Providing environmental and waste education and recycling services
- Responding to pollution incidents and prosecuting polluters
- Monitoring the water quality of local waterways.

**We create a safer place to live by:**

- Maintaining and improving roads, footpaths and stormwater drains
- Working with emergency organisations such as the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service and NSW Police
- Managing the keeping of companion animals
- Treating and supplying drinking water to our community
- Treating sewage to a high standard to protect human health.

**We enhance our community by:**

- Listening to our community views
- Holding citizenship ceremonies, Australia Day Celebrations, Seniors Week Celebrations, Halloween and more.
- Offering services for seniors, young people, new migrants and people with a disability
- Providing financial assistance to community organisations
- Supporting local community groups such as sporting clubs, arts and charities
- Encouraging and promoting volunteering in our communities.

**We plan for the future by:**

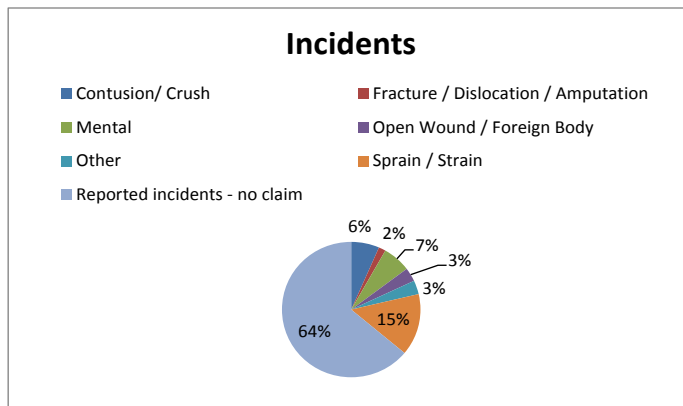
- Planning and managing the urban and rural environment
- Preserving heritage sites
- Consulting with the community about its needs
- Developing long term strategic plans for Council and the LGA.

# Our Workplace

## Organisational Development

During the reporting period the following Human resource activities for were undertaken:

- The appointment of 12 people to permanent positions
- 15 people left permanent employment with Council.
- The Work Health and Safety Committee meet every 4 weeks.
- 15,101 hours of sick leave was taken by employees.
- The Consultative Committee met monthly.
- There were 61 incidents reported with 22 of these resulting in a worker's compensation claim.



The following training was undertaken during 2016/17 as per the training plan:

Course	No. of Participants
Dignity & Respect in the Workplace	Whole of Council
Code of Conduct	Whole of Council
Leadership Program - 'Emerging Leaders'	6
Confined Spaces	2
Working at Heights	89
Ranger Workshop - mental health, personal security & tactical disengagement	2
Traffic Control - Stop/Slow	58
Traffic Control - Implement Traffic Control Plans	58
Level 3 SpraySmart Chemical - Initial Accreditation	4
Forklift Training	1
First Aid Training	74
Safe Handling of Sharps - 10340NAT	17
Safe Use ICS Diamond Chainsaw	10

## Equal Employment Opportunity

The following activities were undertaken during the reporting period to implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan:

- The integration of equal employment opportunity principles in recruitment and selection, annual performance reviews, the development of position descriptions, the development of the Training Plan, the ongoing maintenance of Council's training database and requirements relating to progression through Council's Salary Management System.
- All new employees were inducted including training on equal employment harassment and bullying prevention.
- A review of employee work procedures continued to ensure that they conform to equal employment opportunity principles.

# 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).

## Moving Forward

In response, Council engaged the services of specialist consultants, Morrison Low at a cost of \$114,500 to develop a Performance Improvement Plan that would position Council for a sustainable future by:

- Reviewing and developing Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) to incorporate a Fit for the Future improvement plan and strategies.
- Reviewing Council's Asset Management Plan and Special Schedule 7.
- Preparing a Financial Management Maturity Assessment to understand Council's Financial Management Maturity Status and developing an Improvement Plan with specific priority actions.

This work was completed as part of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPR). Following community consultation of the draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework suite of documents process during the exhibition period of all document in May/June 2016, documents were reported to Council and the the Office of Local Government within the required timeframe of 30 June 2016.

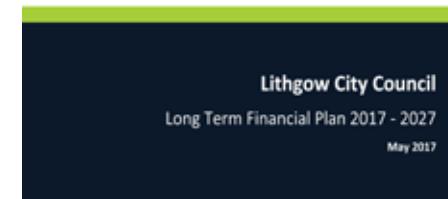
The work undertaken by Morrison Low to position Council for a sustainable future provides a range of long term benefits and value for Council and the community in the form of:

1. A robust financial plan with improvement options for longer term sustainability.
2. An opportunity for Council to provide improved services to the community.
3. Good practice financial management governance, procedures and process.
4. It satisfies the additional Integrated Planning and Reporting requirement for the Asset Management Plan and asset service levels.

5. Building confidence in the community that Council is financially sustainable to deliver on the Community Strategic Plan outcomes, key programs and projects.
6. Meeting all statutory obligations and being in a position to maintain stewardship of the community's resources.
7. Ensuring transparent annual planning and quarterly reporting processes through the IPR Framework which shows the implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan.

As part of the process, Morrison Low, conducted interviews with Management and conducted an internal workshop with Council staff to identify forward planning actions for inclusion in the FFTF Improvement Plan. These actions have been interwoven into the suite of documents that make up IPR Framework for implementation.

Morrison Low identified 37 recommendations as part of the Financial Management Maturity Assessment for Council to investigate and implement. An Internal Finance Committee made up of representation from across Council meets weekly to review the Business Improvement processes identified. Progress is reported monthly to the Office of Local Government.



The Fit for the Future Improvement Plan has been incorporated into Council's suite of documents which make up the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework which was adopted on 27 June 2016.

# Building strong sustainable finances

## INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Year	Project	Grants \$
2016/17	Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant Upgrade *	7,147,259
	Landfill Consolidation Grant - NSW Environmental Trust (EPA) *	6,493
	Community Recycling Centre (CRC) - NSW Environmental Trust *	133,706
	Community Building Partnership - All Abilities Round About	16,000
	Roads to Recovery Program *	1,585,252
	NSW War Memorial Grant Program	8,595

\* Depicts budgeted amounts pending finalisation of project/grant.

The current term of Council has continued responsible spending to deliver more on infrastructure without curtailing any Council services and also adopted a sound funding strategy to fund the Infrastructure backlog.

## Financial ratios

Council's financial position can be measured by the results of the Industry Key Financial Ratios. The Key Ratios concerning Council's financial position are listed below.

Unrestricted Current Ratio	Benchmark	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Measures the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term as they fall due	1.5%	3.01:1	4.08	3.10

Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio	Benchmark	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Measures Council's degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.	60%	55.84%	67.23%	64.90%

Debt Service Ratio	Benchmark	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Measures availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments.	2	3.53	2.91	5.45

Note: Ratios for 2016/17 are preliminary ratios and not audited ratios.



# Our Planning in Action

## Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 (DIAP)

As part of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Council has developed a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The DIAP outlines precise strategies and actions that will help Council achieve its inclusion goals over the next four years. This will allow people with disability to have better access to the services, information and facilities offered by Council.

The DIAP was developed in consultation with key stakeholders, including the clients and their families from Uniting and the Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre, students from La Salle Academy and Lithgow Public School, and members of the Disability Access Committee. Furthermore, a call for submissions was made to the community and a survey was distributed at the Accessible Lifestyle Expo in October 2016.

The strategies and actions were developed based on what the community told us was important. In addition, the strategies and actions in the DIAP are based on and aligned with the four key focus areas found in the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan, including:

1. Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours
2. Building liveable communities
3. Providing meaningful employment opportunities
4. Improving systems and processes

The DIAP takes a holistic approach as it includes actions for all areas of Council and is aligned with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. By implementing the actions in this plan, not only will people with disability benefit, but older people, people with acute or short-term injuries, and parents with young children will also benefit.

This action is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 1.1.1.1 To provide social and cultural planning that will lead to the enhancement of the quality of life of the community.
- 1.2.2.1 To respond to the needs of an ageing population.
- 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community.
- 1.2.5.1 To increase community awareness of local services and facilities.
- 1.2.6.1 To encourage equitable access to services and facilities.
- 1.2.7.1 To provide a range of health services which meet the needs of the community.
- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
- 3.1.1.1 To provide infrastructure to ensure the sustainable growth and development of the area including the provision of quality recreational and community facilities.
- 3.2.2.1 To develop cultural and recreational infrastructure that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.
- 3.2.3.1 To maintain community commercial and industrial buildings and structures to meet the needs of the community and service Council operations.
- 3.2.4.1 To establish a system of cycleways and pedestrian paths to provide links between major cultural and recreational facilities and town centres.
- 3.2.9.1 To develop parks and gardens that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.
- 3.2.10.1 To develop recreational facilities that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.



# Our Planning in Action

## Farmers Creek Precinct Master Plan

The Farmers Creek Masterplan project 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.

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 the Lithgow City 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.

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 will involve 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 environmental work will include the involvement of community volunteers in such activities as tree planting to promote education and awareness about the importance of riparian ecosystems.

Council does not have the capacity to undertake all of these works immediately, or even into the foreseeable future. Development and management of Farmers Creek to enhance its recreational, environmental and aesthetic values will ultimately be reliant on, and largely determined by, the funding and resources available to Council. As such the works required to upgrade the creek corridor, as guided by this masterplan, must be assessed against the other priorities of Council and determined by the budget allocations assigned in Council's rolling Delivery Programs and Operational Plan.

Hence the masterplan sets out a prioritised and staged approach to the proposed actions and works and detailed in the Implementation and Cost Estimates Schedules for each planning unit.

Full realisation of the upgrading of the Farmers Creek urban corridor, and main tributaries, as set out in this masterplan is estimated to cost in the order of \$9,005,000.

The total estimated orders of cost to implement each stage of this masterplan are as follows (rounded to the nearest \$000):

- Stage 1 – \$1,996,000;
- Stage 2 – \$2,205,000; and
- Stage 3 – \$4,803,000.

Developing the Masterplan project is the culmination of many years of planning, preparation and consultation. The fact that the Lithgow community now has an overarching document to guide all future activities in the Farmers Creek Precinct is a huge win for the Lithgow community and a demonstration of success in its own right.

The benefits to the Lithgow City LGA, businesses and the community as a whole include environmental improvements, healthier population and encouraging further investment. There are a number of key impacts the project will have on our community:

- The project will encourage and enable residents to participate in healthy activities which are freely accessible to all.
- The project will promote the responsible management of natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds and restoration of riparian corridors.
- Provide direct opportunities for the most unskilled and disadvantaged workers: by re-engagement through volunteering, community and potentially employment, this project will provide those disadvantaged workers in the region with a number of opportunities.
- Support the continued economic restructure of Lithgow – the diversification of the local industry base is important to Lithgow to ensure its growth and ongoing sustainability resulting in greater job opportunities both for locals and the greater regional area. Farmers Creek presents opportunities for tourism in particular with recreational activities and historic sites of interest within the precinct.

- Support local business growth – the proximity of Farmers Creek to Lithgow’s CBD provides a realistic opportunity for businesses to harness the tourist/visitor trade which is being stimulated by a number of projects including the Restructuring of Lithgow initiative.
- Allow greater access to and support the sustainable management of an environmentally significant area.

### Hassans Walls Reserve Plan of Management

Lithgow City Council, in conjunction with Gondwana Consulting, commenced preparation of a Plan of Management for Hassans Walls Reserve in June 2016. The plan was adopted by Council on the 17th July 2017.

The plan of management will provide a clear strategic direction for future management and use of Hassans Walls Reserve. The key principal objectives of the plan of management are as follows:

- 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.

In order to maintain momentum in developing the active management of the Hassans Walls Reserve, Council is investing a further \$55K in 17/18 to undertake a mine subsidence audit of the reserve, to quantify the risk parameters around mine subsidence to inform future actions and direction outlined in the plan.

These action are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 3.1.1.1 To provide infrastructure to ensure the sustainable growth and development of the area including the provision of quality recreational and community facilities.
- 4.1.1.1 To identify, preserve and improve our natural heritage and biodiversity whilst ensuring the water security and sewerage capacity of the region for sustainable growth and development.
- 4.1.3.2 To responsibly manage natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds.
- 4.1.6.1 To protect our waterways and provide safe drinking water.



Pictured:

Top - Farmers Creek Project

Bottom - Tree planting at Hassans Walls.

A photograph of three people participating in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. On the left, a man in a dark blue suit and black tie is cutting a red ribbon with scissors. In the center, a man in a dark suit and patterned tie is smiling. On the right, a woman in a colorful floral blouse is also smiling. They are standing in front of a window decorated with colorful balloons (purple, pink, green, black).

*Caring  
for our  
Community*

Launch of the refurbished Lithgow Library Learning Centre 13 March 2017.

Pictured: Paul Toole MP, Mayor Stephen Lesslie and Helen Forsythe, State Library NSW.

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 theme 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.

To achieve the objectives of this key theme, council has implemented a variety of strategies, programs and services to facilitate and manage the overall health and wellbeing of the community. This theme aims to develop and support to:

- Aboriginal & Culturally Linguistically Diverse Communities
- Ageing population
- Arts and Culture
- Children and Families
- Community Support
- Health
- Library Programs
- Regulatory/compliance Programs
- Safety
- Volunteering
- Youth



Telstra Tech Savvy Seniors Program held at the Lithgow Library Learning Centre in partnership with the Lithgow Telstra Store. Classes ranged from introduction to the internet and social media, to smart phones and online shopping and banking.

# A caring and supportive community

## Lithgow Mental Health Summit and 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 has been 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.

An early initiative of the Mayor's Mental Health Taskforce was a "Walk out of the Shadows" walk on Sunday 7 May which provided an informal opportunity to raise awareness, remember those lost to suicide and unite in a commitment to prevent further deaths by suicide. Further walks are planned.

## Men's Sheds

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 and Portland. 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.

Most recently, Council assisted the newly formed Wallerawang Men's Shed to commence operations in the Wallerawang Memorial Hall. The men have been very busy setting up, including cleaning, building storage shelves, positioning work tables and setting up an office and kitchen. The local community has been very generous with donations of benches, lathes, tools and furniture, just to name a few.



## Seniors Festival 2017

The theme for the 2017 Seniors Festival was, 'Let's do more together!' This year's festival promoted inclusive communities and provided an opportunity for seniors to try new things, contribute, and remain active and engaged in their local communities.

During the 2017 Seniors Festival Council provided a rich and diverse program of events and activities for local seniors to take part in. The festival ran for 5-days from Monday 6 March to Friday 10 March in Lithgow and offered many FREE and discounted events around town.

Some of the events included belly-dancing classes, pamper days, ukulele workshops, author talks at the library, tours of Eskbank House and Museum, Tai chi classes, mindfulness colouring sessions, 'Art Tonic' classes, morning melodies at the local Workman's club, yoga and meditation classes and much more.

During the 2017 Seniors Festival, seniors in Lithgow were inspired. They got creative, socialised, shared skills and did the things they loved, together.

## Celebrating Our Local Volunteers

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 Mayor of Lithgow, Clr Stephen Lesslie, who also spoke to volunteers about their contribution and the important role they play in our community.



These actions are consistent with the Community and Strategic Plan 2026 and the Lithgow Ageing Strategy.

- 1.2.2.1 To respond to the needs of an ageing population.
- 1.2.7.1 To provide a range of health services which meet the needs of the community.
- 1.2.11.1 To celebrate and grow volunteering.
- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
- 3.2.3.1 To maintain community commercial and industrial buildings and structures to meet the needs of the community and service council operations.
- 5.1.2.1 To provide responsible leadership for the community.
- 5.1.3.1 To ensure effective communication between Council and the community.

# A caring and supportive community

## White Ribbon 2016

Lithgow Partnerships Against Domestic Violence and Family Abuse (LPADVFA) is a collaboration of agencies and individuals in the region who aim to support an active, integrated response to domestic violence, family abuse, sexual assault and child abuse in the Lithgow LGA. As a member of the LPADVFA, Council provided support to organise events for White Ribbon 2016.

As part of White Ribbon 2016, Council supported the LPADVFA to organise a march along Main street and raise awareness about domestic violence and family abuse. Over 300 local residents took part in the march and included members of Lithgow Council, Lithgow Police, Fire and Rescue, Ambulance Service and Correctional Centre.

Following the march, the community congregated at the local Workman's Club to take part in the White Ribbon Trivia Night. The trivia night was a fun and informative event, with questions designed to test participants' general knowledge and some White Ribbon related questions included as 'extra points' and awareness-raising. The money raised went towards both White Ribbon and Lithgow Partnerships Against Domestic Violence and Family Abuse.

## Harmony Day 2017

To celebrate Lithgow's cultural diversity Council, in partnership with the Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre, delivered an exciting and fun program at the Lithgow Library and Learning Centre.

This year, Harmony Day was celebrated on 22 March 2017 and included cultural performances, speeches, face-painting, singing, Chinese fan dancing, arts and crafts, and storytelling. New students from the local Tafe also attended and got a chance to practice their English speaking skills with staff and other community members at the library.

Amnesty International and Lithgow Asylum Seekers and Refugees Group held information stalls to assist people with any questions. To finish, guests enjoyed a multicultural cuisine in the library courtyard forging new friendships and a sense of belonging.

## NAIDOC Week

Council in partnership with Leaving Healthy Footprints and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) provided an exciting program for NAIDOC 2016.

The NAIDOC Week event officially opened at 10.00am with a Welcome to Country by Uncle Owen Smith and a Smoking Ceremony by Aunty Gloria Rogers, followed by a combined school choir performance.

Celebrations took place at Queen Elizabeth Park on Friday 23 September 2016 and included a variety of Aboriginal workshops, such as traditional dance, jewellery-making, story-telling, Indigenous games, face-painting, arts and crafts and information stalls.

The event was well attended with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members. In addition, most of the local school students attended with their teachers and took part in an art competition as part of the NAIDOC 2016 celebrations.





## Lithgow Youth Council

Lithgow Youth Council meets monthly throughout the year to voice the needs of young and develop targeted youth programs and initiatives. Due to the local government election process the Youth Council reformed in April 2017 and has since worked on the following initiatives:

### Further Education Scholarship Program

One of the most successful initiatives of the Youth Council is the Further Education Scholarship Program. This program is being developed in partnership with Western Sydney University and Tafe Western to provide young people with financial support while they study.

The program will offer up to 20 scholarships per annum and will enable young people to take part in a diverse range of studies, including, but not limited to the arts, science, carpentry, drama, music, dance, sports, hospitality, nursing, jewellery making, and online training options.

It is hoped that these scholarships will provide young people with the financial support they need to cover costs related to further study, such as, internet usage, fees, and text books, when enrolled at one of the local educational institutions.

## Youth Week 2017

To celebrate National Youth Week 2017 two events were held in April. The first event was held at the Lithgow Skate Park and featured demonstrations and coaching by BMX and scooter professionals from Newtons Nation.

Free sandwiches and drinks were also provided and young people worked together to create new moves and then showcase them to family and friends. There were over 100 young people in attendance on the day.

The second event was a Manga workshop facilitated by the accomplished illustrator, artist and designer, Matthew Lin. Matthew worked with Manga and anime enthusiasts to hone their drawing skills and develop their style.

Participants learned new techniques such as drawing manga characters, adding colour, shading characters, instructions for creating scenes within a story, and advice on how to get published. The workshop was fully booked and a huge success with many young people on the day.



These actions are consistent with the Community and Strategic Plan 2026 and the Lithgow Ageing Strategy.

- 1.2.1.1 To support people from Aboriginal and CALD backgrounds.
- 1.2.10.1 To facilitate a safe community.
- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.

# Accessible library services

## Lithgow Library Refurbishment

Lithgow Library was awarded a State Library Infrastructure Grant of \$118,027.00 towards the refurbishment of the library. The title of the project – ‘Reboot, Revitalise and Re-imagine’ – captured the focus of the refurbishment: to introduce new technologies, to replace worn carpet and furnishings, and to redesign the shelving layout. New technologies included a Print Magnifier, and a new Self-checking Station for customers to issue their own items. A new Print Release Station has also been installed, enabling customers to pay and release their own photocopies and printing. The new carpet features a bright and colourful design and helps delineate the new seating spaces created by our redesigned shelving layout. A welcoming and accessible Customer Service Desk is also a key feature of the refurbishment. The Children’s area received particular attention, with bright colourful shelving boxes, modern curved shelving, and practical seating options. The Teen Zone too received two bright Pod Chairs, which have proven to be very popular. After a two week closure to complete the majority of the work, the library reopened with a huge community event. On 13 March, over one hundred people attended a morning of music, dancing and speeches, celebrating the refurbishment and showing their support for their local library.

## Portland and Wallerawang Library Branches

Portland and Wallerawang Library branches have seen positive increases in membership in 2016/17. Portland library had 77 new members in this period, bringing the branch membership to 694; and Wallerawang library had 58 new members, bringing their membership total to 469. The branches are busy, with Portland issuing 13,787 items, and Wallerawang issuing 7,456 items. Portland library offers a range of craft sessions, storytimes, Craft’n’chat, and boardgame sessions. Portland library was also a featured stop for the NSW Library motorcycle tour group – Biblio Turismo. Both branches offer school holiday activities, and Wallerawang library offers after-school jigsaws and boardgames.

## EBooks

The Library’s eBook collection continues to grow, with over 640 titles now in the collection, including 72 eAudiobooks. 60 new users signed on for the eBook service in 2016/17. There were 454 loans in this period; 372 eBooks and 82 eAudiobooks. Borrowers can enjoy a selection of classic titles, new releases, teen, and children’s eBooks, in both fiction and non-fiction. The library’s eBook service supplier – Axis360 – have also upgraded their access options, including a new app, to make the download process simpler. This service is free to all library members and more information can be found on the library’s website.

These actions are consistent with the Community and Strategic Plan 2026:

- 1.2.8.1 To provide learning opportunities and quality library facilities which meet the needs of the community.



Pictured - Modern and accessible Libraries  
Top: Lithgow Library  
Middle: Portland Library  
Bottom: Wallerawang Library.

## Local Studies Services

The Local Studies area provides assisted access to the library's collection relating to the local LGA. This area is open each day from 10am to 12noon. The library also receives requests for information via email and telephone from people from all over Australia and occasionally from overseas.

The most frequent enquiries are for local history such as events, industries, roads and rail. Next are enquiries relating to Family History and then those relating to House and Property history.

The collection has local and family history books, videos, oral history tapes, photographs and records on microfilm. There is also an archives collection of company records, family documents and photographs.

The Local Studies collection increases each year with regular purchases of resources such as the local newspaper Lithgow Mercury on microfilm, published and unpublished books. The collection also receives donations of items which is especially important for unpublished research and original photographs.

A major donation in this last year has been the photograph collection from the Lithgow Mercury. Library volunteer Kay Ross has been working steadily to organise and document each photo and the smaller collection of documents that accompanied them.

## History@YourLibrary

As part of the Lithgow City Council's commitment to the celebration of our unique heritage, Lithgow Library collaborates with local history groups, historians and authors to share our history with the community. This year the Library partnered with the Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc., The Small Arms Factory Museum and The Lithgow & Hartley branch of the National Trust for exhibitions, history displays and competitions.

The library has also hosted history and author talks by historians Jan Saundercock, Tony Griffiths, John Low, Keith Painter and the also by the Bushexplorers/Authors - Michael Keats, Brian Fox and Yuri Bolotin. The topics covered ranged from 1918 visit to Australia by a French delegation, Women in War and War Horses to Hassan Walls and Gardens of Stone National Park.

Another major event for Lithgow was a Celebration of the addition of The Lithgow Mercury to the National Library of Australia's digitized newspaper website TROVE. This project was funded by the State Library of NSW at a cost to them of \$120,000. Lithgow Library Celebrated with special guest speaker Jerelynn Brown from the State Library, Len Ashworth former Editor of the Lithgow Mercury, Jan Saundercock of Lithgow & District History Society Inc.



Pictured  
Top: Local Studies Officer Kay Shirt looking at the collection.  
Bottom: Glen Davis Town Plans

# Accessible library services

## Home Library Service

This year the Home Library Service has increased steadily with over 60 active clients, representing an increase of 43% on the previous year's figures.

The Home Library 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. 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. A special HLS Morning Tea was held in March, with over 70 people attending. Entertainment was generously provided by the Lithgow City Band, Norm, Lenore, Leo, and the Uke'n'Sing Group; and was greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

## Storytime

Every Wednesday at 10.30am parents and their pre-schoolers come together at Lithgow Library for a morning of stories, songs, dance, play and craft. Each Storytime session is focussed on a fun theme, specially designed to boost the development of early literacy skills. Interactive stories are a key feature, as well as songs that encouragement movement, and puppet play and felt boards to engage and support the children to participate. Storytime is also held at Portland Library every Wednesday at 11.30am. In total just on 570 preschoolers attended Storytime sessions in 2016, filling the library with singing and laughter.

## National Simultaneous Storytime

On May 24th, Mayor Stephen Lesslie joined us to read 'The cow tripped over the moon' by Tony Wilson as part of National Simultaneous Storytime. This is an annual event that sees schools, libraries, playgroups and others read the same story at the same time, nationwide. This year two members of our Library team performed the story with hand puppets and props. Over 25 children attended and had a great time.

## LEGO Club and Pokemon TCG

LEGO Club is in its second year at Lithgow Library and continues to grow. Started with a grant from Fundability it was created as an inclusive after school club with STEAM building challenges each week. The Club encourages creativity and imagination, with young people working individually and as a team as the challenge requires, to consider all manner of engineering and mathematical problems. The library also has a LEGO Mindstorms Robot set, which is available for booked sessions during the holidays. The LEGO Club had over 120 attendees to LEGO club in the period January-June 2017. Another new group for the library is the Pokemon Trading Card Club. This group meets every second Thursday during school term. Everyone from experts to novices are welcome.

## Baby Bounce & Rhyme Time

Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time is an early literacy program, designed for babies 0-2 years of age and their carers. Now in its second year this program has proven to be very successful. Sessions feature music, instruments, stories, and puppets, making them very dynamic and engaging. Singing, reading, playing and talking to your baby is the proven best way to develop their early literacy awareness. The program is a great way for new parents to play and sing with their child, and also to meet other new parents in the area. Over 70 babies and toddlers attended Baby Bounce & Rhyme Time from January-June 2017.



## YourTutor

In August 2016 the Library introduced a new free service – YourTutor. YourTutor (<http://library.lithgow.com/your-tutor/>) provides an online tutorial service for local students, where library members logon and receive 1:1 tutorial help. Students communicate with tutors via the keyboard, an interactive whiteboard and shared web browsing so that tutors can review the students' specific homework and assignment questions. Tutors are available for: Maths - General Maths for primary and lower secondary students; General, Intermediate and Specialist/Extension Maths for senior students; English - Skills and Concepts, English and literacy; Science - Science (Years 3-6), General Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics; Assignment help for all subjects including Essay and report writing, Assignment research and Referencing and citation support; Business Studies; and Economics. YourTutor also offers 24/7 Written Work Feedback – where students submit their essay, speech, report or assignment, and within 24 hours they will receive detailed feedback from English writing experts. All tutors are qualified professionals, who ensure a safe and professional tutoring session. Over 50 local students have made use of this free service, all providing positive feedback.

## Uke'n'Singers Group

In November 2016 a new project was launched at the Library - a basic beginner Ukulele Group. The library purchased 6 ukuleles and 1 book for a total of \$200 and the Uku'n'Singers Group was born.

Every week up to 30 members attend the ukulele classes each week. The group have gone from absolute beginners to seasoned performers. The Uke'n'Singers were featured artists at the grand reopening of the library as well as regularly appearing at library functions, such as the Home Library Service Morning tea, and making public performances at local aged care facilities. The ukulele class has become the highlight of the week for many of our members. It's an opportunity to engage with the community and build strong connections for local residents who are often quite isolated due to ageing, access and/or carers responsibilities. This group is free at the library, and is always open to new members.



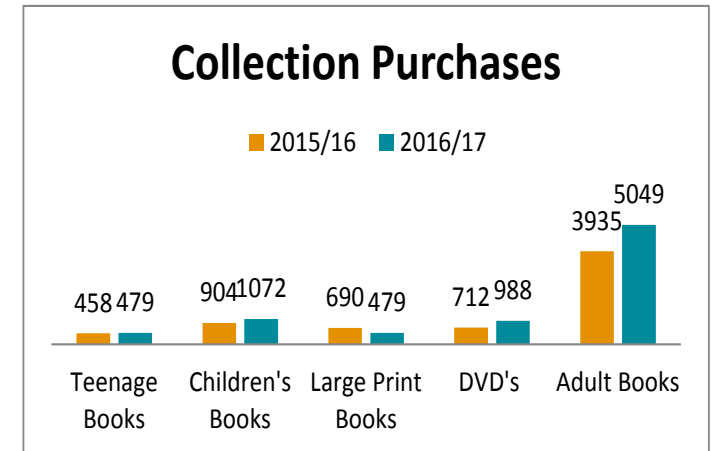
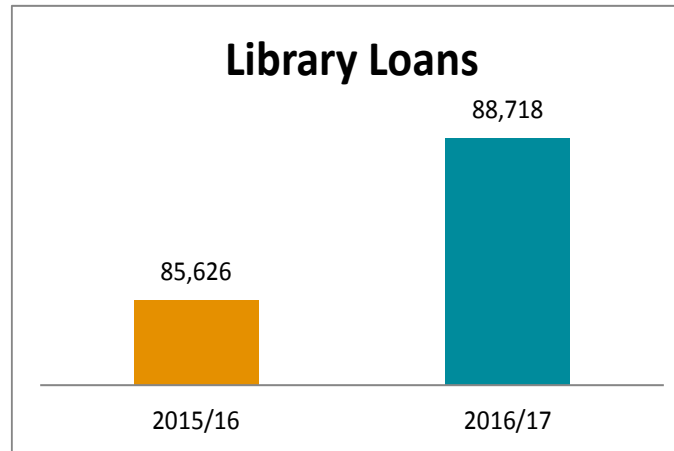
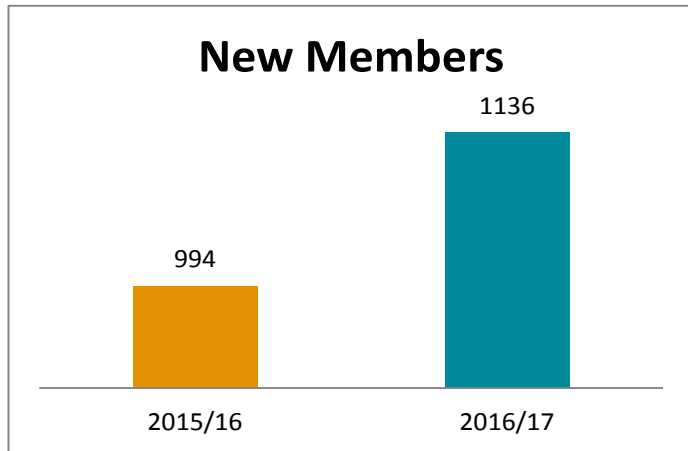
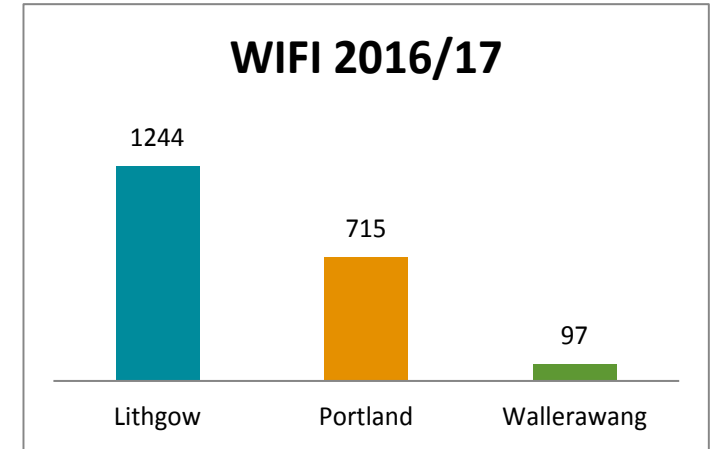
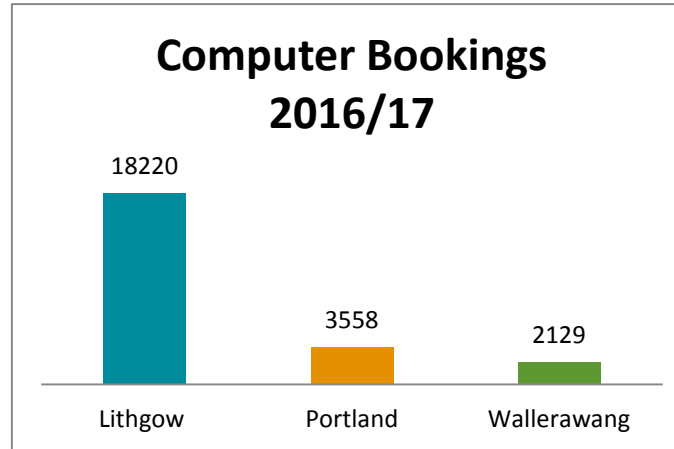
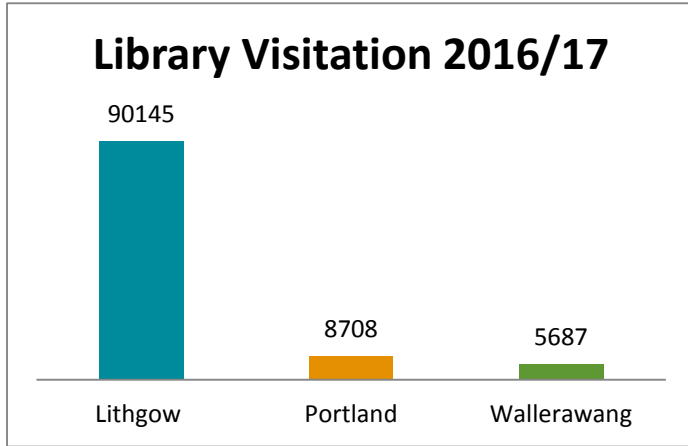
These actions are consistent with the Community and Strategic Plan 2026 and the Lithgow Ageing Strategy.

- 1.2.2.1 To respond to the needs of an ageing population.
- 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community.
- 1.2.8.1 To provide learning opportunities and quality library facilities which meet the needs of the community.
- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.

# Accessible library services

## Library Usage

The graphs below show usage of the facility and services at the Lithgow, Wallerawang and Portland Libraries.



# Caring for our pets responsibly

## Lithgow Animal Shelter Improvements

Another year of the Lithgow Animal Shelter Improvement Project is complete with significant improvements made with a \$30,000 budget allocation.

The Animal Shelter alterations are under guidance of the new standards required for the welfare of animals. 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. The shelter has been expanded to provide additional kennels, floors have all been repainted and the section of the shelter has been renovated to improve, heating and cooling.

The next stage of the project will see the Animal drop box renovated and fencing installed within the animal exercise area.



## Responsible Pet Ownership Grant Program

Lithgow City Council in partnership with the NSW Government delivered the Responsible Pet Ownership Program to Companion animals of the Local Government Area. The program ran for the months of February 2017 – May 2017. The program was possible through \$8000 in funding from the NSW Government as well as \$2000 in funding from Council.

The program was delivered in three distinct components including; two free walk-up Microchipping days held at Council's Animal Shelter, Discounted Desexing program and an Education program delivered by the RSPCA.

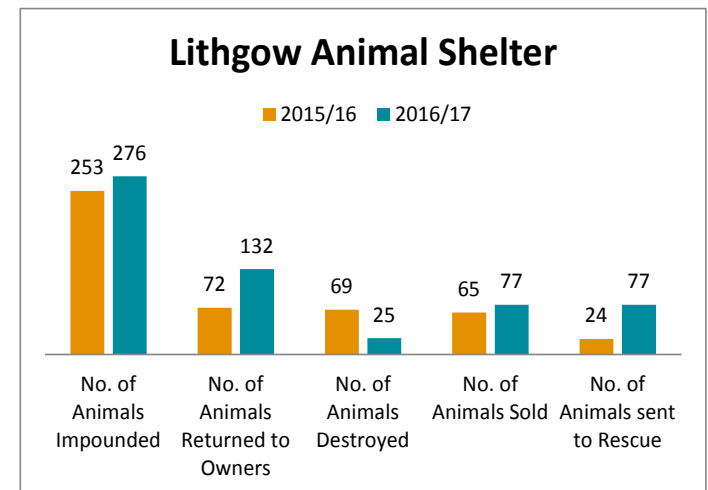


## Key Facts:

- 37 animals de-sexed (all pensioners or health care card holders); 26 Dogs & 11 Cats
- 59 animals micro-chipped (both cats & dogs)
- Education component delivered to 3 Primary Schools within the Local Government Area. Program delivered to a total of approximately 90 students.
- A strengthened relationship with Council's Rangers and the community.
- 2 successful micro-chipping open days held at Council's Animal Shelter, which led to several animals being adopted.
- Greater education on responsible pet ownership and the need for micro-chipping and de-sexing of pets. Especially lifetime traceability.

These action are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 1.2.9.1 To ensure community safety and compliance
- 3.2.3.1 To maintain community commercial and industrial buildings and structures to meet the needs of the community and service Council operations.



# Strengthening our Economy

## visit surrounding area

Mount Piper Energy Expo  
 The expo will feature the latest in renewable energy technology, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal. It will also feature a range of educational activities for children and a variety of food and drink options.

### WOLGAN VALLEY, NEWNES & GLOW WORM TUNNEL

The Wolgan Valley is a beautiful area with a range of activities for all ages. The Glow Worm Tunnel is a unique experience where you can see the world's largest glow worms. The Newnes area is also a great place to visit, with a range of shops and services.

### PORTLAND

Portland is a beautiful coastal town with a range of activities for all ages. It is a great place to visit, with a range of shops and services.

### MOUNT PIPER ENERGY EXPO

The expo will feature the latest in renewable energy technology, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal. It will also feature a range of educational activities for children and a variety of food and drink options.

### PEARSONS LOOKOUT, THE CAPERTEE VALLEY & GLEN DAVIS

Pearsons Lookout is a beautiful area with a range of activities for all ages. The Capertee Valley and Glen Davis are also great places to visit, with a range of shops and services.

### RYDAL

Rydal is a beautiful area with a range of activities for all ages. It is a great place to visit, with a range of shops and services.



DISTANCES	KMS
Wallerawang to Culler Bullen	145
Wallerawang to Portland	115
Wallerawang to Rydal	105
Wallerawang to Culler Bullen	105
Wallerawang to Rydal	105
Wallerawang to Culler Bullen	105
Wallerawang to Rydal	105



### MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- 1 Wallerawang Power Station
- 2 Site of Arts Wallerawang School (1960)
- 3 St John's Church
- 4 The second old school
- 5 Shopping area and railway station
- 6 Thompson's Creek Dam
- 7 Weygan Street, Portland
- 8 Portland Cement Works
- 9 Bottle Kilns
- 10 Culler Bullen
- 11 Mount Piper Power Station
- 12 Murrumbidgee Bridge
- 13 Newnes Butte
- 14 Glen Warrig Tunnel
- 15 Lake Wallace
- 16 Charles O'Connell monument
- 17 Ewart Monument
- 18 Rydal
- 19 Pearson's Lookout

### LOCAL CEMETERIES

- A Burren Cemetery
- B Portland Cemetery
- C Rydal Cemetery
- D Wallerawang Cemetery
- E Wallerawang Cemetery
- F Wallerawang Cemetery



Information signage at Lake Wallace, Wallerawang developed in conjunction with the Wallerawang/Lidsdale Progress Association.



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.

To achieve the objectives of this key theme, council has implemented a variety of strategies, programs and services to facilitate and manage economic growth and development in the Lithgow LGA. This theme aims to develop and support to:

- Arts and Culture
- Branding and Marketing
- Business and Industry Development and Support
- Leadership and Communication
- Education and Training
- Local Environment Planning and Development
- Tourism



Lithgow from the air. Drone image courtesy of Matthew Wade.

# Our place...Our future

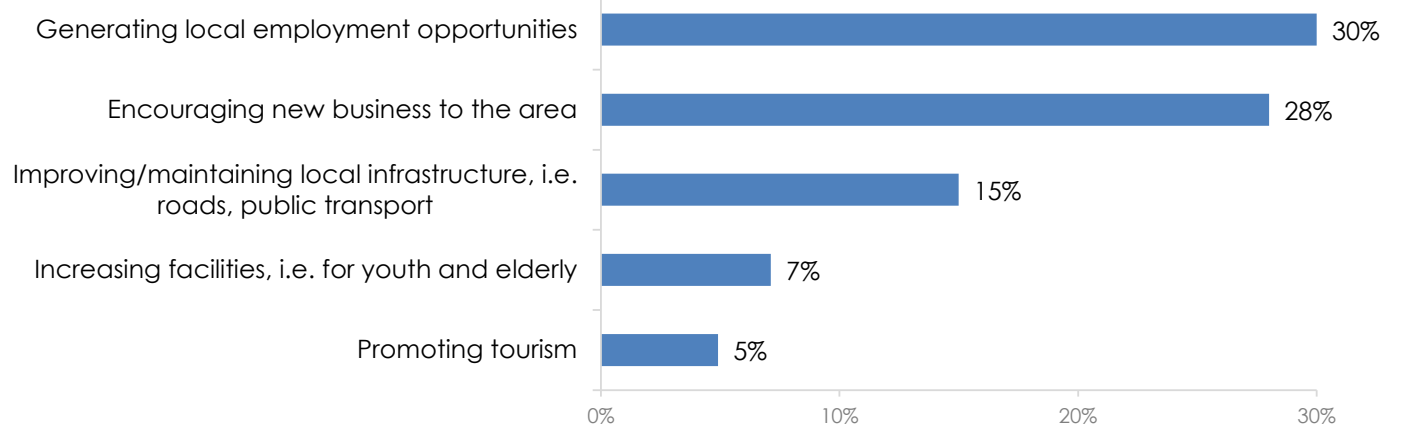
In April 2016, Council engaged Micromex Research to undertake a random telephone survey of 407 residents in the Lithgow LGA to measure community attitudes and perceptions towards current and future services and facilities provided by Council. The survey found that:

*“As with many regional LGA’s, there are concerns about the current and future opportunities in regard to local employment, as well as attracting new business to the area.*

*There are also concerns around renewing and maintaining the local infrastructure, the management and process of development, as well as the provision of community facilities for residents.*

*The top 5 drivers of overall satisfaction account for just under 20% of overall satisfaction. These drivers included encouraging local business, town roads, community consultation, council responsiveness and the provision of community festivals and events”.*

Micromex Research, June 2016



Respondents were asked what they felt were the key challenges for the Lithgow LGA in the next 5 to 10 years .

**Key Facts:**

- There are 7,538 workers in the Lithgow LGA.
- For every 100 workers in the Lithgow LGA there are 99 jobs.
- 82% of the jobs in the LGA are held by Lithgow residents.
- Most popular places for Lithgow residents to work outside the LGA are the Blue Mountains (5.5% or 415 jobs) and Bathurst (3.8% or 286 jobs).
- Workers coming into the LGA to work come from the Blue Mountains (7.2% or 537 jobs) and Bathurst (5.3% or 398 jobs).

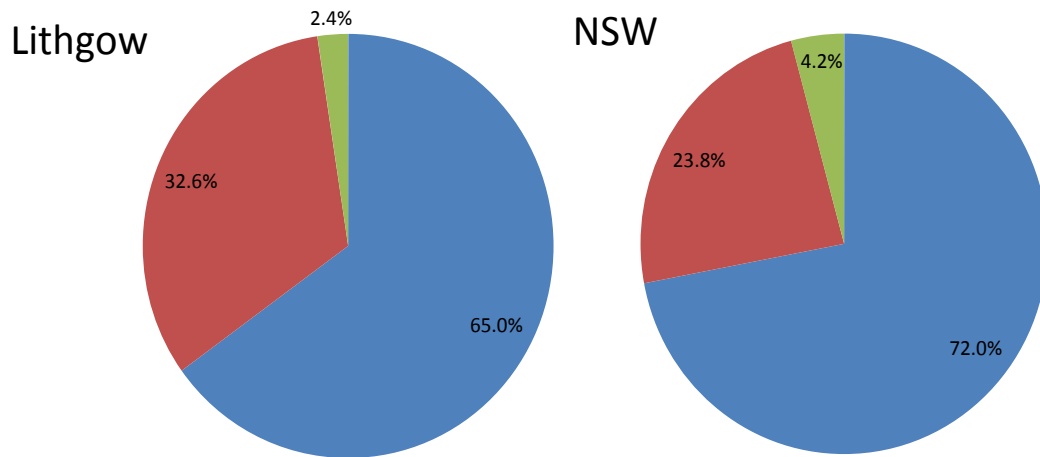
2011 census data

**Population and Housing**

Population – 21,090 (Shire)

Median age of Lithgow LGA – 45, NSW - 37.7 years

Lower proportion of family households and higher proportion of single person households



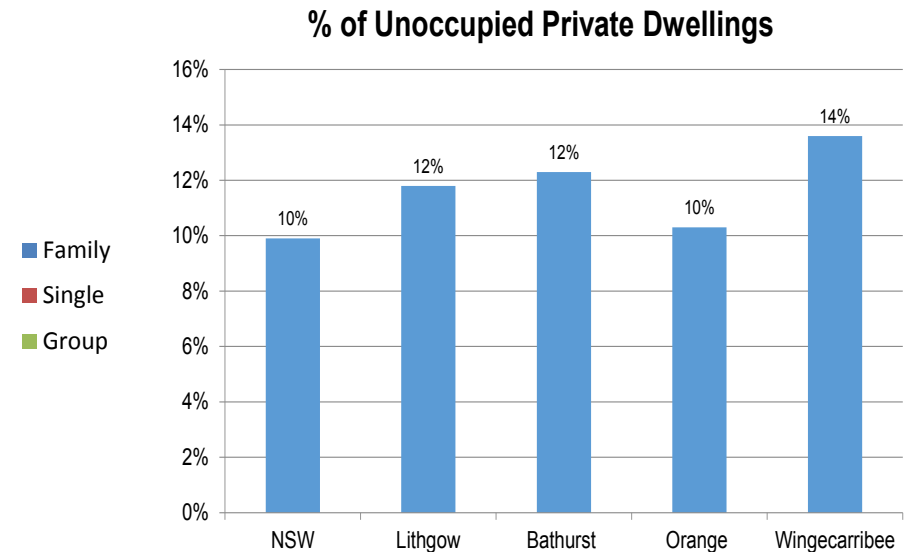
Source: Centre for Economic & Regional Development - 2016 census data

The table below indicates the Projected Population Age Distribution - Lithgow 2011 - 2031.

Age Bracket	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change 2011-2031
0-14 yrs	18.7%	17.7%	17.4%	16.1%	15.8%	-2.9%
15-24 yrs	12.2%	10.7%	9.8%	9.6%	9.2%	-3.0%
25-34 yrs	10.3%	11.0%	10.5%	9.4%	8.5%	-1.8%
35-44 yrs	12.5%	11.5%	11.0%	11.5%	11.4%	-1.1%
45-54 yrs	14.9%	13.4%	12.4%	11.8%	11.4%	-3.5%
55-64 yrs	13.7%	14.6%	15.0%	13.9%	13.3%	-0.4%
65+ yrs	17.7%	21.2%	24.0%	27.6%	30.3%	+12.6%

Source: NSW Department of Planning 2014, A.P. Sheere Consulting, 2015.

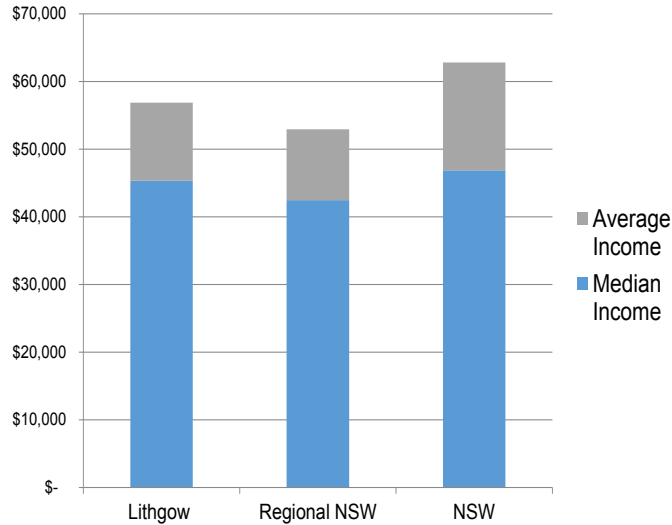
2016 Census: 12% of houses in Lithgow were unoccupied compared to 10% across NSW. This has come down from 14% in 2011, and NSW remained the same at 10%.



## Income

Median income for the Lithgow Shire was \$45,336 in 2014-2015 (with an average income of \$56,849)

Median income for NSW of \$46,879 (with an average of \$62,798)

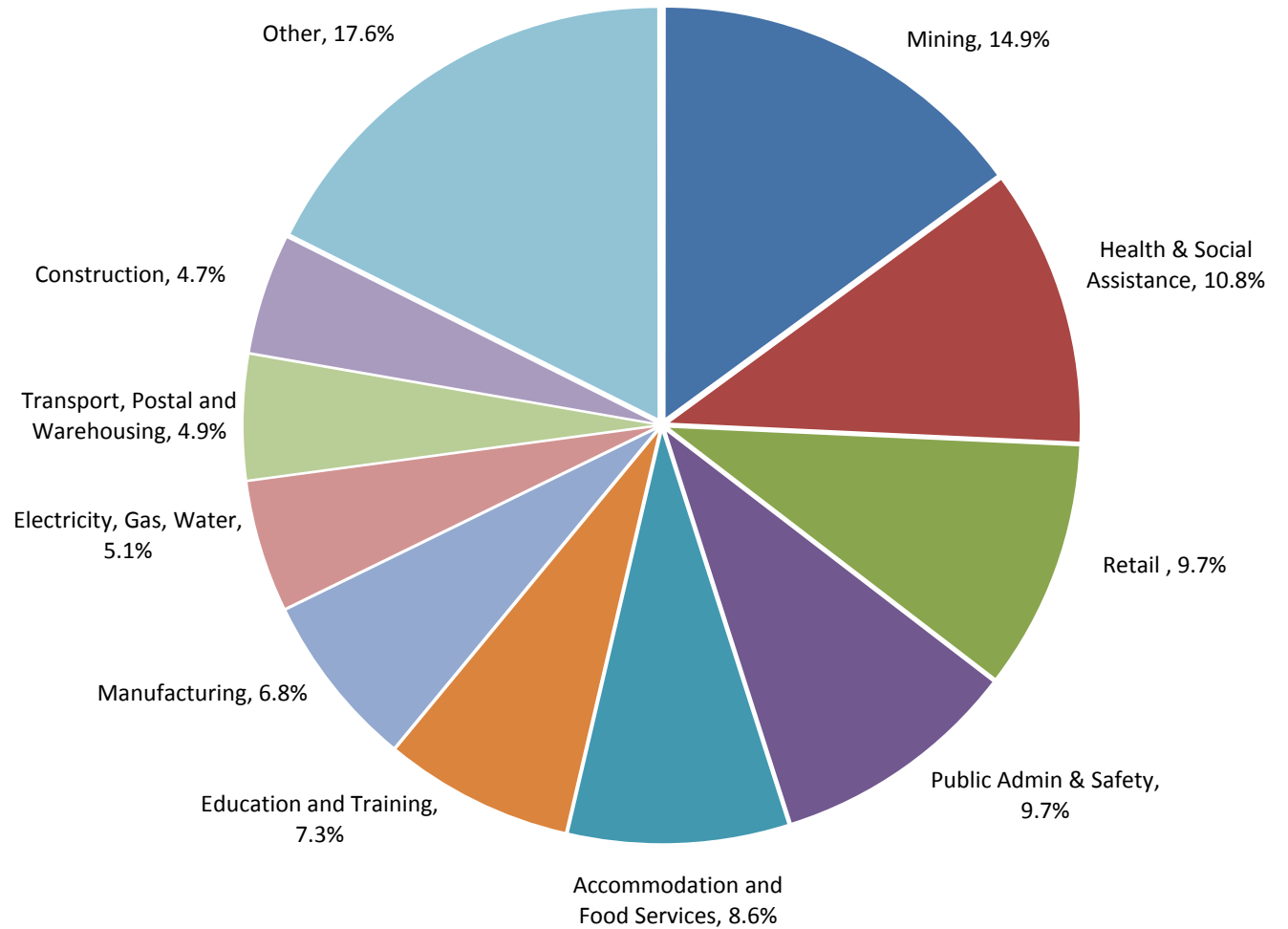


ABS 6524.0.55.002 - Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, 2011-2015 - TOTAL INCOME

Note: Regional NSW in this chart uses data from the ABS definition "Rest of NSW" and includes Wollongong and Newcastle, it excludes Greater Sydney

## Employment Profile

Top 9 employing sectors account for approximately 78% of total employment (2011 census data).



Mining (1,117)

Health & Social Assistance (807)

Retail (725)

Public Administration and Safety (723)

Accommodation and Food Services (640)

Manufacturing (507)

Education (549)

Electricity and Utility Services (382)

Construction (349)

2011 Census, there were 7,476 jobs in the Lithgow LGA  
Largest industries employing over 5% of the workforce

# Our place...Our future

Council recognises that ensuring the economic viability of the Lithgow LGA requires a multidisciplinary approach and long-term planning. Furthermore it recognises that although it has a valid and important role to play in promoting and facilitating economic development, it must work within its jurisdiction and resource limitations to support sustainable growth. It acknowledges that the support of the community, key stakeholders and partners is paramount. Council is not the principal 'driver' of local economic development. This is in fact the role of business and industry. Council however, can play an effective role in influencing what is termed the 'drivers of economic development'. (EDS 2015 p. 12)

In 2016/17, the following actions have been undertaken to ensure sustainable growth and development.

## Long Term Planning

The following Plans and Strategies have been developed and implemented:

- Community Strategic Plan 2026
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Farmers Creek Precinct Master Plan
- Hassans Walls Reserve Management Plan

Progressed the development of the following Plans & Strategies:

- Lithgow City Rural and Rural Residential Strategy Review
- Masterplan and Development Control Plan for the Marrangaroo Urban Release Area
- Comprehensive Development Control Plan
- Cullen Bullen Village Improvements Plan
- Farmers Creek Precinct Master Plan.
- Marketing Strategy for Lithgow.

## Infrastructure Upgrade and Renewal

The development of long-term plans ensures that Council is positioned to successfully seek state and federal grant funding to assist in infrastructure development and upgrades. The table below shows the annual grants and contributions for infrastructure upgrade and renewal.

Year	Grants and Contributions \$000
2013/2014	3,682
2014/2015	5,240
2015/2016	6,958
2016/2017	9,561

Note: Grants and Contributions includes Loans. Figures are from Financial Statements.

In 2016/17 the following works commenced:

- Construction of the Portland Sewage Treatment Plant.
- Design and tender for the Refurbishment of Cook Street Plaza and the Eskbank Street Precinct; Stage 1 of the CBD Revitalisation Program.

Works scheduled to commence in 2017/18 are:

- Refurbishment of Cook Street Plaza and the Eskbank Street Precinct; Stage 1 of the CBD Revitalisation Program.
- Cullen Bullen Sewerage Treatment Plant

## Creating a place to live, work and invest

Each year, Council develops and implements a suite of programs designed to support local businesses. These programs include a range of educational and shop-local initiatives that aim to ensure the longevity of small businesses and promote the Lithgow LGA as a vibrant, 'up and coming' location for businesses looking to relocate from other areas.

These initiatives include:

- The development and promotion of iconic local events such as Halloween and LithGlo.
- Attraction of new events to the region.
- Actively marketed the LGA through tourism and economic trade shows.
- Provided funding to local businesses to upgrade their facades in the Main Street Program.

# Strengthening our local Tourism industry

## Marketing the Region

A number of Key marketing initiatives were employed to promote and encourage visitation to the Lithgow LGA including taking reference from the Destination

Management Plan – a Tourism Strategy for Lithgow.

- Attendance at the South Coast Caravan, Camping and 4WD Show
- Canberra Home, Leisure and 4WD Show
- Newcastle Caravan, Camping and 4WD Show
- Rose Hill Caravan and Camping Super-show.
- Continual promotion of the Lithgow Visitors Guide which is placed in all level 1 Visitor Information Centres around NSW.
- Continual promotion of the Lithgow smart phone app.
- Advertising in regional publications and Sydney Newspapers as well as local media outlets.
- Promotion via Social Media including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

## Wallerawang Information Bay

Another key action to be identified by the Tourism Advisory Committee was the completion of the Wallerawang Information Bay. The key action was taken from the Destination Management Plan and involved liaison between Lithgow City 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 then provided historical and contemporary information for the sign and after triple checking that everything was correct the information bay sign went into production.

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 and has led to a vital piece of tourism infrastructure being installed in Wallerawang.

## Town Entry Signage

A key action from the Destination Management Plan – A Tourism Strategy for Lithgow, identified the need for new Town Entry and Local Government Area signage. After extensive community consultation including a survey to find the most preferred design, tenders were sought and the manufacture of the signs began.

Lithgow Tourism staff liaised with the Roads and Maritime Service to ascertain where the signs could be placed and what rules and regulations had to be adhered to. Lithgow City Council Operations department surveyed the identified sites for the placement of the signs and in co-operation with the sign manufacturers the signs were installed over a 3 week period in March 2017.

Since being installed, the LGA entry and Town entry signs have received much praise from the community and now sit resplendent in their vibrant and warm colours as welcoming beacons that send out a message of positivity about the future direction of Lithgow.

The signs are still a work in progress, and over the winter months some issues have been identified with cracks appearing in the signs. The manufacturers of the signs will be revisiting Lithgow to rectify any issues. There will also be investigations into the possibility of landscaping and lighting the signs.



## Lithgow Halloween 2016

Lithgow Halloween is family friendly Tourism event aimed at increasing visitation to the region and to drive business into the tourism sector.

Lithgow Halloween is staged in the centre of Lithgow's main shopping and dining precinct.

Local businesses including cafes and restaurants actively engaged in the event offering safe trick or treat along with themed Halloween window displays and special menus for the event.

Cafes, restaurants and Hotels reported a big increase in revenue and extended their regular trading hours due to the increase in demand.

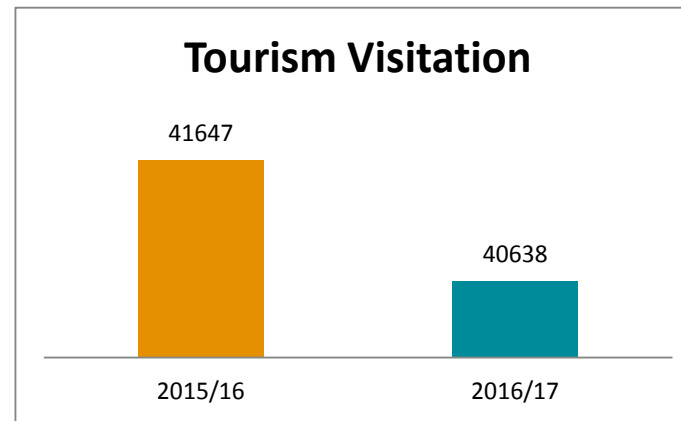
Many of the restaurants were booked out in advance of the event with some of the cafes and restaurants along Main Street trading out into the street offering special quick food options for the night. Lithgow Tourism provided additional seating and tables for street dining along the event site. New activities for the 2016 included a cake decoration competition ran by Sweetie's Cake House in Main Street, although the number of entries was low the business reported a good increase in revenue and awareness of the business.

Accommodation in Lithgow over the weekend of Lithgow Halloween was sold out with some of the event contractors needing to seek accommodation in Katoomba and the Blue Mountains.

Lithgow Visitor Information Centre staff monitored accommodation booking enquires leading up to the event with bookings for the event weekend made as early as February 2016.

Accommodation demand also increased with over 60 contractors including security, traffic control and event production crew over the event weekend.

Lithgow Halloween offered craft and food markets stalls trading from 2.00pm on Saturday with over 80 stalls including craft and produce from the region. The stalls created a festive atmosphere and provided an economic boost to regional traders.



These actions are consistent with the:

- **Community Strategic Plan 2026**
  - 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community.
  - 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
  - 2.2.7.1 To create a strong tourism industry that maximises benefits from visitors to the LGA.
- **Tourism Destination Management Plan**
- **Festival and Events Strategy**



# Interpreting our heritage

## Eskbank House & Museum

2016/17 was a very important year for Eskbank House and Museum.

The 50th 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.

In 2017, the 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 and Museum received a significant Heritage Near Me grant from the NSW Government to deliver a series of engagement outcomes. This has involved constructing new garden paths and fencing as the first stage to developing an historic garden and a new publication capturing key historical information and oral histories. The grant will also cover the development of digital interpretation platforms, a new website, an exhibition, and an event celebrating the anniversary to be delivered at a later stage of 2017.

Many other activities took place at Eskbank House and Museum throughout the year.

Seven exhibitions were held, including:

- The historical survey Masters of Iron and Steel,
- The outcomes of workshops held with local schools as part of the inaugural Subliminal Festival, and
- Waste 2 Art returned for another successful year with entries spilling out into the Garden Pavilion, Pottery Pavilion and gardens.

A number of special events and programs were also delivered engaging with different audiences and encouraging increased visitation to the museum. These included art workshops, children's programs, music and theatre performances, and themed garden events such as Steampunk held on a beautiful Winter's afternoon in July. Australia Day was also hosted in the gardens of Eskbank House, with the over 200 attendees entertained with music performed by the Mitchell Conservatorium.

### Museums Advisor Program

After six years of providing dedicated support and expert advice to the museum and cultural sector across the Lithgow region, Lynn Collins retired from his role as Museums Advisor. The Museums Advisor Program is co-funded by Museums & Galleries of NSW to provide experienced support to cultural workers in regional areas. Lynn was instrumental in establishing the Museums Network, coordinating Museums Standards training, and has provided outstanding support to the volunteers who care for the regions important cultural institutions and assets.

In 2017, the Museums Advisor Program took on a new focus. Michael Huxley was appointed as the Museums Advisor bringing a wealth of experience in strategic cultural planning. Michael commenced initial consultations with key stakeholders in early 2017, leading towards a concise Cultural Heritage Report making recommendations for Council's future planning involving the museums sector in local tourism and economic development initiatives.

Photographs:

Top left: Voices of Eskbank book cover

Bottom left: Eskbank Steampunk 2016 Photograph courtesy of Brigitte Grant Photography

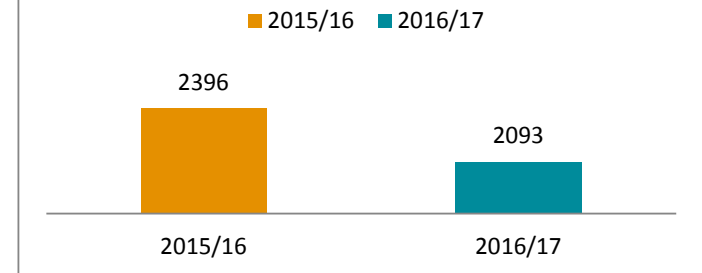
Top right: fun Crafty Noons - children's school holiday craft workshop

Bottom right: School Holiday young writers workshop with local author Kim Kelly.

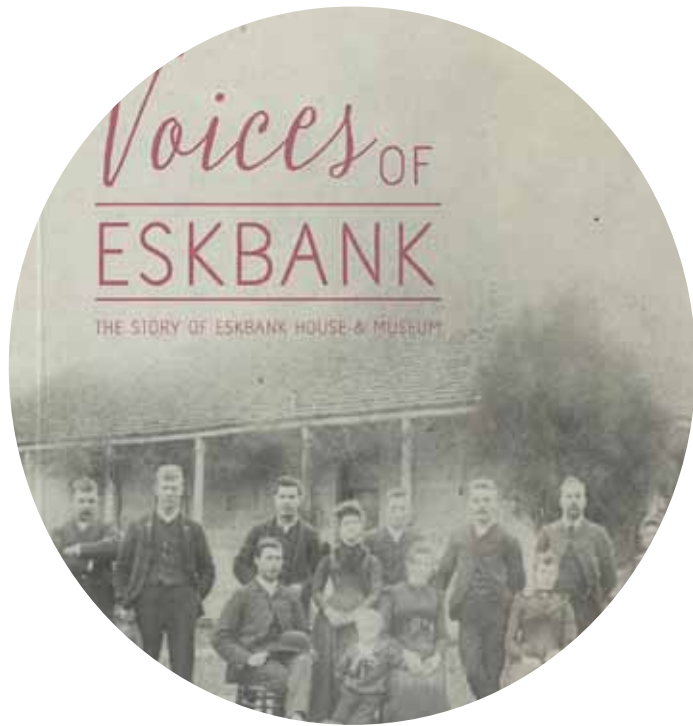
These actions are consistent with the:

- **Community Strategic Plan 2026**
  - 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community.
  - 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
  - 2.2.7.1 To create a strong tourism industry that maximises benefits from visitors to the LGA.
- **Cultural Plan**
- **Cultural Precinct Study**

## Eskbank House & Museum Visitation







*Developing  
our Built  
Environment*



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 Principle Activity Area is responsible for:

- Providing for future community needs.
- 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.

To achieve the objectives of this key theme, council has implemented a variety of strategies, programs and services to upgrade and maintain our community assets. This theme aims to develop and support:

- Community cultural facilities
- Community commercial and industrial buildings
- Cycleways and walkways
- Environmental health
- Heritage
- On-site sewage management
- Parks and gardens
- Recreational facilities
- Road safety and compliance
- Transport
- Sewage infrastructure
- Stormwater
- Trade waste
- Water infrastructure
- Waste and recycling



Telstra Tech Savvy Seniors Program held at the Lithgow Library Learning Centre in partnership with the Lithgow Telstra Store. Classes ranged from introduction to the internet and social media, to smart phones and online shopping and banking.

# Connecting our community

## Key Facts:

### Lithgow City Council is responsible for:

- **956km of urban, rural sealed, regional and rural unsealed roads.**

#### Glen Davis and Glen Alice Roads

- **Unsealed = 12,530m**
- **Sealed = 68,120m**
- **32 Concrete bridges**
- **10 Timber Bridges**

## Changing how we do things

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 will be included as part of the Roads Asset Management Plan. The first draft of this plan is currently being written and will be completed in 2017/18.

## 2016/17 Roads & Ancillary Facilities Works Program

Project/Program	Total \$
Urban drainage improvements	16,173
Kerb & gutter construction - Thornton Avenue, Lithgow	11,340
Footpath construction - James O'Donnell Drive, Lithgow	9,756
Footpath Construction - Kirkley Street to Magpie Hollow Road, South Bowenfels	22,412
Farmers Creek Cycleway, Lithgow	35,451
Gravel resheeting:	
• Wolgan Road, Wolgan Valley	87,236
• Cullenbenbong Road, Kanimbla	53,360
Roads to Recovery Program:	
• Glen Alice Road	346,674
• Glen Davis Road	256,744
• Curly Dick Road	108,173
• Rydal-Hampton Road	299,145
• Cox's River Road	257,889
• Mckanes Falls Road	149,274
• Main Street, Wallerawang	58,946
• Williwa Street, Portland	64,348
Infrastructure Levy Program:	
• Inch Street Lane	25,681
• Bells Road	125,607
• Cullenbenbong Road	53,360
• Wolgan Valley Bridge	93,852
Urban roads improvements program - Hotmix reseal of a section of Methven Street, Lithgow	137,442
Improvements to timber bridges on Glen Davis Road, Capertee Valley	86,171
Repair grant improvements to Wallerawang Road	362,450
Line marking of rural and urban roads throughout the Local Government Area.	23,643

## Wallerawang Road, Portland Reseal

In 2016/17, 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 rideability, 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.



# Connecting our community

## Reconstruction of the Wolgan Causeway, Wolgan Valley

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 has 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.

The majority of the construction was completed over eight days with some extra time being required to cure the concrete deck. As it stands, the bridge is complete however the approaches remain to be completed before traffic is transferred to the new asset. It is expected that this work will be completed prior to Christmas break, subject to contractor availability. This asset was constructed at a cost of \$93,500.00 including GST.





These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026

- 3.2.4.1 To establish a system of cycleways and pedestrian paths to provide links between major cultural and recreational facilities and town centres.
- 3.2.13.1 To provide road infrastructure that meets the needs of the residents.
- 5.1.4.1 To ensure the operations of the Council are managed to achieve identified outcomes.



Pictured

Top and bottom left: Bridge failure

Middle top: Stabilisation of the bridge

Middle bottom: Temporary bridge

Top right: Temporary bridge plus frame for new bridge

Bottom right: New bridge installed.

# Quality Open Spaces catering to all recreational needs

## New Amenities for Endeavour Park

In 2016/17 following public consultation Council resolved to construct a new toilet block in Endeavour Park adjacent to the Great Western Highway Lithgow. The existing toilets were demolished and replaced with new automatic self cleansing Exeloo amenities similar to the facility installed in Cook Plaza which has been very popular with the residents and visitors.

The amenities building has been located to allow easy public access from the carpark and to complement the Adventure Playground proposed for future development within the park.

The facility is fully compliant for accessibility for persons with disabilities, which continues Council's program of improvements identified in its recently adopted Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

The Endeavour Park toilet facility was fully funded by Council at a total project cost of \$200,000. The final stage of this project will be to screen print the building with historical photographs similar to the Cook Street facility.



## All Abilities Roundabout

During the year, Council installed an All-Abilities Children's Roundabout in the Queen Elizabeth Park Playground.

Inclusive play spaces breakdown barriers between different groups and are important for developing an understanding of diversity amongst children, their families and the wider community.

The roundabout was 50% funded by the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership Program 2016 and 50% by Lithgow City Council. Queen Elizabeth Park Lithgow was chosen as the location as it is a major recreational facility for both the local community and visitors to the town and is right next to a child care centre.

Playgrounds are a place for play and learning - where kids develop physical and cognitive skills and build social relationships. The roundabout will enable children of varying abilities to engage in these play, social and educational processes.



## Emora Park Playground

Council received a \$50,000 grant during the year from the NSW Government's Social Housing Community Improvement Fund to install playground equipment in Emora Park, Landa Street Lithgow.

Until the equipment was installed, there was no playground equipment nor other facilities in this park which is centrally located in the Landa Street social housing community. It is the only park in this community. This community is located on the western side of the Great Western Highway and separated from playgrounds and other social and recreational facilities on the eastern side of the highway.

The grant enabled Council to install new playground equipment and seating. Children and families in this community now have access to creative play spaces to foster their physical and cognitive development.





## Blast Furnace Upgrade Works

Council awarded a tender in early 2017 for the construction of board walks, viewing platforms, pathways, landscaping and carpark works which will transform the Lithgow Blast Furnace into a major cultural heritage destination and venue for events, performance and exhibitions.

Construction works are due to start in August 2017 and completed before Christmas 2017.

The works will also include new interpretative signage, lighting and park furniture to enhance safety, walkability and the visitor experience.

Council has been successful in obtaining funding from the Commonwealth and NSW governments to undertake this important project which aims to attract a greater number of visitors to the Lithgow region, promote the economic diversification of the Lithgow economy and create jobs.

With the completion of Blast Furnace works, Lithgow will have a greatly enhanced offering of cultural and heritage destinations.

### Key Facts:

#### Lithgow City Council is responsible for:

- 11 Sports fields
- 44 Parks and reserves
- 3 Picnic & BBQ areas
- 4 Skateparks
- One 32 hectare Golf Course
- Garden maintenance and weekly mowing of 213 hectares (that's 213 soccer fields).

### These actions are consistent with the:

- **Community Strategic Plan 2026**
  - 1.2.2.1 To respond to the needs of an ageing population.
  - 1.2.7.1 To provide a range of health services which meet the needs of the community.
  - 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community.
  - 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
  - 2.2.7.1 To create a strong tourism industry that maximises benefits from visitors to the LGA.
  - To develop cultural and recreational infrastructure that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.
  - 3.2.3.1 To maintain community commercial and industrial buildings and structures to meet the needs of the community and service council operations.
  - 3.2.6.1 To identify, preserve, improve and promote the LGA's indigenous built and natural heritage.
- **Tourism Destination Management Plan**
- **Cultural Plan**
- **Cultural Precinct Plan**
- **Blast Furnace Park Management Plan**
- **Open Space and Recreation Needs Study**
- **Lithgow Ageing Strategy**



# A healthy, vibrant community

## JM Robson Aquatic Centre

This state of the art facility is now open for year round use with a 25m heated indoor pool for winter months and fully refurbished 50m outdoor pool.

The final stage of this project incorporated a complete redevelopment of the 50m Olympic Pool, including a new pool liner, wet deck, concourse, shade sails, plant and pipework, as well as refurbished filtration. Completed in early 2016, the pool still has 9 lanes and complies with FINA requirements.

An Open Day was held on 6 November 2016, to celebrate the completion of the upgrade to the 50m pool. Activities included:

- An inflatable on the 50m pool.
- Free learn to swim assessment for Term 1, 2017.

- Free trial Aqua classes throughout the day.
- Information sessions by the Lithgow Swimming Club.

The Aquatic Centre now has the ability to provide year-round activities for the community and has seen an increase in patronage with residents taking advantage of:

- Learn to Swim Classes
- Aqua-Aerobics Classes
- Reduced rates for Seniors (75+).

In July 2016, the Aquatic Centre implement party packages for kids birthday parties. This has been

extremely successful with 42 party bookings in 2016/17.

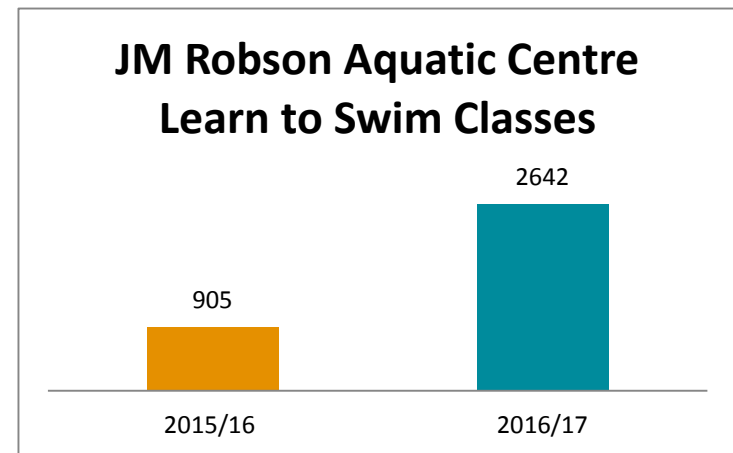
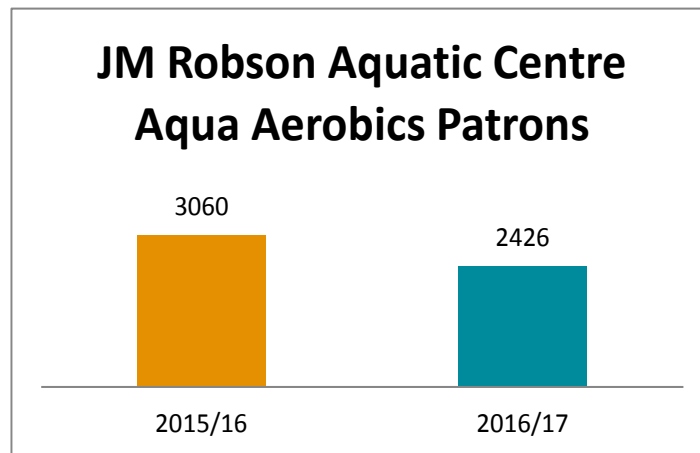
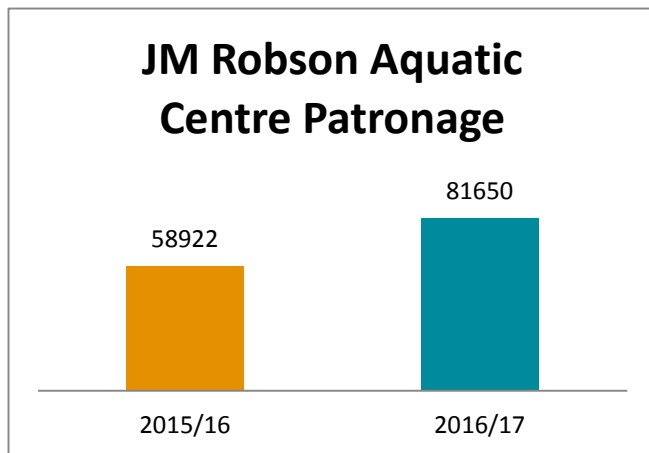
Parties in the Centre include a decorated party room and qualified instructor(s) that facilitate structured games for children to participate in.

Parties run for 2 hours, with the first hour and a half dedicated to pool time fun and the last half hour for food and cake. At the end of the party all children will leave with a lolly bag.

In addition to Learn to Swim Classes run during school term. The Centre runs intensive Learn to Swim School Holiday programs which provide 10 days of beginner classes or School Carnival Workshops designed to focus competitive swimmers training.

These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026 and the Lithgow Ageing Strategy.

- 1.2.2.1 To respond to the needs of an ageing population
- 1.2.4.1 To develop the Lithgow LGA as a Family Friendly Community
- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
- 3.2.10.1 To develop recreational facilities that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future



# CBD REVITALISATION

## Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Square

Following the completion of the Lithgow CBD Revitalisation Action Plan in 2015/16, Council received \$1,304,550 in funding from the Australian Government's National Stronger Regions Fund to commence the implementation of the Action Plan. Council committed a further \$1,594,450 of its own funds to the project for a total Stage 1 project cost of \$2,899,000.

During 2016/17 Council commenced the first stage of the implementation of the Action Plan. Turf Design and Environmental Partnership were engaged to coordinate a multi-disciplinary team to prepare designs and technical specifications for the

redevelopment of Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Street Square.

Following a competitive tender process CA&I were awarded the construction tender with works to be completed in 2017/18. Council will also commence planning Stage 2 in the implementation of the Action Plan in 2017/18 which will largely involve the replacement of the aging footpath surfaces on Main Street.

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.

Works are scheduled to commence on 6 November following the annual 2017 Halloween festivities on 28 October.

Pictured: Concept drawings for Cook Street Plaza and Eskbank Square

This action is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 2.2.3.1 To expand Lithgow's economic base and encourage local employment opportunities through the promotion and facilitation of business and industry development and services.
- 2.2.7.1 To create a strong tourism industry that maximises benefits from visitors to the LGA.
- 3.1.1.1 To provide infrastructure to ensure the sustainable growth and development of the area including the provision of quality recreational and community facilities.
- 3.2.2.1 To develop cultural and recreational infrastructure that will meet the needs of the community now and into the future.



# Protecting our waterways

## Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant Filter Upgrade

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 underdrain 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 ensure 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 KI 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 be better manage the supply of water to the whole of the LGA during times of limited supply off the Fish River water supply scheme.

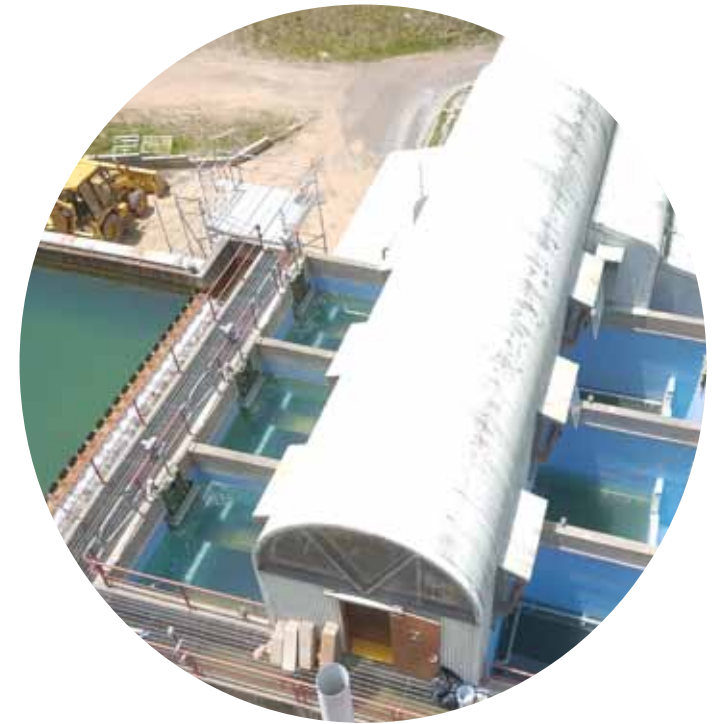
The reduction in frequency and volume of backwashing of the filter media will also have a positive effect on the environment by reducing the amount of sludge by producing a more concentrated sludge volume and reducing the amount of by product needing to be disposed of at landfill.

### Key Facts:

- **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.**
- **30,000KI 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.**

This action is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 3.2.15.1 To provide water infrastructure to allow for the sustainable growth and development of the area.
- 3.2.17.1 To implement the waste management hierarchy of avoidance, reuse, recycle and dispose.
- 4.2.4.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.
- 5.1.4.1 To ensure the operations of the Council are managed to achieve identified outcomes.



## Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant Augmentation

Stage 1 construction Portland Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) Augmentation is commenced during 2016/17. These works will upgrade the existing 2,000 EP (equivalent Persons) STP to a 3,000 EP STP.

The New STP will treat the Sewerage to a much higher standard which will have a beneficial effect on the environment downstream by reducing the levels of potential pollutants released into the environment compared to the current STP. The increased size of the new STP will also allow enough capacity in the system for the growth of the township of Portland.

This project is co-funded by the NSW governments Resources for Regions project through Infrastructure NSW and Lithgow City Council. The funding was received on a basis of 2/3 Funded by Resources for Regions of \$10.05m and 1/3 by Lithgow City Council of \$4.950m. This significant investment in the Portland Community will allow for Growth in all areas of the town.

The new STP is designed to be the same system as Council's existing Wallerawang STP. This design being the same will reduce stores costs for council to have an inventory of critical spares for both plants which are interchangeable. This also means that the Effluent quality will be at the same standards required for the Sydney Catchment area. Which is a vast improvement on the current standards.

This Project is being undertaken By Gongues Constructions PTY LTD, The head contractor is utilising as many local subcontractors and suppliers as possible to increase the economic benefits to the local community. Local trades utilised include electricians, builders bricklayers and earthmoving contractors.

### Key Facts:

- **Project cost \$15,000,000**
- **Increase from 2,000 equivalent persons to 3,000 equivalent persons allowing for future growth of Portland.**
- **Will reduced the levels of potential pollutants released into the environment.**
- **Cost savings for Council will be achieved through alignment of parts with Lithgow and Wallerawang STP.**

This action is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 2.2.3.1 To expand Lithgow's economic base and encourage local employment opportunities through the promotion and facilitation of business and industry development and services.
- 3.2.12.1 To provide sewerage infrastructure to allow for the sustainable growth and development of the area.
- 4.2.4.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.
- 5.1.4.1 To ensure the operations of the Council are managed to achieve identified outcomes.



# Encouraging a reduction in landfill

## Waste Education

Waste Education Program (WEP) has been rolled out throughout local primary schools and early education centres throughout the LGA. To help improve the community's knowledge of environmental issues.

The Lithgow City Council Waste Collection Contract is now into the fourth year with J.R.Richards & Sons. The contract includes a fortnightly collection of the 240 litre yellow lidded household recycling bins available to all residents. To encourage and endorse sustainable waste and resource behaviours, attitudes and practices, an education component (WEP 2016-17) has been included within the contract for ongoing community education and awareness. The education component has been developed and delivered by Council's waste education contractor.

Council's Primary School Education Outreach Program was delivered in May to several schools around the LGA. The program was a resounding success with 335 students provided programs including; 'Wonderful Wiggly Worms', 'Food Glorious Food, Litter, Litter Everywhere' & 'Better Get It Sorted'. This year we also undertook a Recycling Bin Inspection Program (BIP) in Portland, Lithgow, Wallerawang and Bowenfels as a snapshot of current recycling behaviours.

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.

69% of recycling bins inspected contained no or low contamination, which is a fantastic effort. Central Lithgow had the lowest contamination with Portland and Wallerawang performing equally well. Bowenfels have some catching up to do but I'm sure residents are up to the challenge.

The most commonly observed recycling contaminants were 'Plastic packets/film' and 'Recycling in plastic bags', with other common contaminants such as 'Polystyrene' and 'General Rubbish'.

Overall Lithgow residents are doing a great job with 80-90% of recycling bins inspected only having up to three minor contaminants in them in three of the four areas! There is always room for improvement, and all it takes is a moment to think before placing a contaminant in the recycling bin.

This program is in line with Council's Community Strategic Plan 2026:

- 3.2.17.1 To implement the waste management hierarchy of avoidance, reuse, recycle and dispose.

Waste & Recycling Strategy 2011-2016:

- To encourage community growth and development
- To contribute to the efficient and effective management of the environment community and economy for present and future generations
- Development of education programs to encourage reusing and recycling waste.



### Angus Place Rehabilitation Transfer Station Waste/Recycling

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) has been constructed onsite to continue to provide waste collection service to the residence of the area. The new WTS allows residents in all weather to waste and recycling disposal options. Back to Base security camera has also been installed to ensure the facility is only frequented by local residents.

### Tarana Transfer Station

The primary objective of the new waste transfer station is to provide a facility for the Tarana community that can be used to store and allow waste transfer safely in an environmental manner that complies with the guidelines recommended by Waste Services NSW.

The following considerations have been made to design a new facility:

- Waste storage in skips and bins
- Access road that would allow easy transfer of waste from vehicles
- Enclose storage area
- Improve road conditions that allow safety for traffic
- Secure the area to minimise vandalism

These actions are consistent with the Lithgow Council Waste & Recycling Strategy 2011-2016 and the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 3.2.16.1 To provide a waste and recycling collection service that encourages a reduction in land filling.
- 3.2.17.1 To implement the waste management hierarchy of avoidance, reuse, recycle and dispose.
- 4.2.4.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.
- 4.1.4.1 To significantly reduce carbon emissions within the LGA.



*Enhancing  
our Natural  
Environment*



Landcare Coordinator, Rechelle Fisher at Rydal Show in February 2017.



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 district 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.

To achieve the objectives of this key theme, council has implemented a variety of strategies, programs and services to protect, monitor and maintain our environmental assets. This theme aims to develop and support to:

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- Environmental Protection and Leadership
- Natural Heritage
- Water



Green Army Students - training session

# Helping the community to help our environment

## Key Achievements:

- **10 events with 235 community volunteers/ members attending.**
- **1500 native plants planted by volunteers.**
- **4ha of degraded land re vegetated.**
- **2000ha of land with improved management practice.**
- **Support for threatened species and ecosystems through key partnerships.**
- **15 Landcare groups supported.**

Lithgow City Council has been fortunate to have the opportunity to host a fully funded Landcare Coordinator position to support the community in helping to look after and learn about their local environment.

The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative is funded by the NSW Government as a component of their plan to renew the government-community relationship and unlock the full potential of the thousands of volunteers in the Landcare network.

Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association (LOLA) applied to be a host organisation in October 2015 as part of a Regional bid with the four other Landcare Networks in the Central Tablelands region. The LOLA Committee agreed that the most effective and long-term sustainable fit would be to devolve the funds to Lithgow City Council to house and manage the position.

Landcare is a community-based approach to managing and restoring Australia's natural environment, improving the sustainability of agricultural activities, and building the resilience of communities. Landcare refers to any community-based groups operating in the sphere of natural resource management and sustainable

agriculture in NSW and includes but is not limited to groups that describe themselves as Landcare, Bushcare, friends of groups, and producer groups.

Rechelle Fisher was appointed to the position in May 2016 and brings a wealth of experience with industry and as a Landcare Facilitator assisting environmental programs for schools and the broader Landcare community.

It has been a very busy first year for Rechelle who, working with council, LOLA and various project partners, has supported Community and Landcare Groups through coordinating 10 events with 235 community members attending. These include:

- Threatened Species Day- Hyde Park
- Lake Pillans Community Planting Day
- Vale of Clwydd Community Planting day
- Rydal/Tarana Grazier Group Pasture walk and Workshop
- Rydal Show - Landcare Info Stall and plant giveaway
- Hyde Park Fauna Survey techniques- Community spotlighting evening
- Hassans Walls Community Planting Day
- Farmers Creek Community Planting Day
- Acid soil workshop – Tarana
- Swamped by Threats – Information and working day at Browns Swamp

These activities have resulted in community volunteers planting 1500 locally occurring native plants which have been established to revegetate 1 ha of degraded reserve and 3ha of degraded riparian area. As a result of sustainable agriculture workshops and awareness raising activities; improved management practices have been implemented on 2000ha of land. In total, 15 Landcare groups in the region have been provided with support.

Other achievements include working in partnership with

agencies and programs including:

- Local Land Services - to ensure projects are developed and implemented in line with regional priorities and funding opportunities. We have also partnered on community events, shared resources and developed a combined what's on newsletter for our region which is updated and distributed regularly to ensure good communication and minimise overlap.
- Swamped by Threats- we have worked with a consortium of project partners and coordinated the community engagement aspects in the Browns Swamp area.
- Save Our Species program partners OEH, Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens - helped support coordinated translocation planting trials for Threatened Species *Asterolasia buxifolia* within Hyde Park Reserve and organised a community awareness event to mark Threatened Species day.
- Worked with NSW Health to host a 'learn and grow' community planting day at Lake Pillans to raise awareness for Mental Health Month.

## These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026

- 1.2.4.1 To provide a range of health services which meet the needs of the community.
- 4.1.3.2 To responsibly manage natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds.
- 4.1.5.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.
- To protect our waterways and provide safe drinking water.

## Learn and Grow

*A community tree planting that just makes you feel better.*

### The issue

Many of us within the community are affected by mental health issues. It's a fundamental truth for most of us that getting out and into the fresh air and sunshine makes you feel pretty good. Combine this with getting your hands into the soil and contributing to your environment and community by planting native plants and you have a recipe for a great day out.

The personal, social and environmental benefits of working with likeminded people to improve and restore habitats are well known within the Landcare community. It is therefore really not a huge leap to see how Landcare could have a lot to offer those affected by mental health issues – a supportive environment where people can make a real difference.

### The solution

As part of Mental Health Month and Year of the Family, the NSW Western Area Health Service decided to think outside the box – literally getting people outside and into the environment – by collaborating with the Lithgow City Council and Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association to host the 'Learn and Grow' family fun and tree planting day.

All community members were invited to come along to show they care about those affected by mental health issues in our community and to plant some native plants. The event was held at Lake Pillans wetland an important site for birds and wildlife within the Lithgow area. The area around Lake Pillans is also an important place for the local aboriginal community and the event included a welcome to country and traditional smoking ceremony conducted by Wiradjuri elder, Uncle Owen.

### The Impact

Volunteers planted 500 native plants to improve bank stability, downstream water quality and improve habitat values. Many of the volunteers on the day had never planted a tree or had forgotten how good it feels to get their hands in the 'dirt'.

The event provided an opportunity for us all to feel positive about ourselves, learn something about traditional connections to country, and interact in a positive and hands-on way with our local natural landscapes. The day also reached out to those in the community who may never have considered joining a Landcare group or volunteering for Landcare activities.

### Key Facts:

- **The day highlighted the important connection between our environment and our wellbeing**
- **Participating in Landcare projects has the potential to provide a meaningful and worthwhile experience to those affected by mental health issues.**
- **500 native species were planted to improve the Lake Pillans habitat by people who may have never been involved in Landcare before.**



Pictured  
Top: A traditional Smoking Ceremony was conducted by Wiradjuri Elder, Uncle Owen.  
Bottom: A budding young conservationist.

# Helping the community to help our environment

## Threatened Species Day - Hyde Park

### Key Facts

- **Reserves are often the last foothold of many threatened species.**
- **Managing the threats to these reserves is the responsibility of the whole community.**
- **Reaching out to the Community to let them know how important these reserves are is essential in order to make sure they are looked after into the future.**
- **31 people attended the day**

### The issue

Hyde Park Reserve, located near Hartley on the western edge of the Blue Mountains, is home to the only known population of *Asterolasia buxifolia* which was presumed extinct in the wild until being re-discovered within the boundaries of the reserve.

This threatened species is reduced to a population size estimated to be in the order of only a few hundred plants. The reserve is the site of a Save Our Species (SOS) recovery plan.

### The solution

Lithgow City Council in partnership with the Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association (LOLA), The Office of Environment and Heritage and Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens, held an awareness raising event at Hyde Park to mark Threatened Species Day along with an ex-situ planting of *Asterolasia*. The day included a tour of the reserve guided by national experts and provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of the reserve to the survival of a number of species.

On Friday, 9 September 2016, national experts from the Australian Network for Plant Conservation a former senior ecologist at the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens were amongst those who discussed and presented the unique biodiversity values within the reserve to a rapt audience and described the specific works being undertaken to help the threatened species *Asterolasia buxifolia* as part of NSW Government's 'Saving Our Species' Program.

### These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026

- 1.2.4.1 To provide a range of health services which meet the needs of the community.
- 4.1.3.2 To responsibly manage natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds.
- 4.1.5.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.
- To protect our waterways and provide safe drinking water.



Pictured  
Top: Bob Maskinson addressing the audience.  
Bottom: River Lett at Hyde Park.

## Vale of Clwydd Creek Project

### *Communities looking after their creeks*

#### The Issue

The Vale of Clwydd Creek is an urban tributary of the upper Cocks River catchment, eventually feeding into Sydney's drinking water supply.

The area has long been infested with Willows and other woody weeds which has resulted in decreased aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity as well as changing the in-stream flows and temperatures and significantly. In 2012, an integrated program of woody weed control works commenced.

#### The Solution

Collaboration between Lithgow Oberon Landcare, Central Tablelands Local Land Services and Lithgow City Council has been supported by volunteers within the wider community.

In addition to the contracted Willow control works, a number of planting days were facilitated to assist with the re-establishment of suitable riparian species along the Vale of Clwydd Creek. Local neighbours that border the Reserve were invited along, in addition to the broader community.

#### The Impact

A staged approach to removing the woody weeds and re-establishing native vegetation has provided the system time for gradual and progressive recovery, in-filling with a variety of species and engaging locals numerous times for planting events.

Engaging and interacting with the local community has been vital to the success of the program of works; by creating a sense of stewardship and ownership neighbours can assist with the longer-term management and maintenance of the site.

#### Learnings

Creek and tributary corridors provide valuable connections for wildlife, providing important resources for a range of animals.

Targeting source-point weeds in the upper catchment will substantially improve the aquatic health and biodiversity of the downstream environment.

Working together and linking people to the environment helps make the community stronger.

#### Key Facts:

- **9 volunteers helped plant 300 native plants in their 'bush backyard'.**
- **Developing a strategic catchment-based approach to woody weed management and subsequent native species plantings are necessary for the success of any weed management program (i.e. start from the top and work down).**
- **This approach has aided in securing funding and support from project partners.**



Pictured: Vale of Clwydd Tree Planting.

# Helping the community to help our environment

## Lithgow Green Army

The Lithgow Council Green Army Program has been running over the last 24 months within the Lithgow Local Government Area (LGA). This project valued at over \$800,000 over 24 months provided employment, increasing skills and experience to local youth while increase the biodiversity, restoring threatened species habitat and improve condition of native vegetation throughout the LGA. The program has been highly productive and rewarding to all involved.

In association with a number of the listed grant funded projects the Green Army participants had the opportunity to work with contractors and other government and non-government organisations such as Central Tablelands Local Land Service (CTLLS) Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association and Lithgow & District Community Native Plant Nursery providing invaluable professional support and future employment opportunities for participants.

40 participants were employed over the duration of the project fostering some bright young youths of our area looking for hands on experience. An average of 93% of each team's graduates found employment or when on to follow further studies through education and experiences delivered during this rewarding program.

The Green Army initiative has been a great success in the Lithgow LGA. It was fabulous to see that the Lithgow community has produced such enthusiastic, bright youth who have made a real difference to our natural environment through hours of dedication. The projects addressed revegetation, trail/site maintenance, weed invasion and erosion control. This in turn has improved recreational opportunities, enhanced habitat value and ecosystem services as well as improving the visual amenity of our environmental assets.

Lithgow City Council Green Army supports Council's Community Strategic Plan 2026, and further supports

environmental protection and community partnership targets enhancing our natural environment.

These actions are consistent with the Community and Strategic Plan 2026.

- 1.2.12.1 To improve the quality of life of the LGA's youth.
- 2.2.5.1 To encourage and support learning opportunities in the LGA that align with our needs for skilled workers and retention of young people and families.
- 4.1.3.2 To responsibly manage natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds.
- 4.1.6.1 To protect our waterways and provide safe drinking water.

### Key Facts

- Employed 40 participants over the duration of the project
- Over 16,000 plants planted (4000 per project across 4 projects)
- 28 kg of native seed collected
- 14 community events hosted
- 308 Hectares of weed control treatment
- 100 m<sup>3</sup> of debris removed
- 9065 plants propagated at the Community Nursery
- 49.5 hectares of erosion management.



Top: Green Army Team at Farmers Creek.

Bottom: Mayor Leslie with the Green Army participants at their graduation.

### Hill Crest Reserve

This two year \$45,000 grant funded project which commenced in 2015 in partnership with Central Tablelands Local Land Service for the treatment and control of noxious weeds, planting trees, erosion control and community engagement at Hillcrest Reserve.

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity through consultation with the community and the development of partnerships with the Central Tablelands Local Land Service have achieved real environmental outcomes at Hillcrest reserve.

Hillcrest Reserve now has potential to be a high quality bushland reserve. The Reserve contains important remnant native vegetation consistent with the Lithgow Abercrombie Grassy Woodland which presented some unique challenges. Past land use caused isolation of the reserve from the boarder landscape, while continued future challenges include threats from environmental weeds and the impacts of urban development.

Council will continue to manage threats to the reserve through projects such as this, which has achieved significant reduction in noxious weeds such as Blackberry and Hawthorn as well as other environmental weeds. Council also aim to undertake works to increase the linkages and condition of native vegetation within the reserve.

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity through weed control and supplementary planting will assist in enhancing biodiversity, reduce erosion and improve habitat value. It is hoped improved visual amenity of the area, together with increasing public perception and awareness of this environmental asset will provide long-term environmental outcomes through community support and ownership.

### Hassans Walls Reserve

Through the management of natural resources within Hassan's Walls reserve the control of environmental and noxious weeds continues through the implementation of successful \$30,000 grant funding from Public Reserve Management Fund Program.

This project enhanced biodiversity, reduced erosion, improved habitat value and controlled noxious weeds within the reserve. All of these works improved recreational opportunities, visual amenity of the area and increased public perception and awareness of the environmental asset.

The project has treated a number of the high value areas within the reserve while also identifying other point source of weeds within the reserve, which requires additional works to contain and will be targeted in future works. This project compliments and builds on previous works currently active within the reserve by increasing community participation for lasting environmental outcomes. Including a successful community-planting day where participants managed to plant 250 native tube stock.

These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 1.2.11.1 To celebrate and grow volunteering.
- 4.1.3.2 To responsibly manage natural resources through the control of environmental and noxious weeds.
- 4.1.5.1 To provide environmental leadership through responsible natural resource management, legislative compliance and working cooperatively with the community, relevant environmental authorities and alliances.



Top: Hill Crest Reserve prior to works being undertaken.  
Bottom: Tree Planting at Hassans Walls Reserve.

# Helping the community to help our environment

## Farmers Creek Rehabilitation & Revegetation Project

Lithgow City Council received \$38,000 of grant funding to improve biodiversity within Farmers Creek from the Blue Mountains Biodiversity fund implemented by the Central Tablelands Local Land Service.

This facilitated the implementation of works outlined within the Farmers Creek Precinct Master Plan such as, strategic woody weed control and to establish 3000 native plants to improve connectivity of existing native vegetation along Farmers Creek between Guy St and Tank St.

Furthermore, upstream of the water treatment plant along Farmers Creek to Ida Falls Creek was treated for weeds to enhance the condition of current native vegetation and reduce the downstream impact of weed species. Target weeds in this area include Ivy, Blackberry, Large and Small-leaf Privet, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Buddleja. Priority will be given to controlling vines that are a threat to native trees and shrubs.



## Stay warm, breath easy

Council's Alternate Fuel Rebate Program provides incentive for the conversion of Coal Burning Appliances to clean energy alternative. The program aims to help residents get the most out of their heating, while protecting the environment and their health. The program involves the following components:

- Community education
- Smoky chimney surveys
- Cleaner Heating Cash Incentives

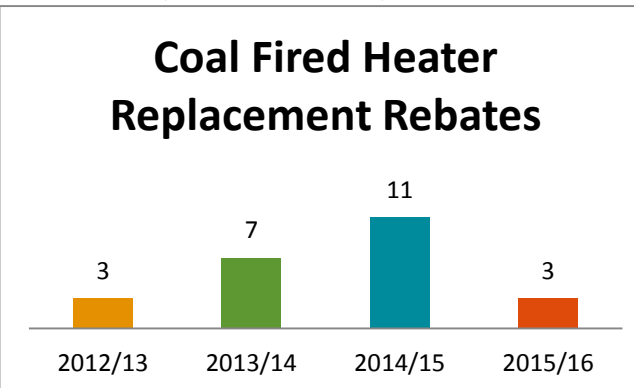
Rebates are available to householders to replace their coal burning appliance. In 2016/17 Council issued \$6,400 in rebates to eligible ratepayers in the areas of Lithgow, Portland, Wallerawang, Lidsdale and Rydal who currently use a coal heater to heat their home or business.

The incentives being offered include the following.

- \$1000 rebate (\$1400 for pensioners)
- \$2000 for Commercial Premises

The following replacement heating systems are eligible for the program:

- Fixed electric heaters with thermostatic controls
- Fixed flued gas heaters
- Reverse-cycle air conditioners
- Ducted gas central heating



## Rainwater Tank and Domestic Appliances Rebate Scheme

This is one of the many ways Council is working with the community to create sensible solutions for people and the environment to ensure that clean, fresh drinking water doesn't become a luxury item. Council has implemented a rebate scheme for:

The installation of Rainwater Tanks connected to domestic appliances and for garden watering; And The purchase of energy and water efficient domestic appliances.

In addition to this, Council has developed 'A Guide to Rainwater Tanks' to assist residents in selecting and installing a rainwater tank which includes information on Council's planning and building requirements. Furthermore, Council's rebate scheme which previously covered tanks 5,000 litres or more has recently been extended to cover 2,000 litre tanks.

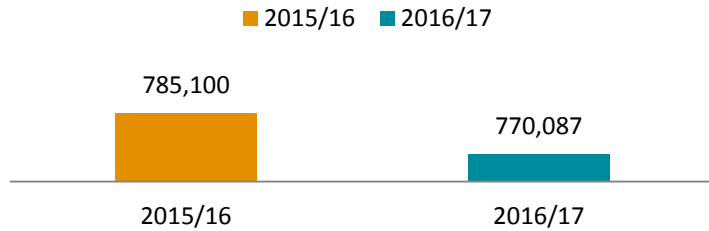
## Environmental Monitoring

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.

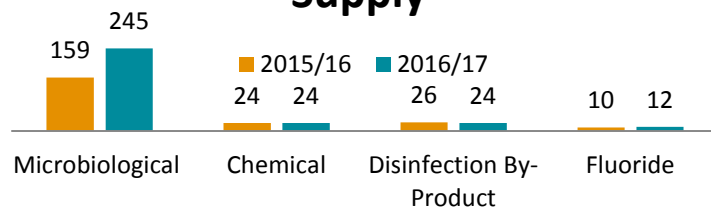


## Water Purchased from Fish River Water Supply (kL)



The areas of Wallerawang, Portland, Cullen Bullen, Blackmans Flat, Pipers Flat, Lidsdale, Rydal and Glen Davis are supplied with water purchased from the Fish River Water Supply. In recent years, the amount of water purchased has decreased as Council is able to supplement the supply to the villages when needed thus reducing demand on the Fish River system.

## Routine Samples of the Reticulated Drinking Water Supply



The drinking water monitoring program enables regional rural water utilities to monitor their water in line with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2004. Representative samples are taken by local water utilities and provided to NSW Health for analysis and recording to ensure water provided to consumers complies with the Guidelines.

## Blue Green Algae Sampling in Partnership with Delta Electricity



The increase shown in 2014/15 represents a prolonged period of hot weather combined with very little rainfall, which is conducive to increased chances of Blue Green Algae outbreaks. Therefore increased testing was undertaken during this period.

*Governance  
& Civic  
Leadership*



Pictured: Staff training at the University of Western Sydney

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.

To achieve the objectives of this key theme, council has implemented a variety of strategies, programs and services to ensure an inclusive and responsible approach to governance. This theme aims to develop and support to:

- Civic Leadership
- Communication
- Corporate Management
- Customer Service
- Employer of Choice
- Information Systems Management
- Local Environmental Planning and Development
- Plant and Equipment



Mayor Stephen Lesslie and General Manager Graeme Faulkner.

# Working Together with our Community

## Improving Communication with the Community

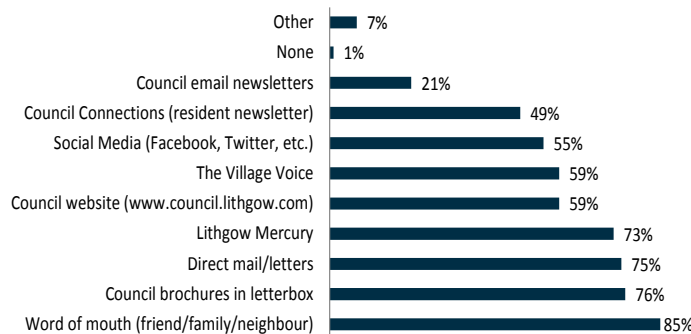
Council uses all media platforms to ensure the community is kept up-to-date with Council activities and the information on services and facilities is current.

- Media Releases
- Weekly Council Column in the Mercury.
- Lithgow and Waste Apps
- Websites for Council, Tourism, Library, Economic Development and Eskbank House Museum
- 5 Facebook pages targeting different audiences
- Media interviews
- Community forums
- Lithgow City Council Twitter site
- Lithgow Tourism Instagram site
- Council Connections newsletter
- Year in Review Annual Report
- Information flyers and brochures.
- Waste education programs delivered in schools and pre-schools
- Community Noticeboards.

Despite all of these avenues being used to provide information to the community, in the recent Community Satisfaction Survey (a random telephone survey of 407 residents across the LGA) the third highest barrier to community satisfaction remains "Consultation with the Community by Council".

In response to the questions "where do you source information on Council services and facilities?" Respondents to the survey replied as follows:

### Sources of Council Information



Other Specified	Count
Council Chambers	13
Radio	12
Community organisations	4
Meetings	2
Community Notice Boards	1
Lithgow Neighbourhood Centre	1
TV	1

Source: Community Satisfaction Survey - Micromex Research, June 2016 Survey n = 407

Council acknowledges that many residents in the rural areas of the LGA do not receive the local paper, radio or regional television stations. It also acknowledges that there are communications blackspots within the area for internet and mobile phone reception. However, in order to ensure that information is communicated as broadly as possible throughout the Lithgow LGA, council will continue to adapt to new forms of communication.

In 2016/17, Council implemented two weekly e-Bulletins for email subscribers; Council Connections e-News and Schools eNews distributed via MailChimp.

Council Connections eNews commenced in October 2016, has 244 subscribers (July 2017) and is distributed weekly. The newsletter provides information on Council activities and events, opportunities for the community to 'Have their say', positions vacant and links to media releases on Council's website.

The Schools e-News has 52 subscribers (July 2017) and is emailed to all schools/preschools in the Lithgow Region plus Schools in Bathurst, the Blue Mountains, Kandos, Rylstone and Illford. The newsletter is distributed monthly during school term providing information on activities and opportunities for youth at the Libraries, Aquatic Centre and Eskbank House Museum as well as School Holiday programs.

## Engaging our Community

During the reporting period Council sought community input into the development of a wide range of strategies, policies and plans including:

- Draft Policies
  - Draft Event Attraction Policy
  - Excessive Water Usage Allowance for Breakages
  - Financial Assistance.
- Road naming
- Locality naming
- Strategies and Plans
  - Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
  - Draft Lithgow Flood Study
  - Draft Youth Strategy
  - Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Planning agreements
- Proposed installation of a Rotunda in Saville Park Portland by the Portland Community Group.
- Proposed use of Wallerawang Memorial Hall by the Wallerawang Men's Shed.

A Mental Health Summit was held in December to provide the community with an opportunity to raise its concerns about living with or being affected by mental illness. The summit enabled the community, in partnership with local services to identify local needs and future strategies to assist people affected by mental illness. In response to the summit the Mayor's Mental Health Taskforce was convened.

Council undertook a Councillor Visioning Session and random telephone survey to identify the community's and Council's priorities for the future of the Lithgow Local Government Area as part of the community engagement process for the development of the Community Strategic Plan 2036.

Six Community Information Sessions were conducted throughout the LGA and a dedicated website 'Have your say' was set up during the exhibition period for the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

A dedicated website was developed for the Marrangaroo Masterplan/Development Control Plan Project. The website provided residents with information on the consultation processes and managed bookings for community sessions including:

- Project briefing session
- Visioning consultation session
- Landowner consultation
- Structure Plan consultation.

The community was invited to 'Have your Say on the Farmers Creek Precinct Masterplan and an information portal was set up to keep the community informed of the project.

In October, Council called for comment on the Issues and Options Discussion Paper which was prepared as part of the planning process for the Hassans Walls Reserve Plan of Management. Comments were used to help confirm the values and issues, determine the reserve's future character and usage, and assist in setting and prioritising management directions for the

area. In March, Council invited public submissions on the Draft Hassans Walls Reserve Plan of Management and a public hearing into the categorisation of "community" land within the reserve to be included in the draft plan was held on 4 April.

These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 1.1.1.1 To provide social and cultural planning that will lead to the enhancement of the quality of life of the community.
- 2.1.1.1 To plan and manage growth in a sustainable manner with emphasis on creating a diversified economy underpinned by sound local environmental planning.
- 3.1.1.1 To provide infrastructure to ensure the sustainable growth and development of the area including the provision of quality recreational and community facilities.
- 4.1.1.1 To identify, preserve and improve our natural heritage and biodiversity whilst ensuring the water security and sewerage capacity of the region for sustainable growth and development.
- 5.1.1.1 To ensure integrated corporate plans set the long term direction for the LGA and Council.
- 5.1.2.1 To provide leadership for the community
- 5.1.2.1 To ensure effective communication between Lithgow City Council and the community.

# Local and regional collaboration

## Customer Service Postage Initiative

To aid in the continual improvement of liaising with external customer a local postage initiative was undertaken. This project was implemented due to

- Rising cost of postage to Council
- Improving delivery time to local solicitors and conveyances as postage was taking up to 7 days
- Provide information that delivered quality improvements in our services.

Correspondence was sent to all local solicitor and conveyances to seek interest in an opportunity to have a pickup service for their mail to save delays and money. The onus was on them to pick up the mail from Council.

All staff at Council were informed of the new process and were asked to deliver mail to Customer Service to be distributed by individual pick up boxes for those external customers.

All solicitors were very quick to respond to this efficient service that Council could provide and therefore the implementation of this service began.

This has now be an ongoing service for over 12 months with the results being

- Receipt of all certificates on the same day as completion
- Reduced cost to Council with postage for 2016/2017 budget remaining static even with increases in cost of postage
- Greatly improved service and relationships with local solicitors and conveyances.

These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 5.1.5.1 To ensure efficient customer service standards

## Customer Service Charter

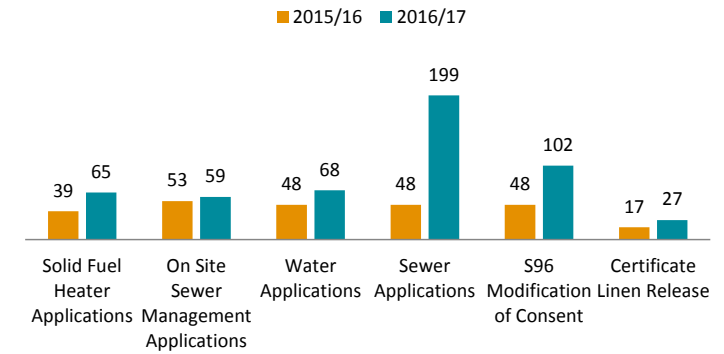
Council's Customer Service Charter sets out the standard of customer service Council will offer you as we aim to deliver a range of quality services to meet your needs.

As Council's friendly Customer Service Team handles approximately 18,000 face-to-face enquiries and 50,000 telephone calls each year it is important to set out a standard of service that identifies:

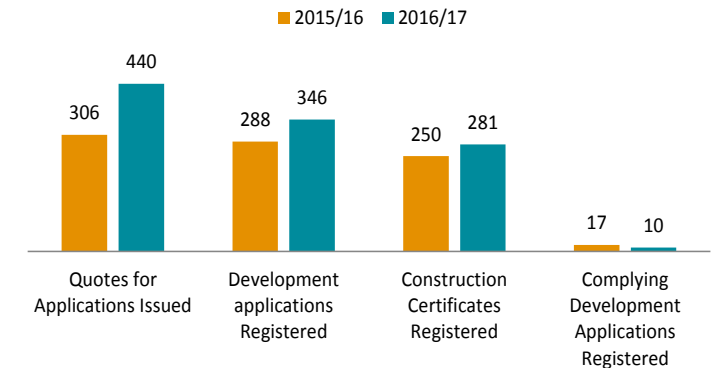
- Council's Service Commitment;
- How face to face and telephone enquiries will be dealt with;
- A service standard for written responses; and
- Council's Complaints Policy.

A copy of the Customer Service Charter is available for viewing on Council's website [council.lithgow.com](http://council.lithgow.com).

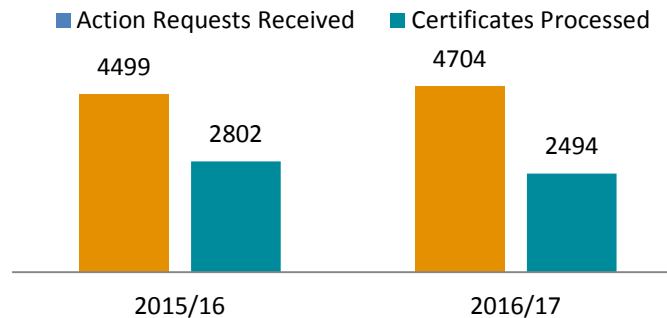
## Customer Service



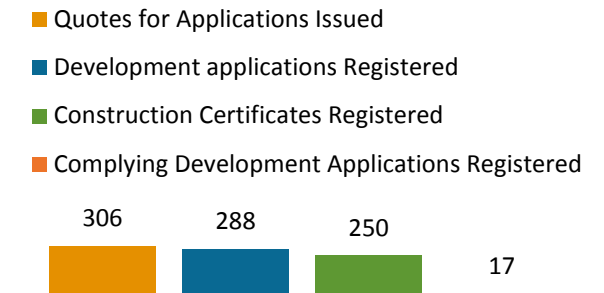
## Customer Service



## Customer Service



## Customer Service



## VendorPanel

In late 2016, Council began rolling out a web-based quotation system named VendorPanel. The system is used as a central point for staff to seek quotations from local and national suppliers. It is also utilised by Council's contractors to upload their insurance and compliance information.

Information sessions were held for local suppliers in the lead up to the system going live and so far, over 200 suppliers have registered.

All local suppliers are encouraged to register their business in the system in order to receive potential opportunities to quote. Information on how to register can be found on Council's website at <http://council.lithgow.com/doing-business-with-council/>

## Regional Contracts

Council participated in two joint tender processes with the Central NSW Region of Councils during the 2016/17 financial year.

One was for the bulk supply of fuel and member Councils benefitted by approaching the market as a group, resulting in lower pricing through greater purchasing power.

The second process involved selecting a mailing house to supply rates notice printing and mailing. The provider chosen as a result of this process will provide significant financial savings for Council over the next financial year. Through this provider, Council will also be giving ratepayers the opportunity to pay and manage their rate notices via an electronic platform. This initiative will make management of rates notices more efficient for ratepayers and will save paper. Please note however that 'going electronic' will be optional and ratepayers will still have the option to receive hard-copy notices via the post if they wish.

## Working with CENTROC

Council is an Executive Member of Centroc and a valued Board member.

Council is also a member of the Centroc Water Utilities Alliance (CWUA). The CWUA supports member Councils by advocating for water and sewer infrastructure management and ownership to be retained by Local Government. It demonstrates the benefits of Councils working collaboratively to share resources and deliver cost savings while ensuring increased efficiencies and best practice in delivering critical infrastructure and services to their communities.

The CWUA has attracted over \$3M of State and Federal funding to supplement programming since its inception in 2009 and collectively saved members in excess of \$700k through regional procurement alone.

Centroc is working collaboratively to deliver Best Practice to all member Councils including compliance with the DPI Water's Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Framework and assure eligibility for funding through the State Government for its water and sewer business. Through this program Council has procured:

- an Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan Evaluation Study;
- a Drought Management Plan;
- a Strategic Business Plan; and
- a Developer Services Plan (currently in development)

The CWUA delivers cost savings and other efficiencies through regional procurement of asset management contracts with Council participating in the following regional contracts in 2016-2017: Dam surveillance, CCTV Condition Assessment of Gravity Sewer Mains, Smoke Testing and Asset Valuation Services.

Council has also worked towards achieving full compliance with Best Practice participating in a regional Audit of Performance Reporting for Water Supply and Sewerage and demonstrated commitment to its Drinking Water Quality Policy through engagement in a Microbial Improvement Program for Drinking Water Quality.

Participation in the Centroc HR Group and Training Service that Centroc offers Lithgow as a member Council throughout 2016-2017 has resulted in significant savings for training with:

- 32 courses delivered by the Service
- 310 staff trained via the Service
- Total spend with the Training Service (including online training) is \$84,048
- Cost of training using alternate training providers would have been \$74,443
- Savings on course costs is \$2,945
- Savings on travel and accommodation costs is \$6,611
- Savings on coordination and research time is \$1,462
- Total savings for Lithgow City Council is \$11,019

For the past 5 years, Council was part of the regional online training program, which allowed access to 6 online training modules to staff. The training modules available to staff under this program include:

- Bullying & Harassment
- Privacy
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Code of Conduct
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Alcohol & Other Drugs

# Regional collaboration

This online training contract will cease in mid-2017 and a new online training program will commence for a period of 3 years. Council is participating in the new online training program which will give staff access to 340 courses online.

Council has also benefitted from a number of regional contracts including:

- Pre-employment Screening
- Online Training
- Road Signs
- Bitumen Emulsion
- Bulk Fuel and Fuel Cards
- Internal Audit
- Water & Sewer Strategic Business Plans
- CCTV/Smoke testing of sewer lines
- Dam Surveillance
- Pipe Relining
- Traffic Control Training
- Employee Assistance Program
- Developer Servicing Plans
- Linemarking Services
- WHS Compliance Training
- SCOUT E-Recruitment
- Asset Valuation Services for Water and Sewer
- Auditing of Performance Reporting for Water and Sewer
- Electricity for Small sites

Lithgow City Council saved a total of \$24,800 by participating in the regional procurement processes for Regional electricity contract for small sites over a 12 month period.

Lithgow City Council is a participating Council in the Centroc WHS Induction Program. This Program enables contractors working for multiple councils within the Centroc region to undertake a WHS Induction once – and be able to work at any other participating Council without needing to do the induction again. To date, Council has inducted 448 contractors under this Program and 228 of these contractors were inducted this past financial year.

Beyond the Range – Lithgow City Council is participating in this project which is recognising health workforce shortages in the region, the Centroc Health Workforce Group has worked with key stakeholders to develop a matrix of what we do well in this region and what we can do better to attract health workforce to Central NSW. <https://www.facebook.com/BeyondTheRangeNSW/>

In 2016/17, Centroc made the following Submissions on behalf of its region:

- Discussion Paper for the Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities
- Inquiry into Regional Development and a global Sydney
- Inquiry into the augmentation of water supply for rural and regional New South Wales Post Hearing Response - Questions on Notice
- Inquiry into the augmentation of water supply for rural and regional New South Wales Post Hearing Response- Supplementary
- Productivity Commission National Water Reform Inquiry

- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal WaterNSW operating licences review
- The operation, effectiveness, and consequences of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Location of Corporate Commonwealth Entities) Order 2016
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 Planning Legislation updates
- NSW Review of Regional Infrastructure
- Assessment of the Distribution of Medical Places and Training
- Lachlan Water Resource Plan
- Macquarie-Castlereagh Water Resource Plan
- Draft Climate Change Strategic Plan and A Draft Plan to Save NSW Energy and Money
- Australian Drinking Water Guidelines: Draft framework on microbial health based targets
- Bells Line of Road/Chifley Road proposed upgrade
- RDA Independent Review
- Joint Organisations Getting the boundaries right
- Review of the Local Government Rating System Local Government — Draft Report
- Response to the Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan
- Inquiry into the augmentation of water supply for rural and regional New South Wales
- Crown Lands Inquiry
- Feedback to the Joint Organisation reform process (Background Paper)



Five separate Regional Priority Infrastructure Plans are being developed;

- Water - completed
- Transport Infrastructure (freight, logistics and transport) – completed
- Community – underway
- Communication
- Energy

Operational Support - Project Teams are an important component of Centroc's operation and vital to its success. Project Teams are formed to allow cross collaboration and the sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources.

Project teams Lithgow participate in include:

- Directors of Corporate Services
- IT
- Best Practice in Stores Management
- Transport Technical Committee
- HR Managers' Group & Centroc Training Service
- WHS and Risk Management
- Directors of Engineering
- The Centroc Water Utilities Alliance
- Planners workgroup

These actions are consistent with the Community Strategic Plan 2026.

- 5.12.1 To provide responsible leadership for the community.
- 5.1.4.1 To ensure the operations of the Council are managed to achieve identified outcomes.
- 5.1.6.1 To build and develop a high quality staff base so that Council is an employer of choice in Lithgow.
- 5.1.7.1 To ensure effective management of information systems that comply with legislative requirements.

Savings on Regional Procurement from 14 December 2009 - 30 June 2017

Completed Programs (Telephony Audit, Diesel Tax Rebate and Corporate Express	Training Service (includes funding from water training)	WHS Contract (Load shifting, traffic control training, compliance training	HR Contracts (Online Training, Pre-Employment, EAP and SCOUT e-Recruitment)	Electricity (2017 small sites contract	IT contracts (unified communications solution)	CWUA *does not yet include savings for current CCTV and Smoke Testing contract	Participation in Regional Tenders (billable)	Participation in Regional Tenders (unbillable)	Total Savings
\$39,603	\$100,676	\$15,674	\$5,225	\$24,802	\$7,627	\$15,499	\$30,000	\$120,000	\$359,105

# Statements Against Reporting Requirements

## Condition of Public Works

A condition index has been used to describe the condition of each type of asset. The condition description is based on the following condition index:

Condition Rating	Condition	Description of Asset
0	New	New asset commissioned in current financial year. Rating used for depreciation reporting only.
1	Excellent	Asset is physically sound, is likely to perform adequately with low/regular maintenance, and extremely low short term risk of failure.
2	Good	Asset is in acceptable physical condition, is likely to perform adequately with minor maintenance and repairs, and minimal short term risk of failure.
3	Satisfactory	Asset is in acceptable physical condition although aging and deterioration is evident. Asset is still functioning safely, minor components require replacement/repair, with failure in the short term unlikely.
4	Worn	Asset is showing signs of moderate deterioration and possibility of assets failing to perform in the short term is possible, with no immediate risk to health and safety.
5	Poor	Asset has failed or failure is imminent with significant signs of deterioration of the asset and hazards present a possible risk to public safety.

Further details of the condition of particular assets are provided in Special Schedule 7 of the Financial Statements provided under separate cover to this Report. The following should be noted:

- The estimate of cost to bring public works up to a satisfactory standard is based on the condition of the asset and an adjustment for the Consumer Price Index.
- Council has adopted a strategic approach to the management of its varied and extensive assets. During 2016/17 Council continued to identify value and develop works programs for all its assets.

## Asset Management Improvement Plan

To ensure the Strategic Asset Management Plan is implemented effectively and efficiently, an Asset Management Improvement Plan has been prepared. On 26 June 2017 Council adopted the Strategic Asset Management Plan 2017-2026.

The actions required to undertake improvement of Council's asset management capabilities are impacted by both internal and external influences and require resources or enablers. These enablers can be in the areas of people, processes, technology and information and data.

The Asset Management Improvement Plan, which will be reviewed annually, prioritises specific capability areas which were identified through a gap analysis process, and where action is required to raise Council's asset management capacity to the desired level of maturity. Implementation of these improvements requires resourcing and monitoring. The actions have been integrated into Council's Delivery Program to ensure ongoing resourcing, implementation and performance monitoring.

Although the Assets Improvement Plan was adopted on 26 June 2017, Council has been progressively implementing improvements identified as part of the Plan, including:

- Reviewing and auditing asset register information (including category, hierarchy, useful lives and unit rates)
- Preparation of draft Asset Management Plans for Water Supply and Sewerage Supply
- Investigating more effective Asset Management Systems to streamline technical and financial data
- Reviewing organisational structure to ensure appropriate resources are utilised for asset management
- Commencing a review on current levels of service provided by Council's infrastructure assets
- Commencing preparation of formally documenting and implementing asset inspection and monitoring programs

## Legal Proceedings

The following table provides a summary of legal proceedings in which Council was a party to in 2016/17:

Matter	Amount	Progress or Outcome
McKinnon v LCC	\$4,500	Successful prosecution
Roger Bailey v LCC and others	Subject to a Dead of Release including confidentiality provisions.	The matter was settled and subject to a dead of release with confidentiality provisions.

## Fees, Expenses and Facilities Provided to the Mayor and Councillors

Council at its meeting of 16 April 2007 adopted a policy regarding the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors. A copy of the Policy is available on Council's website [www.council.lithgow.com](http://www.council.lithgow.com)

Fee, Expense or Facility	Amount \$
Mayoral Allowance	28,882.12
Councillor fees	76,676.81
Provision of a mobile phone for the Mayor	528.00
Provision of iPads for Councillors (including hardware)	18,573.10
Telephone calls	625.53 (GST inc)
Mayoral Vehicle	Nil
NOTE: The Mayor paid nil lease fees for private use during the reporting period which is the amount applicable from the date Council adopted its policy on the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors.	
Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars	4,691.76(GST excl)
Training and skill development	14,665.27 (GST excl)
Interstate visits	Nil
Overseas visits	Nil
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor	Nil
Provision of care for a child or an immediate family member	Nil

NOTE: Includes service award, board membership, parking and meals

## Overseas Visits

There were no overseas visits undertaken during 2016/17.

# Statements Against Reporting Requirements

## Senior Staff

Council had one senior staff position throughout the year although it was held by 3 incumbents; Roger Bailey, Andrew Muir (Acting) and Graeme Faulkner. The total remuneration package of the senior staff are provided in the table below:

General Manager	Amount \$
Total value of salary component of package	253,501
Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary component	Nil
Employer compulsory superannuation or salary sacrifice	18,473
Total value of non-cash benefits	Nil
Total payable fringe benefits tax	7,705

## Bushfire Hazard Reduction Activities

Council participated in several committees and provided support through the Service Level Agreement with the Rural Fire Service.

## Summary of Resolutions Concerning Work Carried Out on Private Land and any Subsidies Related to the Work

There were no resolutions passed during 2016-2017 in accordance with the provisions of section 67(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1993 relating to Council subsidising the cost of any works carried out on private lands.

## External Bodies Exercising Functions Delegated by Council

There were no functions delegated by Council to external bodies during 2016/17.

## Companies in which Council held a Controlling Interest

Council did not hold the controlling interest in any one company.

### Contracts Awarded over \$150,000

Council resolved to award the following contacts in 2016/17 which were over \$150,000:

Contract Description	Contractor	Amount \$
Construction of the Blast Furnace Improvements Masterplan	Coordinated Landscapes	1,122,500
Upgrade of Council's Telemetry System	Elpro Technologies	875,436
Supply of electricity to Small Sites - Less than 100MWh p.a.	Origin Energy	870,000 (value is approximate as energy usage fluctuates)
Supply of Bulk Fuel	Oilsplus Holdings Pty Ltd/Lowes Petroleum/Park Pty Ltd	840,000 (value is approximate as fuel purchases/used fluctuates)
Construction of Cleanwater Diversion Drain - Lithgow Landfill	Henry Plant & Equipment Hire	174,382

### Categorisation of Council Business and the Implementation of Competitive Neutrality Principles

Council operates the following businesses:

#### Category 1

- Wastewater
- Water

#### Category 2

- Land Development

Council has complied with the principles of competitive neutrality in relation to pricing, taxation equivalents, Council rates and charges and corporate taxation equivalents. No complaints have been received in relation to competitive neutrality and Council on 16 October 2006 resolved to adopt a policy to ensure that competitive neutrality complaints are dealt with in an efficient manner (Min No. 06-349). A copy of the Policy is provided on Council's website [www.council.lithgow.com](http://www.council.lithgow.com).

The Financial Statements for the Category 1 and 2 businesses are disclosed in the Financial Statements and Auditors Report 2016/17 and are available on Council's website [www.council.lithgow.com](http://www.council.lithgow.com).

# Statements Against Reporting Requirements

## Grants and Donations

During 2016/17, Council provided Financial Assistance under section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 to the value of \$99,491.10. The organisations who received Financial Assistance included the following:

Non Recurrent Financial Assistance			Recurrent Financial Assistance
Shaқыra Quinn - Sporting Representation	EmilyThompson - Sporting Representation	Portland Film Society	Western Region Academy of Sport
Barton Park Giant Trees Arboretum	Lithgow District Car Club	National Trust	White Ribbon Day
Lithgow High School	Lithgow City Band	Gorrie-Ban	Portland Golf Club
Cullen Bullen Progress Association	Life Education	Lithgow Pony Club	Lithgow Golf Club
Josephite Foundation	Lithgow Theatre Group	Zig Zag Public School	Ironfest
Wallerawang Kids Club	Lithgow Grey Hound Racing Club	Portland Community Group	Arts Out West
Lithgow District Garden Club	Lithgow Athletic Club	Uniting Church Lithgow Parish	Local School Presentations
Hampton Reserve Trust	Portland Men's Shed	Tarana Tanker Trailers	Lithgow District Chamber of Commerce
Rydal Village Association	Hartley District Progress Association	PCYC Lithgow	Lithgow Show
Mitchell Conservatorium - Student Scholarship	Lithgow Croquet Club	Sydney Legacy - Lithgow Branch	Lithgow, Portland, Wallerawang & Cullen Bullen Tidy Towns
Blast Furnace Theatre Company	Lithgow WWI Commemorative Plaque Project	State Mine Heritage Park & Railway	
Kanimbla Valley Sports & Recreation Club	Parkrun International	220 Army Cadet Unit	
Fusion Australia	Pied Piper Association Wallerawang	Rydal A H & P Association	
Leukaemia Foundation			

### Partnerships, Co-operatives or Joint Ventures to which Council was a Party

Council was a party to the following partnerships, co-operatives or joint ventures:

Name	Purpose
Central West Regional Councils (CENTROC) Central West (Pilot) Joint Organisation of Council's	An organisation of councils for the sharing of knowledge, bulk purchasing, and provision of human resource services such as training, promotion of the area for filming and driver for improvements to the region.
Lithgow Community Health and Centrelink	Books for Babies Program which provides literacy material for each newborn.
NetWaste	An organisation of council's for the purpose of sharing resources and knowledge, and co-ordinating the planning of waste issues at regional and sub-regional levels.
State Library of NSW	Provision of support service for the Lithgow Library Service.
Sydney Catchment Authority	Council entered into an agreement for the ongoing costs for the UV Disinfection Units at the Lithgow and Wallerawang Sewerage Treatment Plants.

### Stormwater Management Services

The following table details the amount of income received from the stormwater charge and expenditure on stormwater management services in 2016/17:

Details	Amount \$
Income from stormwater charges	240,142.88
Expenditure on stormwater management services	127,690.27

Further information on stormwater works is provided in the section of this report details Council's performance in terms of the functions listed in the Delivery and Operational Plan - Supplementary Report - Attachment 1

# Statements Against Reporting Requirements

## Planning Agreements

Below is a list of planning agreements approved by Council in 2016/17:

D/A No. and Approval Date	Description	Names of Parties	Amount \$	Land	Contribution Objectives
DA234/14 22 Mar 2016	For the provision of the upgrade of Glen Alice Road.	Lithgow Council & Don Saville (Director) Glen Alice Pty Ltd.	\$40,000	Lot 1 DP 651340, Lot 1 and Lot 21 DP 753780 "Glen Alice" Glen Alice – Old Road Glen Davis	To provide upgrade works to the existing Glen Alice Road to a sealed surface due to increase in development
DA3508 28 Oct 2008	For public community facilities.	Lithgow Council & Vision Property Holdings Pty Ltd	\$24,000 (\$1,500 per unit, 16 units-Stage C)	Lot 2 DP 1198292, Hoskins Avenue Lithgow NSW 2790	To provide community facility funds as a result of development.
SSD-6084 Hy-Tec 15 Jul 2015	For Public Facilities and Infrastructure	Lithgow Council & Hy-Tec Industries Pty Ltd	\$0.025 Per tonne of quarry product sold from the quarry on a quarter basis	Lot 1 and 2 DP1005511, Lot 31 DP 1009967 and Lot 4 DP876394, 391 Jenolan Caves Road Hartley	To provide public facilities and infrastructure funds as a result of development.
SSD 07_0127 MOD 5 Invincible Colliery Yet to be approved by State Government.	For community facilities and infrastructure for Cullen Bullen and surrounds	Lithgow Council & Castlereagh Coal (Shoalhaven Coal)	\$0.05 per tonne of product coal each financial year	Lot 1 DP180294, Lot 11 DP614429, Lots 112 & 113 DP877190 and Ben Bullen State Forest, Castlereagh Highway Cullen Bullen	To provide community facilities and infrastructure funds as a result of development of a mine for the Cullen Bullen community.



## Companion Animals

The following information is provided on Council's activities during 2016/17 in relation to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Companion Animals Act 1998 and the Companion Animals Regulation 1999:

Activity	Achievement
Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Office of Local Government.	The pound data collection return for 2016/17 has been provided to the Office of Local Government.
Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Office of Local Government.	All dog attacks were reported on the Companion animal Register website.
Companion animal community education programs	<p>During 2016-17, community awareness and education around individual's responsibilities for care of companion animals was achieved through the delivery of a Companion Animals education program. The program engaged participating primary schools within the Lithgow LGA providing students with skills and techniques for caring and ensuring personal safety around Companion Animals.</p> <p>This program was part of a broader grant funded Responsible Pet Ownership Program part funded by the Office of Local Government to improve desexing, microchipping and registration of Companion Animals across the LGA (see page 28 for details).</p>
Strategies to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats	Promotion and participation in the Responsible Pet Ownership Program.
Strategies to see alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals	Council has rehoused and fostered unclaimed animals
Off leash areas provided	A total of 4 off leash area are provided in the Local Government Area, being 2 in Lithgow and 1 in each of Portland and Wallerawang.

The following table shows income received in relation to companion animals and the amount of money expended on companion animal management and activities during 2016/17:

Budget Item	Amount \$
Income	
Office of Local Government	15,546.15
Impounding, sale, surrender and fines	10,878.00
Expenditure	
Employee costs	64,669.34
Pound Expenses	61,125.29

Council collects income during the year from the Microchipping and registration of companion animals and forwards this to the Department of Local Government which in turn reimburses council a proportion of these fees. Council uses this income and income derived from the impounding, sale, surrender and fines to undertake companion animal management activities.



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