

Living in EUROBODALLA

Community news from your Council

IN BRIEF

Show us the money

Electronic payment of your rates, water accounts and other Council charges is fast and easy. However, each year hundreds of these payments go awry for one simple reason; payments are made using the wrong reference number.

Every bill to you from Council has a specific reference number to automatically direct your payment to the right account, and it's right there on your invoice. Using the wrong number not only wastes time – yours and ours – while tracking down the errant payment but can also lead to interest charges on any of the accounts left unpaid in the meantime.

Along with rates and water, Council administers over 800 different fees and charges. That's a lot of different services!

Each year, these fees and charges are reviewed to make sure they are still needed and correctly priced. It's a lot of work and we are looking at ways to consolidate some fees and simplify their administration in the future.

Let's grow, let's eat

From friendships to food, teens have been growing both! Our youth and sustainability teams are supporting the SAGE Gardens project Buds 4 Life - a series of workshops inspiring the shire's future growers and promoting the importance of local food production. Based out of the SAGE Gardens in Moruya, this new social growing hub is for youth aged 12-18. The weekly workshops include topics like plant lifecycles, growing mushrooms, composting, zero-waste hacks, cooking, food foraging, and native flora. It kicked off in February and runs until the end of second term.

To find out more or join a workshop, visit our website www.esc.nsw.gov.au/events



POUCHES PLEASE: WIRES volunteers Rachel McInnes and Shelley Clarke with Mick Millikin from Council's roads crew. Every Council truck now has a pouch to keep joeys safe until they can be passed to a WIRES carer.

HERE FOR WILDLIFE

After the bushfires, many who were doing it tough or lost their homes were also worrying about the wildlife.

Arriving at blackened properties, Shelley Clarke was touched by the community's care for native wildlife and efforts to call WIRES for help.

"Even in their darkest moments, people were so concerned about the animals," Shelley said.

Five years on, this form of altruism has led to some great initiatives.

We're lucky to have Shelley as Council's fire mitigation officer, and just as lucky to work with her as a WIRES volunteer and chair of the WIRES Mid South Coast branch.

Collaboration between WIRES and Council has seen a reduction in wildlife road trauma thanks to our virtual fence

program. Plus, there's a new animal rehabilitation facility at the botanic garden, and more people feeling inspired to help animals in our community.

This edition of Living in Eurobodalla features our wildlife. Shelley's story as a WIRES volunteer highlights a productive collaboration between Council and the community. Virtual fences are saving animal's lives and motorists' insurance claims, with more of these tech marvels lining shire roads soon. We're weeding on Snapper Island to protect little penguins, and a nest box made by Moruya High students recently helped save two baby kookaburras.

See 'Here for wildlife' feature, page 4.

Five years on from the fires, Mayor reflects

New Year's Eve 2020, we were all still putting our lives back together. I hosted a one-year bushfire anniversary event where I recognised a mother and daughter sharing the pain of their lost husband and father. But I saw strength and optimism too – the daughter working hard all year to graduate high school. I was blown away by their bravery. I still am.

Five years on and scars are still visible, but signs of recovery are everywhere. Green has returned to charred landscapes, the bush has wallabies, bats and lyrebirds again.

With time, we forget little bits. And that's healthy, because we need to move on...

What many remember as the worst of times also brought out the best in us. Sharing food, water, shelter and clothing – anything that was needed. With time, we forget little bits. And that's healthy, because we need to move on. But we cannot become complacent, and we must recognise that many people are still facing hardship. The fires magnified existing challenges and gaps still remain.

Council, along with other others, has worked to secure the shire's infrastructure and communications; fireproofing power poles, moving electricity underground and safeguarding and extending water supplies. We're developing new emergency operation centres at Moruya and Surf Beach. And Council now have a full-time local emergency management officer.

As a regional council we'll never have the money of the big cities. But our shire has something money can't buy. You see it in the volunteers bringing crucial help to the vulnerable. You see it with locals supporting their neighbourhood businesses. You can see it in our lifesavers and community officials helping local sports clubs thrive. I see it every day – in your aspirations for Eurobodalla's future.

Page 2

McMillan motors

Y drive mentor is a NSW Volunteer of the Year.

Page 3

Block heads

New material speeds home development application.

Page 6

Future leaders

Bingie bootcamp for young environmentalists.

Page 7

Educational hits!

Bite-sized insights into Council's day-to-day work.



Joan says, nip it in the bud

Heads must roll to curb this flourishing garden favourite – seed heads that is.

The last edition of Living In Eurobodalla prompted Joan from Narooma to write in, sharing her concerns on an up-tick in agapanthus she sees spreading down road verges and into bushland.

Many of us really like our agapanthus – so easy to grow, so hard to kill – with its riotous purple (sometimes white) flowers. But this hardy plant, originally hailing from South Africa, has been escaping from gardens across the country since the 1970s.

These plants are herbicide resistant... and can also resprout from root fragments left in the ground...

Agapanthus isn't yet a major weed in Eurobodalla. But Joan is right – its wide adaptability to different conditions means we should take action to stop it spreading. The single best thing to do is cut off those finished flower

heads, pop them into a plastic bag in the sun – killing off any seeds – then into your red bin they go.

For those of you wanting to be rid of agapanthus altogether, things get a little trickier. These plants are herbicide resistant (we did say they're hard to kill!) and can also resprout from tiny root fragments left in the ground, so if you dig them out then do it thoroughly and dispose the same way as the seed heads.

You can replace agapanthus with local natives; spiny-headed mat-rush (*Lomandra longifolia*) and grass flags (*Libertia paniculata*) are great alternatives. Mat-rush provides food and shelter for butterflies, moths and native bees, and even a bite for yourself: the leaf-base eaten raw taste like raw peas or can be fried up like leeks, and those hard seeds roasted then ground into flour. Grass flags have perfumed white flowers. You can buy both of these native plants at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden.

Extinct no more. Fabulous garden finds

Staff at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden are behind a project that's helping safeguard threatened flora and better coordinate state and national approaches to plant conservation.

NSW lists 689 plants as threatened – with 223 listed as vulnerable, 339 listed as endangered, 108 as critically endangered, and 19 as extinct. Last year, Garden manager Michael Anlezark put out a call to botanic gardens across the state hoping to clarify which of these listed species are held in their collections.

Michael says eleven botanic gardens responded and between them had seeds or live specimens for 665 – 97 percent – of the state's threatened plants. Remarkably, 18 of the 19 listed as extinct can still be found in botanic garden collections.

Eurobodalla was one of only two botanic gardens with naturally occurring threatened species; the vulnerable East Lynne midge orchid (*Genoplesium vernale*) can be found within garden grounds.

"Simple yet groundbreaking, this project demonstrates the potential of regional botanic gardens to power conservation efforts. The collated data has since been presented to the threatened species commissioner in Canberra and will also be available to conservation agencies and government departments," says Michael.

Botanic gardens are now planning to partner up and share stock, giving threatened species an increased chance of survival should they experience a catastrophic event at any one location.

FUTURE PROOFING: Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden manager Michael Anlezark with critically endangered *Rhodamnia rubescens* collected on a joint trip with Jervis Bay's Booderee Botanic Garden.



Tips and kits for a smooth start

If you have kids stepping up to school next year, get insights and tips direct from the experts at our Be Ready Transition to School info nights at Narooma, Moruya and Batemans Bay in early May.

We've been running these events since 2015 and they are always a hit. This year we'll have an early childhood researcher, a speech pathologist and a NSW Department of Education transition to school officer familiar with local schools. They'll share vital information followed by a question-and-answer session.

Attendees will also receive our very popular transition-to-school kits, packed with activities that have kids learning as they play, helping them with skills like turn taking, counting, listening, working with others, and confidence.

Developing skills like these now can set children up for life. Research shows 70 percent of preschoolers who



FRESH START: Our fun transition-to-school kits help kids play using skills like listening, counting and taking turn.

are well prepared for big school fit in quickly, enjoy better literacy, with fewer emotional and behavioural difficulties later in life.

For times, locations and bookings, search for 'Be ready' on Council's website.

Funds to support day care at home

Childcare waitlists can be long and frustrating due to high demand. Our shire is often referred to as a 'childcare desert'.

While we don't have stats on centre-based childcares facilities, we can share that Council's Family Day Care service currently has 115 children on the wait list. Council supports the services and ensures educators meet national standards.

For educators thinking about starting up with Family Day Care, we have great news for you! We've secured \$140,000 from the NSW Government to help set up five new Family Day Care businesses. This will create up to 50 new childcare placements. That means more spots for kids while their parents are at work.

It's not just about the kids - this will also help five people start their own small business at home. It's a win-win!

If you're interested, contact our children's services team on 4474 7333 or childrenservices@esc.nsw.gov.au

The house that hemp built

“Our neighbours call it the Cheech and Chong house” jokes sustainability project officer Kirsten Pitot who’s building her \$350,000 dream house with a surprising material.

Like other Moruya residents, Kirsten and husband Dom have a property susceptible to bushfire damage. They wanted a home built from sustainable materials, designed to withstand all kinds of extreme weather and, though neither had much experience, they wanted to build it themselves.

“We did all the research and for cost and ease of installation, we went for hemp blocks,” says Kirsten.

All building products must comply with Australia’s National Construction Code and relevant Australian Standards, including AS 3959 for bushfire-prone areas. The hemp block supplier issued fire-resistant certification, making the Development Application process quick and easy.

Kirsten says when they started building, she couldn’t tell an impact driver from a drill. Dom had a touch more experience, building a treehouse for the kids when they were young.

By calculating the exact amount of hemp blocks and necessary materials there has been very little construction waste so far, and any extra hemp can be bagged up to be used again.

This ties in nicely with Council’s 10-year Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, currently under development, which focuses on construction waste after restrictions were loosened following the 2019-20 bushfires.

...there has been very little construction waste so far, and any extra hemp can be bagged up and used again.

“We’re looking into source separation, partial on-site processing and local solutions to divert waste from landfill. Less residual waste is an advantage for any builder because it removes the need to manage post-construction waste,” says our waste services coordinator Melinda Norman.

After six months of DIY, the Pitot’s hemp build is on time and on budget. They hope to have the house finished for Christmas.



PROACTIVE: Kirsten and Dom Pitot are building their own sustainable home using blocks made of hemp.

Steering a path for P-platers

Our Y drive program helps new drivers get their Learner or Provisional licences. The support comes in many forms but the Y drive mentors are absolutely vital.

These generous souls provide time, expertise and access to a Council vehicle, ensuring P platers can clock up their required 120 hours behind the wheel and become fully qualified drivers.

Given most Y drive participants have very little experience, and 20 driving-practice hours must be done at night, mentoring is not for the faint of heart. Mentors need the calm patience of the Buddha combined with the grit and determination of Mad Max.

So what a delight to see Roger McMillan – one of our longest-serving Y drive mentors – recognised as NSW Youth Sector Volunteer of the Year.

It all started with an ad in this very newsletter.

“I read the article and thought I could do that, so I’ve been with the program since the beginning. It wasn’t that I was sitting around with nothing to do, more that I could help kids be safer on the road,” says Roger.

With previous military experience teaching people how to drive, Roger starts his new drivers off with very basic skills.

“Of course, they do their formal driving lessons with qualified instructors, but I still need to be confident we will all be safe. So we begin with two hours in the carpark navigating two cones while holding the steering wheel correctly, doing head checks, not relying on the reversing camera, then running through different patterns – turn in sharp and leave on a gentle curve, then turn in gently and leave on a sharp turn.”

A week later – the second lesson – Roger takes his drivers up a forest track.

“They need to learn how to brake hard without sliding. They’re usually reluctant at first but they need to learn should a roo jump in front of them. From then on, it’s street work, getting in the hours and practicing different scenarios.”



DRIVING SUCCESS: Roger McMillan has been helping young people clock up road miles since the Y drive program began.

Based in Narooma, Roger has gradually developed a strong relationship with the high school, providing ten driving hours to students each week – six hours on Fridays plus additional hours of night-time driving. He makes it a goal to meet parents early on.

“It’s been hugely successful, and the parents are always so appreciative.”

Y drive mentors must be over 21 with a current licence and no driving offences in the last five years. We provide the vehicle and training, you provide two or more hours for driving practice each week. Contact Zoe Morgan on 4474 7470 to sign up.

It’s round about time for better traffic flow on George Bass Drive

Drivers along George Bass Drive will not have missed new work to build a roundabout at the Broulee Road intersection, replacing the off-set crossroad that has proved such a nightmare for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians alike – with too many crashes over the years.

While we build the roundabout, the Broulee Road entrance to Broulee will be closed for several months, so please do allow extra time if traveling to or from the village. George Bass Drive will remain open throughout, with traffic control in place.

It’s not ideal but more a case of short-term pain for long-term gain. On top of improving road safety – with an upgrade to the lighting, and islands and paths included for cyclists and pedestrians – the roundabout will improve traffic flow along one of the shire’s busiest roads.

While Broulee will be accessible from George Bass Drive using the busy Train Street entrance to the village, we’d encourage you to use Annetts Parade if travelling to or from the north. This will help keep traffic moving smoothly during the work.

And yes, we have the Train Street intersection in our sights too. Stay tuned.

Search for ‘current works’ on our website to see all of our projects around the shire.

From frontlines to forest



Wildlife rescue with Shelley Clarke

Meet Shelley. Her career spans time as an ambulance driver, an administration officer with local police and, now, as fire mitigation officer with Council. Her partner was a firefighter. Fair to say, they have seen a lot.

Together, they share a passion for animals and in 2019, just before the bushfires, both enrolled in a WIRES animal rescue course.

"I started seeing the impact of the fires on wildlife in the Shoalhaven before it hit us down here. We were getting called out to injured animals at Bawley Point – one was a greater glider and I didn't even know what that was at the time," says Shelley.

The pair were run off their feet. During rescues, Shelley said a big part of the work was supporting residents who cared so much for their local wildlife.

"The work we were called to do required a certain level of physical fitness and mental resilience. We became our own emergency response team.

"Even though it can be confronting, there's nice things like rescuing orphaned babies and seeing carers feed them. The beauty outweighs the negative."

During Covid Shelley noticed more people moving to the area and wanting to help after watching the bushfires on the news.

"Volunteer numbers have steadily grown, and we received a lot of donations from the people we helped.

"Our team of volunteers is incredibly diverse, with experience ranging from war zones to emergency services and executive roles. There are also impressive mums who, after raising kids, now dedicate their time to rescuing and caring for wildlife.

"Our WIRES community is like family - we've been through some confronting and beautiful stuff together, there are such highs and lows."



HOP TO IT: Council's fire mitigation officer Shelley Clarke with eastern grey kangaroo joey in an artificial pouch.

Over the years, Shelley has responded to injured animals along the highway or tangled in fences. She has rescued a brushtail possum from someone's kitchen exhaust fan, a little bat trapped in a shower screen, and even a goanna stuck down a toilet.

"We love sharing knowledge on how to handle a situation until we can get there. It's amazing how many people still think they should call the police for injured kangaroos – call WIRES, we're the ones with the expertise."

**Injured wildlife:
1300 094 737**

Visit www.wires.org.au if you want to get involved.



Pouches are making all the difference

WIRES volunteers do their best to attend injured animals along the road quickly. Any dead animals are marked with spray paint to indicate to others the pouch has been checked.

It's Council's responsibility to clear road reserves of litter – which includes dead animals.

Sometimes Council crews come across an animal. Instead of waiting for WIRES, our crews can quickly retrieve a joey from a pouch and then contact a carer.

It was back in 2021 when WIRES volunteer Rachel McInnes visited Council to show us how it's done.

"Everyone saw the impact of the fires – we lost so many animals," Rachel said.

"We went around to Council and local police who travel the roads often and provided joey pouches with rescue information," she said.

You can find Rachel and other WIRES volunteers with joey pouches at markets across the shire. They happily share knowledge on how to rescue joeys.

"It's amazing to hear how many people have stopped to rescue a joey on the road. The pouch made all the difference to whether they stop or not."

Thanks to Rachel and WIRES, all our Council trucks have joey pouches on hand.

Every animal that's collected is also recorded by Council and WIRES. This data is very useful to support initiatives and funding for programs like the virtual fence.



This student-made nest box has already made a difference.

Two kookaburra babies were reunited with their family after WIRES volunteers put them in one of the boxes and secured it to a tree in a Tomakin backyard.



High school heroes

We're always impressed with young people making a difference.

So when a group of students from Moruya High School were looking to get stuck in to an environmental program, Council's environment team knew exactly what to do – make nest boxes for WIRES!

Our team took the students to check out existing nest boxes, looking at different types and the ways they are made. During the excursion you could see the

students excitement grow. We provided the right plans and building materials to get these enthusiastic young people started and it was lovely to see the finished product handed over to WIRES volunteers.



Tackling food waste at home



Transform your leftovers into garden gold by learning how to compost and worm farm.

We have free workshops at the Moruya Tip in March and April, with all the info and kit you need.

For more information or to book contact Council's friendly waste services team on 4474 1024 or visit www.esc.nsw.gov.au/events





HEALING FLIGHT: A frogmouth chick in WIRES care. The aim is to release healthy animals back to the wild.

Garden opens arms to wildlife volunteers

Since the fires, the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden has become a haven and place of healing for many. It's also the ideal place for new WIRES volunteers to learn their trade.

From lake Conjola in the north to Wallaga Lake in the south, new members meet up at the Garden for WIRES training and regular social catchups. Soon these volunteers will also have access to an animal rehabilitation facility onsite.

The facility is a natural fit here and our staff and volunteers very keen to support it and play an active role in the rehabilitation of our precious wildlife.

Garden manager Michael Anlezark is working with local WIRES volunteers and rehabilitation facilities project coordinator Rob Townsend to develop the project.

"The facility is a natural fit here and our staff and volunteers very keen to support it and play an active role in the rehabilitation of our precious wildlife," says Michael.

The collaboration will result in a decent sized wildlife care facility – 10 metres long, four wide and four tall, with space for storage and a food-preparation shed. It will be the biggest WIRES aviary in the shire, perfect to flight-test animals before release. Instead of isolated, home-based

care, WIRES volunteers can share the facility as they transition suitable injured wildlife back to life in the open.

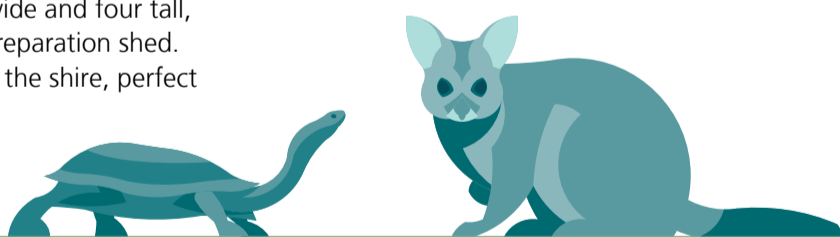
While the public won't be able to visit animals at the facility, there's a chance to see them once released.

"We don't want to pressure our existing wildlife so it's important recovered animals released onsite can successfully integrate," says Michael.

"We will work with WIRES and other wildlife experts to ensure these release programs are sustainable."

Michael says other botanic gardens in NSW and ACT are already showing interest, keenly following the project's progress.

"This is the first partnership of its kind. It has potential to be a model that can be rolled out at other botanic gardens and we are making every effort to get it exactly right."



Penguin watch



Dragging his kayak onto the rocks – with a tray of plants and a perlite nest box neatly balanced – the ripe smell of salty penguins hits Paul Martin like a sledge hammer. It's not glamorous, just another day in the office for Council's invasive species officer and long-time steward of Snapper Island.

"We've planted over 400 native plants" says Paul.

"Our penguins are picky about where they nest, so we're replacing invasive weeds with the native plants – like lomandra, saltbush and poa – they love."

Alongside revegetation, Paul has help from colleagues and student volunteers install new artificial burrows, which are now lighter and vandal resistant compared to the old concrete ones.

"The good news is, our upgraded perlite burrows have an 80 percent occupancy rate, that's huge!" says Paul, adding "But we still do get the odd penguin bite when checking burrows".

...our upgraded perlite burrows have an 80 percent occupancy rate, that's huge!

Though the overall population is stable, breeding numbers have decreased by 20 percent this season.

"Last season's breeding numbers were unusually high, so that may skew the data. But human disturbance is also a contributing factor, we've even had a few vandals destroy nest boxes. If they feel too unsafe there's a risk penguins might even abandon the colony altogether.

"Everyone can help simply by respecting the 100-metre boat exclusion zone and not stepping foot on the island."

Virtual fence continues to turn heads

Our environment team uses data from our road crews and WIRES to determine wildlife hotspots along our roads.

What started as a pilot program along Cullendulla Drive in Long Beach has extended to Dunns Creek Road and now Tomakin Road.

The virtual fences use lights and sound to deter animals at night - they're triggered by vehicle headlights.

The Dunns Creek fence has been extended an additional three kilometres, which means the entire hotspot is now covered.

Tomakin Road was another hotspot, receiving a virtual fence along a 2.7 kilometre stretch.

The virtual fence not only turns heads of wildlife but has turned heads of media and other councils, near and far. We've had calls from almost every state - and even internationally.

People are keen to learn from our experience. What are we telling them? The secret is well-placed lights and maintenance.

The lights work magic in dark rural areas and the sound alerts are super effective in quiet environments with minimal background noise. Plus, getting the installation right is crucial. Posts need to be perfectly aligned with car headlights for them to trigger effectively.

You can't just set and forget. Recently, we had posts on Dunns Creek Road damaged by a car. Our team along with WIRES volunteers regularly check the posts and undertake maintenance.

This effort has led to a consistent reduction in roadkill, making the roads safer for both wildlife and drivers.



Explore, play and celebrate at the Garden

- Guided walks
- Display gardens
- Mossy on Gardens Café
- Plants, books and artisan goods for sale
- Fabulous event venues

Open Wednesday to Sunday 9am to 4pm. For holiday opening hours see our website www.erb.org.au

Deep Creek Dam Road, Batemans Bay.



Olive's recipe for success

When Olive Zammit's parents dropped by the Job Shop they met Amy, who eagerly pitched our youth traineeships to them.

"Amy really sold it to my dad; I wasn't sure what I wanted to do yet – either finish year 12 or apply for a traineeship," Olive says.

Olive delved deeper into the opportunity through school talks, a tour of Council, and info sessions. With Amy's support at the Job Shop, Olive gained the confidence she needed to apply. She aced her interview.

"When I got the job, I had a good hard think and decided the traineeship would give me better perspectives on my future career," Olive says.

The traineeship meant she could live at home and still train her horse for showjumping, save money, and explore career options. The biggest challenge so far has been the "rotations through areas of Council".

"It's a great experience moving around different departments within Council, but it's hard starting out in a new team once you've already become familiar with the old one. It's like you're starting a whole new job," Olive admits.

Despite the challenge, Olive views it as a positive.

"You adapt to change and gain skills to be resilient and walk into a new job with confidence. Everyone is super friendly which makes it a lot easier."

Now, almost one year into the traineeship, Olive is leaning towards becoming a primary school teacher. Her work in the libraries has given her valuable insights.

"I enjoy what goes on behind the scenes, planning activities and storytime, while also getting a taste of what it's like working with younger children."



DEEP DIVE: Olive has developed skills that let her start a new job with confidence.

"TAFE has been awesome; the teacher is great. I really enjoy it. It's quite different to school and I am using a lot of what I learn at TAFE in a practical way at work," Olive says.

Caleb sparks ideas for his career

Meet Caleb Sparks – one of our trainees who has hit the ground running.



He has been working on projects and events for Y drive, the Job Shop, Childrens Services and the Bas.

Caleb shares how far he's come since his early days living with autism and hopes to inspire others.

"I was severely autistic and wasn't able to speak until I was three," Caleb says.

"Ten years of therapy taught me skills I couldn't learn like other children."

University was a commitment Caleb wasn't ready for. Instead he finished year 12 and chose a two-year traineeship at Council, which comes with a certificate III and IV in business. It also means no HECS debt and plenty of practical experience he is excited for.

"A job in local government seemed overwhelming at first but the people I have worked with have been very easy going and I felt comfortable right away – I could be myself," he says.

"I love that I have met so many new people and can build real bonds rather than brief interactions."

Caleb enjoys the variety on offer while working in the arts and community development sector. He will rotate to the libraries next.

Caleb's traineeship is more than just work, it is about real-life experience and exploring career options.

"I've had a lot more experience than I expected working with multiple teams," Caleb says.

"I thought about studying journalism but now I am thinking about a future at Council or working in the disability sector. Some aren't as lucky to receive the therapy I did; I would love to help others on their journey."

dhurga corner

This regular column introduces dhurga words and culture, with help from our Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

In the last two issues we looked at the first couple of the core principles – Land and Origins – of traditional LORE. This issue we'll consider the third principle, respect.

Respect is vital in Aboriginal traditions – respect for land, respect for culture, respect for each other. Crossing to neighbouring Country, respect for the custodians of that land is essential. Their blessing would involve a cleansing smoking ceremony and support given until business is finished

Even tools and weapons are respected. When a person lost their life, their tools and weapons would stay with them forever, not to be touched or taken. This is respect for the time and energy in their making and ownership.



Lore
buru – kangaroo

There is respect for land and animals. For example, burning Country to make grass for kangaroos so they had their own food. When hunting, respect is given first by singing to the spirit of the kangaroo, appreciating through ceremony the food kangaroo provides.



Bushfood
galungara – lillypilly tree

Galungara grows beautiful and abundant sweet and sour berries. There are several types, all are tasty.

Eurobodalla Libraries and local bookshops have copies of *The Dhurga Dictionary and Learner's Grammar*, authored by locals Trish Ellis, Kerry Boyenga and Waine Donovan.

Biinda: Rise up stand up

While autumn showers descended, 16 eager year-ten students gazed across the ocean from Bingi Bingi Point, ready for three days of learning and leadership.

The Biinda Experience is Eurobodalla's sustainability-themed youth camp. Biinda means to rise up or stand up in dhurga and the experience is about readying the shire's next generation of environmental advocates and protectors.

Students got their hands dirty planting penguin-friendly native plants on Snapper Island, connected with land and water while kayaking down the Bhundoo (Clyde River), before setting up a farm-to-table feast at Moruya's SAGE Garden.

The Biinda Experience will be back, with the two-day program slated for 20-21 May. Students or teachers wanting to join in can contact Council's natural resources team.

TEEN GREEN THUMBS: Year ten students from St Peters, Batemans Bay and Moruya high schools planting natives on Snapper Island.



From the trenches

Short 'n sharp answers to your common questions

We did a quick rip-round of Council staff to find out the kind of things you're asking about.



“There’s a pothole the size of a swimming pool on the highway, can you chuck some dirt in it?”

We look after 633km of sealed local roads, but not the highway. The NSW Government's Transport for NSW is responsible for keeping your highway trips safe and as smooth as possible and they're your contact for highway woes. You may sometimes see a Council crew working on the Kings Highway, but they're working under contract to Transport for NSW.



“There's a flickering streetlight driving me crazy, can you replace it.”

Whether it be a dud streetlight or problems with powerlines, Essential Energy are the ones to call when it comes to keeping streets well-lit and safe.



“People drive way too fast on my street – can you lower the speed limit?”

First, if someone is speeding you should notify police. However, if you feel the legal limit is still too fast, you can request a review from Transport for NSW – they are responsible for setting limits on all roads. That said, in consultation with state authorities, we do use physical means to slow traffic down with things like speed humps and roundabouts in problem areas.



“When I see Council bashing on Facebook, it seems like you don't train your staff, right?”

Council employs around 675 people, it's the largest employer in the shire. Last year our HR team ran over 700 courses with a whopping 2,630 attendances. Topic ranged from the essential (workplace health and safety) to the purely practical (chainsaw maintenance), to career-improving vocational – 58 staff are currently enrolled in 24 different certificate or diploma level qualifications with another 48 staff completing their formal qualifications.



“Where can I get free internet?”

Eurobodalla Libraries offer free internet, along with plenty of comfortable nooks to get comfy in. Connecting to our Wi-Fi is easy – open your device settings, turn on 'Wi-Fi' (if it isn't already), choose the library name from the list of options, and bingo – you're connected. No password needed. You can also search the library catalogue for books from home. Head to the Libraries page on Council's website, click on the 'Browse the catalogue' icon and you're away.



“Can you put a bigger mobile reception tower in our suburb and speed up the internet?”

Council does not build or own telecommunications towers, they belong to telcos like Telstra and Optus, who are overseen by the Australian Communications and Media Authority. If your internet speed is slow, you need to speak to your provider.



“How much to join a library?”

Library membership is free for locals. Visitors can also join for a \$16 annual fee. Just bring along some ID and proof of your residential address (with under 16s needing a parent or guardian along too) and we'll sign you up.



YELLA: Our airport coordinator Andy Dobson took charge of repainting many of the guidance lines at Moruya Airport.

“Who draws the lines on the airport runway?”

We used the team from Airport Linemarking Service Australia to spice up the white runway markings at Moruya Airport in January. Thanks to special paint technology, now when it rains the top layer – along with any black marks – simply washes away to reveal fresh paint, leaving the runway looking like new.

Living in EUROBODALLA SPORT



Loving our new sports page?
Or missing those What's On events?
Let us know at council@esc.nsw.gov.au

From pub talk to touchdowns

You probably didn't know Tuross Head has an oval that's about as big as the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Yet, sitting pretty by Coila Lake, Kyla Park Oval hasn't homed a sports club for more than a decade. A conversation around a pub table sees the oval back in action.

Adam Carey moved back to his childhood home of Tuross to start a family – something of a trend for couples in their 20s and 30s it seems. Adam says Eurobodalla has a lot to offer, but it's what you make of it that counts.

"Growing up in Tuross, we made our own fun surfing, diving, fishing and riding bikes. But if you're not into any of that, there wasn't much to do."

Sitting at the local tavern last year, Adam and his mates talked about the good old days of the Tuross Shamrocks – a rugby union team their dads played for 20 years ago.

From there, a new committee was created and the Tuross Head Touch Rugby League & Social Sports Club was born. They set up the club to be flexible for multiple codes.

"We could do soccer, netball, AFL 9s, or softball. We decided to kick off with a touch footy comp, which seemed to be flavour of the month."

Adam was quick to contact Council, asking for the facilities to be tidied and oval fit for purpose.

"The ground was solid with hard, thistly grass, like a cow paddock," says Adam.

"You could tell the canteen hadn't been opened in a long time – there were spiders and dead beetles everywhere."

...we made our own fun surfing, diving, fishing and riding bikes. But if you're not into any of that, there wasn't much to do.

It cost Council about \$9,000 to get the lights up and working again – repurposing two from Gundry Oval – and tidy up the toilets and canteen. Our parks team say Kyla Park Oval's playing surface could potentially be the best in the shire but with lack of use it was far from premium. They did their best to whip it into shape before boots trod the ground last October.



CAREY CAN: The next generation of keen competitors are kicking goals at Kyla Park Oval.

In the small town of about 2,300 people, word spread quickly and registrations flew in.

"We thought there was only going to be four or five teams. That escalated to nine," Adam says.

With 135 players registered, the club turned to local businesses for sponsorship to buy merch and equipment, securing 30 sponsors and avoiding bank loans for gear, fees and insurance.

"We generated about two years of funding, which is amazing."

Just as everything was set and ready to go, some unwanted donuts were served.

"Someone in a four-wheel drive tore up the oval – we were gutted," says Adam.

Council crews patched it up, but ideally, eight weeks were needed for full recovery.

"We delayed the comp by three weeks and staggered the field to avoid injuries."

Counting down the days to the start, Adam wondered if anyone would turn up.

"Turns out it was the best thing happening in Tuross and brought the community together."

The mixed competition had men and women ranging in ages from 12-68.

"It was special to see mums and dads playing with their kids; we had first grade league players and Moruya, Bodalla and Narooma people join us too. As soon as the competition finished, everyone wanted to know when the next round would start, so we've kicked off another that goes until April."

Stuck for sport, try pickleball

Narooma's Kirk Ryder says it's the fastest growing sport in the world. And it seems Eurobodallans agree, with keen enthusiasts across the shire picking up pickleball paddles.

Imagine crossing tennis, badminton and ping-pong. The whiffle is a softball-sized ball yet lighter than a tennis ball. The court of play is one-half the space used in tennis. So there's less running and hard hitting and, Kirk will tell you, there's more fun.

"The rules make for short games, with a lot of back and forth and quick turn around. You can learn the skills quickly but there's a lot of nuance as you progress," he says.



Indeed, it has all the ingredients for good social sport. A part-time Narooma resident, Kirk also spends some of the year in the US, where pickleball players number an estimated 36+ million. And still growing.

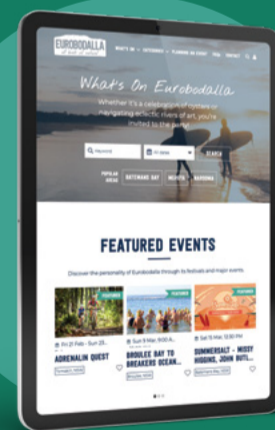
"You can go to the courts any morning and there will be a couple of dozen people to play with. Then, of course, you go out for coffee after," says Kirk.

Following the adage 'build it and they will come', Council is doing its bit to grow this accessible and social sport –



currently estimated at 16,000 players nationally – here in Eurobodalla. There are marked indoor courts at the Hanging Rock basketball stadium and the Narooma Leisure Centre, and outdoors at Narooma's Bill Smyth Oval – individuals, clubs and community groups bringing along their own paddles, balls and nets for play.

In Moruya, Next Generation Tennis also run pickleball on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings at the Shore Street tennis courts.



Want to Know
**WHAT'S ON
EUROBODALLA?**

Find all the shire's events online and sign up for weekly highlights delivered straight to your inbox, visit:
whatson.eurobodalla.com.au