OCTOBER 2015

News from the Hill

blue mountains City Council

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MAYORAL ELECTIONS

The Mayoral Election for Blue Mountains City Council was held at the Council meeting on Tuesday 15 September 2015.

Cr Mark Greenhill was elected Mayor and Cr Chris Van der Kley was elected as the Deputy Mayor, both for a one year term.

BLUE MOUNTAINS AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

The awards recognise those local citizens who have a consistent record of excellence, who have made outstanding achievements in their field, and contributed in a significant way to our community. **Nominations are due Friday 27 November**.

Further information: www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/yourcouncil/australiadayawards

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

As I embark on my **third term as Mayor**, I reflect on the many achievements of the Council and the community over the last year with pride.

The **two year anniversary of the October 2013 bushfires** has just passed, again marking the journey from the time of the fires, through the process of recovery, which continues for many of our bushfire affected residents.

As the **Local Recovery coordination** draws to a close in December, I would like to praise the work of everyone involved in the recovery efforts to date. Our combined efforts have helped to deliver the necessary support to those who experienced first-hand the single greatest challenge faced by the City and the Council, and better prepare us for any future natural disaster.

Recovery from major events such as bushfires can be complex and take time. Council acknowledges the recovery process is ongoing and will continue its support of bushfire affected residents every step of the way.

Looking to the year ahead, the Council will continue its collective efforts to deliver acceptable and affordable services to our community, make even further progress towards financial sustainability, and remain focused on **building a successful future for the City**.

I am pleased to say Council's overall **financial position and forecast is positive** as we continue to balance our budget every year and live within our means.

We are set to introduce a **new green bin service** for garden waste on 1 July 2016 to reduce waste to landfill at no additional cost to ratepayers. The **new resource recovery centre** at Blaxland Waste Management facility is close to completion. Also, the Council will fast track some **service improvements across the City** advancing $1.295M of special rate variation funded projects in 2015-16, and we are developing plans for the **future redevelopment of Springwood Library** to attract grant funding. Council continues to show leadership in **fostering regional business and economic development** in the City.

I remain hopeful of reporting a favourable result of NSW Government approval of our final **draft Local Environment Plan** in the coming months.

There is no doubt the City is moving ahead and I am proud to lead a Council that has the **wellbeing of the community and environment** at the core of its charter.

Mark Greenhill, **Mayor**

PREPARING FOR A BUSH FIRE IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

There are four simple steps to help prepare yourself, your family and your community for the bush fire season.

1. DISCUSS

1: DISCUSS with the people in your household what to do when a bush fire threatens your home. If you intend to leave early: what will be your signal to leave; where will you go; how will you get there; what will you take and what is your backup plan? If you intend to stay: who will stay, what equipment do you have; how you will cope and what is your backup plan?

2. PREPARE

2: PREPARE your home to make it as safe as possible during a bush fire. Do this by trimming overhanging branches; mow your lawn and remove the clippings; remove all flammable materials from around your home; clean gutters and remove all debris; have a garden hose handy that can reach around the house.

3. KNOW

3: KNOW what the bush fire danger ratings and alert levels mean. Understand what the Fire Danger Rating meter indicates when the pointer changes from Low to Moderate through to Catastrophic and what each rating tells you. Once a bush fire has started, know the difference between the alert levels: Advice; Watch & Act; & Emergency Warning & what each alert means to you and your family.

4. KEEP

4: KEEP important numbers and sources of information in your phone, tablet and computer. Bush Fire Information Line: **1800 679 737**; 'Fires Near Me' smart phone app; facebook.com/nswrfs; twitter.com/nswrfs. If you see a fire call 000.

For more information: contact the Blue Mountains Fire Control Centre: **4784 7444** or visit **www.rfs.nsw.gov.au**

RESOURCING OUR FUTURE

Special variation projects to rollout

The approved special rate variation commenced on 1 July 2015 enabling Council to direct priority funds over the next four years to stop the decline in the City's $1 billion worth of built assets, improve services to the community, deliver ongoing environmental programs and improve its capacity to respond to, and prepare, for emergencies.

The first year of the special rate variation, 2015/16, is allocated primarily to the continuation of important environmental programs previously funded by the Environment Levy. These programs include water quality monitoring and restoration, noxious weeds control, bushland management and rehabilitation, renewal of cultural and historical sites, protection of threatened species, maintenance and upgrade of walking tracks, lookouts and visitor infrastructure and supporting community conservation volunteers.

A significant upgrade of the popular Katoomba Cascades is progressing well. On completion, the 100-year-old Prince Henry Cliff Walk will offer improved access to the spectacular cascades, panoramic views and flood lit waterfalls, providing a world class experience of our World Heritage Area. The $400,000 upgrade to our network of walking track and lookouts, will also boost the City's tourism economy.

Council is due to start a number of special rate variation-funded projects earlier than planned to get the best value for money and to better meet the needs of the community in the longer term.

Council is advancing $1.295 million of special rate variation funding on city-wide asset works, maintenance and asset planning initiatives, including, completing the upgrade of Lawson Community Hall, replacing play equipment at Blaxland Oval, additional sportsground maintenance and more frequent cleaning of sportsground amenities, purchase of a new street sweeper and pressure cleaner for town centre cleaning and increased road patching.

Some of the service improvements will roll out by the end of 2015 with immediate benefit to the community.

Upgrade work to the Katoomba Cascades section of the Prince Henry Cliff walk has been completed.

It includes improved access to the spectacular cascades, panoramic views and flood lit waterfalls.

WASTE NEWS

Introduction of green bins for garden waste

Blue Mountains City Council will introduce a fortnightly green bin for garden waste from 1 July 2016 at no extra cost to ratepayers, to help reduce waste going to landfill.

An extensive consultation process saw an unprecedented response of more than 9,000 submissions. This represents almost 27% of households in the Blue Mountains. Almost two thirds (64.4%) of respondents supported the introduction of some form of green bin with most (46%) supporting 'Option B- Green Bin for Garden Waste Only'.

The new household waste service commencing 1 July 2016 will provide:

- Small (140 litre) garbage bin collected weekly (with a larger bin available at cost);
- Large (240 litre) recycling bin collected fortnightly (with an extra large bin available at cost);
- Large (240 litre) green bin collected fortnightly for garden waste (not food waste);
- Any combination of 2 booked service per year (Chipping and/or Bulky Waste).

For those households that need additional recycling or garbage capacity, an extra-large (360 litre) recycling bin and a large (240 litre) garbage bin will be made available on request at an additional cost.

Community feedback showed a preference to retain the kerbside chipping service. As such the kerbside chipping service will remain unchanged. This expanded waste service will come at no additional cost to Council or ratepayers.

The new green bin service will see 4,000 tonnes of organic waste being recycled each year and extending the life of our landfill beyond 2030. This builds on the impressive 37% reduction in waste to landfill that the community has achieved over the past decade.

Council welcomes a NSW Government grant of $1.258 million to offset the costs of establishing the green bin service and fund a community education program.

Booked Waste Services

Councils Booked Waste Service is easy: simply choose the service you need and use the online booking form at www.bmccbookaservice.com.au to request your bulky waste or chipping service.

The Booked Waste Service provides the following benefits: a flexible, timely service for residents; neat, tidy and safe neighbourhoods; less time for waste to sit in front of your property; removing potential hazards sooner; reducing litter and pollution; and recyclable items can be collected in better condition.

Please make sure that you are familiar with the terms and conditions and Service Requirements as these tell you what, when and how to present your waste materials.

GREAT BLUE MOUNTAINS TRAIL

The Great Blue Mountains Trail (GBMT) is a big idea, to develop a regional trail from east to west across the Blue Mountains ridgeline, accessible from all towns, villages and train stations along the way. The Trail links to the Anderson, Ingar and the Oaks fire trails to the east, and will eventually link up with Lithgow and Oberon trail networks to the west. The first section of the Trail, between Katoomba and Blackheath is open and ready to enjoy.

Council has commenced work on the next section of the Trail connecting Leura Mall to Leura Cascades which is due for completion in November 2015. An upgrade of Leura Cascades historic picnic site, which is also underway, will include works to provide a bush setting experience for people with limited mobility, and strengthening the site as a place to start or finish a walk or ride in the Mountains.

The Trail is identified in the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 and once completed, it will play an important role in meeting the growing demand for safe cycling facilities whilst providing a safe corridor connecting residents and tourists with town centres and natural bushland environments.

An information brochure and map of the Great Blue Mountains Trail is available online from Council's website and from Council's Visitor Information Centres at Glenbrook and Echo Point, and the NPWS Heritage Centre at Govett's Leap Blackheath.

MANAGING TREES AND VEGETATION ON YOUR PROPERTY

Preparing your home for the bushfire season can involve managing trees and vegetation on your property to help reduce bushfire risk. Here are some important things to remember before clearing any trees or vegetation on your property.

10/50 VEGETATION CLEARING SCHEME

The NSW Government 10/50 Vegetation Clearing scheme was introduced on 1 August 2014, giving some property owners permission to clear certain trees and vegetation (within strict conditions) on their own land without state or local approval. Further changes have been made to the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing scheme since it was introduced.

Prior to attempting to remove any vegetation property owners should check the latest information and entitlements. The easiest way to work out if you're eligible to clear trees and vegetation under the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing scheme is by checking the RFS website:

- Information - www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/1050-vegetation-clearing
- Online tool - www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/1050-vegetation-clearing/tool

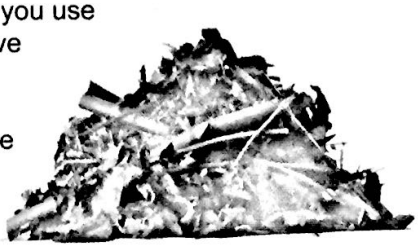
Enquiries relating to the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing scheme should be directed to NSW Bushfire Information Line on **1800 679 737**.

DISPOSAL OF GREEN WASTE

Kerbside chipping – use Council's booked waste service for kerbside chipping (or bulky waste) for green waste up to four cubic metres in volume. Conditions apply. For details see www.bmccbookaservice.com.au.

Waste Management Facilities – take your sorted green waste or mixed waste to Council's Katoomba or Blaxland Waste Management Facility. Fees apply. For details see www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/yourcommunity/wastemanagementfacilities.

Professional services – If you use a private contractor to remove and dispose of green waste from your property, Council recommends that you ensure they are properly licensed and have appropriate insurance etc.



PRUNING TREES OVERHANGING YOUR PROPERTY BOUNDARY

You can prune branches that overhang your house or garage without Council approval, however, it is advisable to discuss the pruning with the tree owner before carrying it out. If the tree is covered under Council's Tree Preservation Order you do need the tree owner's agreement to do the pruning. In all cases, you should keep evidence of the overhanging branches before undertaking the pruning. Evidence could be in the form of photographs, and/or video footage.

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

The removal of trees outside the 10/50 clearing entitlements is regulated under Council's Tree Preservation Order. Information and application forms relating to tree management and removal is available at www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/sustainableliving/treemanagement or you can contact Council on **4780 5000**.

BUSHFIRE HAZARD ENQUIRIES

If you are concerned that vegetation on land near you may be placing your property at risk from bushfires, you can request an inspection by a NSW RFS officer by lodging a Bushfire Hazard complaint at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/know-your-risk/Bush-fire-hazards-and-your-property/reporting-a-bush-fire-hazard.

Bushfire hazard enquiries should be directed to NSW Bushfire Information Line on **1800 679 737**.

WEEDS

If your property has been affected by bushfires in recent years, it is important to manage weed growth in the burned and adjacent areas. The key is to enhance the re-establishment of desirable plants and healthy plant communities. If you need help managing weeds on your property contact Council's Community Weeds Officer**4780 5612** or lthomas@bmcc.nsw.gov.au. For information on weeds in your area visit www.weedsbluemountains.org.au.

Contact Us

Locked Bag 1005,
Katoomba NSW 2780

Telephone (Local Call Charges):
West from Woodford 4780 5000
East from Linden 4723 5000
Fax: 4780 5555
Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au
Online:
www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au
facebook.com/bluemountainscitycouncil
twitter.com/BlumtsCtyCncl

Councillors

Ward 1 - Bell to Leura, Megalong Valley & The Mounts

Cr Michael Begg
0431 501 981
mbegg@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr DonMcGregor
0434 306 143
dmcgregor@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Sarah Shrubb
0414 195 980
sshrubb@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 2 - Wentworth Falls to Faulconbridge/Springwood

Cr Chris Van der Kley (Dep. Mayor)
0427 805 810
cvanderkley@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Romola Hollywood
0414 195 983
rhollywood@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Annette Bennett
0431 501 984
abennett@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 3 - Faulconbridge/ Springwood to Valley Heights

Cr Daniel Myles
0414 418 161
dmyles@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Brendan Luchetti
0414 195 986
bluchetti@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Mick Fell
0414 195 991
mfell@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 4 - Warrimoo to Lapstone

Cr Mark Greenhill (Mayor)
0414 195 990
mgreenhill@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Brendan Christie
0423 565 988
bchristie@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Anton Von Schulenburg
0414 195 989
avonschulenburg@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

LIBRARY NEWS

Poetry Under the Stars

Friday 27 November | 6.30 to 8:30pm | Katoomba Library | A FREE event no bookings required

Join Blue Mountains City Library for the fourth annual Poetry Under the Stars event.

Performances from local poets will include new poetry and, for the first time this year, renditions of classic works that will be instantly recognisable and guaranteed to transport listeners back to the time and place they first became familiar with them.

Music will be provided by local chanteuse, Loretta Durso, whose original songs are poetry entwined with folk music.

Bring a cushion, a blanket and maybe a picnic and sit back under the stars for an evening of poetry with a difference.

Summer Reading Challenge

Each year Blue Mountains City Library challenges kids up to the age of 16 to make the most of their school-free time by getting into some quality reading and discovering new books and authors.

The Summer Reading Mayoral Award which began in 2009 has now become an annual event as it promotes the value and enrichment that reading provides in the development of our children.

Participating Children and Young Adults can receive a book voucher for $5 to be redeemed at either The Turning Page Bookshop in Springwood or at Megalong Books in Leura for completing a Reading Log. These two businesses have sponsored our Reading Program for the last five years.

Pick up a Reading Log (you must be a library member but joining is easy) and check out the details at any library branch from 1 December 2015 to 31 January 2016.

BLUE MOUNTAINS CULTURAL CENTRE - WHAT'S ON

Midsummer Nights - Music, Artisan Markets and Trivia - *after hours event on selected evenings, November 2015 - February 2016. Doors Open 5.30pm.*

Midsummer Nights is a great way to enjoy the artwork in the Gallery as they come to life in a new way. Come and enjoy drinks and canapés after work whilst you watch a magnificent sunset on our Viewing Platform and enjoy the evenings' entertainment.

All ticketed events include entry into the City Art Gallery. Bookings are essential at Reception or **4780 5410**.

Please note, Midsummer Nights is not suitable for children.

Academy Singers - Seated Concert, 27 November 2015 6-8pm.

Tickets: $30/$25 InSight Members.

Academy Singers presents The Arafura, featuring choral music from five centuries, starting with one of the greatest Renaissance composers, Giovanni Palestrina and finishing with a recent work, The Arafura. This piece, by Australian composer Dan Walker includes both English and Indigenous text and celebrates the landscape of northern Australia. The concert also includes performances by a string quartet.

Further information about news & events: www.bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.au

BLUE MOUNTAINS FAMILY DAYCARE NOW ON FACEBOOK

Get the latest news from Family Day Care, find out about childcare vacancies, read Educator profiles plus loads of fun facts and resources for parents and families.

Thinking about becoming a Family Day Care Educator? You can visit the Facebook page to learn more about what's involved in setting up your own Family Day Care service. Whether you are currently using the service or would like to learn more, Family Day Care would love you to join their online community.

You can find the Blue Mountains Family Day Care page at www.facebook.com/bluemountainsfamilydaycare.

BLUE MOUNTAINS Family DAYCARE