



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013**

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## **BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL**

The background of the page is a traditional Aboriginal art pattern. It features a complex design of interlocking shapes, including circles, lines, and stylized figures, rendered in earthy tones of brown, yellow, and blue. The pattern is dense and covers the entire page, with a central rectangular area of solid brown color where the text is located.

## Recognising Aboriginal Custodians

The Bega Valley Shire acknowledges, by way of our Memorandum of Understanding with the Bega, Eden and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Lands Councils and the Native Title Holders, that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants, custodians and native titleholders of all land and water in the Shire.

We recognise Aboriginal spiritual, social and cultural connections to these lands and waters and state our commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal rights, as enshrined in legislation, are upheld and not eroded.



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A hiker with a backpack is crossing a rocky stream bed in a forest. The hiker is wearing a red shirt and black shorts, and is using a walking stick. The stream is surrounded by large rocks and lush green trees. The title 'Introduction' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

# Introduction

Bega Valley Shire is proud to present our Annual Report for 2012-13.

This report has been developed for our community, to share our achievements over the past financial year. It provides a summary of the achievements we have made in working towards our Community Strategic Plan.

This report summarises our activities under each of our community ambition statements. It provides an overview of Council's financial position, operations and achievements, and is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act. 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.

This Annual Report matches achievements and actions with our previously adopted Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. Following our Council election, a revised Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan were adopted and will be reflected in future reports.



# Our Place

## Who we are

The Bega Valley Shire is located at the south-eastern extremity of New South Wales. The Shire's coastal fringe extends from Wallaga Lake in the north to Cape Howe and the Victorian border in the south. Collectively this 220 kilometre section of coastline forms the beautiful Sapphire Coast. Inland the higher peaks of the Great Dividing Range give way to rolling hills and numerous rivers and streams. Approximately 73% of the Shire's 6,052 square kilometres is National Park or State Forest.

The Shire's combination of natural beauty, temperate climate, its proximity to Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra and its range of towns, villages and recreational opportunities and commercial enterprises has attracted visitors and new residents for many years.



## OUR PLACE BY NUMBERS:

- 1,422 km of roads
- 78 km of footpaths
- 20 community halls
- 25 sporting grounds
- 7 swimming pools,
- 4 libraries
- 1 art gallery
- 101 beaches
- 29 estuaries
- 227 bridges
- 10 sewerage treatment systems
- 37 sewerage pump stations
- 990 pressure sewerage pump stations
- 6,628 sewerage manholes
- 347 km of reticulation sewerage mains
- 231 km of sewer rising mains



# Our Community

The Bega Valley Shire's population of approximately 33,112 people is currently projected to grow at 1.1% per annum, which will see a population of 37,295 people calling the Bega Valley home by 2030.

Despite a small population, the Shire's community boasts a diverse range of skills, talents, interests, and our own story to tell, all of which makes the Bega Valley Shire community what it is today.

In December 2012 a community satisfaction survey was conducted by IRIS Research to provide Council with a greater understanding of community expectations, needs and levels of satisfaction with current services. The results of this survey showed the management of roads, pathways, and parking as the number one priority for Shire residents. This was followed closely by promoting tourism, and planning for growth, development and sustainability.

## OUR COMMUNITY BY NUMBERS:

- 33,112 people live here
- 12% of our community were born overseas
- 3% of our community are Indigenous
- 26% of do some form of volunteer work
- Our median age is 48 years
- 6% need assistance due to a disability
- 13% have a tertiary education
- 62% of households have internet connection
- 27% of households contain only one person
- 23% of households are couples with children



## VOLUNTEERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Bega Valley Shire boasts the highest rate of volunteerism per capita in NSW and over 500 people are actively volunteering directly for the Council. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining and managing our beautiful halls, ensuring our cemeteries are shown the respect they deserve, assisting to deliver home library services, as well as maintaining a host of sports grounds, parks, gardens and nature strips throughout the Shire.

Volunteers also form various advisory committees including the Access committee and the Youth Council.

Regardless of skills, experience, or ability volunteering is rewarding for both the community and the volunteer.



# Our Council

## A Message from our Mayor



It's always a nice thing to be told I haven't the room in this message to talk about all of Council's achievements over the past financial year.

Busy, productive, and yes, challenging, could all be words to describe the past 12 months. We've secured \$10 million for major infrastructure in Eden; we've trained and developed a national award winning customer service team; and paved the way ahead for Bega to grow as a significant commercial and cultural centre serving the shire and beyond.

I'm particularly pleased with an independent financial assessment from NSW Treasury that places Bega Valley Shire Council in the top 20 per cent of rural NSW Councils, and better still we're predicted to move into the top six per cent within three years.

There's more of course, and details of these can be found in the pages of this report.

I would, however, like to make special mention of the things that really have nothing to do with our achievements as an organisation, and everything to do with how we work together as a community.

These are the things that are often overlooked in reports such as this as we have no way of quantifying a result when matched to budgets and projected outcomes.

I refer to moments when local people, including hardworking Council staff, get together to protect our community. Last year we had fires, and before that in 2011 we had floods, and on each occasion we were ready on personal, community and organisational levels to deal with the challenges before us. We worked together and thrived, and that in my books is the essence of achievement.

Bill Taylor, Mayor



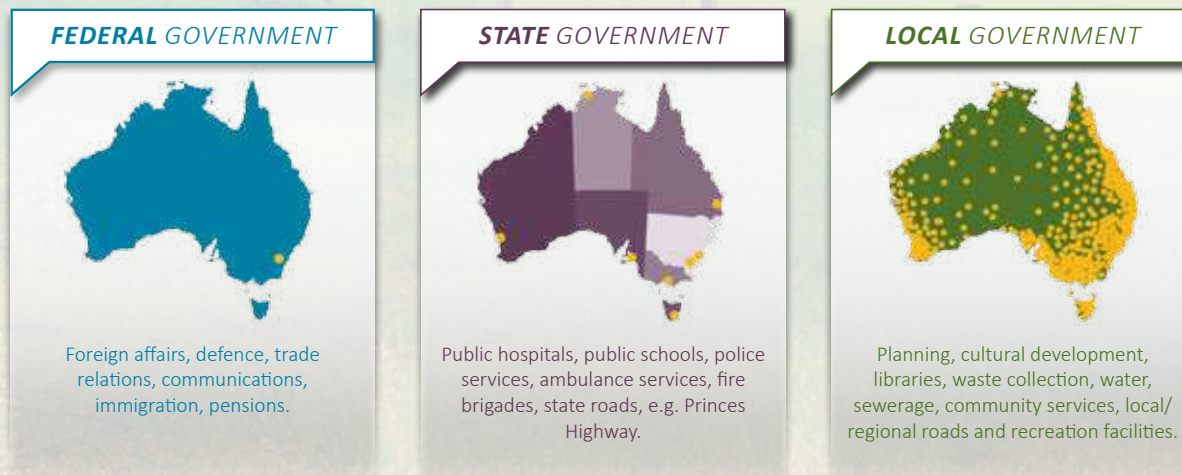
# Councillors

Bega Valley Shire Council is governed by nine elected Councillors. The Councillors are elected every four years with the last election being held in September 2012. Councillors provide leadership and establish policy and strategic direction for the organisation and the future of the shire.

There are no wards or ridings in the Bega Valley Shire so the nine Councillors are elected by the people to represent the interests of ratepayers and residents and provide leadership and guidance to the community and to encourage communication between Council and the community. The Council elects the mayor and deputy mayor each September. Our current Mayor is Councillor Bill Taylor and our Deputy Mayor is Councillor Russell Fitzpatrick.

## How Council operates

Council is the third level of government that is directly accountable to the local community with powers and responsibilities conferred from Federal and State Government. The Local Government Act 1993 provides Council with the framework and powers to provide community services and facilities.



Mayor  
Clr Bill Taylor



Deputy Mayor  
Clr Russell Fitzpatrick



Clr Tony Allen



Clr Michael Britten



Clr Keith Hughes



Clr Ann Mawhinney



Clr Kristy McBain



Clr Liz Seckold



Clr Sharon Tapscott

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Everyone is invited to attend meetings of Council. Council meetings are now held every third Wednesday. The meetings start at 2pm and are held in the Council Chambers at Zingel Place Bega. Extraordinary meetings are held from time to time to attend to urgent matters which require the decision of the full Council, these meeting are advertised in the local papers.

The Agendas for Council Meetings and Council Reports for each meeting are available from 5pm on the Thursday prior to each Ordinary Meeting on Council's website and a hard copy is made available at the Bega Administration reception desk and in the Council Chambers on the day of the meeting.



# Our Organisation

## Acting General Manager's Message



It's been a big year with plenty of action and the occasional surprise. I refer obviously to the departure of former General Manager, Peter Tegart who left us in August for personal reasons. Peter made a significant contribution and left with the organisations best wishes and thanks.

Peter 's legacy is an organisation equipped with great vision, plus the people skills and financial capacity to follow through on our promises.

The following pages outline the actions that followed these promises. It demonstrates our commitment over the past year to plan what we do, and do what we plan by achieving outcomes attached to our key directions and obligations to the community.

None of this would of course be possible without a committed Councillor team and our fantastic workforce, from dedicated call centre staff to our ever helpful town teams. Thank you all.

This year looks to be another busy one. We have town centre redesigns, a new GM starting early 2014, and the building of a new Bega Civic Centre to name just a few.

Looking forward to the year ahead.

Leanne Barnes, Acting General Manager





Simon Schweitzer  
Acting Group  
Manager Community  
and Relationships



Andrew Woodley  
Group Manager  
Planning and  
Environment



Wayne Sartori  
Group Manager  
Infrastructure, Waste  
and Water



Nina Churchward  
Workforce and  
Administration  
Manager



Lucas Scarpin  
Business and  
Technology Manager

## Organisation Structure

Council's General Manager, Leanne Barnes (acting) is responsible for the implementation of Council's policies as well as the administration and management of all Council day-to-day business. The General Manager reports to the Council (Councillors).

The General Manager is supported in the role by three group managers and two managers. These managers report to the General Manager and form the Leadership and Executive Group. The group is fondly referred to as LEG by our staff.

- Group Manager Community and Relationships - Simon Schweitzer (acting)
- Group Manager Planning and Environment - Andrew Woodley
- Group Manager Infrastructure, Waste and Water - Wayne Sartori
- Workforce and Administration Manager - Nina Churchward
- Business and Technology Manager - Lucas Scarpin

## WHAT WE DO:

- Provide and maintain community facilities
- Care for the environment
- Create a safer place to live
- Enhance our Community
- Plan for the future

## OUR WORKPLACE

Council is one of Bega Valley's largest employers, with 316 Full Time Employees (FTE) at a cost of just over \$20 million. Our staff are employed in our Bega office, our depots, libraries, regional gallery, child care centres, pools and in the field. Our staff are also our local community with just about every one of them living in the shire.

All our staff contribute to the community in some way and are working together to make your place, our place a great place.

The development, health and safety of our staff is our priority.



## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)

Council has a commitment to ensure principles of the EEO policy underpin activities and procedures across Council. The staff induction program regularly reinforces this commitment plus regular bi-annual workshops on the prevention of bullying and harassment are included in the corporate training plan. As per this plan, respect, equity and diversity workshops were attended by all staff in July 2012. These workshops focused on how to build a positive culture which enables everyone to feel respected and safe in our workplace.

In 2012-13, Council included 2 Diversity and 2 Indigenous traineeships in the new intake of apprentices, trainees and cadets.

## PROVIDING A SAFE WORKPLACE

Council takes very seriously its Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) obligation to provide a safe workplace for our employees. Some of our employee health initiatives conducted in 2012/13 included: flu (168) and hepatitis (27) vaccinations; employee assistance programs (30 sessions); skin patrol checks and mental health at the workplace workshops. In addition to these initiatives Council also undertook audiometric testing for staff exposed to excessive workplace noise.

Council continues to regard WHS as a high priority area for attention. One indicator of sustained organisation improvement is in the area of workers compensation claims lodged. The number of new claims lodged and time lost due to injury is summarised below.

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Lost time hours cumulative *	2,701	1,600	3,444
Number of new claims	29	27	25

\* Equals lost time hours for injuries received plus lost hours for claims carried over from previous years.

The number of workers compensation claims increased slightly against last years numbers as demonstrated in this table. This can be attributed to an increased workload for field staff (due to flood damage works) as well as an ageing workforce.

## Developing Our Employees

In 2012–13, as part of the Workforce Plan, Council increased the number of trainees, apprentices and cadets by fifteen. A Council wide mentoring program was also established to support new staff in these positions. In addition, a professional development program for Aspiring Leaders also commenced in 2012-13. These staff have been recognised as future managers for Council and have also been included in the mentoring program.

Other key aspects of the corporate training is the continuation of the Information technology (IT) upskilling program- a pilot group commenced this program in July 2012, and a further group commenced in September 2013. There has also been an increase in the number of employees undertaking nationally recognised training at the Cert 111, Cert IV and Diploma levels. Council funds for this training were augmented through incentives available through Commonwealth and State Government training initiatives.

Total expenditure on all staff development and training by Human Resources for 2012-13 was \$580,478 excluding salaries.



# Year in Review

## Significant Events

### July 2012

Call for proposals for the new Bega Civic Centre.

Council holds a series of recycling workshops.

Council grant of \$15,000 to Eden Whale Festival.

2012 Shirley Hannan Portrait Award announced

### August 2012

Council works with Sapphire Coast Producers Association (SCPA) to create a free booklet promoting local food and its producers.

Kerb-side recycling service is expanded with an extra

2,000 properties accessing the services

### September 2012

The Shire Council election returns five existing councillors and elects four new ones.

Bega library takes centre stage in solar panel trial

### October 2012

Councillors elect a new mayor and deputy mayor.

Effluent reuse system commissioned for Oaklands at Pambula.

Council hosts free 'Healthy Parenting Day' in Eden

## AWARDS / CITATIONS

- Winner - 2012 NSW Coastal Conference Local Government Award for best practice in Coastal Management – Love our Lakes.
- Runner up - 2013 National Government Contact Centre Excellence Awards for most Innovative Project.
- Finalist in NSW section - 2013 National Early Childhood Educators Awards. Eden Pre School Authorised Supervisor, Dianne McCaffery.
- Council's 'Every Home a Farm' project awarded an Outstanding Achievement from NSW State Government.

### November 2012

Council resolves to relay the results of the Pambula Hospital poll to the State Government.

The Library unveils its 2013 calendar showing historic photographs of residents.

Ten new Council trainee, apprentice and cadetship positions appointed

### December 2012

Council's Goodwill Committee distributed \$1,500 from money raised by staff during the year.

The Bega Art Prize of \$5,000 awarded.

Sapphire Coast beaches receives the thumbs up from Beachwatch testing.



### January 2013

Council hosts Australia Day photo competition

Council's 'Every Home a Farm' project awarded an Outstanding Achievement from NSW State Government

18 Australian Citizens welcomed as part of Australia Day celebrations

### February 2013

Library hosts the first of many 'Rhyme Time' songs and rhymes sessions for children and their parents

"Pit Stop" mens health screening hosted to raise awareness of mens health

Council hosts free 'Healthy Parenting Day' events in Pambula

### March 2013

Margaret Sheaves of Eden awarded Bega Valley Shire Senior of the Year.

Siobhan Linehan awarded Bega Valley Shire Council Young Women's Scholarship.

Council accepts a tender for just under \$1.7m for the Central Waste Facility civil works.

### April 2013

Council hosts screening of rare Anzac footage, the only moving images of Anzacs taken during the Gallipoli campaign.

Sustainable community workshops held.

Council hosts free 'Healthy Parenting Day' events in Bega.

### May 2013

Council offers \$5000 in tertiary scholarships for local TAFE and University students.

Updated community directory released

Council hosts the 'Small Biz' bus to help small businesses

### June 2013

Free tipping vouchers for all rate payers

Free screening of the youth short film competition, YOOF Tube showcasing young and emerging local filmmakers.

Council acquires Tura Beach Tavern





## Some Facts and Figures for the year

- Our call centre received 56,000 calls
- 189,349 books were loaned through our library services
- 84,315 visits were made to the library branches
- A contribution of \$593,000 was made to emergency management agencies
- \$32,000 was provided to community groups for Environmental grants
- Donations of \$202,000 were made to the community for various events, sporting/cultural representations, school/club activities
- Grants of \$23.3 million in Operating Grants and \$3.6 million in Capital Grants were applied for and received
- \$5.25 million was spent on road maintenance, and \$4.7 million spent on capital and rehabilitation works.
- Our childcare centres provided care for over 287 local children
- The Regional Gallery hosted 9 major exhibitions and delivered over 20 public programs
- Over 40 playgrounds across the shire were maintained
- \$375,000 was spent on weed and vegetation management
- \$412,087 was provided for environmental management activities
- Over \$7 million was spent on the operation and maintenance of the Shires water supply system
- Over \$8.5 million was spent on the operation and maintenance of the Shires sewerage services



# Achieving Our Plan



A Liveable Place



An Enterprising Place



A Sustainable Place



An Accessible Place



A Leading Organisation



# Vision

The Bega Valley is a community that works together achieving a balance between quality of life, enterprising business, sustainable development and conservation of the environment.

## Framework to achieve the Vision

Key Themes: Bega Valley 2030 has five key themes. These reflect the ambitions of the community and are presented in a manner that outlines the outcomes that are to be achieved by 2030.

Five key themes provide the focus for the development of key directions, outcomes and key result areas in this plan.

The first three themes provide the framework to deliver social, environmental, economic outcomes to achieve our vision in partnership with other levels of government, the community and business.

The fourth theme provides the support to the first three themes through the provision and renewal of infrastructure.

The fifth theme outlines how as an organisation Bega Valley Shire Council will support the community direction through effective and transparent leadership.



1  
A LIVEABLE PLACE



2  
AN ENTERPRISING PLACE



3  
A SUSTAINABLE PLACE



4  
AN ACCESSIBLE PLACE



5  
A LEADING ORGANISATION

YOUR PLACE. OUR PLACE. GREAT PLACE.





## A Liveable Place

To support a place where everyone regardless of age or circumstance can enjoy a safe, involved and affordable community life.



The following pages outline our key steps towards our community ambition statements (key directions) from our Community Strategic Plan. Detailed performance against our Delivery and Operational Plans can be found in attachment 1.





## L1 Cultural Diversity

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley is a harmonious community where cultural diversity is respected and celebrated, and everyone is made to feel welcome.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** December 2012 saw the launch of an Indigenous preschool language and literacy book with copies distributed to Supplementary Recurrent Assistance program cluster group. There has been increased attendance of Indigenous youth involved in literacy programs, by 20%. In addition, the libraries are providing safe space and opportunities to develop reading and spelling skills.

Recruitment commenced for an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, with position appointed in early of the 2013-14 financial year. A review of our Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal communities within the region has commenced. Working with Sapphire Coast Tourism and cultural heritage groups has seen the finalisation and publishing of the 'Trails and Tales' stories hosted on the Sapphire Coast Tourism website, providing a researched journey through the history of our communities.

## L2 A Safer Community

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley is a safe community where local people and visitors feel safe and secure in their homes and accommodation, at workplaces and in the community.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** During 2012/2013 \$295,000 was spent on companion animal management responsibilities and associated activities. Council employs four Rangers and one trainee Ranger. Companion animal management is one of the major functions for these staff. Council also maintains an animal management facility at Wallagoot employing other part time staff to provide daily animal care.

A Companion Animal Management Plan was compiled during 2012/2013 and is currently being reviewed by Senior Management. This Plan will guide companion animal management strategies into the future.

Private car-parking regulations and procedures have been adopted and fees set by Council.

A review of current contract and specifications of the summer lifeguard service was completed. This enabled the contract to be re-advertised for the operation of the 2013-14 summer period.





## L3 Healthy Communities

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has health and social/community services and social and community infrastructure for all members of the community.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Council has held an advocacy and facilitation role in relation to the new regional hospital, with meetings held to help inform the development application and design process. Construction of the South East Regional Hospital commenced. A report has been published by Local Health District (LHD) on Pambula Hospital, and poll results reported.

The University of Wollongong (UOW) nursing and allied health student's academic research support sessions were successfully delivered, and support is being given to UOW through literacy courses being held regularly throughout the year for tutors and university students.

The Healthy Communities project 'Live Life' has finalised its implementation plan which was endorsed by the Department of Health and Ageing. The successful project has been delivering numerous physical activity and healthy eating support programs to the community. A mobile health clinic is now operating in Eden in partnership with University of Canberra.

## L4 Cultural Development

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley integrates celebration, cultural and artistic expression in all aspects of community life.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Our creative community has had access to numerous training and development opportunities through the South East Arts (SEA) programs with the delivery of 5 museum workshops, 2 exhibition development workshops, 2 funding workshop, and 2 creative freelancing workshops

Council now hosts a calendar of events which went live December 2012 complementing the regular events and cultural activities promoted on Facebook.

The Cultural Setting Report developed in partnership with the Cultural Committee was presented to Council in December 2012.







## L5 Our Character and Place

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley recognises, celebrates, maintains and enhances the character and amenity of our towns, villages and localities.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Community meetings were held to develop and promote the Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategy, and options for themes and signage for the towns discussed. Tourism signage plans have been adopted and work will continue in this area.

Major infrastructure projects, and projects of high community interest are published on the Council website to help promote what is happening in towns and villages.

## L6 Housing Diversity and Affordability

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley housing is designed so it provides choice, is affordable, sustainable and is suited to the needs of the community; and diversity and affordability in new housing is increased.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Work on the affordable housing mapping has not yet commenced and has been subject to resource limitations. Work is planned for the first half of 2013 and operational targets will be revisited as part of the review of the operational and delivery plans.



## L7 Learning

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has opportunities for life-long learning and skill development across a range of education and training modes and topics.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Childcare centre playgrounds have been upgraded and ongoing review of plant, service operations and management undertaken. Staff employed in Children's services have undergone professional development through Certificate III training programs, to enable the successful transition to the National Early Years Learning Framework. Nominated supervisors and educational leaders have been appointed at all sites

An improved usage of space including the development of a community training room in Bega has led to an increase in services provided by our Library Services, with the successful delivery of 'tech savvy' classes, Drop In 'tech help' mornings, author presentations, literacy support, general interest and children events. In total 219 community events were held by the library in the financial year. Library staff have also shown commitment to increasing their skills with staff completing Diploma level qualifications.

As an organisation we recognise the importance of supporting our staff and our community in seeking and achieving education opportunities. Internally, our Mentoring Strategy to support cadets and trainees is in implementation, and one of our successful initiatives to support youth was delivered with 3 university scholarships and 2 TAFE scholarships awarded to local youth.







## L8 Volunteering

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley volunteers are valued, recognised and supported in providing what are deemed valuable services to the community.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Our hall committees and other Council volunteers have completed volunteer induction programs.

All hall and cemetery committees are operating in the new model. The sporting grounds management committee model to be progressed in early 2014. Inductions of Gallery volunteers has begun and will continue.

Development of a volunteer organisation resource kit has commenced. This kit along with training will be delivered to volunteer organisations in the Bega Valley to assist them in volunteer recruitment, management, retention and recognition.

Volunteer record management systems are being developed. The goal is to integrate volunteer records within Councils' records system so it can be easily accessed and maintained as an accurate record of Council's volunteers.

## L9 Engaging Youth

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley creates opportunities for young people.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Funding has been identified and signed off for the development of a Youth Space in Bega with Police Community Youth Club (PCYC) with implementation through the coming year.

The suicide prevention action network (SPAN) has been created and is being supported, with a calendar and events conducted as part of mental health month.

Council has provided support for youth through the awarding of youth tertiary scholarships and sporting, cultural and education scholarships through the South East Regional Academy of Sport (SERAS) program.



## L10 Engaging Older People and those with Disabilities

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley provides access for all values the contribution and needs of older residents and people with disabilities; supports opportunities for them to participate in employment, volunteering and community life.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** The Community Information Directory has been updated to better identify services and programs for older people – the directory is currently electronic with a printed version to be published in financial year of 2013-14

The number of volunteers in Library services has increased by 30% in line with changes being implemented to continue a quality service provision.







## An Enterprising Place

To support a creative and innovative business community, invigorating growth in employment and economic activity, in partnerships with government.



The following pages outline our key steps towards our community ambition statements (key directions) from our Community Strategic Plan. Detailed performance against our Delivery and Operational Plans can be found in attachment 1.

## E1 Business Growth and Capacity

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has an increased business capacity generating ongoing economic development.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** A Bega Valley Shire Council profile report was commissioned in line with data releases from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The data in the report provided a valuable resource for planning and an input to the economic regeneration strategies.

A business information and training night was held in May 2013 with local businesses to show the research and analysis of key economic data including population trends, characteristics of local population, and visitor trends. This training was provided by Profile ID and available free to any interested businesses or community group within the Shire.

## E2 Growing Tourism

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has expanded tourism business opportunities taking full advantage of other marketing and promotion opportunities such as through alignment with Australia's Coastal Wilderness brand and local provider frameworks.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Workshops were held for local tourism focussed businesses on Australia's Coastal Wilderness program and provider and product development. These were hosted by Sapphire Coast Tourism. Discussions were undertaken with Sapphire Coast Tourism and the Regional Tourism Organisation to facilitate and assist with agreed outcomes for local developments, including tourism signage projects with the National Landscape Australia's Coastal Wilderness program.

Support of the Port of Eden regeneration, with an Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre (SCMDC) Regional Development Australia (RDA) application and grant submitted. Ongoing liaison and works with local state and federal groups and government to facilitate developments within the Port of Eden.

The tourist signage audit and consultation is complete, with the installation of signage to commence in 2013-14.

Advocacy and support was provided for the Aboriginal pathway the Bundian Way and the long awaited upgrade of the entrance at Jigamy commenced.







## E3 Supporting Traditional Industries

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley supports traditional industries in forging new futures:- Farming, fishing, forestry.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** The Comprehensive Local Environment Plan (CLEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) was lodged with Department of Planning for gazettal during the 2012-13 year with subsequent approval. A key element of the plan is protection of agricultural land and existing enterprises.

As part of the investigations into effluent and recycled solid waste for use in agricultural enterprise, the Merimbula Effluent Options Study has been completed. This involved focus group meetings and data collection and analysis

Ongoing support has been provided to the South East Producers project through supporting the creation of free booklet promoting local producers.

Support to traditional industries through program such as economic gardening will commence through the 2013-14 period.

## E4 Creating Vibrant Regional and District Centres

*Our community ambition:* By 2030 the Bega Valley has a strong regional centre and vibrant district centres.

*Steps taken to reach this:* Stage 1 of Bega Littleton Gardens has been completed during the 2012-13 financial year, and work continues in this area. The Bega long-term traffic and carparking study was completed during the 2012-13 period and reported to Council in the 2013-14 year.

Assistance was provided to the Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) for the completion of the Bega by-pass, which was opened to the public early in the 2013-14 financial year.

The design of the Merimbula by-pass was developed into the final draft stages with the next stage to work with RMS on approval process.

The Snug Cove Masterplan for Eden has been reviewed with consultation and the final amended report will be adopted by Council in 2013-14.

Support to the development of the South East Regional Hospital has been provided and will continue.





## E5 Supporting Employment Growth

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has employment opportunities and a labour-ready workforce.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** A number of workshops have been delivered to develop and support the growing home based sector. Workshops and training in the area of creative industries have included 2 exhibitor development workshops, 2 funding workshop, 2 creative freelancing workshops.

The Bega Valley Shire Council 'Live , Work , Invest' prospectus and online site will be further developed during 2013-14. The 'Live, Work, Invest' site will be a valuable resource to support the development of employment opportunities and research on business opportunity has commenced and will inform the business growth plan.

Local training opportunities have been supported through partnerships with Community Training Partnerships (CTP).

## E6 Fostering Innovation

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley fosters innovation and has a reputation for its commitment to new and emerging industries.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** 3 workshops have been hosted through Community Services, with a focus on encouraging youth entrepreneurship.

## E7 Advocacy for Infrastructure

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has the infrastructure to support community and current business growth and has future development including communication technology, appropriate energy infrastructure and transport and freight services.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Council Digital Economy Strategy was adopted in August 2012.

Council facilitated NBN Co agreement to purchase land to establish an earth satellite tracking station.

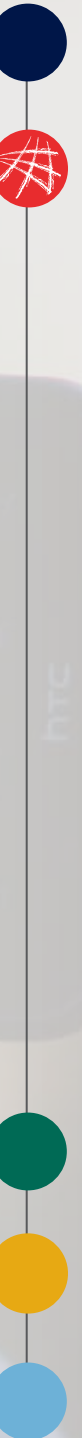
The renewal of Merimbula Airport runway was completed during the 2012-13 year. The Merimbula Airport Masterplan was commissioned and commenced during 2012-13 and will be reported during the 2013-14 financial year.

Continuous support and advocacy for the development of infrastructure with an RDAF grant lodged for Eden wharf extension, attenuator and marina development, comprising federal, state and local government, and private sector funding. \$10 million for Stage 1 has been secured.

## E8 Sustainable Reliable Energy Sources

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley Energy Infrastructure meets the needs of business, the community and services

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Corporate energy usage figures are measured and reported quarterly, for Council buildings. Corporate Energy Efficiency improvements are programmed and procedures have been established and are being utilised. This has included energy efficiency programs with solar for Council childcare centres and pools.







## A Sustainable Place

To ensure the unique environment is protected to maintain biodiversity and water quality, and managed for our community to provide growth and economic opportunity.



The following pages outline our key steps towards our community ambition statements (key directions) from our Community Strategic Plan. Detailed performance against our Delivery and Operational Plans can be found in attachment 1.

## S1 Natural Environment Protected

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has natural areas including our catchments, waterways, coast, and bushland that are protected and enhanced.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** The third year of Council's Community Environmental Grants Program was well subscribed with \$31,300 awarded across 7 grants. The supported projects were across the Shire from Yowrie and Cobargo in the north to Pambula in the south. Grants were allocated to these groups to complete projects that addressed a range of environmental issues including weed control, revegetation and community engagement / education. Many of the grants were in highly visited areas and were designed to attract local communities to use, value and experience their local environment

Full vegetation management and endangered ecological communities training for staff completed.

Contract has been awarded for development of a Coastal Zone Management and Hazard Plans, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) drafted with University of Wollongong and Southern Council Groups for coastal hazard mapping, management and monitoring project.

Community Marine Algae Education Project media and guide completed and launched; Pambula lake processes studies completed and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) commissioned with contract awarded.







## S2 Manage Development in the Natural Area

*Our community ambition:* By 2030 the Bega Valley manages development to minimise impact on the natural environment.

*Steps taken to reach this:* An Aboriginal Heritage study was completed and the Koori Heritage Stories were developed in collaboration with more than 40 Koori elders. Protocols will be completed early in 2013.

A review of environmental zones was also completed as part of the draft Local Environment Plan process which has recognised environmentally sensitive land through the use of Environmental Management and Environmental Living zones (zone E4), which provides for low impact residential development in areas with special ecological, scientific or aesthetic values. The review also recognised protection of sensitive foreshore areas and bushland public reserves through the use of Environmental Conservation zone.

Threatened species training for all relevant staff has been delivered.

Tree preservation order procedures have been reviewed, including public and private tree management systems and will be finalised during the 2013-14 year.

## S3 Supporting Sustainable Communities

*Our community ambition:* By 2030 the Bega Valley is a community that lives in a clean and environmentally sustainable way.

*Steps taken to reach this:* Recording of energy usage has been completed for the organisation and data is now collected on a quarterly basis.

Environmental policy including environmental sustainability developed and adopted.

Work has commenced on the cycling and pedestrian strategy with the first stage of community consultation completed. This step has enabled the identification of cycling interests, and priority needs. Work to finalise the Cycling and pedestrian strategy will continue through 2013-14.

A kerbside waste audit was conducted with the results benchmarked against 13 other Council areas. Our waste recovery rates exceeds the Sydney average – with the recovery rate for our Shire at 83.5%.

## S4 Celebrating our Towns and Villages

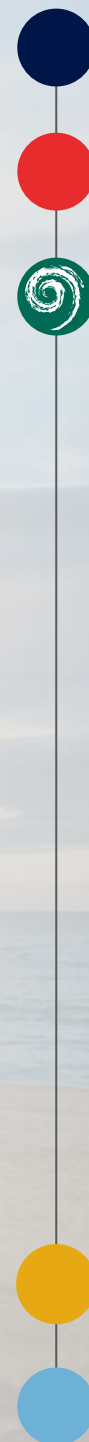
***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley has towns and villages that are visually unique, centred around a variety of green spaces, lake, water bodies and natural areas.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Individual values and controls, in relation to landscape features, for existing villages have been incorporated in the Development Control Plan (DCP) and Local Environment Plan (LEP). The newly adopted LEP has enabled the protection of productive agricultural land through the use of Primary Production and Rural Landscape zones. The LEP has also recognised environmentally sensitive land through the use of Environmental Management and Environmental Living zones, and the protection of sensitive foreshore areas and bushland public reserves through the use of Environmental Conservation zone. The LEP has also provided a focus on improving opportunities for economic development and jobs in the Bega Valley town centres, through the expansion of business, mixed use and industrial zones.


## S5 Managing our Water Cycle

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley commits to total water cycle management practices.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** NSW EPA effluent options study has been completed. Council adopted a preferred approach for effluent management at Merimbula. The process now involves subsidy funding discussions with NSW and Federal Government. The aim is the construction of deep ocean outfall and additional beneficial effluent re-use schemes in accord with Councils Long Term Financial Plan.







## S6 Preparing for Climate Change

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley plans for and takes action to minimise the impact of climate change and other natural events.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** During 2012-2013 a suite of environmental management policies were developed and adopted by Council relating to environmental management, the environment levy, soil and water management, weed management, corporate sustainability, pesticide use and climate change. A climate change policy has been completed with the draft climate change strategy in preparation.

Procedures and guidelines will be developed during 2013-14 to assist the implementation of these policies.

## S7 Improving the Health of our Natural Systems

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley maintains and improves health of natural systems (soil, water, weeds) that support agriculture.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Coast and estuarine funding as well as weed management funding was secured for 2012-13 year.

A weed education strategy has been delivered activities such as field days, information events and ongoing support to on ground services such as Landcare.

Bega River Rehabilitation Plan funding secured with Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA) as well as Bega Brogo Floodplain and urban Natural Resource Management (NRM) funding.



## An Accessible Place

To plan and provide a comprehensive mix of public and private sector services and facilities in order that residents and visitors have access to the quality of health, recreation, education, employment, transport, utility and retail resources they want and need.

The following outlines our steps towards community ambition statements (key directions) from our Community Strategic Plan. Detailed performance against Delivery and Operational Plans, and updates on Major Capital and Renewal Projects (as per our Long Term Financial Plan, and our Asset Management Plans) are in attachment 1.





## A1 Transport Infrastructure Developed and Accessible

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley you can get where you need to go in a way that is accessible, safe, environmentally friendly and efficient.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Flood damage restoration works have completed with \$25 million expended. Scheduled bridge and drainage works completed including the replacement of timber with concrete on Towamba Bridge and concrete repairs to Merimbula Bridge.

Road repairs including sealed, unsealed and path surfaces as identified in the Asset Management Plans have been completed.

Bega traffic study consultancy brief awarded with the study undertaken during the 2012-13 reporting period. Traffic study reported to Council October 2013.

RMS Bega by pass is complete. Council provided assistance to the RMS through providing burrow areas for select fill and by widening Buckajo road and Coopers Gully road. This resulted in improved road alignment at minimal cost to Council.

## A2 Information Services Accessible and Up to Date

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley you can find out how to get where you want to go and what is available there.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Completed audit of all signage within Council road reserves. Implementation of signage plan will be ongoing.

## A3 Asset Planning and Management of Council Infrastructure

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley infrastructure planning, design, construction, maintenance and works meet standard.

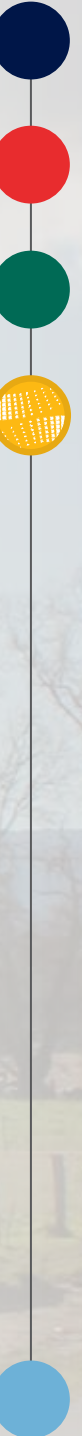
***Steps taken to reach this:*** In accordance with Asset Management Plans a detailed review of boat ramps has been completed. Implementation of recommendations from Asset Management Plans to enable appropriate management of recreational and building assets based on changing demographic needs completed.

Renewal projects as per Asset Management Plan for 2012-13 period completed.


## A4 Community Assets Appropriate and well Managed

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley recreation, sporting, tourism, cultural and community assets meet the community need.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Development of community partnerships through the establishment of management committees for regional sporting complexes is ongoing with the focus for 2012-13 to have Council volunteers systems in place. Facility Management Plans are in development and will be finalised in the 2013-14 financial period.







## A5 Locating Facilities to meet Community Needs

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley facilities are located to encourage their use rather than letting things just happen.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Latest release ABS Census data for consideration as part of our planning processes has been captured through partnership with Profile Id. Staff training delivered in the analysis of latest census data including population forecasts to enable effective planning. Business and community training sessions also delivered to support business and community development.

## A6 Water Supply Reliable and Protected

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley towns and main villages has access to potable water supply.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Consultants have been engaged to develop design concepts for water treatment schemes for Kiah water supply to support a water treatment supply strategy with water filtration in line with the Long Term Financial plan. Consultation on the options for fluoridation of Merimbula Water Supply, will commence during the 2013-14 reporting period.

## A7 Sewerage Systems meet Community Needs

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley the sewerage system meets the needs of both the permanent residents and holiday population.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Merimbula Effluent Options study completed which included focus group sessions with industry and data collection. Investigation and feasibility study completed on the options of sewerage of additional towns with Council position to not pursue. Initial discussions with NSW Office of Water have been held exploring further opportunities for Federal and NSW state Government capital works subsidies

## A8 Waste Services Sustainable and Meet Community Needs

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley waste facilities meet the public health needs of the community and business.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** A kerbside waste audit was conducted with the results benchmarked against 13 other Council areas. Our waste recovery rates exceeds the Sydney average – with the recovery rate for our shire at 83.5% Rural recycling program and accompanying education material delivered with all services properties in the shire now serviced with recycling, this was an increase of 2,000 recycling bins.

Landfill closure plans are in place for Merimbula, with Bega and Eden to progress during the 2013-14 reporting period.

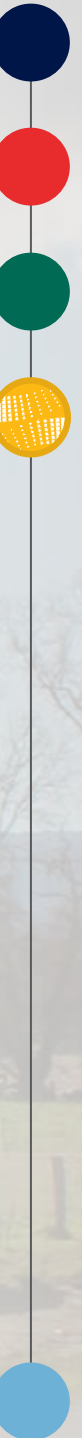
Construction of the Central Waste Facility commenced during the 2012-13 period and the facility will be operational in 2013-14.

## A9 Emergency Planning

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley emergency funding and resource support is earmarked and/or made available.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Flood plain modelling has been completed during 2012-13 and placed on public exhibition October 2013. Funding has been applied for to finalise risk management plan for Bega and this activity will continue.

Ongoing support provided to Local Emergency Management Committee through administration. Ongoing assistance to state agencies during emergency events, this includes the planning and training for emergency management. Mock emergency drill conducted.







## A Leading Organisation

To shape an organisation that supports the agreed aspirations of the community within the capacity of the community and the capacity of the organisation

The following pages outline our key steps towards our community ambition statements (key directions) from our Community Strategic Plan. Detailed performance against our Delivery and Operational Plans can be found in attachment 1.

## LO1 Civic Leadership

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley civic leadership is provided by well trained, responsive, innovative and accountable Councillors and staff.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Local elections occurred in September 2012 with a new Council being elected. Significant induction was delivered. Four new Councillors were elected in the Bega Valley Shire Council including three women, making a balance of five men and four women on Council.

New South Wales Electoral Commission costings and final report detailing findings from the 2012 local elections was received in early 2013.

Development of performance indicators, as part of the Council performance framework has continued, and requires further development across the organisation, this will incorporate revised performance indicators at position level across the organisation.

## LO2 Community Engagement

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley opportunities are provided for the community to be involved in Council decision making.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Following the development and launch of a new Council website, numerous on-line information and feedback points have been developed including a community events calendar. The Council Facebook page has also been an activated point of community information.

Councils Communications Strategy was developed through 2012-13 financial with public exhibited and subsequent adoption in the 2013-14 year.

The community satisfaction survey was undertaken in December 2012, and the results were analysed and are feeding into activities, that were developed through the 2012-13 year and implemented through 2013-14 financial year. These have included online suggestions points, suggestion boxes for community at library branches, and public council workshops in major towns.







## LO3 Customer Service

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley there is commitment to providing consistently high quality customer service.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** A customer service charter was developed and adopted as part of Councils review of the organisations policy review.

Considerable work has been undertaken in developing our Customer Request Management system. We identified a benchmark of 80% for customer first call resolution, which at the time stood at 37%. We have now reached our benchmark of 80%, and are committed to keeping this standard. Through the development and implementation of this system, we were awarded as a runner-up at the National 2013 Government Contact Centre Excellence awards for ‘most innovative project’.

Changes have been made to the out-of-hours function of the call centre which has resulted in this being incorporated within the main call centre, bringing greater consistency to service provision.

## LO4 Integrated Planning and Reporting

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley planning takes place in an integrated whole of organisation manner which reflects the aspirations of the community and the capacity of the organisation.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** The end of term report was adopted in August 2012 and is available on Council’s website.

Council considered and adopted an updated Community Strategic Plan which was adopted and in place from the 2013-14 period. This was based on revised directions from the Community Satisfaction survey and continual development and improvement on the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, which also included peer reviews through the Division of Local Government.

Extensive community consultation took place in late 2012 and into early 2013 regarding a proposed Special Variation, which was incorporated into all Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. The Special Variation was approved by IPART and subsequently adopted by Council.

## LO5 Financial Sustainability

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley there is effective management of assets, finances, resources and service delivery.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Significant work and reporting to Council on the Long Term Financial Plan was undertaken throughout 2012 which enabled the successful application to IPART for a Special Variation. Council has been identified by TCorp as ranking in the top 20% of rural NSW Councils for financial sustainability, and forecasts Council to move into the top 6% within the next three years.

Work has been undertaken to capture the true costs of Council functions with attributions completed. Work in this area will continue.

A number of changes have been made to Council's policies and processes in relation to supplier management. Council has implemented updated procurement procedures and completed training for all relevant staff.

## LO6 Workforce Management

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 the Bega Valley the organisation is an employer of choice, promoting a safe, healthy and innovative working environment.

***Steps taken to reach this:*** Recognising our ageing workforce, we have implemented succession planning initiatives to ensure successful continuity of business over the next 10 years. A retirement survey has been finalised and a review of workforce strategy priorities completed. Eleven new traineeships/cadet ship positions were appointed in the 2012-13 year. Council has also developed and will continue to implement a mentoring program for developing staff.

Council has completed three new safe work method statements including a sun smart policy, Personal Protective Equipment procedure and drug and alcohol procedure. Lone working and remote working procedures are incorporated into the Work Health Safety (WHS) manual.







## LO7 Partnerships

***Our community ambition:*** By 2030 strong partnerships between all levels of government and their agencies, community groups and businesses are in place.

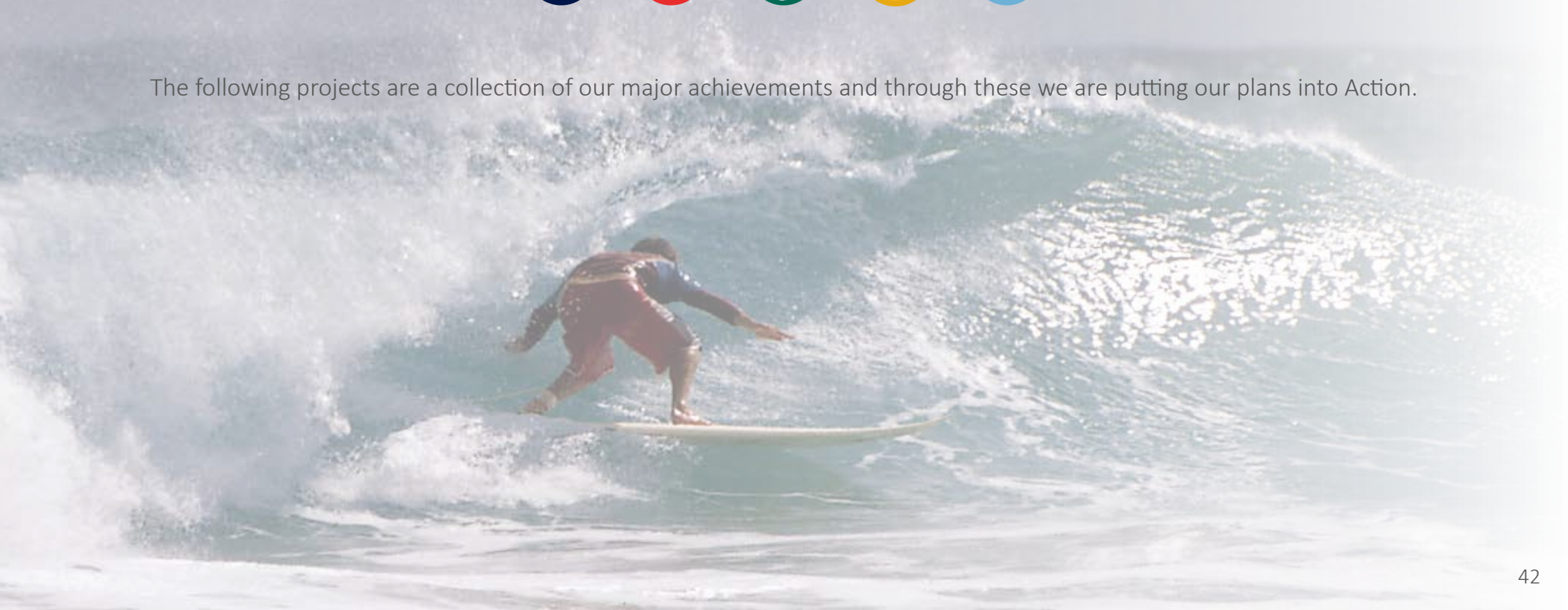
***Steps taken to reach this:*** Council shows continuous commitment to representing the community views to both state and federal governments. Two major projects have resulted from Councils facilitation and advocacy. The Bega Bypass, constructed by the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has now been completed with support from Council. The benefits of the Bypass are improved traffic conditions and safer roads.. Council also took a leadership role in calling for the construction of the South East Regional Hospital. Supporting local businesses, and promoting our region as a tourist destination, Council also partners with Sapphire Coast Tourism Ltd (SCT) to promote and market our region.

Council is also a member of Southern Councils Group (SCG) and works collaboratively with other member councils on issues such as natural resource management, procurement, and the development of integrated planning and reporting.

# Our Plans in Action



The following projects are a collection of our major achievements and through these we are putting our plans into Action.







## Live Life Bega Valley

A successful Australian Government (DoHA) grant application resulted in the implementation of the 'Live Life Bega Valley' project.

The project tackles the prevalence of obesity for local people by providing accessible pathways to better health and wellbeing through physical activity and healthy eating programs.

Other health and wellbeing initiatives include:

- **Love Food - Hate Waste (Street Share)**

We encourage and assist street sized community gardens where neighbours join together in growing and sharing their own produce. Our workshops guide people in siting, building and maintaining no dig gardens, with the provision of free starter kits including raised beds, soil, seedlings and tools. This program has considerable benefits for people struggling with the increasing cost of living. It provides access to a high quality and healthy diet through participating in a free community building program that boosts skills in growing, cooking, storing and recycling.



- **Every Home a Farm**

We took the Love Food Hate Waste message on the road and developed a very successful program of demonstrating that every home and backyard is big enough to feed a family with fresh and healthy food.

Gardening, composting and cooking skills were the focus of live skills workshops held at local markets and shows.

Every workshop demonstrated the importance of composting by providing free worm farms to participants. This was a vital aspect of the program that looks at reducing food waste in NSW, where annually \$2.5 billion of edible food is discarded.

The program was run in conjunction with the local producers association, SCPA South East Producers, who have since joined us in a number of successful partnerships to boost the value of local food production and value adding.



## Youth Space

We helped secure \$250,000 for the funding of NSW's first PCYC (Police Citizens Youth Club) mobile youth space along with our neighbours at Eurobodalla Shire Council.

The Bega Valley Shire is a big place, and traditionally the support and activities on offer at the nearest PCYC has been out of reach for many young people living in small rural communities.

We changed this through a firm belief that no young person should be disadvantaged because of where they live.

Based in Bega and Narooma, the service will operate in both shires, travelling to small communities with fully trained staff and well equipped trailers offering everything from sports training to blue light discos.

We'll be offering local young people the opportunity to actively engage in life skill development, vocational pathways, and character and leadership building.



## Connecting with our Local Indigenous Children

Our research showed us that Aboriginal children had a significantly lower level of literacy and numeracy at school entry from preschool than non-indigenous children. The Federal and State governments are working at 'Closing the Gap'.

At Eden Preschool it was identified that resources that used local language and images would assist in engaging Indigenous children and their families. To enable this, we worked closely with the Eden Aboriginal Community in publishing a children's book and CD that combines literacy, numeracy and cultural teachings.

The Boori's of Eden book project contains images that are significant to the Eden Aboriginal Community, and each were chosen and created by children, families and Elders.

The accompanying CD has Elder, Uncle Ossie Cruse sharing local stories and use of traditional Language.

The book is dedicated to a local Elder who passed away during the project, which emphasises the significance and importance of capturing history and the Yuin Language before it is lost.

The Boori's of Eden was distributed to local families and children, who now have the opportunity to engage with material that is culturally significant and reflective of the Eden Aboriginal Community.

The Eden Preschool director was a finalist in the NSW section of the Early Childhood Awards earlier this year.







## Social Issues and Cultural Settings Report and Response Papers

Following the release of our Community Strategic Planning documents, we heard a call from the community for a detailed report on social issues affecting local people and cultural opportunities that inspire and shape our community.

The Social Issues Papers and Cultural Setting Report were subsequently delivered, and today they work by providing a framework to assist with decision making for Councillors and the community.

Using surveys, targeted consultations, peer reviews, research and demographic studies we took on board a wide range of views from all corners of the shire to identify and prioritise social and cultural needs and opportunities for our shire.

To view our Social Issues Papers and Cultural Setting Report visit council's website: [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)





## Most Intelligent Library Under the Sun | DIY Sun Powered Learning

Last year we negotiated with Essential Energy for a 20Kw solar energy system to be installed at Council's library in Bega.

The installation generates about 26,000KW/h of electricity a year, which equates to reducing our carbon footprint by 22.62 tonnes every year.

Part of the installation involved an educational kiosk installed in the library to highlight the role renewable energy can play in boosting energy efficiency, and how this can benefit the community through utilising back-up micro grids in the future.

### Self-checkout system

The introduction of a self-checkout system last year has resulted in a vastly improved tracking system for loaned items and a faster, more efficient borrowing experience for library customers.

The project required the tagging of the entire Bega Valley Shire Library collection with radio frequency labels. A successful community campaign and lots of works from library staff and volunteers (and the Mayor), saw this completed swiftly.

Two self-checkout kiosks have since been installed in Bega and Merimbula libraries and a successful staff and community training program has been implemented.

Radio Frequency tags have recently been added to the University of Wollongong collection at the Bega Library, and a separate kiosk has been installed for students use.

There's always some doubt as to how a new technology will be viewed by the community, but we're happy to see that the take up rate of borrowing using the self-checkout kiosks has been about 85%.

To view more information about our libraries visit council's website [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au) > A Liveable Place > Library Services.



## \$10 Million for Eden Port | Bringing hope back to Eden

The Eden Port is a major infrastructure facility in the shire, with more than 100 big ships using the deep water port every year.

The port is on a growth trend, but the town of Eden has in recent years been hit with wholesale job losses through closures and downsizing of major industries.

We're turning things around with a \$10 million grant from the Regional Development Australia Fund.

Our plan to revitalise Eden through developing its port to allow increased cruise ship and commercial vessel visitation through an additional 50 ships / 100,000 visitors arriving per annum will put money back in local pockets through increased employment and investment.

The development of an extended breakwater wharf to allow birthing of large cruise ships carrying up to 2000 passengers is projected to create 75 local jobs, and the flow on effect of investment through a boosted shire-wide tourism industry will no doubt create many more.

We prioritised Eden and commenced work on the RDAF4 application in 2012, and negotiations also started at this time with the NSW government and private sector in further developing the port to include a wave attenuator, marina and supporting infrastructure, all of which are discussed in our recently exhibited Eden Port Masterplan.

To view more details of our plan for Eden visit council's website [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au) >An Enterprising Place >Major Projects.







## Digital Economy | Making Money Away from the Big Smoke

- **The first NBN satellite tracking station in Australia**

We're turning the Bega Valley Shire into a leader in the decentralised business revolution.

Big business and innovation was once only possible in major population centres, but thanks to the expanding digital communications market and a clever move from Council, we can now secure large scale business investment in a shire populated by 33,000 people.

Things started with our Digital Economy Strategy first identifying a major need for fast and reasonably priced broadband in the shire. The National Broadband Network then announced they were looking to locate a satellite tracking station in the region, we were able to successfully negotiate an agreement to site Australia's first NBN satellite tracking station on a 5 hectare parcel of land within the shire.

This proved to be a smart move as a subsequent announcement from NBN Co detailed a seven year wait for the rollout of their cable network locally.

We're now at the forefront of digital economy, with our strategy identifying a roadmap of securing benefits for the people and businesses of the shire.

The flow on effect will be an upgraded approach to business growth strategizing, with a focus on metropolitan based business owners weighing up a move to a fully supported regional area. Our aim is to support this with a Live, Work, Invest portal on Council's website. The NBN satellite tracking station is about to commence construction.

- **ICT creative Hub**

A further advantage will be gained from the creation of an Information, Communication and Technology business/creative hub within the shire. This measure, also identified in our Digital Economy Strategy and Community Strategic Planning documents, will provide incubator space for new and existing enterprises wishing to utilise the power of the shire's NBN connection.

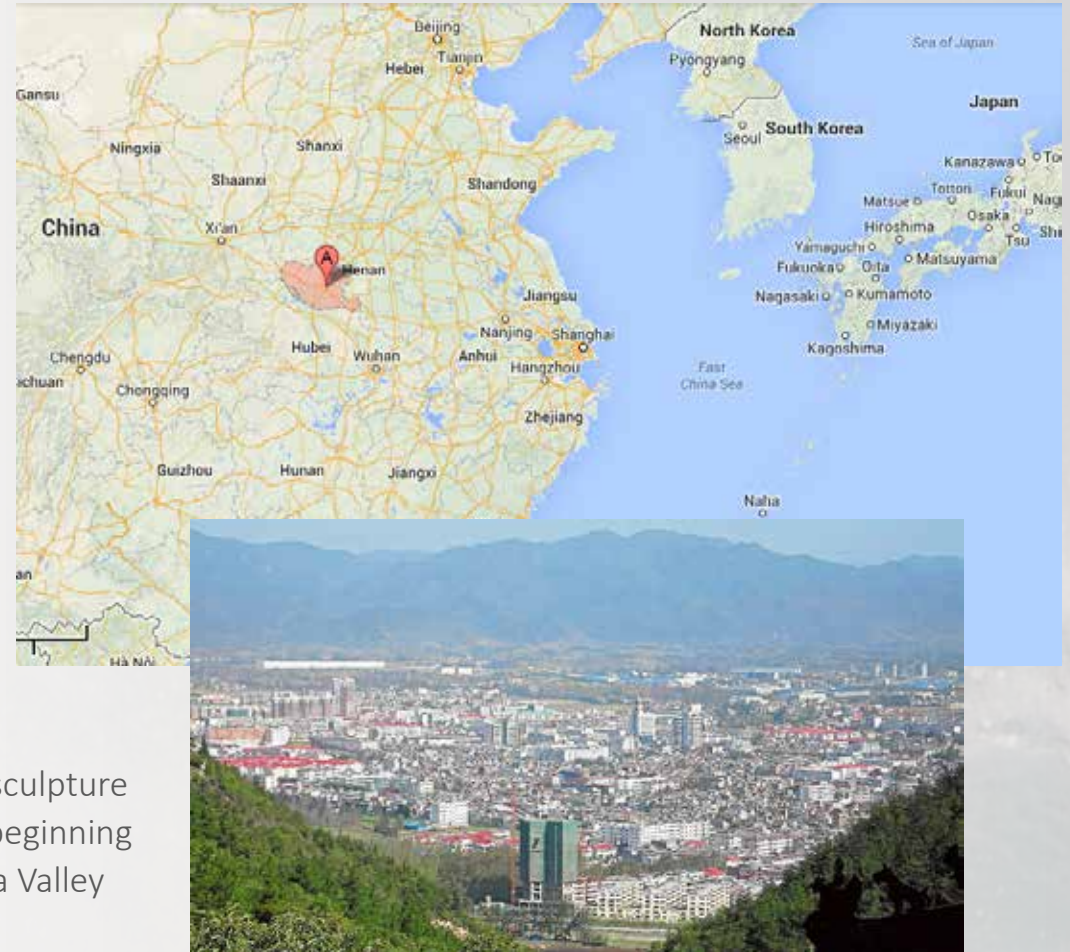
A building has been purchased for the purpose of becoming a community space and ICT hub, and facilities are planned to be up and running later this year.



## Delegation to Nanyang, Henan Province, China

The main thrust of a recent self-funded visit to Nanyang, in the Henan Province of China, was to alert the officials and business people to the strategic proximity of Bega Valley to Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne; the access via cruise ship and plane; the existence and prospects for growth in overseas students and youth exchanges into the shire; the opportunity to tap into the shire's dairy, fish and wine produce; and potential for Chinese investment in tourism accommodation and infrastructure, port infrastructure, and events.

Already prospects are emerging with bridal cruises, flower sculpture and lantern events planned for the near future. This is the beginning of a beneficial and long-term relationship between the Bega Valley Shire and China.





## Love our Lakes | Award winning environmental program

This unique and award winning\* program keeps our beautiful lakes clean and educates the community on the importance of catchment areas and water systems.

It works like this: we've successfully conducted an audit of local businesses whose activities may impact on nearby stormwater systems and estuarine lakes. Responsible businesses having no impact on the local water system are awarded a certificate and 'Love our Lakes' logo to proudly display in their premises. The lakes stay clean and the business owner gets a big thumbs up from the community.

We've also implemented an educational campaign involving strategically placed signage around our lakes telling the story of the water system's environmental, economic and cultural values. The educational campaign has also been taken to local schools, with the project officer having presented a tailored package to more than 1000 children as part of the NSW science curriculum.

No program of this nature would of course be complete without getting our hands dirty and cleaning the lakes up ourselves. So far we've successfully completed a marine debris clean-up of Twofold Bay, and Pambula and Merimbula Lakes in conjunction with SRCMA, Eden Lands Council and local oyster farmers. Six cubic metres of rubbish was collected along the Eden Coast alone.

**\*2012 NSW Coastal Conference Local Government Award for best practice in Coastal Management.**



*baskets of water filters floating on the lake*

Oysters gather their food by filtering large volumes of water. This filtering action cleans the water by removing fine particles, enhances water clarity and promotes seagrass, saltmarsh and mangrove health. Oysters are the 'canaries' of the lake – if oysters are healthy, it indicates the lake is healthy.

**learning first hand**

Local education programs aim to teach our children about growing oysters, the ecology of our coastal estuaries, and the importance of a sustainable oyster industry.

Grow your own oysters education program

**oyster life cycle**

fertilised egg → egg + sperm → free swimming larvae → 3 years to reach maturity → spat can attach to catching structure → spat can attach to rock or shell

Oyster cultivation is a safe and natural form of farming. In contrast to fish farming, oysters do not require artificial food, and instead feed on suspended particles in the water. Oyster growing relies on the natural environment to supply nutrients, food particles and sunlight to produce the optimum food mix for oysters.

Long-line cultivation systems are a relatively recent innovation and assist with protection of seagrass.

supported by:

- Catchment Management Authority
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- Merimbula Council
- Merimbula Oyster Farmers
- Merimbula Oyster Farmers

To report a spill call Bega Valley Shire Council (02) 6499 2222





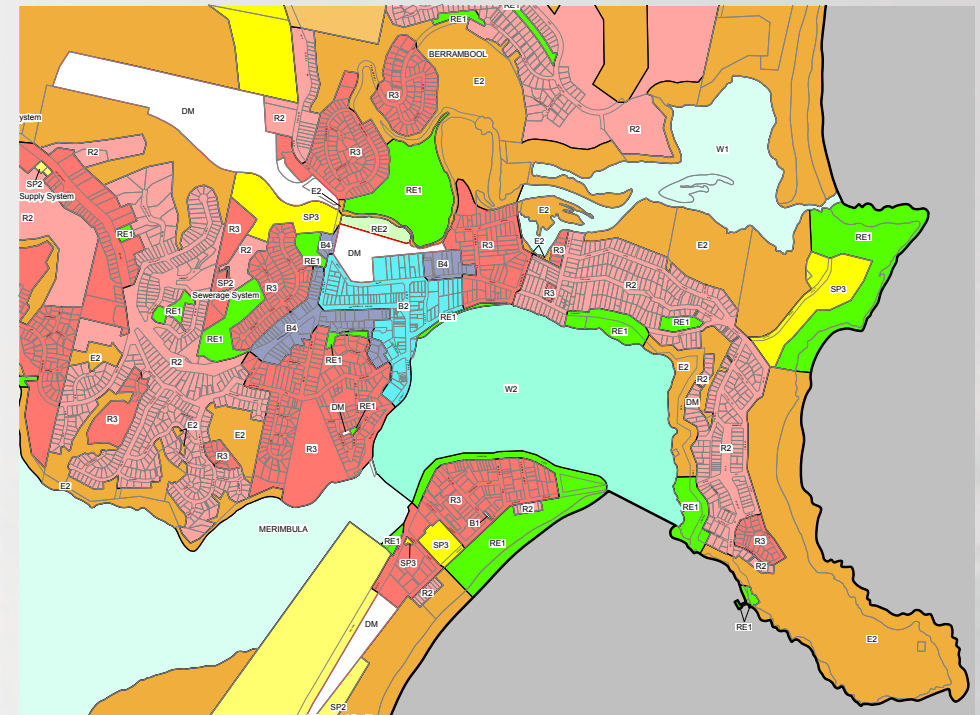
## Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan | Award Winning Coastal Management

Our Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (CLEP) and Love our Lakes program were officially recognised for innovative coastal management with a Local Government award for best practice at the 2012 NSW Coastal Conference.

We demonstrated that effective coastal zone land use planning can occur within the constraints of the Standard Template CLEP and that it is possible to achieve effective integration of NRM.

Our well-considered plan shows that private landowners' aspirations and enhanced coastal ecosystem protection can coexist.

We achieved this mainly through adopting a landscape approach; that is carefully considering coastal zoning in terms of predicted climate change impacts and sensitive areas whilst still providing for appropriate and compatible forms of development and economic activity to occur in our coastal zones.





## Koori Heritage Stories | Treasured Tales

This is a special book. It came about through Council's planning team conducting a study of local areas with Aboriginal cultural significance.

From our many discussions with local Aboriginal people it soon became evident that the stories being told of times gone by in the Bega Valley were themselves culturally significant. They needed protecting and preserving for future generations.

As a result, Council's Aboriginal Heritage committee worked collaboratively with more than 40 Koori elders to record and compile their stories.

The collection of stories were published in the Koori Heritage Stories book to assist in fostering a better understanding of how it feels to be a Koori person in the Bega Valley, both now and in the past.

The stories speak of Koori people identifying themselves as a distinctive cultural group; using kinship, knowledge of country, language and shared histories.





## Keeping Water Clean and the Grass Growing Green

Last year we added to our already impressive effluent reuse program with a further project completed for a local tourism facility.

Bega Valley Shire Council ranked first of sixteen coastal NSW water utilities for the highest percentage of recycled water use, and ranked third for achieving the least number of sewer main breaks and chokes per one hundred kilometres of mains.

This is noteworthy considering we have the highest number of sewerage treatment plants per head of population within coastal NSW.

Of the eight estuaries forming Australia's Oyster Coast, we have five, one of which is the home for Tathra Oysters which is Australia's most awarded food. With this in mind, and the overall importance of clean waters for tourism, recreation, visual amenity, aquatic ecosystems and the local seafood industry, we are dedicated to making every drop of water in our coastal areas as clean as possible.

Our latest program is an effluent reuse program serving a major tourist facility in Pambula. This will reduce pressure on the Merimbula sewerage treatment plant, which lies in close proximity to a sensitive coastal area. The latest program will reduce pressure on the Merimbula STP whilst investing in local tourism. A win win situation.

Our overall performance is achieved through working in partnership with authorities, local businesses and the community, whilst recognising the fundamentals of well-planned asset maintenance, renewals and operational programs. We also adhere to an organisational philosophy that supports continual improvement and cultivates employee responsibility and motivation.

To read more about our innovative sewerage treatment strategies visit council's website [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au) >An Accessible Place >Major Projects.





## Weed Tracer | Outsmarting Weeds with Technology

Last year we were among the first NSW councils to adopt this technology in the ongoing battle against noxious weeds.

Our Weed Management Team recognised that relying on verbal instructions and hand drawn maps to locate weed infestations was not effective. We investigated a range of solutions and found the technology behind Weed Tracer to be perfect for the job.

The program allows us to receive live GPS satellite imagery of an area we are inspecting and points us to the exact coordinates of a reported weed infestation.

Through adopting this technology we have doubled inspections from previous years, and we anticipate this to further increase as the technology become widely adopted by the community.

The flow on effect of this is more action taken by landowners, who are supplied with detailed maps and reports outlining the action that needs to be taken on their property.





## Transport Infrastructure | Taking you Places

- **Merimbula airport runway renewal:** Merimbula airport is a major gateway into the shire and we're just completing works to see the runway renewed to a higher standard. Works are funded by the airport runway special variation, so the community is reassured that their new runway is already paid for.

Completing these works will see Merimbula airport continuing as a critical transport gateway providing access to boost tourism, business, government and health related travel.



- **Bicycle strategy:** The humble bicycle has turned out to be a major element of our local tourism and transport focus. Rising fuel costs and environmental concerns has seen a rise in the number of bikes on the road, and an increased interest in healthy lifestyles and local bike related tourism has added to this further.

With this in mind we have developed our first Bicycle Strategy, which is in consultation phase, with aims to safely link areas within and between towns, and further boost the popularity of this efficient, healthy and cost effective mode of transport.

- **State, regional local and tourism signage:** We see tourism signage as far more than a simple arrow pointing you in the right direction. For us, it's also about telling stories and providing access to digital and interactive information via the web. We want visitors to the area to immerse themselves in the cultural, historical and environmental stories of what they see before them.

Our plan is to reduce the visual pollution from ad hoc signage and pull together a coordinated network of information as laid out in our 2010 signage plan.

We have commenced implementing the plan which is funded through a special variation for tourism infrastructure. The north to south coastal route will be renamed Australia's Coastal Wilderness Way and will link with interpretative signage telling the wonderful stories of the area.

We're presenting these as part of a complete touring product that encourages visitation to local attractions such as the Light to Light Walk, Australia's Coastal Wilderness Way, and the Bundian Way Indigenous route soon to be reopened as the world's oldest walking track.



## Community Infrastructure | Building Places for People

- **Improving our sporting infrastructure:** In the last community survey we saw greater satisfaction in our sports infrastructure. This is the result of us engaging the community in the allocation of funding raised through a sports and recreation special variation. It demonstrates a direct link between financial planning, consultation and satisfaction.
- **Littleton Gardens Bega:** Works have commenced on fulfilling the first stage of the Littleton Gardens Masterplan. The design aims to recapture the heart of this great regional town and resulted from extensive consultation with the local community, local Aboriginal groups, the chamber of commerce and local park users. We're on target for completion by August 2013. Funding was sourced from the sale of lands in Bega.
- **Bega Civic Centre:** Also located in Bega's heart, this facility will replace the old memorial town hall and provide a cultural and community hub for the region. A community consultation group was established to look at the options and a community backed final design was approved in 2013. A construction company has been appointed, and the development approval processes is underway.
- **Tura/Merimbula Community Space:** In June 2013 Council purchased the former Tura Beach Tavern site at auction for \$1.2 million, for community purposes. Our Long Term Financial Plan had already identified funding for the building of a community space in the area and we are very pleased with this acquisition for its price, purpose, and ideal location for the community. The next step is to ask the community what they think about our preferred options and work towards opening the doors to the public.
- **Central Waste Facility:** We've planned for this regional solution to responsible waste management for the past nine years. An enormous amount of research, consultation and studies were undertaken and construction is now underway. This facility plans for forecasted population growth and offers the best of both worlds for an ongoing regional service and environmental outcomes.





## Communications Strategy | People First

Our new Communications Strategy is about people. It's about getting people to understand and respond to information, rather than the ways we should be delivering it.

We took this approach because we see communication as personal before social, where social elements (sharing, conversation, opinion) happen as a consequence of an emotional response to information.

This means that as communicators wanting to do the best we can with the words we offer, we should really be looking to get our message 'in there', not 'out there'.

We started with a look at our communication efforts, and found some gaps:

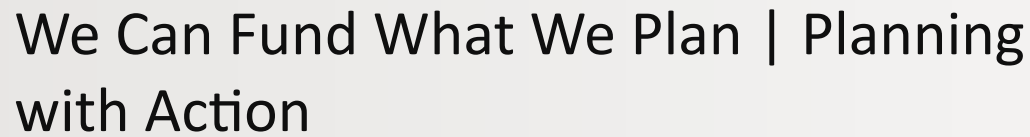
- Bloat – we produce too much heavy and inaccessible information.
- Disengagement – we fail to engage the community through traditional and social media.
- Language – we tend to talk like politicians, bureaucrats and engineers.
- Technology – we're failing to embrace interactive digital communications.
- Design – we have poorly designed documents. Words are irrelevant without smart design.

We took time to investigate different ways of addressing these common mistakes in communication and found that many of us talk more, write more, increase complexity and always spin the positive line when faced with a problem getting ourselves heard.

Further behavioural research uncovered two major findings which basically said that you cannot rely on information to change behaviour, and that people will only take ownership of new ideas if they are provided with an easily digested message that encourages an emotional response.

This was our springboard; the point of reference for every recommendation in the strategy and every word and image that we now produce. It's a stand out feature of our communications and we are confident that it will result in frank and open dialogue with the people of our community.





TCorp's latest financial sustainability report showed Bega Valley Shire Council ranked in the top 20 per cent of rural NSW Councils, and better still it forecasted that we will move into the top 6 per cent within three years.

**FSR**

- Strong** (Green)
- Sound** (Blue)
- Moderate** (Yellow)
- Weak** (Pink)
- Very Weak** (Red)



## Energy Efficiency | Getting More for Less

In December 2012 Council established the annual \$147,000 Resource and Efficiency Fund to identify attractive financial returns through consideration of energy efficiency.

In this first year we completed audits of six pools, our Bega offices and the shire's libraries.

The audits identified a large number of viable projects and formed part of an application to the second round of the Australian Governments Community Energy Efficiency Program (CEEP) for 'Energy Efficient Community Pools'.

We were successful in securing the full \$161,000 requested, and we have committed to co-investing a further \$80,000 to boost the energy efficiency of our Council-owned swimming pools.

As a result, the Energy Efficient Community Pools project will include new and upgraded solar heating for three pools in Pambula, Bega and Cobargo, new and upgraded pumping efficiency measures installed at all of the shire's pools, and a range of smaller retrofits to boost energy efficiency at all pools.

In addition we will develop Energy Efficient Management Guides for each pool to lock in best practice energy efficiency measures.

The majority of works will be completed in the 2013-14 financial year.





## Lobbying Governments | Getting Things Happening in the Shire

Bega Valley Shire Council actively lobbies both state and federal government on behalf of the community.

Two major projects currently under construction in the shire have resulted from Council's lobbying of governments.

We took a leadership role in calling for the construction of a regional hospital that will not only significantly boost local medical facilities, but also attract a wide range of professional and qualified people to live and work in the shire.

Leadership was also taken in lobbying for the soon-to-be-completed Bega Bypass, which will result in safer roads and improved traffic conditions for people in the Bega area.

We took an important community advocacy role when the state government expressed an intention to close Pambula District Hospital with the opening of the new Regional Hospital. Realising that no official question had been asked of the community in relation to the hospital's future, we included the following question on September's Council election papers:

"Do you support the retention of Pambula District Hospital funded at current total operational budget levels by NSW State Government for a period of 5 years, at approximately \$5 million pa, from the completion and official opening of the proposed new regional hospital at South Bega, so as to provide the essential services needed to supplement the new hospital during this period."

A strong response indicated an 82.54% support for the retention of Pambula District Hospital and its services, and we gladly passed this message on to the state government with a request to ensure Pambula hospital is funded at its current budget level. The state government has since declared it will keep the hospital open for at least five years.



## Successful Special Variation Proposal | Getting the Balance Right

We were one of a number of NSW Councils given full IPART approval to increase our rate base this year; the process of how we got there, however, is what sets us apart.

We needed \$1.3 million per annum for renewing vital infrastructure. Not an onerous request when compared with other Council's requests, but still we were mindful of presenting everything we do in an open and easy-to-understand package.

In November 2012, we set about asking people how satisfied they were with our level of service. We also looked in to community sentiment regarding our proposed special rates variation.

1000 residents were randomly recruited by an independent consultation firm (IRIS) to participate in a deliberative survey regarding their level of satisfaction with our services. Of these, 407 were recruited to participate in a further survey specifically involving our proposed rates increase.

An information package was sent to every resident taking part in the survey explaining in clear language our proposal to increase the rate base. The secondary survey was only administered to those rate payers who confirmed they had received and read the package in order to make an informed choice.

Public and stakeholder meetings were held in four shire towns to enable staff and Councillors to get a face-to-face understanding of community sentiment. The meetings were also an opportunity to show those in attendance exactly how much a rates increase will cost, and for what reasons we were applying. Laptop computers were on hand at all meetings along with trained Council staff to talk people through a rates calculator showing the exact cost of an increase based on an individual's property.

Further consultation took place on Council's online discussion forum, Bega Valley Views, which included polls, calculators and links to documents as well as specific discussion forums about the proposal. Additional discussion took place on Council's Facebook page, and a regular flow of media was generated through press releases.



## Customer Service | Focussing on the ‘Us’ in Customer Service

Council acknowledged that the Customer Request Management System was ageing and in need of replacement.

We identified a benchmark of 80 per cent for customer first call resolution, which at the time stood at 37 per cent. We are proud to state that we have now reached the benchmark, and the program that got us there is currently a finalist in the Government Contact Centre Summit Awards.

The new system allows for one set of corporate workflows, making it possible to nominate responsible officers and track the progress of allocated tasks, thus effectively improving control and performance when it comes to service delivery.







## Workforce Plan

The Bega Valley Shire has an ageing population, and the workforce of Council is no different. Results from a Retirement Intentions Survey this year showed that 25% of Council staff are likely to retire within five years.

We've responded to this by putting in place a program of offering traineeships and cadetships both internally and externally, by skilling up the younger workers who are yet to join us and developing the skills of those who are already working for Council.

With our existing worker traineeships we have a policy of 2 for 1, ensuring that as a person leaves we replace with two existing worker training programs. This allows us to expand the capacity of existing workers and our workforce in general, whilst enabling career diversity for individuals.

Our aim is also to attract and retain new workers whose training will see them perfectly tailored to the job at hand. Eleven young trainees and cadets have joined our ranks in the past 12 months, working in areas including customer service, community services and the Rangers department.

We're promoting traineeships and cadetships through local schools, including Workplace Diversity Traineeships that result in a workforce reflective of shire demographics. This program targets minority groups such young people with disabilities, and three young people with disabilities have joined the organisation through this program since the end of 2012. Currently three per cent of people living in the shire have a disability, and we are looking to reflect this statistic in our workforce. We are proud to say that we are well on our way, and our workforce and standard of service are the better for it.

Council is also seeking to ensure there is a gender balance wherever possible and we actively encourage women to apply for existing or traineeship positions in all areas of employment. We also offer traineeships and cadetships specifically for Indigenous people.

A young girl with brown hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and a bright yellow life vest, is sitting in a yellow inflatable boat. She is looking out towards the horizon where a whale is breaching the water. The whale's head and back are visible above the surface, creating a splash. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is a pale, hazy blue. The title 'Financial Snapshot' is written in a large, black, cursive font over the right side of the image.

# Financial Snapshot

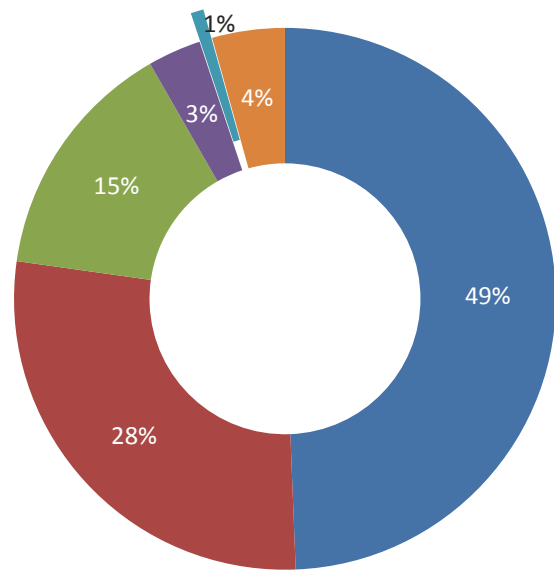
Council is committed to continually seeking ways to deliver our service with greater efficiency.

In the last three years we have saved more than \$2 million in the following areas:

- \$440,000 saved through reducing contracting our work to external sources
- \$180,000 saved through boosting our skills base and conducting in-house research
- \$120,000 saved on our legal fees
- \$600,000 saved through improving employment practices and staff productivity
- \$750,000 saved through investing in a safer and healthier workplace
- \$200,000 saved through using efficient technologies
- \$40,000 saved through working towards a paperless workplace.

The following graphs summarise our income and expenditure. For our detailed audited financial report for 2012-13, please refer to attachment 2.

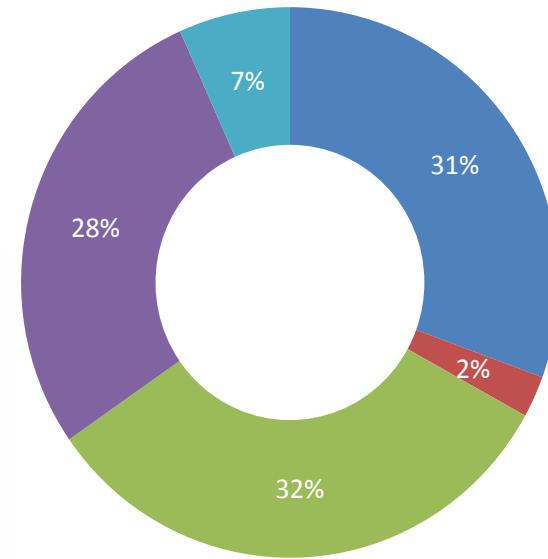
## Source of Funds 2012-13



- Rates & Annual Charges
- Operating Grants & Contributions
- User Charges
- Investment Returns
- Sale of Assets & Other
- Capital Grants

Type of Fund	Amount
Rates & Annual Charges	\$41,281,000
Operating Grants & Contributions	\$23,289,000
User Charges	\$12,111,000
Investment Returns	\$2,665,000
Sale of Assets & Other	\$644,000
Capital Grants	\$3,627,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$83.617,000</b>

## Expenditure of Funds 2012-13

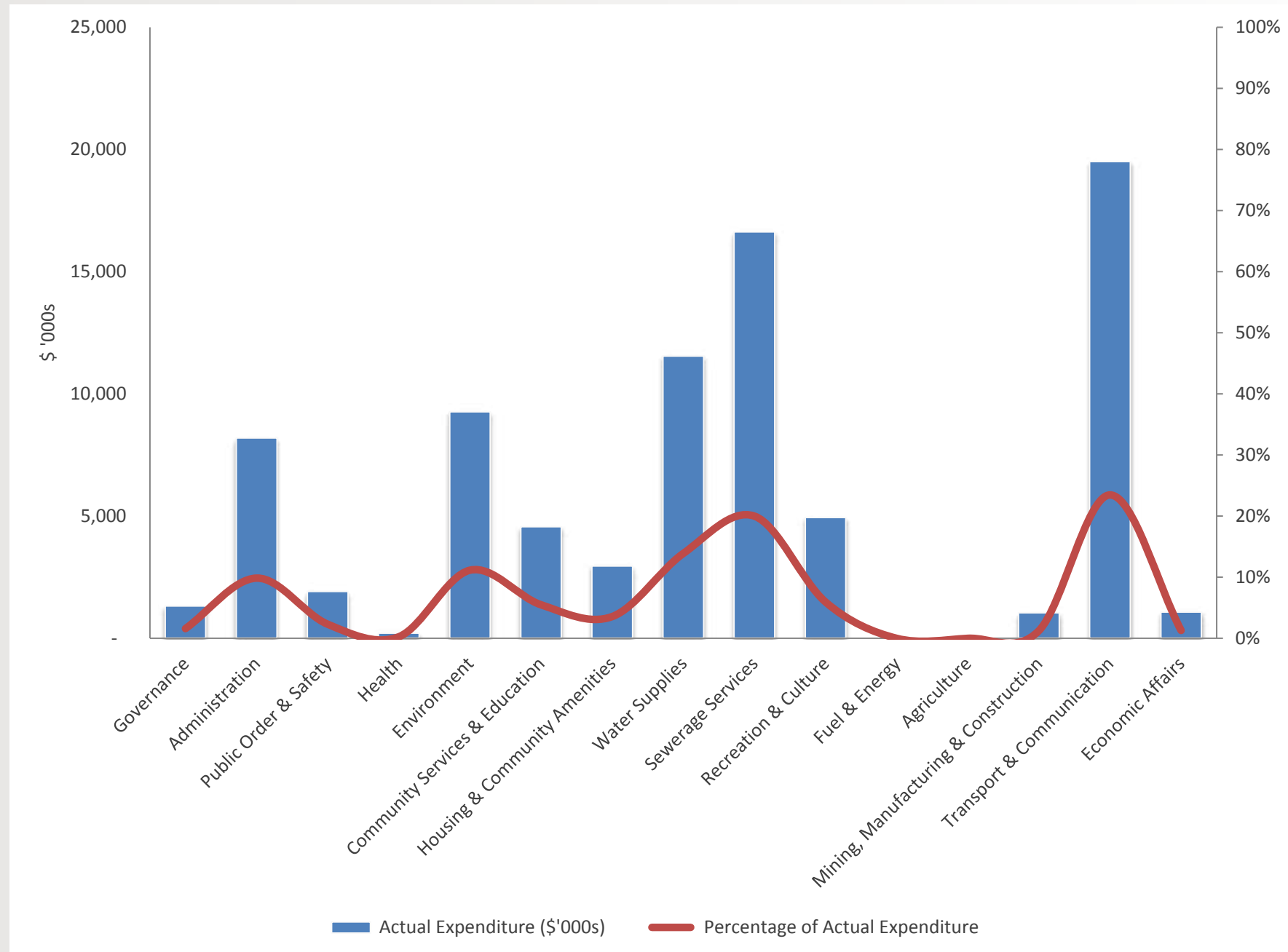


- Employment Costs
- Borrowing Costs
- Materials & Contracts
- Depreciation
- Other Expenses

Expenditure Type	Amount
Employment Costs	\$25,426,000
Borrowing Costs	\$2,034,000
Materials & Contracts	\$26,842,000
Depreciation	\$23,237,000
Other Expenses	\$5,567,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$83,106,000</b>



## 2012/13 Operating Expenditure by Function (\$'000)



## Definition of our Function areas

- **Governance:** Elected Officials; Governance and Executive.
- **Administration:** Communication; Community and Relationship Administration; Contact Centre; Financial Management; General Purpose; Human Resources and Risk Management; Information Communication and Technology; Information Management; Integrated Planning and Reporting; Organisation Support; Procurement.
- **Public Order and Safety:** Beach; Emergency Services; Fire Services; Regulatory.
- **Health:** Health.
- **Environment:** Environment; Stormwater; Street Services; Waste; Weeds.
- **Community Services and Education:** Ageing and Disability; Bandara Childcare; Brighter Futures; Community Options; Community Services; Compacts; Eden Childcare; Eden Preschool; Emergency Response [Community Service]; Healthy Communities Sapphire Mobile Preschool; Volunteer.
- **Housing and Community Amenities:** Cemeteries; Planning and Environment Group Administration; Planning; Public Amenities.
- **Water Supplies:** Water.
- **Sewerage Services:** Sewer.
- **Recreation and Culture:** Gallery; Halls; Library; Parks; Pools; Sports.
- **Fuel & Energy:** Fuel; Energy.
- **Agriculture:** Agriculture.
- **Mining, Manufacturing and Construction:** Building Regulation; Quarry.
- **Transport and Communication:** Airport; Bridges; Bus Shelters; Carparks; Council Buildings; Cycleways; Flood; Infrastructure, Water and Waste Administration; Jetties; Plant; Regional Roads; Rural Roads; Street Services; Urban Roads.
- **Economic Affairs:** Business Growth; Land Development; Private Works; Saleyard.

# Statutory Information

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## Special Rate Variation (SRV)

Special Variation to Rates income approvals:

### 2007/2008

The 2007/08 operational plan implemented a special variation approved by the Minister for Local Government of 9.76%, raising an additional \$720,572. These funds were targeted at infrastructure, continuing services in branch libraries, the regional gallery, tourism visitor information centres and the weeds program. This variation was approved on an ongoing basis.

	Program Budget amount offsets 2007/08	Total Expenditure 2008/09	Total Expenditure 2009/10	Total Expenditure 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12	Total expenditure 2012/13
Branch libraries	\$150,000	\$154,800	\$157,300	\$164,384	\$168,986	\$175,408
Regional Gallery	\$100,000	\$103,200	\$134,100	\$109,589	\$104,157	\$116,939
Tourism (incl VICs year 1 then tourism infrastructure)	\$150,000	\$154,800	\$126,980	\$0	\$65,715	\$11,522
Weeds management	\$320,572	\$321,597	\$490,070	\$351,312	361,149	\$374,872
Total	\$720,572	\$734,397	\$908,450	\$625,285	\$700,007	\$678,740

### 2008/09

The 2008/09 operational plan implemented a special variation approved by the Minister for Local Government of 9.33% inclusive of the rate pegging amount, raising an additional \$887,720. These funds were directed at infrastructure rehabilitation and provision of ocean lifeguards over the busy summer holiday season at beaches not serviced by a Surf Lifesaving Club, but still popular with visitors. This variation was approved on an ongoing basis.

	Program Budget amount offsets in 2007/08	Total Expenditure 2008/09	Total Expenditure 2009/10	Total Expenditure 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12	Total expenditure 2012/13
Rural sealed road rehab program	\$218,000	\$219,623	\$295,370	\$231,496	\$237,978	\$247,021
Armco culvert rehabilitation	\$100,000	Included below	Included above	\$106,191	\$109,164	\$113,313
Bridge rehabilitation	\$100,000	\$206,232	\$205,750	\$106,191	\$109,164	\$113,313
Footpath trip hazards	\$7,000	\$7,448	\$35,000	\$7,433	\$7,641	\$7,932
Recreation buildings and pools	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$94,300	\$74,334	\$76,415	\$79,319
Ocean lifeguards	\$150,000	\$132,056	\$147,565	\$159,287	\$156,450	\$161,716
Urban street construction	\$200,000	\$183,784	\$234,795	\$212,382	\$218,329	\$226,625
Kerb & guttering	\$61,620	\$61,620	\$104,400	\$45,365	\$46,635	\$48,407
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$906,620</b>	<b>\$880,763</b>	<b>\$1,117,180</b>	<b>\$942,679</b>	<b>\$961,777</b>	<b>\$997,645</b>

## 2009/10

The Minister for Local Government approved a special variation of 3.01% above rate pegging for a total rate increase of 6.51%. The special variation to rates was approved for five years and to be spent on sports and recreation infrastructure and improving accessibility of these facilities.

The total amount of the increase above rate pegging raised \$450,000 in the first year. A General sports and Recreation Committee has been established as a committee of Council. This group worked with Council to identify priority projects for this fund and has been focussed on using the Council contribution to leverage additional funds through grants, sponsorship and volunteer endeavour.

	Total Expenditure 2009/10	Total Expenditure 2010/11	Total Expenditure 2011/12	Total Expenditure 2012/13
Sportsground Management	\$0	\$747,978	\$474,627	\$130,407

## 2010/11

In 2010/11 Council was granted a Special Rate Variation of 6.35% by the Minister for Local Government, this represented a 2.95% increase above the 2009/10 general rate yield. The increase was approved for the 2010/11 financial year only. The impact of the proposed variation on residential ratepayers is significantly reduced due to the concluding of a rate increase of \$553,000 granted for 10 years in 2000. Of the \$583,000 raised by the rate variation, \$250,000 was raised from the business sector for tourism marketing and \$333,000 was raised from all rateable properties and provided funds toward the redevelopment of Merimbula's antiquated jetty.

	Total Expenditure in 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12	Total expenditure 2012/13
Tourism Development	\$250,000	\$0	-
Merimbula Jetty	\$333,000	\$0	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$583,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-</b>

## 2011/12

In 2011/12, a special variation was approved by IPART under the new assessment process. It continued the 2010/11 approval for tourism and the resurfacing of the existing tarmac at the Merimbula airport. The approval is for 20 years.

The amount of variation also includes an amount of 0.14% for a 'Crown Land Adjustment' which the Council is able to apply for under the Local Government Act 1993 and which the Division of Local Government recommended be included in the Council's special variation approval.

	Total Expenditure 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12	Total expenditure 2012/13	Total expenditure 2010/11	Total expenditure 2011/12	Total expenditure 2012/13
Merimbula Airport	\$584,148	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$344,616
Tourism development and promotion (SCT Ltd)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$259,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$834,148</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$604,116</b>



# Environmental Levy Achievements

Expenditure exceeded the income for the Environmental Levy in 2012/13. This additional expenditure was derived from carried forward funds from previous years. A total of \$107,821.20 will be carried forward to the 2013-14 year from the reporting year.

Specific projects in environmental management, coastal management, weed and vegetation management, and erosion and sediment control will remain a focus with funds used wherever possible to leverage government grants. In addition the Community Environmental Grants program, which was well subscribed in 2012/13, is expected to continue to grow and will be an area where the community can undertake environmental management works on public land into the future.

## Weed and Vegetation Management

The Weed Management Levy was approved with the Special Variation to rates in 2007/08. The levy was approved to supply funding to help support the agricultural industry in regard weed management initiatives. Actual income and expenditure for this Levy are listed below:

- Actual Income 2012/13                      \$375,000
- Actual Expenditure 2012/13                \$375,000

All funds were expended directly on works and management activities directed at controlling noxious and environmental weeds and vegetation management.

## Catchment Biodiversity and Sustainability

The Environmental Levy has been in place since 2003 with permanent approval from the Minister for Local Government issued in 2006. At the time Council was one of the few Council's in NSW that had a permanent Environmental Levy in place to ensure that environmental management initiatives were adequately funded.

The following amounts show actual income and expenditure for the reporting period:

- Actual net income 2012/13                \$355,396
- Actual expenditure 2012/13                \$412,087

Details of the major expenditure items are provided below.

### Community Environmental Works

\$32,000 was expended on the Community Environmental Grants program. This program delivered works across the shire by community groups on works such as community education, weed control and revegetation.

### Urban Stormwater management works

\$60,000 was expended undertaking maintenance of urban stormwater infrastructure.

### Vegetation Management

\$75,000 was expended on vegetation and weed management activities. Of this \$40,000 was expended on roadside noxious weed spraying, \$10,000 being spent on noxious and environmental weed control and vegetation management in partnership with SRCMA funds at Towamba Valley and, \$25,000 being spent in partnership with the SRCMA on managing coastal weeds along the entire Shire coastline.

### Corporate sustainability improvements

\$41,000 was expended on corporate sustainability improvements including, energy efficiency works on Council buildings, policy development, and energy consumption review and reporting. In addition carbon emission reporting and data acquisition for future State of Environment reports costs were incurred.

### Natural asset / Bushland management

\$45,000 was spent on natural assets / bushland planning and management.

### Staff Education

\$10,000 was expended on staff education programs including training in threatened vegetation species assessment and endangered ecological communities assessment as well as environmental impact assessment processes for council works particularly asset renewal and major maintenance works.

### Coastal and Estuary planning and management

\$100,000 was expended as matching funds with NSW government grants in estuary and coastal management studies at Wapengo Pambula and across the Shire in regard entrance management planning and as well as preliminary work in coastal hazard identification.

### River and catchment monitoring

\$16,000 was spent on water quality analysis and studies of coastal lakes and catchments in the Brogo and Murrah Rivers.

### Reserve rehabilitation works

\$33,000 was expended on the rehabilitation and revegetation of the Bega River Reserve at Auckland Street Bega. This project was a joint project with NSW Lands and the SRCMA that was highly successful and has seen great improvement and use of the Reserve.

## Rates Written Off

Rates and Charges totalling \$57,436.72 were written off for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 and these are detailed as follows:

	1 July 12 to 30 June 13	1 July 11 to 30 June 12
General Rates (*Postponed and VCA)	*56,157.93	154,110.61
Water Access Charges	-	57,760.70
Sewerage Availability Charge	-	79,021.00
Interest (*small debt write off)	*1,278.79	33,326.31
Waste Charges	-	94,232.73
Base Waste Management Charge	N/A	8,249.65
Stormwater Charges	-	183.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,436.72</b>	<b>426,884.19</b>

All of these rates and charges were written off as a result of adjustments in conservation agreements; postponed rates adjustments; re-classification of non-rateable properties to rateable; or re-classification of rateable properties to non-rateable.



## Condition of Public Works

An independent 'Asset Sustainability Review' was completed by consultants GHD in 2010. That review identified an asset back log of 1% for general fund assets and 4% for water and sewer assets, signalling over \$20m was required to restore critical assets.

The financial notes (note 13) indicate assets were renewed in 2010/11 at 85% of the depreciation rate, and this may accelerate the deterioration of assets without injection of capital to renew assets as recommended by GHD. Refer to [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

### Public buildings

- **Council Offices (Bega, Bermagui, Eden and Merimbula)**

Offices and Bega, Bermagui and Eden are in satisfactory condition. The planned refurbishment at the Merimbula office was put aside in the 2011-12 period given the continued consideration of other options for total redevelopment of the site. The building remains in fair condition and is no longer being maintained. Council entered into a lease to move the Merimbula Library to a Market Street property in Merimbula. At the end of the 2012-13 period Council purchased the Tura facility which will house the library. The current Merimbula site has been vacated since 2011- 12, and Council will consider options to sell, lease or redevelop the old site.

- **Council halls**

All Council's halls are managed by volunteer committees, with volunteer community members providing an emphasis on operational maintenance and hall management to ensure community activities are catered for. Funding for halls for the year 2012/13 was a total of \$126,000 with most halls committees directing works to kitchen refurbishment and structural repairs.

- **Swimming pool facilities**

Council's has six pool facilities at Bega, Bemboka, Candelo, Cobargo, Eden and the Sapphire Aquatic Centre in Pambula and one ocean pool at Bermagui. Each of the facilities are in a reasonable condition, however only one is operational year round. The Sapphire Aquatic Centre was officially opened in December 2010. The financial support to the facility and to the operational entity was increased beyond the original estimates on several occasions over the year, to over \$933,000.

### Public roads

Council maintains a total length of 1,424 kms of public road throughout the Shire, which is made up of local roads: 494 kms sealed; 676 kms unsealed and Regional roads: 228 kms sealed; 26 kms unsealed.

Some of the unsealed local and regional roads carry significant traffic and there is considerable community pressure to seal these unsealed rural arterial roads. Council has resolved to only seal the Unsealed Urban Streets (19km) and Unsealed Rural Collector Roads (65km).

This will still require an estimated \$26 million.

In 2012/13 Council spent \$5.25m on road maintenance works and \$4.7m on capital and rehabilitation works.

There are a total of 255 bridges on Council's road network, of these 62 are timber and 163 are concrete/steel. There are also approximately 2,400 other miscellaneous drainage structures on the network comprising culverts and causeways.

In 2012/13 Council spent \$0.46m on bridge maintenance and \$1.2m on bridge capital and rehabilitation.

Since increasing rates by the special levies in recent years the 'gap' between actual and required maintenance has improved.

### Stormwater Management (drainage)

Council has an 109km stormwater drainage network in the urban areas for which it is responsible.

In 2012/13 Council spent \$240,000 maintaining the drainage systems, a further \$279,000 on capital works and \$60,000 on urban water levy funded works.

### Water Supply

1. Water supply assets were in a satisfactory condition.
2. Total operating, maintenance and administration (OMA) expenses were \$7,456,000.
3. Direct operations and maintenance expenses were \$4,067,000.
4. Total depreciation of system assets, plant and equipment was \$4,036,000.

5. A total of \$1,989,000 was expended on capital works, capital equipment and asset refurbishment this year. This includes Federal and NSW State Government subsidised capital works.
6. The following operations, maintenance, repair and management activities were undertaken for the year:
  - a. Reticulation system work including water main flushing, house service repairs, water main repairs and reservoir cleaning.
  - b. Trunk main maintenance work including flushing, air valve repairs and access track clearing.
  - c. Electrical and mechanical maintenance work on pump stations including valve maintenance, switchboard repairs and servicing of pumps.
  - d. Dam safety surveillance and studies.
  - e. Water quality monitoring and water resources management activities.
  - f. Water meter reading and data maintenance activities.

#### Sewerage Services

1. Sewerage system assets were in a satisfactory condition.
2. Total operating, maintenance and administration (OMA) expenses were \$8,597,000.
3. Direct operations and maintenance expenses were \$5,041,000.
4. Total depreciation of system assets, plant and equipment was \$6,515,000.
5. A total of \$1,161,000 was spent on capital works, capital equipment and asset refurbishment.
6. The following operations, maintenance, repair and management activities were undertaken for the year:
  - a. Reticulation system operation and maintenance including CCTV inspections, flushing and jetting.
  - b. Electrical and mechanical work including switchboard maintenance, valve maintenance and pump servicing.
  - c. Electrical and mechanical contract maintenance of sewage treatment works associated with the Bega Valley Sewerage Program.
  - d. Effluent quality monitoring and management activities associated with reuse systems.
  - e. Sewage treatment plant operation and maintenance.



## Summary of Assets

Asset	Current Cost	Written Down Current Cost	Nominal life	Estimate (current values) of amount required to bring works to satisfactory standard	Estimate (current values) to maintain works at satisfactory standard	Maintenance Program for Past Year
<b>Land</b>						
Operational Land	28,808,000	28,808,000				
Community Land	66,563,000	66,563,000				
<b>Land improvements</b>						
Rubbish Tips	4,781,000	4,581,000	20			
Quarry	72,000	69,000	20			
Parks and Gardens	13,963,000	9,123,000	20			
<b>Buildings</b>						
Council Offices	10,283,000	7,703,000	50-100	3,410,000	225,000	59,000
Other (Depots)	3,316,000	2,637,000	50-100	2,195,000	110,000	38,000
Council Halls	21,089,000	16,611,000	50-100	2,090,000	140,000	126,000
Miscellaneous Buildings	10,617,000	9,137,000	50-100	1,965,000	135,000	63,000
Amenities/Toilets	3,990,000	3,385,000	50-100	670,000	720,000	116,000
Sports Complexes	18,140,000	16,164,000	50-100	1,205,000	185,000	224,000
<b>Roads bridges &amp; footpaths</b>						
Roads	372,222,000	243,847,000	30-100	30,900,000	4,000,000	5,083,000
Bridges	166,723,000	106,991,000	80	3,300,000	600,000	463,000
Footpaths/Kerb & Gutter	65,408,000	41,521,000	50	1,855,000	150,000	167,000
Car Parks/Ancillary	16,270,000	6,914,000	50	620,000	100,000	34,000
Airport	2,927,000	1,223,000	50	-	-	-
Boat Ramps/Jetties	2,373,000	1,975,000	50	1,400,000	100,000	45,000
<b>Stormwater Drainage</b>	33,411,000	24,089,000	100			
<b>Water Supply Network</b>	288,695,000	184,180,000	20-100	4,990,000	1,754,000	1,955,000
<b>Sewerage Network</b>	275,574,000	178,100,000	20-100	10,660,000	2,563,000	881,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,405,225,000</b>	<b>953,621,000</b>		<b>65,260,000</b>	<b>10,782,000</b>	<b>9,254,000</b>

## Legal Proceedings

Set out below is a summary of amounts incurred by Council in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council in the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

Subject	Particulars of proceedings	Result	Cost to Council
Debt recovery **	Recovery of rates and charges	Ongoing	339,000
Planning	Planning matters	Ongoing	26,000
Other			245,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$610,000</b>

\*\* Note: Expenses recouped through the rate recovery process

## Councillors Expenditure

### Fees payable to Councillors

The Mayoral allowance for the financial year of 2012-13 was \$37,230. The allowance for the eight Councillors was a total of \$179,337 which includes vehicle and IT allowance. A total of \$216, 567 was paid to the Mayor and eight Councillors over the 2012-13 reporting period.

A further \$176,557 was expended on the provision of Councillor expenses comprising the following:

Childcare Reimbursement	\$763
Training- CPD Induction and Development	\$4,071
Training- Delegates Expenses	\$25,101
Travelling- Food and Catering Expenses	\$14,515
IT Facilities	\$23,885
Publication and Subscriptions	\$82,766

Telephone and Communication	\$11,404
Mayor Vehicle Expenses	\$12,852
Conference and Seminars	\$1,200
Interstate visits by Councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket expenses - representation at the Sea Change Coastal Conference- Adelaide	\$866
Overseas visits by Councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket expenses - delegates to City Nanyan, China, covered all own travel, accommodation out of pocket expenses	Nil
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor	Nil

### Policy

Council has adopted a policy on Behaviour of Councillors and Staff with a procedure for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors. This policy and procedure can be viewed at any of Council's offices or on Council's web site [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au) The policy outlines the services and facilities provided to Councillors, the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor to enable them to carry out the duties and functions of their civic office.

## Senior Staff Payments

Council has four senior staff designated and employed on four and five year performance contracts in accordance with Section 338 of the Local Government Act 1993. The designated positions are set out below together with the value of salary packages (inclusive of superannuation, motor vehicle, salary and other benefits) paid during the period 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

	2011/2012 \$'000	2012/2013 \$'000	2012/2013 additional contribution to defined benefits scheme
General Manager	230	240	-
Group Manager Infrastructure, Waste and Water	196	200	-
Group Manager Planning and Environment	196	200	\$10.2k
Group Manager Community and Relationships	183	184	-
Total	\$805	\$827	\$10.2k



# Contracts

In accordance with the Regulation – cl 217 (1)(a2), the following is a list of contracts awarded during 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013 (whether as a result of tender or otherwise) other than employment contracts and contracts less than \$150,000.

Tender No.	Name of contractor	Particulars of the subject of the contract	Estimated amount of the contract
N/A	Sapphire Aquatic Centre Limited ACN 145 061 249	Provision of management and maintenance services for the operation of the Sapphire Aquatic Centre	\$264,000 inc GST
09/10	Harris Aquatics Pty Ltd ACN 074 936 780	Provision of services for the operation of the Bega swimming pool	\$133,352.26 Inc GST
09/10	Bemboka Aquatics Pty Ltd- ACN 079 559 578	Provision of services for the operation of the Bemboka swimming pool	\$143,560 inc GST
09/10	Evaleigh Pty Ltd ACN 079 400 561	Provision of services for the operation of the Candelo swimming pool	\$128,920 inc GST
09/10	Swansali Pty Ltd ACN 075 034 212	Provision of services for the operation of the Cobargo swimming pool	\$139,554 inc GST
09/10	JP Aquatics Pty Ltd ACN 074 412 945	Provision of services for the operation of the Eden swimming pool	\$152,896 inc GST
N/A	Tenix Pty Ltd ABN: 64 000 305 304	Operations & Maintenance of Council's ten (10) Sewerage Treatment Plants.  O&M contract Includes provision of STP staff, mechanical and electrical maintenance, and provision of power, chemicals, and associated technical and reporting deliverables, as described within the BVSP Deed of Agreement.	\$3,511,526 inc GST

Tender No.	Name of contractor	Particulars of the subject of the contract	Estimated amount of the contract
3/11	ANZ Banking Group	Provision of banking services	\$500,000 approx.
N/A	NSW Public Works	Concept development, detail design and technical specification documentation for the provision of chlorination facilities and associated works at the Eden Sewage Treatment Plant	\$149,000 ex GST
N/A	NSW Public Works	Concept development, detail design and technical specification documentation for the provision of chlorination facilities and associated works at the Tura Beach Sewage Treatment Plant	\$175,800 ex GST
8/12	Transpacific Cleanaway Pty Ltd	Waste Transfer Services	\$868,415 (ex GST)
26/12	Moodie Outdoor Products Pty Ltd	Supply and install prefab Autoloo	\$182,600 (inc GST)
1/12	Omegalec Pty Ltd	Merimbula Sewerage Pumping Station	\$231,239.00 (inc GST)
38/12	CJD Equipment Pty Ltd	Supply and delivery of Volvo EC240L Excavator	\$224,400 (inc GST)
41/12	Downer EDI Australia Pty Ltd	Bitumen sealing	\$795,346.97 (inc GST)
39/12	Guideline South Coast Pty Ltd	Periodic supply and delivery of natural gravel	As per schedule of rates
51/12	RD Miller Pty Ltd	Water mains renewal works	\$988,390.91 (ex GST)
52/12	Beno Excavations Pty Ltd t/a Benex Pipelines	Sewer mains pipe bursting program	\$489,057.82 (ex GST)
53/12	Relining Solutions Pty Ltd	Sewer mains relining works	\$410,054 (ex GST)
57/12	Hewatt Earthworks	Merimbula airport runway resurfacing	\$6,360,924.17 (inc GST)
7/13	RD Miller Pty Ltd	CWF Wanatta Lane Civil Works Package	\$1,678,050 (ex GST)

## Subsidised Works on Private Property

Council carried out no subsidised works on private properties during the 2012/13 financial year.

## Community Grants

Contributions by way of grants under Section 356 of the Local Government Act for this period were \$202,000.

## External Bodies, Companies and Partnerships

### Functions delegated to other organisations

- **Body:** Hall and building committees; S355 general halls and buildings Committee and 17 individual community hall committees.  
**Function:** Councils peak advisory body on issues related to the management of community halls and buildings. This committee is made up of representatives from each of the individual hall committees and forms the conduit between each individual committee and Council.

The various individual hall and building committees have management responsibility delegated to them from Council, including arranging bookings and carrying out maintenance and improvements.

Committees also provide information relevant to the development of plans of management for each specific facility.

- **Body:** Cemetery committee and S355 general cemeteries committee and five individual community cemetery committees.  
**Function:** Council's peak advisory body on issues related to the management of cemeteries. This committee is made up of representatives from each of the individual cemetery committees and forms the conduit between each individual committee and Council.

The individual community committees provide care and maintenance of the Shires cemeteries. The role of each committee is to



provide a dignified final resting place for members of our community who have passed on. The number of individual committees has reduced over the last few years.

Committees also provide information relevant to the development of plans of management for each specific facility.

- **Body:** Sportsgrounds and Reserve Committees – all S355 committees.

**Functions:** To oversee the care and use of Councils sporting and recreational facilities.

Committees also provide information relevant to the development of plans of management for each specific facility.

- **Body:** Access Advisory Committee.

**Functions:** Recommends access, design and modification to council's assets and private developments.

- **Body:** Cultural Planning Committee.

**Functions:** Advisory for the development and implementation of Council's Cultural Action Plan under the community strategic plan.

- **Body:** Bega Valley Bush Fire Management (by service agreement – RFS).

**Functions:** Bush fire management.

- **Body:** Bega Valley Shire Medallion.

**Functions:** Considers nominations for community service awards.

- **Body:** Bega Valley Shire Youth Council.

**Functions:** Provides a youth perspective on Council decisions.

- **Body:** Road Safety Group.

**Functions:** Representative group providing advice on road safety.

- **Body:** General Sports and Recreation Committee

**Functions:** Assess and recommend applications for funding for improvements to sport, recreation facilities and access.

### Companies controlled by Council

There are no companies controlled by Bega Valley Shire Council.

### Partnerships with other organisations

#### **Southern Phone Company**

Bega Valley Shire Council is a shareholder as one of 42 local councils in the independent telecommunications company limited by guarantee, and annually receives a dividend as share of profits based on the number of Southern Phone Company clients resident in Bega Valley. The dividend for the 2012-13 financial year was \$188,456.

#### **Tenix Alliance**

Council entered into an alliance contract with Tenix in the 2003/4 financial year for construction and operation of sewage treatment plants. This contract is now in its operational phase.

Under the alliance, Tenix also became responsible for the operation of the Shire's ten sewage treatment plants. Annual operational contract payments of \$3,511,526 were made to Tenix this year.

#### **Sapphire Coast Tourism Ltd (SCT)**

Council provides support to Sapphire Coast Tourism for the promotion of tourism development and marketing in the Bega Valley. Raising the profile of our region as a tourist destination is a benefit to local businesses in the region. In addition to financial commitments provided through the 2011-12 special variation of \$259,500, Council has also provided support to the 2013 EAT Merimbula festival which showcased local producers, and to the South Coast Regional Tourism campaign. Inclusive of funds allocation through the special variation, payment to the value of \$297,539 were made to SCT.

#### **Statewide and Statecover Mutual**

Council is a member of four Statewide and Statecover Mutual Insurance schemes, which are operated for Local Government throughout New South Wales. The benefit of a Mutual Scheme is that the members spread their risk so that the impact on each individual member Council is reduced in the event of a major claim. There are three schemes that operate for the following classes of Insurance:

- Statewide Mutual Liability Scheme which, covers Council for Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance Claims.
- Statecover Mutual which deals with employee injury Insurance and other workers compensation matters.
- Property Mutual Liability Scheme which, provides insurance cover for all Council buildings.
- Fidelity Mutual Liability Scheme is an insurance scheme designed to cover Councils against any fraudulent activity by staff and Council Committee members.

Council is obliged to follow best practice risk management guidelines and undertake risk system audits to be eligible for premium rebates. Annually, Council is subject to two formal external audits from Statewide Mutual. The results of these audits form a percent basis for rebate calculations.

From both Statecover and Statewide Mutual, council received a combined rebate of \$123,874.93 for the 2012-13 financial year.

## Overseas Visits

From 23 April 2013 to 1 May 2013 – eight members of the Bega Valley Shire attended a business tour to China, facilitated through Australia International Trade Association (AITA). On the invitation from the City of Nanyang, Henan province, Council sought expressions of interest from business, education and community to accompany a delegation, at the personal cost of the individual. Over ten initial expressions were received, with some unable to make final arrangements. Bega Cheese, University of Wollongong and Illawarra TAFE were also invited to accompany the delegation, but were unable given the relatively short lead time.

The composition of the delegation proved to be an excellent mixture of Business, Tourism and Council Representatives with all members of the delegation working as a team and participating in presentations made by the Council to each of the Chinese Officials groups who met with our delegation. Over the tour the delegation met with governors, mayors, party secretaries or heads of bureaus of trade, commerce, tourism, education or agriculture.

The purpose of the visit was to develop educational, tourism and business relationships and to proactively promote the Sapphire Coast and Wilderness Coast as a tourist destination. Through this tour, the strategic proximity of Bega Valley to Sydney, Canberra



and Melbourne; the access via cruise ship and plane was promoted, along with the existence and prospects for growth in overseas students and youth exchanges into the shire, the opportunity to tap into the dairy, fish and wine product of the shire; and potential for investment.

Council funded the cost of an interpreter \$4,439 (exc GST) and the preparation of a DVD on the Bega Valley Shire and related printed material, at \$4,787 (exc GST). Council also expended approximately \$850 on gifts for officials.

All Council delegates and community / business delegates met their own travel and personal expenses.

## Companion Animal Management

Companion animal management functions and activities are conducted by Council in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

### Expenditure

During 2012/2013 an estimated \$295,000 was spent on companion animal management responsibilities and associated activities. Council employs four Rangers and one trainee Ranger. Companion animal management is one of the major functions for these staff. Council also maintains an animal management facility at Wallagoot employing other part time staff to provide daily animal care.

### Companion Animal Management Plan

A Companion Animal Management Plan was compiled during 2012/13 and is currently being reviewed by Senior Management. This Plan will guide companion animal management strategies into the future.

### Companion Animal Facility (CAF)

The Companion Animal Facility (Pound) management data collection returns were lodged with the Division of Local Government on 3 July 2013 in compliance with the Act. The web based reporting system combined with Council's electronic Pound Register, which compiles statistics on a monthly basis, continues to be an efficient way of complying with the reporting requirements. Maintenance work at the facility has been completed to maintain an acceptable standard of care for dogs and cats.

### Desexing / Rehoming

Council continues to liaise with the Animal Welfare League, Far South Coast Branch, to maximise animals rehomed. Councils Desexing policy (requiring all animals rehomed from Council's pound to be de-sexed) remains in place.

Total Animals Rehomed or Released in 2012/13.

- Cats – 25 (36% of all cats received)
- Dogs – 186 (74% of all dogs received)

The averages appear to be better than State and regional averages.

### Dog Attacks / Dangerous & Restricted dogs

During 2012/13 Rangers investigated a total of 76 reported dog attack events. This is an increase on the last two years. This equates to 5.81 attacks per 1000 dogs identified in the Bega Valley (currently 13,066). This is above the state average of 3.29 attacks per 1000 dogs identified.

These attacks included attacks on other dogs, other animals and also on people. There were 18 animal deaths (mostly livestock) resulting from dog attacks during the year. 40 people were bitten in attacks by dogs during 2012/13. Three people required hospital treatment, 4 required medical treatment, 4 received minor injury and 29 reported no injury.

As a result of investigation of these attacks 8 dogs were destroyed, 12 penalty notices, 28 warnings, and 2 court attendance notices were issued. One dangerous dog declaration was made. Many of the reports result in no action taken because the victim did not want to be involved in prosecuting the owner of the dog.

There are no specific breeds which are over represented in the reported dog attack events. Labrador Retrievers and Staffordshire Terriers had the highest number of occurrences at 7 each. A total of 41 dog breeds were represented in the statistics.

There are a total of four declared dangerous dogs within the Bega Valley Shire Local Government Area. Two are recent with compliance activity continuing. Two have compliance certificates and are inspected annually. One of the owners has requested the dangerous dog declaration be revoked and this is currently under consideration.

There has been no activity in relation to restricted breeds in the last 12 months and there are no restricted breeds recorded in the Bega Valley Local Government Area.

### Animal Registration

Lifetime registration reminders were sent to 2,229 owners of unregistered animals in February 2013. The results of this registration action by Council are detailed below:

- 604 Registration Paid (includes Working dog –No fee registration)
- 131 Notified dog deceased
- 190 Returned mail no forwarding address
- 164 Sold or given away without details
- 27 Now living outside BVSC Local Government Area.
- 9 Listed as missing
- 1,102 Still outstanding.

Rangers have been tasked to visit the outstanding addresses and this is an ongoing cost to Council and the community. The owners included in the “returned mail” have been contacted where possible by telephone and the name cross checked with other Council data to obtain current addresses.

### Community Education

A publicity campaign directed at cat owners (“Where is your cat now!”) was conducted in the previous financial year. This was to encourage owners to keep their cats either enclosed or indoors.

There has been a marked decline in the number of cats seized in 2012/13. It is possible that this is at least partly due to the publicity campaign to encourage cat owners to keep cats indoors and enclosed. Cats seized in recent years are as follows:

- 2009/10 - 135
- 2010/11 - 114
- 2011/12 - 105
- 2012/13 - 55



### Community Relationships

The relationship between Council and the Animal Welfare League remains strong and effective. During the 2012/13 a branch of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has been formed in Merimbula. Rangers were invited to and have attended meetings to address members. It is likely that the activities of this new branch will be largely directed towards fund raising. The branch will be liaising with the Animal Welfare League to pursue their common objectives. Council Rangers regularly liaise with the RSPCA Inspector for this area.

### Customer Requests

There were a total 1233 requests by customers in relation to companion animals during 2012/13. These are broken up as follows:

- 467 - General complaints
- 204 - Reporting lost animals
- 190 - Barking dog complaints
- 170 - Animals found
- 120 - Dog Attack & Dangerous Dog complaints
- 82 - Animal registration inquiries.

## Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Public Statement

There were 2 matters referred to or from the ICAC and in the 2012/13 financial year.

## Code of Conduct Complaints

No matters were received during the 2012/13 period.

## Government Information (Public) Access Act 2009 (GIPA)

Council adopted a new policy framework, including Access to Information Policy in June 2010. The policy and procedures have been augmented by the attendance of staff from several sections of the organisation including, community and relationships, customer service and planning and organisation support at formal training sessions regarding the requirements under the GIPA Act.

There were 18 formal applications under GIPA in the 2012/13 period.

Information is available regarding GIPA Applications in the GIPA Disclosure Log on Council's website by clicking on the 'Leading Organisation' tab, then following the links to the policy and procedures for this particular section and opening the 'Access to Information' policy. The GIPA Act Disclosure Log provides a record of all applications received.

## BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL

Zingel Place, Bega

Postal address: PO Box 492, Bega NSW 2550. DX: 4904.

Phone: (02) 6499 2222, Fax: (02) 6499 2200. Email: [council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

ABN 26 987 935 332

Website: [www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

