



How to contact your council

Muswellbrook Shire Council Administration Centre

Campbells Corner
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Muswellbrook NSW 2333
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(02) 6549 3700

council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au
www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

Business Hours:
8.30am – 4pm Monday to Friday

Council Facilities Usual Opening Hours

Muswellbrook Waste Management Facility

8am – 4pm
Seven days a week (excluding
public holidays)

Denman Transfer Station

Friday and Saturday: 9am – 4pm

Muswellbrook Aquatic and Fitness Centre

Monday to Friday: 6am – 7pm
Saturday: 9am – 4pm
Sunday: 10am – 4pm

Denman Memorial Pool Summer Season

Monday to Friday:
6am – 7am, 11am – 6.30pm
Saturday/ Sunday 11am – 6.30pm

Muswellbrook Library

Monday to Friday: 10am – 5pm
Saturday: 10am – 1pm

Denman Library

Monday to Friday

Muswellbrook Regional Art Centre

Monday to Saturday 10am – 4pm

Upcoming Events

2022

31 December - New Year's Eve Fireworks

Free entry and entertainment. Food for purchase. Remember to keep your pets safe by putting them inside during the fireworks. Muswellbrook Showgrounds.

2023

26 January - Australia Day

Awards, Citizenship Ceremony, celebrations. Denman Recreation Grounds.

11 February - Colour Run

Parkrun. Karoola Park, Muswellbrook.

March 2023 - Rock'n the Brook

Free concert with headline acts, food and fun. Olympic Park Muswellbrook.

8 April 2023 - Easter Family Fun Day

Free family friendly entertainment and the Easter Bunny. Highbrook Park, Muswellbrook.



Muswellbrook Community Services

Local Aboriginal Land Council – Wanaruah: 6543 1288

Tresillian – Parents Help Line: 1800 637 357

Upper Hunter Community Services Inc: 6542 3555

Upper Hunter Drug & Alcohol Service: 6543 2677

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1800 512 348

Upper Hunter Homeless Support: 6542 5051

Transcare Hunter: 6545 3113

St Vincent de Paul: 6543 2659

St Albans Ministry Services: 6543 3592

Member for Hunter Dan Repacholi: 4991 1022

State Member for Upper Hunter Dave Layzell: 6543 1416



Message from the Mayor

As my first year as Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire draws to a close, I must firstly extend my thanks to Councillors for the hard work they have put in over these 12 months.

While maybe not on a par with drought, pandemic or bushfire, 2022 introduced us to La Nina who brought serious rain and flood events stretching Council to its limits. Potholes quickly became the word of the day and work crews worked tirelessly to keep roads open, bridges and causeways safe – and those potholes filled.

The Shire was declared a Natural Disaster Area and I wish to also extend my thanks to both local members Dan Repacholi and Dave Layzell for their assistance to gain funds from a number of State and Federal grants and programs to help with flood recovery and road reinstatement.

Despite the challenges Muswellbrook Shire remains resilient and optimistic and, I believe, well positioned to take advantage of future opportunities, including a demand for jobs, as new industries are established in the region.

With the benefits of a rural location and easy access to major transport routes we are well positioned for future development.

Muswellbrook Shire Council is committed to investing in our community and has a strong focus on improving liveability.

The opening of the major upgrade to the aquatic centre in September was one of the highlights of 2022. With the addition of two heated pools, a fantastic water play area, spa, sauna and new amenities, the facility is attracting many locals and visitors alike and will be extending the range of activities in the new year.

Having successfully attracted sufficient funding for the redevelopment of Olympic Park, consultation with stakeholders will take place over the coming months with works to follow.

A range of community events are planned, including a New Year's Eve spectacular and free rock concert, while favourites, such as the Easter Family Fun Day, will return. Our libraries and art gallery will continue to introduce new and innovative programs and activities.

Council believes community events are important for generating community pride, showcasing natural advantages, supporting local business and giving residents an opportunity to celebrate.

Now that commitment to the Muswellbrook Bypass being completed by 2027 has been made by both State and Federal Government's we can look forward to having our main street back and the town centre rejuvenated.

The Donald Horne Building exemplifies our focus on bringing cutting edge technology and skills to town. Programs such as robotics, aeronautics, computer aided design and manufacturing and coding will be offered along with a STEM Innovation Lab.

There is a busy and challenging schedule ahead in 2023 and I wish to thank the former General Manager Fiona Plesman and Acting General Manager Derek Finnigan and all staff for their commitment to ensuring our community's essential services are continuously delivered.

If we are fortunate to receive, I hope we will also be inspired to reach out to others. There are many people in our community who deserve our gratitude for all the work they have done over this year to support others – to them all, our thanks.

In the best spirit of Christmas, I hope each and every one has the opportunity to rest, relax, reflect – and to pay attention to what is most important in life. I hope all find opportunities to feel gratitude for even the smallest of blessings and that all feel joy.

On behalf of Council, staff and my Councillor colleagues I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year

Steve Reynolds
Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire



Back L-R: Brett Woodruff, Amanda Barry, Louise Dunn, De-Anne Douglas, Mark Bowditch, Rohit Mahajan, Darryl Marshall.
Front L-R: Jennifer Lecky, Jeff Drayton, Steve Reynolds, Derek Finnigan, Graeme McNeill. Absent Rod Scholes.

2022 Highlights



Deputy Premier Paul Toole pledged funding through Stronger Country Communities Fund to further progress Council's vision for Olympic Park.



Meg Southcombe was the 2022 Young Citizen of the Year



Royal Park Refuge – winner of the 2022 MAP Ceramics Prize by Fiona Hiscock.



Sandy Hollow's "pocket park" was completed in March.



Another day, another pothole!

New flag for Campbell's Corner.



Magpie, by local chainsaw artist Mark Ray, was installed in Simpson Park.



The upgrade to the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre officially opened in September.

January

Following the NSW Local Government elections, the newly elected councillors met for the first time on January 11. The first task for the new council, comprising of five members from the previous council and seven new councillors, was to elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Cr Steve Reynolds, entering his second term was duly elected as Mayor while Cr Jennifer Lecky, was elected as the Deputy Mayor. The first official engagement for Council was Australia Day – awards, citizenship ceremonies and celebrations - held at Olympic Park, Muswellbrook.

February

Council hit the ground running after a series of training workshops for newcomers. Membership of the Joint Regional Planning Panel was reinstated with Crs Rod Scholes & Amanda Barry elected as representatives along with staff representative, Roads & Drainage Manager Kellie Scholes. Mandatory Level 1 water restrictions were removed as the two-year drought was farewelled. Major roads works at the intersection of Thomas Mitchell Drive and Denman Rd and the rehabilitation of Lorne St were approved. After the catastrophic storm and flood event Council applied to the NSW Government's flood recovery program for \$1M.

March

Elections for council's committee and delegate positions were completed. Local resident Granville Taylor was elected as the community member on the Joint Regional Planning Panel and the former Upper Hunter Economic Development Corporation was restructured as an economic development unit within council. The art gallery hosted the annual Muswellbrook Art Prize – renowned as one of the best in regional Australia. 2022 winners were Rachel Milne, Painting (\$50,000) Fiona Hiscock, Ceramics (\$10,000) David Fairburn Works on Paper (\$10,000).

July

Naidoc Week was celebrated with the annual flag raising ceremony at Simpson Park and special activities at the libraries and in a first, Denman Memorial Hall hosted the Sydney Festival Roadshow film festival. Severe flooding, following on the February-March flood events caused havoc of the Shire's roads and the LGA declared to be a natural disaster region. Flood recovery assistance from the NSW Government assisted council with emergency works and crews worked around the clock to keep the roads safe. "Another pothole" to fix was the catch cry of the month and capital works projects severely impacted.

August

The design for the long-awaited Hunter Beach – a new recreation area with access to the river – was finalised and works got underway with the clearing of vegetation the first step. When completed it will feature picnic areas and amenities. Designs were also finalised for the Denman Heritage Village – sure to be an attraction for locals and visitors when completed. Council held a Budget Breakfast which attracted a large audience from the business sector and community.

September

The upgrade to the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre – including the construction of an indoor pool hall with two heated pools, water play area, spa and sauna and new facilities – was opened to great acclaim by two local MP's, Dan Repacholi and Dave Layzell. Free entry during the school holiday period saw residents flock to the pools with many taking up memberships. The inaugural Great Cattle Dog Muster drew visitors from far and wide and was supported with special events at the art gallery and library and another first, the town centre scavenger hunt.



Removing scrap metal at the Waste and Recycling Facility.

April

Council endorsed the Draft Muswellbrook Shire 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan and the Draft 2022-2026 Muswellbrook Shire Delivery Program, important documents which form council and community visions and aspirations for its future, for public exhibition. Initial enquiries for a proposed Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) were initiated and a large number of residents enjoyed the half day public holiday on April 1 for the annual running of the Muswellbrook Cup.



The sensory courtyard and new children's play space at the Muswellbrook Library.

May

Designs were endorsed for the replacement of Rosebrook Bridge and the rehabilitation of Wilder St, including new footpaths and tree planting. The Draft 2022-2023 Operational Plan, Revenue Policy and annual Fees and Charges were endorsed for public exhibition. A suitable location for container reversed vending machine in Denman was investigated and council's war on waste education program, aimed at diverting waste from landfill, continued with the awarding of Community War on Waste grants of up to \$4000 each to five local schools for waste reduction projects.



Flood damage has been a constant during 2022.

June

Extensive alterations and additions to Muswellbrook South Public School and the development of a youth centre at the Indoor Sports Centre were wholeheartedly supported. Muswellbrook Connect, a joint initiative with Muswellbrook Healthy and Well formed under Covid restrictions as an online program, held its first well-attended live workshops for community, education and business groups. The \$1M received from the Local Government Flood Recovery grants program was designated for restoration of Widden Rd, erosion repairs in Hunter Tce, restoration works in Muscle Creek and the development of catchment management plan for Possum Gully and Muscle Creek.



Rugby league legend Boyd Cordner surprised staff at the aquatic centre.

October

The first budget to be presented following the May Federal election delivered on commitments made during the campaign with council receiving \$10.5 million for the Muswellbrook Town Centre Project and \$5.5 million for the development of Olympic Park. A Section 355 Committee of Council was formed to aid council during the redevelopment of this premier sport and recreation precinct. Glamour came to town in the form of the Blue Heeler Film Festival with the red carpet rolled out for the awards night in Denman.



Building: The Donald Horne Building gets finishing touches ahead of the opening.

November

The Donald Horne Building received its finishing touches. Sited between Loxton House and Weidmann Cottage the spectacular edifice will provide access to the latest technology and skills in the STEM Innovation Laboratory and will house The Melt – an industrial prototyping company. With an eye on the future these works complete the Education Precinct. Council made an application to the Minister for a Half Day Public Holiday on 31 March 2023 for the running of the Muswellbrook Cup.



The 'giving tree' at Muswellbrook Marketplace.

December

Despite the unseasonal weather conditions works progressed on the new animal shelter and relocation of the community hub to Sydney St, Thompson St signalisation and the extensive network of water main replacement works across Muswellbrook amongst others while Water and Wastewater were in a constant battle against the elements to provide safe drinking water and services across the Shire. Notwithstanding these challenges the annual Christmas trees were installed and the town festooned with festive decorations.