

HAWKESBURY HIGHLANDS

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2 MAY JUNE 2023

BRINGING YOU NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE HEIGHTS TO THE MOUNTS.

Kurrajong Heights, Bilpin, Warawaralong, Berambing, Mt Tomah, Wilson, Irvine, Tootie and Lagoon

PLACE PLANS FOR EVERYWHERE BUT KURRAJONG HEIGHTS

"Hawkesbury Towns and Villages Place Plans" is on exhibition for public comment until Wednesday 21 June 2023.

The report identifies 9 villages in the Hawkesbury and provides a description and map of what village centres are projected to become. North Richmond, Kurmond, Kurrajong, and Bilpin are in the report but not Kurrajong Heights.

This report will be used by Council to direct future funding received from the State and Federal Governments.

What are place plans?

NSW Planning Circular PS 21-026 (December 2021) provides information on the purpose of place plans. It states that the role of the planning system is to guide how growth will be managed, including by setting strategic targets for new housing to meet the needs of future communities. Character is a critical element of local areas and neighbourhoods and needs to be carefully considered in future planning.

The circular provides advice on how the NSW planning system will deliver development that both meets the growing needs of NSW and is contextual, local and of its place - to make better places for everyone.

Bilpin – the only place with a plan

Bilpin place plan can be viewed on page 27 to 30 in the report. Cycle and hiking tracks are the main features and an "DIY Little Library" and "Temporary Café/Trucks" are noted on the plan.

Vox pop on Bilpin place plan

"The mixture of cyclists and trucks on BLOR is concerning, and where are all the pushbike riders and hikers going to park their vehicles? I don't think this is a well-considered plan".

"Has anyone told Grumpy Baker that his shop is going to be a public toilet block?"

"We need to do something about the traffic flow through Bilpin CBD, particularly on weekends. This plan does nothing to address this serious here and now problem."

These are a few comments from locals, and you can have your say by going to <https://www.yourhawkesbury-yoursay.com.au/>

Why doesn't Kurrajong Heights get a place plan?

No one knows. Funding for the report has come from an Australian Government "Recovery Disaster Grant" for Local Councils focusing on bush fires. "The purpose of the Grants was to improve resiliency in local areas by investing in safety, community, and fire protection infrastructure."

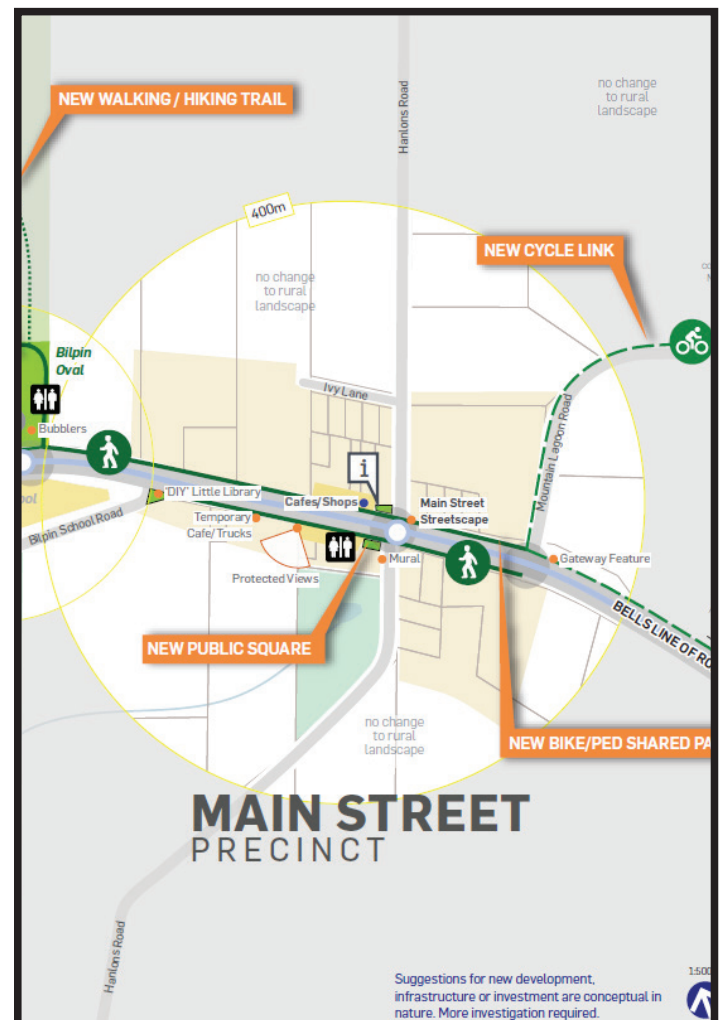
Kurrajong Heights was badly impacted by the Black Summer

bushfires that burnt out properties and destroyed houses. The only other places equally impacted by fire were Bilpin, Colo Heights and St Albans all who have place plans in this report.

Do the Place Plans improve community safety and provide fire protection infrastructure as required by the grant?

Water is an essential ingredient for effective firefighting, along with emergency evacuation areas and other community safety infrastructure. None of this is present in the place plans for any location.

If you want to comment on Hawkesbury Council's use of a bushfire recovery grant to pay for this Place Plan report, you can have your say at <https://www.susantempleman.com.au/> see tab "Have your say"



VOICE TO PARLIAMENT – A STATEMENT FROM THE HIGHLANDS

People driving on BLOR past Bilpin Cider will catch a view of the Aboriginal flag flying next to the Australian flag at the entrance to the Cellar Door.

This is the first business to fly the First Nation people's flag in the Highlands and it has sparked discussion about the upcoming Voice to Parliament referendum everyone will be lining up to vote on in a few months' time.



Photo: Entrance of Bilpin Cider

What's the Voice about?

In 2017 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Nations gathered at Uluru and made a statement from the heart of Australia. Part of this statement was seeking constitutional reform:

"We seek constitutional reforms to

empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country. We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution." (Uluru Statement from the Heart 2017)

Embedding a Voice in the Constitution would recognise the special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia's history, but importantly would also mean that it can't be shut down by successive Governments. This is important because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and bodies have called for a voice for close to 100 years. (Reconciliation Australia.org.au)

Is a Voice needed?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are the only racial group in Australia who have policies and laws made specifically for them, and government ministers and departments that specialise in implementing these laws and policy which often have an adverse impact on their lives. A Voice to Parliament will give Indigenous communities a route to help inform policy and legal decisions that impact their lives. It will provide a mechanism where First Nation people can directly voice

their concerns and ideas to Parliament regardless of who is Prime Minister and what ideas are fashionable at any time, and they believe this will give them greater control of their lives.

Opposing the Voice is the Liberal/National Party who proposed to pass laws establishing local and regional bodies to act as the Voice. Some First Nation leaders also oppose the Voice believing it will create another layer of bureaucracy and not solve any of the dire health and social problems racking their communities. What is the referendum question?

"A Proposed Law: to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

Do you approve this proposed alteration?" If the majority of people in the majority of the States of Australia vote yes, then Parliament will make laws creating the Voice. When governments change these laws can be changed but the Voice cannot be extinguished without a referendum to remove it from the Constitution.

<https://voice.gov.au/referendum-2023/referendum-question-and-constitutional-amendment/>

HAWKESBURY COUNCIL FLIES IN VICTORIAN EXPERT TO TALK TO BILPIN BUSHFIRE VICTIMS



Photo: Image taken by Nina Lipscombe Art

Hawkesbury Council Community Recovery Co-ordinator Liz Murphy organised a community dinner for bushfire survivors at Chapel Hill Berambing and flew in Victorian

disaster expert Dr Rob Gordon to speak at the event. 38 people attended the event of which about 30 were residents impacted by the fires.

Dr Gordon spoke after dinner and repeated the information contained in videos made by the Victorian

Government after the 2009 Black Saturday fires featuring him discussing the road to recovery which covers the following topics:

- Coping with stress after an emergency

- Building trust and confidence in your community post emergency
- Tackling uncertainty and anxiety ahead of the next fire season
- Summer strategies to manage feelings and reduce stress.
- Accepting the risk of bushfire and creating a new future
- Learning to trust your own thinking and action.

You can view these videos at <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/travelling-road-recovery-video-series>

Some comments from people who attended the dinner.

He is a boring speaker, but his videos are

good. The food was great, and it was the first-time government bushfire money has been spent in Berambing, and on a deserving business that was burnt out by the fires. It must have cost a bomb. It was nice to have a free meal and chat with neighbours, but I don't think it was a good use of bushfire money.

People need to feel safe and to do this we have to talk about what happened. The RFS need to give a proper apology for their backburn and failure to warn us of the unfolding emergency. Then we need to talk about what can be done to make sure the same mistakes aren't repeated. After this we will feel safe and be able to renew our trust and confidence in the RFS and NSW

Government.

The meeting ran over time so not all attendee questions got answered. Council Recovery Co-ordinator Liz Murphy video Dr Gordon addressing the remaining questions after he returned to Victoria. You can view this at <https://hawkesbury.sharefile.com/d-se244b6b3f184436aa4f583ef6c0c6adc>

WHO REPRESENTS YOUR COMMUNITY?

In the first edition of the Hawkesbury Highlands Bilpin RFS President claimed that along with Bilpin Regional Action Group (BRAG) and the Bilpin Hall Committee, organizations which work closely together, their views represent ten percent of the population.

So, what about the other ninety percent of the population of Bilpin, who represents their views or the positions of other communities in the Hawkesbury Highlands on varying issues? Who should our politicians, Council and local bureaucrats consult with on matters concerning our communities?

Determining who speaks for a community is a complex and sensitive issue, and there are always multiple groups claiming to represent the same community, each with different perspectives and priorities.

Here are some factors to consider when deciding who speaks for the most people: How many people are members of the group? Are they representative of the community they claim to represent, or do they only represent a particular subset of that community?

Does the group have a legitimate claim to speak for the community? Have they been elected or appointed by the community, or do they have a history of working on behalf of the community?

Does the group represent a broad cross-section of the community, or does it only represent a particular subset? Do they consider the views and concerns of different groups within the community?

What has the group done in the past to benefit the community? Have they delivered tangible benefits, or have they

been ineffective or even harmful?

Is there a broad consensus within the community that this group speaks for them? Are there other groups that also claim to speak for the community, and if so, why do they feel that the other group does not represent their views.

Ultimately the decision of who speaks for the most people is a complex and ongoing process, and it may change over time as the needs and priorities of the community evolve.

It's important to listen to different perspectives and engage in dialogue with a range of stakeholders to ensure that all voices are heard and that decisions are made in the best interests of the whole community.

Some of this content was generated by Chat GPT.



BILPIN HALL CAR PARK ALMOST & MAYBE

Bilpin Hall is an essential community infrastructure as it:

a) is a district hall servicing the needs of not only Bilpin but surrounding communities of Mt Lagoon, Mt Tootie, Mt Tomah, Berambing and Kurrajong Heights

b) the hall is in use daily by a wide variety of community groups, play groups preschool, exercise classes for the elderly and many others

c) the hall has a busy Saturday market where the existing car park overflows in to degraded and eroded land.

d) the hall is a disaster management staging area, which currently means that volunteer disaster management workers do so in the dirt and dust or wet and mud. During the Black Summer fires the Hall was the staging area for over 100 fire trucks twice a day for weeks.

e) the only way to get to the Hall is by private vehicle so a car park is essential

This was the motion put to Hawkesbury Council's May General Meeting by Bells Line Road Business to have the car park extended.

Hawkesbury Council received funding under the Black Summer Bushfires Recovery grants program to extend the Hall car park which is used as a Disaster Staging Area in bushfires. The Council now want to give back the money as they say it is insufficient to build the car park.

The day before Council was to vote on returning the money BLOR Business became aware of Councils' intention to do this during a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager to discuss other issues.

"I couldn't believe it and wouldn't have if the General Manager hadn't told us" Says Lionel Buckett a member of BLOR Business and Chairman of the Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club which is also used as a disaster staging area.

"The Club has just finished building a car park three times bigger than the one proposed for the Hall, using money from the same Black Summer Bushfire grant – it's ridiculous to say there isn't enough money to do it."



Construction of club car park Feb 2023

"I was president of the Bilpin Hall Committee when we built the current carpark about 25 years ago. It was a different time then; the General Manager and all Council Senior executive officers lived in the Hawkesbury and knew and trusted the residents. We used material from Councils Wilberforce Depot and local contractors donated their time and machinery and the car park was built."

Things haven't changed that much according to Fiona Germaine Council still cuts through red tape and acts in the community's best interest when its demanded.

"Look at the flood response, Council dumped sand in Windsor

Park, and everyone pitched in, filled bags to help stop floodwaters entering private homes. And with bushfires Council sent up a Bulk Water Carrier to Bilpin and residents overloaded their utes carrying plastic cubes of water home to use for drinking washing and firefighting. Council can be useful to the community when the Councillors take charge.

BLOR Business members decided to put a motion to the Hawkesbury Council General meeting to forestall the handing back of the grant money. Germaine and Buckett, the new and old, well dressed and under dressed businesspeople and residents of Bilpin district spoke eloquently and passionately about not returning the money and upgrading essential disaster infrastructure.



Council decided to direct its Administration to hold a meeting with stakeholders and report back to their June meeting.

Concern about car park design

Council design for an extension of the proposed car park caused concern as they included removing existing gardens, and large trees. The proposed plan did not address the issue of soil degradation caused by the current parking arrangements which occur on National Park land.

These are matters of design and involve a lot of talking with people to get it right including with bureaucrats from government departments. We had the same thing when we did the existing car park at Bilpin Hall. It's a lot of effort but it's worth it.

We went over the same things with the new Club carpark and finally got consensus. The car park doubles as a basketball court when not used for parking and everyone is now happy with it. Says Buckett.

Council consultation with stakeholders

Fiona Germaine requested Hawkesbury Council uphold its commitment to convene a review meeting with relevant stakeholder groups including and not limited to:

- Bell's Line of Road Business Council
- Bilpin Regional Action Group
- Bilpin Hall Committee
- The Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club

"Our request was heard and actioned by the Mayor Councillor Sarah McMahon, and I can report the Mayor has confirmed directly to me a meeting will be convened with these listed and other relevant groups. I look forward to hearing from Cr McMahon on the next steps."

The funding grant is due for completion in December 2023 and if not returned.

FIRE TRAILS CHECK YOUR LEGAL CONTRACT.

Hawkesbury Highlands has an extensive network of fire trails in National Parks and across private property. There are approximately 1.3 million properties on bush fire prone land in NSW and to assist with containing and managing fires across the landscape, firefighters need good access so these trails need to be maintained.

In 2017 the RFS established local Fire Access and Fire Trails Plans (FAFT Plans) to assist in bushfire management. Following a recommendation from the NSW Government, work started to enhance the strategic network of fire trails identified through the development of local FAFT Plans.

Identification and upgrading of strategic networks of fire trails includes trails which already exist and may need to be upgraded so they can meet new standards gazetted in 2017 for width and height clearances, gradient and drainage. For example, where a fire trail is identified as capable of carrying a large bush fire tanker, the fire trail must meet standards for the tanker to safely navigate the trail.

Where a need is identified, new fire trails may be constructed. This may be on public land, or with the agreement of private landholders. See <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/fire-trails> for further information.

No consultation or access to the fire trail plan

Fire trails are currently being made and upgraded in Bilpin District now. This is raising community concern about what

the FAFT Plan is for Bilpin and other settlements, where the plans are displayed and what is the community consultation process for updating these plans.

Legal advice on RFS contracts for private landowner

Landowners were not advised to seek legal advice before signing an RFS contractual agreement to have public fire trails constructed on their property. The RFS contract gives the Government an easement through private property. The RFS contracts vary. Some contracts are silent on whether landowner to maintain the fire trail while others say the RFS will do this, both these contracts may disadvantage the landowner when they sell their property which now has a government easement through it and the new owner may have to maintain the fire trail at their expense, to fire trail standards.

This is particularly important as there is no guarantee the State will maintain the fire trail meaning the new owner maybe liable for the upgrade of a degraded trail.

The construction of a fire trail on private property does not guarantee the landowner that a fire truck will be stationed on their property during a fire. There are about 25 Rural Fire Service Trucks in the Hawkesbury and over 300 properties just in the Highlands.

Construction of trails not using local businesses.

Local contractors many who work for the RFS clearing trails when a State of Emergency (Section 44) is declared and have extensive knowledge of the fire trail

network have not been approached to tender for construction or upgrading of new and existing fire trails. So, none of this work and the income it generates is staying in the Highlands. The NSW Government Soil Conservation Service is responsible for engaging contractors to undertake the work and ensuring that it is completed in a satisfactory manner. For further information see <https://www.scs.nsw.gov.au/about-the-soil-conservation-service>

No maintenance plan or budget?

There is concern that no maintenance plan or budget exists for these existing and new fire trails. Trails need maintenance particularly during and after rain and this takes time and money. Whose time and money need to be clarified.

These fire trails now have locked gates with keys held at the local fire shed. This locks out locals or any early responders to a fire, requiring them to wait for an RFS truck to arrive, which given the protocols now around assembling RFS crews and releasing a truck will takes some time during which the fire is spreading.

For further information and to express any concerns you have contact NSW RFS Strategic Fire Trails Jamie Carter Email firetrails@rfs.nsw.gov.au The RFS do have a legal branch where Jamie can refer any concerns you have for advice and clarification.

BELLS LINE ROAD BUSINESS COUNCIL NETWORKING MEETING

The next BLOR Business networking meeting is being held Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 6pm at the Archibald Hotel Kurrajong Heights. Come along and hear what's going on for businesses in our local area and have your say on how things can be improved.

For further information visit our website

www.bellslineroad.com.au or email:

blorbusinesscouncil@gmail.com or ring Liz on **0424329785**

Everyone is welcome and looking forward to seeing you on Tuesday 20 June at the Archibald.



DISTRICT DOINGS

MT WILSON & MT IRVINE

The need for an escape route for Mt Wilson and Irvine residents trapped by the escaped Mt Wilson backburn was highlighted in the NSW Special Inquiry into Black Summer bushfires which ran from May 15 to 26 2023. Bowens Creek Road repairs were highlighted, something the community has been concerned about since Hawkesbury Council failed to maintain its section of the road allowing it to deteriorate to a point where it is now permanently closed. Hopefully some recommendation will be made to re-open this escape route.

MT TOMAH

Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens café is open again and everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a coffee while looking down on the world.

Thanks Blue Mountains Council for constructing firefighting water tanks on Skyline Drive making residents feel safer as the next fire season approaches.

MT TOOTIE

Mt Tootie welcomes its first coffee shop open at the Metro from 7am Friday, Saturday, and Sundays. Go Jo and Eddie – we love you!

MT LAGOON

Jimmy Newton celebrated king of pothole repairs has been elected Deputy Captain of Mt Lagoon RFS. Congratulations Jimmy and Bilpin's loss is the Lagoon's gain.

If you haven't done it yet, take a stroll around the Lagoon as the colour in the street trees is spectacular.

BERAMBING

Ziggy café (formally Maggie Lou Bites) has opened, and you can drop in for a good burger anytime.

The Hive has opened a new outdoor dining area where you can bask in the sun, eat and drink good food and admire Campbell's Garden and mountain views.

WARAWARALONG

Where is Warawaralong again? And who lives there ...that's right John and Robert, A Fathers Love Orchard and everyone on Bullocks and Inberra Roads.

BILPIN

The Cheer up sign is gone from under the Bilpin sign and is now hopefully cheering up another place.

The beautiful colour in the street trees at the beginning of Hanlon's Road North (next to Bilpin Guest House) attracted 16 tourists who took a series of group photos watched by a local sitting at Grumpy Bakers.

KURRAJONG HEIGHTS

The Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club is opening 1st Sunday of every month at 12 noon for roast lunch and an afternoon of music and relaxing chat. Hope you can make it.

Congratulations to lifelong resident of Kurrajong Hills and Heights Catherine Maguire who is turning 60 and celebrating with an open band night at the Bowlo on 10 June.

Thank you, Archibald Hotel, for providing consistently good food that is served with cheerful efficiency. Good job everyone.

FROM OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE DESK

You travel with Tina through racist Southern America of the 1940's to 70's as she manages being a second-class citizen and survivor

of brutal domestic abuse. And she pulls the audience out of their seats willing her on as she becomes the rock legend, we all know her to be. It is a wonderful look back at how much the world has changed in a good way for people of colour and women. She was simply the best!

COMMUNITY GROUPS WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

MT LAGOON SATURDAY BBQ LUNCH held the first and third Saturdays in the month starting at 12 noon beside the RFS shed on Sam's Way. Everyone welcome.

MT TOMAH AND BERAMBING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC welcomes new members, and you can contact them at mtra2020@gmail.com for updates on their next event.

KURRAJONG HEIGHTS GARDEN CLUB has regularly activities and everyone is welcome. Contact Joanne on 0409762686

KURRAJONG HEIGHTS BOWLING CLUB welcomes everyone to attend any activities. Check out our Facebook page or ring Lichell on 0417656437

BELLS LINE ROAD BUSINESS COUNCIL meets monthly and has regular networking meetings. Contact Fiona on 0416031885

HAWKESBURY HARVEST FARM gate trail meets monthly and welcomes everyone. Contact Eric on 0438731712

NEPEAN HAWKESBURY LAND CARE holds regular events and would love to see you at them. Contact Katherine on 45749604

THE CLUB COMMUNITY GARDEN welcomes new people to the Kurrajong Heights Bowling Club for a paddock to the plate affair. Come and plant, pick and eat their way from the garden to the Club kitchen. Contact Eric on 0438731712

Email news of your community group to bilpindistrictcommunitynews@gmail.com

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

If you would promote an activity in our community let us know and we will list it here.

WEEKLY EVENTS HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Tai Chi @ Bilpin Hall Monday 4:30pm
Play group @ Bilpin Hall Tuesdays 10am to 12 noon.
Social Bowls @ the Club Tuesday 10am to 12 noon
Tai Chi @ Bilpin Hall Wednesday 9:30am
Preschool @ Bilpin Hall Thursday 9am to 3pm
Community dinner @ the Club Thursday 5:30pm to 8:30pm
Preschool @ Bilpin Hall Friday 9am to 3pm
Tennis @ The Heights Friday 9am to 12 noon
Bilpin Markets @ Bilpin Hall Saturday 10am t 12 noon

II YOUR STARS FOR MAY & JUNE ☿

This is the time of hard-headed, down-to-earth, tenacious, reliable, loyal, and sensual **TAURUS**. Enjoy making money from all the new tourists discovering the beautiful Hawkesbury Highlands

GEMINI playful social butterfly and intellectually curious, constantly juggling a variety of passions, will have fun buzzing between the new cafes along Bells Line Road reading stories from the Hawkesbury Highlands.

UPDATES ON LAST EDITION'S STORIES

WHAT'S THIS SIGN ABOUT?

Martin Tebbutt "What's this sign about" has had his sign graffitied and a photo of this posted on the Bilpin Group Facebook page. Below are screen shots that were taken before the post was removed from the page.



Hawkesbury rate payers need to brace for a **turd tax!**

Council has finally fixed the break in the sewage pipe but not the \$30 million loan taken out by the Council to cover the costs of this fiasco. The increase in the Valuer General Notice of Valuation to all landowners has increased by 100 percent so this may raise the rate collection enough to pay out the loan without a need for a turd tax.

ABOUT US

The Newsletter content is moderated by an Editorial Collective with a background in publication. If you would like to join the Collective, please email us outlining your qualifications and experience.

Find us www.bilpinnews.com Contact us

bilpindistrictnews@gmail.com

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BILPIN LAND OF THE MOUNTAIN ~~APPLE~~ RUMOR

Reporting on the most interesting rumour circulating in the Hawkesbury Highlands. Hawkesbury Council wins again with the rumoured appointment of Legal Counsel costing \$250,000 per year with a secretary to be paid \$90,000 annually.

In the past Council would circulate its legal work among local solicitors. Then our Councillors appointed Hawkesbury's first Sydney based General Manager who proceeded to expand legal costs policing residents on all manner of compliance matters. This was no bonanza for our local legal eagles as that GM preferred advice from the big end of town.

This current GM, who also lives in Sydney seems to prefer Counsel on tap to assist in dealing with pesky Councillors and residents asking shitty questions about sewage treatment repairs and other poorly managed administrative systems.

APOLOGIES FOR STORIES NOT RUN THIS EDITION

Apologies for stories not run this edition.

We promised this issue to bring the following stories, which have been postponed to the July Issue:

- Where the \$100 million of Federal State funding announced for BLOR is going to be spent?
- Will Hawkesbury Council Peppercorn Inc finally apologise for applying to have money earmarked for Black Summer Bushfire victims used to fund its aged care service activities in Richmond.
- Blue Mountains Council The big fix – what is it and what does it mean for the Mounts.
- Bilpin woman is coming for Dargan man.

ARTS & CULTURE IN THE HIGHLANDS

Arts and culture play a crucial role in all our lives. They contribute to the unique identity and sense of pride within a rural community. They showcase the local heritage, traditions, and customs, preserving the community's history and fostering a strong connection to the past. This shared identity strengthens social cohesion and community spirit.

TELLING OUR STORIES

Each of our little communities in the Highlands have their own stories that connect neighbours that entertain, educate, and enhance our feeling of belonging. These stories are told standing around a fire, stopped on the side of the road through car windows and in the next editions on Hawkesbury Highlands! We will bring you stories forest floor in the next edition of the Highlands.

SEEING OUR WORLD OF NATURAL BEAUTY

Arts and culture broaden perspectives, stimulate critical thinking, and encourage lifelong learning. Cultural institutions like the BigCi, located on Hanlon's Road North is one of the jewels in our cultural crown.

BigCi is an independent, artist run, not for profit artist residency program in Bilpin, Australia (near Sydney), focusing on artists' professional development and facilitating their projects. It was established and is run by Rae Bolotin, a practicing artist, and Yuri Bolotin, environmentalist, and wilderness explorer. Artists-in-residence can present their work during a BigCi Open Day that takes place at the end of their stay. To get on the mailing list and be notified of their events go to <https://bigci.org/>

CULTURAL TOURISM – SYDNEY STICKY PEAKS

Cultural tourism happens mostly on weekends during the cooler months in the Highland. Sticky beaks from Sydney come to Kurrajong Heights to look over the sprawl of suburban Sydney and onto the Highland to experience rural Australia by picking their own fruit, looking at farmyard animals, buying local products and stretching out in the open space.

Cultural tourism brings economic benefits to the community by supporting a Creative economy and entrepreneurship. They inspire and nurture creative talent, encouraging local artists, artisans, and entrepreneurs to showcase their work and develop creative enterprises.

We have visual arts at the BigCi, performing arts at the Bowlo with the Bilpin Elvis & Miranda's monthly cabaret shows, and significant number of local food and drink products from Bilpin Bush Honey to Hillbilly Cider.

This diversification of economic activities help grow our local economies, create employment opportunities, and retain people in the community.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND INCLUSIVITY

Arts and cultural events provide opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together. They serve as a platform for social interaction, breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of belonging. Cultural activities promote inclusivity by celebrating diversity and encouraging dialogue between different groups within the community. This is why we produce the Hawkesbury Highlands Newsletter.

