

Community Newsletter



BLUE MOUNTAINS CITY COUNCIL JANUARY 2020



Supporting our community during and after bush fires

Unprecedented bush fires have devastated the nation, and the Blue Mountains, since December 2019.

Blue Mountains City Council staff have worked tirelessly to provide extra green waste services to help residents prepare their properties for bush fires since then. Staff have also assisted emergency services, led by the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Council has been supporting those who were affected by bush fires in Bell, Mount Tomah, Mount Wilson, Mount Irvine, Berambing, Mount Victoria and Blackheath. Sixteen homes in the upper Blue Mountains were destroyed and another 30 properties damaged.

Blue Mountains Chief Executive Officer Dr Rosemary Dillon said: "Our hearts go out to all those residents, for all that they have lost. We are committed to working with our neighbouring councils, and state and federal agencies, to make the recovery process as easy as possible for them."

Pictured clockwise from top-left: The RFS Community Meeting at Blaxland High School on 9 Jan; CEO Rosemary Dillon, Mayor Mark Greenhill and Council staff at Bell on 24 Dec, burnt bushland behind the Bell village sign, Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens Curator Greg Bourke (right) talks to an affected resident at Council's Community Recovery Meeting held at Mount Tomah on 11 Jan (Photo: Sarah Hyde); the Community Recovery Meeting (Photo: Sarah Hyde); and the Mayor with an ADF unit at Mount York precinct.

See page 2 and 3 for how Council is helping the community to recover.

Council had emergency service, communications and administrative staff stationed at the Emergency Operations Centre in Katoomba throughout December and early January, to assist the Incident Management Team (IMT) who were managing the Ruined Castle, Grose Valley, Linden Creek and Erskine Creek fires. We also assisted the IMT by:

- providing traffic management for multiple road closures
- delivering bulk water carriers to support fire fighting
- providing extra waste services for emergency services
- preparing sporting ovals as staging areas, and
- helping to compile and distribute regular community newsletters about the bush fires and organise RFS Community Meetings that attracted more than 2500 residents, and reached another 100,000 people.

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Bush Fire Mayoral Relief Fund

A Blue Mountains Bush Fire Mayoral Relief Fund has been created to help our community recover and rebuild, following recent bush fires.

This registered fund will provide funding toward projects that contribute directly to the recovery and rebuilding efforts of any fire affected residents in the Blue Mountains. It enables the Australian community to assist our local community in their time of need.

Tax deductible donations can be made to the following account:

BSB: 082 656 / Account Number:
46 179 2573

Via:

- Internet banking
- Telephone: 02 4780 5000
- Council Offices: 2 Civic Place, Katoomba / 104 Macquarie Road, Springwood, or
- At any National Bank branch.

For more information go to
bmcc.nsw.gov.au/MRF.

Thank you for donating to this significant local fund.

Blue Mountains World Heritage Area devastated



2020 marks the 20th year of our City's World Heritage Area, but as we begin to commemorate this wonderful milestone we face the sad truth that up to 90 per cent of the Blue Mountains National Park has been affected by bush fires. Our unique area, and our wildlife, have suffered enormously and Council will work with other levels of government to address this enormous challenge.

The extreme fire event has had a devastating impact on local wildlife with major loss or destruction of fauna habitats, refuges and food sources. Many creeks are dry and normal water supply sources are very low. Animals are under considerable stress and in these conditions there is often much displacement. Get more information on how you can help our local wildlife at bmcc.nsw.gov.au/local-wildlife-need-your-help.

Supporting our local economy & businesses

There is support available to Blue Mountains businesses affected by bush fires, from damaged or destroyed property to disrupted business and reduced income.

- The NSW Government is offering a **Disaster Recovery Grant** of up to \$15,000 to primary producers, small business and not-for-profit organisations affected by the NSW bush fires. You can apply for the Disaster Recovery Grant at raa.nsw.gov.au/grants/disaster-recovery-grants/bushfires.
- The Federal Government is also providing a **Disaster Recovery Allowance** to support people who lost income as a direct result of the bush fires in NSW from August 2019 – January 2020. Claim a Disaster Recovery Allowance by visiting Centrelink, calling Centrelink on 180 22 66 (8am – 8pm local time, Monday to Friday and 8am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday) or filling the form in online at humanservices.gov.au/individuals/forms/em195.

For more information on assistance for small businesses affected by bush fires go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/business.

Supporting residents to prepare properties

Council progressively increased its waste services to support emergency services and meet community demand, this bush fire season.

Staff worked tirelessly to enable the organisation to introduce extra free chipping services and extra green

bin services. We also made the Waste Management Facilities available for free to residents clearing green waste off their blocks.

Between 13 December 2019 and 8 January 2020, Council accepted green waste from nearly 7,300 vehicles at our

two facilities. This was significantly more than what was received after the 2013 bush fires.

At the time of printing, extra green waste services were scheduled to end on 31 January. Go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/waste for more information.

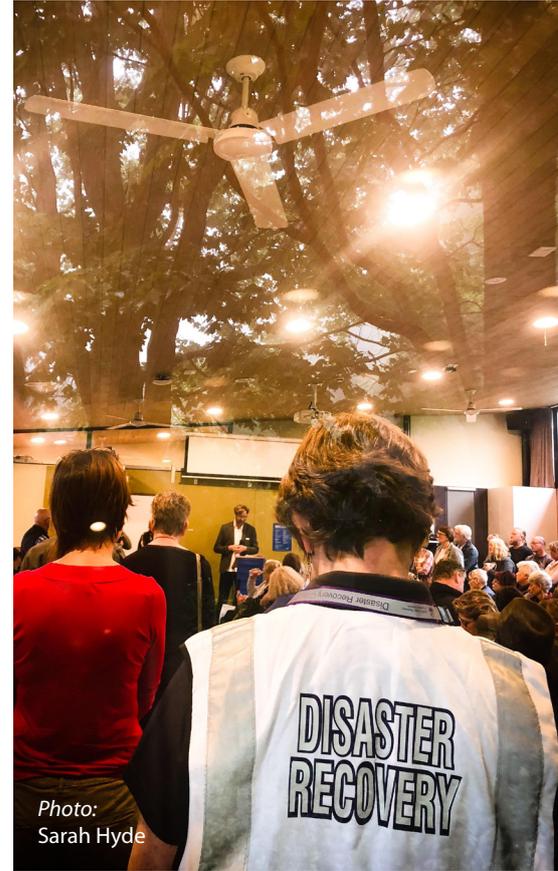
Helping our community to recover after bush fires

Supporting our residents to recover

Blue Mountains City Council has a Bush Fire Recovery Committee, and a dedicated Recovery Manager, who can prioritise calls for assistance from our bushfire affected community.

Council joined the Greater Sydney Regional Recovery Group with Hawkesbury, Lithgow and Wollondilly councils, as well as State Government agencies. The regional group are assisting to plan and develop recovery initiatives for our bush fire affected communities, that will complement our local Council-led Bush Fire Recovery Action Plan. Council has also supported our bush fire affected residents by:

- Providing potable water to affected households and community facilities in this area, for example the RFS sheds and Mt Wilson Hall.
- Providing fuel for generators – at homes, RFS sheds and at the Mt Wilson Hall.
- Granting fee concessions for Development Applications, tree removal and other Council applications associated with the rebuild and recovery.
- Completing tree assessments and working with the NSW RFS and Australian Defence Force (ADF) to clear dangerous trees.
- Holding Community Recovery Meetings in Bell on 2 January and Mount Tomah on 11 January. We also attended a community meeting with Hawkesbury Council, for Bilpin residents, on 9 January.



Council launched the *Love Local* campaign on 13 January to help our Blue Mountains businesses recover after bush fires. This is one of a number of strategies that Council is implementing to support recovery of our local economy.

We are asking residents to spend at least an extra \$20 a week locally in 2020, after visitors stayed away over the traditionally busy Christmas New Year period. This will increase the local economy by up to \$92 million in one year, thanks to multiplier effects. In 2020 Council will feature specific villages each month, using social media channels, to encourage locals (as well as those further afield) to visit the City. As this campaign progresses, we'll be asking neighbouring councils to promote the concept.

The **Blue Mountains Mayoral Reference Group for Business**, chaired by Councillor Kevin Schreiber, is consulting with the business sector to identify further actions that can be taken to assist with business recovery in the Blue Mountains in the coming weeks and months.

For more information go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/lovelocal.

LOVE LOCAL

Shop, play and stay local!



Bush Fire Recovery Guide

Supporting our community to recover

Council's Bush Fire Recovery Guide has information and contacts for services and assistance across a range of areas and issues, including:

- Health and wellbeing
- Safety and site access
- The clean-up
- Disposing of waste and debris
- Financial assistance
- Replacing and repairing property
- Reporting hazards
- Where to find accurate information

Download a copy of the Bush Fire Recovery Guide at:

bmcc.nsw.gov.au/documents/bushfire-recovery-guide

Councillors

Ward 1

Bell to Leura, Megalong Valley & The Mounts

Cr Don McGregor

0434 306 143

dmcgregor@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Kerry Brown

0414 195 980

kbrown@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Kevin Schreiber

0431 501 981

kschreiber@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 2

Wentworth Falls to Falconbridge/Springwood

Cr Chris Van der Kley (Deputy Mayor)

0427 805 810

cvanderkley@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Romola Hollywood

0414 195 983

rhollywood@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Brent Hoare

0431 501 984

bhoare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 3

Falconbridge/ Springwood to Valley Heights

Cr Daniel Myles

0414 418 161

dmyles@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Shae Foender

0414 195 986

sfoender@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Mick Fell

0414 195 991

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Ward 4

Warrimoo to Lapstone

Cr Mark Greenhill (Mayor)

0414 195 990

mgreenhill@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Brendan Christie

0423 565 988

bchristie@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Cr Darryl Bowling

0414 195 989

dbowling@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

WHAT'S ON BLUE MOUNTAINS



Seniors Festival 2020

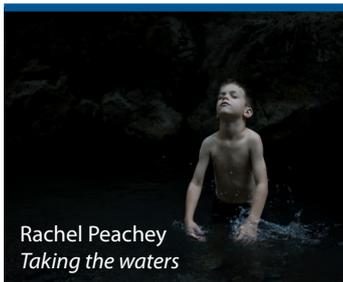
2020 marks 62 years of Senior's Week celebrations across Australia. To commemorate this milestone, seniors will have the opportunity, throughout February to participate in a variety of activities as part of the Seniors Festival program for the Blue Mountains. For more information go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/seniors-week



Camille Walsh
Freedom 2019

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre

Blue Mountains Portraits is the Cultural Centre's annual celebration of the local community and its diverse members. The exhibiting artists portray the unique people that make up the cultural fabric of the Blue Mountains and tell the stories behind the person. **25 January – 22 March 2020**
For more info bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.



Rachel Peachey
Taking the waters

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre

The **National Portrait Gallery's** highly acclaimed **National Photographic Portrait Prize 2019** will be on display at Blue Mountains City Art Gallery. Now in its twelfth year, the annual exhibition draws from entries submitted by photographers across Australia. A National Portrait Gallery exhibition. **25 January - 22 March 2020**. For more info bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.



Blue Mountains Theatre

Vince Jones & The Astral Orchestra Australia's foremost jazz vocalist Vince Jones leads a celebration of the iconic music of Van Morrison, in a special Valentine's Day event on **Friday 14 February, 8pm**.

Tickets online at bluemountainstheatreandhub.com.au



Come along to the **FREE Senior Drivers Workshop** and refresh your knowledge about road rules, learn safe driving tips and improve your understanding of licencing for older drivers. The workshop will be held from at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, Springwood.

10am – 12pm, Monday 3 February.

Bookings are essential. **Call 4780 5000 to book.**



Are you supporting a young person learning to drive? This **FREE Helping Learner Driver Workshop** is an ideal way as a parent or carer to get practical advice on how to help young learner drivers to become safer drivers. The workshop will be held at the Blue Mountains Theatre & Community Hub, Springwood. **2pm - 4pm, Saturday 7 March**. Bookings are essential. **Call 4780 5000 to book** or email council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Blue Mountains City Council

Locked Bag 1005

Katoomba NSW 2780

Telephone

West from Woodford 4780 5000

East from Linden 4723 5000



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