

SOUTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL



Blending Old-Fashioned Values with Modern Ideas

*Southern Midlands Tasmania is a blend of good
old fashioned values and modern ideas co-exist.*



Southern Midlands Council

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with Modern Ideas**

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Southern Midlands Council

WHAT: Southern Midlands Tasmania is a blend of good old fashioned values and modern ideas co-exist.

WHERE: TAS 7120

WEBSITE: southernmidlands.tas.gov.au

A rural local government authority covering the southern part of the Central Midlands, the Southern Midlands Council was created in 1993. It comprises the territories of what were ear-



The Southern Midlands Council has a population of about 6000 persons and its economy is rural based. The district is steeped in history and contains a number of Georgian farmsteads, three jails and a number of early industrial sites. These include timber stations, sandstone quarries and limekilns.

There are several towns and localities within Council area with the major ones being Oatlands, Campania, Bagdad and Kempton. The Midland Highway (Heritage Highway) and the north-south rail route bisect the municipality.

The Southern Midlands Council's Mayor is Tony Bisdee who was first elected to the former Green Ponds Council in 1972 and has been a Councillor and Mayor continuously for the past 40 years. He was the first Mayor of Southern Midlands Council when it was established in 1993.

In the Annual Report for 2014-15, Mayor Bisdee describes the role Council plays in providing infrastructure facilities to its residents, "Council has maintained its focus on asset renewal / replacement during the past year. This included replacement of two significant Bridges: Brown Mountain Road Bridge and Rotherwood Road Bridge and the commencement of other smaller bridge renewals.

"Considerable funds were expended on re-sheeting of gravel roads and a number of sealed road reconstruction projects were completed ...the instal-

lier the municipalities of Oatlands, Green Ponds and Northern wards of the municipalities of Brighton and Richmond.





lation of new ground lighting at both the Campania and Oatlands Recreation Grounds was completed during the financial year.

“This was a major infrastructure project for Council, and whilst some preliminary planning had occurred, it was necessary to expedite the project following receipt of a report that the existing wooden poles had deteriorated. Council were firmly of the opinion that this level of investment was required to support local sporting teams in both the Oatlands and Campania areas.”

Infrastructure projects

Tim Kirkwood, General Manager of

Council and Jack Lyall its Manager of Works & Technical Services, discussed the various infrastructure projects that Council has recently completed. Council management uses its asset management systems, physical inspections and other means to determine the assets that need to be upgraded or renewed.

Speaking about the process utilised for allocation of the funds available to it, Tim Kirkwood explained, “We identify the important projects for asset renewal or asset replacement.

“Every council is in the position that there is insufficient money to do everything that they want, so we initial-



ly go through a prioritization process and then it goes to the elected body of the Council who approves the budget.

“Now, as part of our budget process, we also have some discretionary capital funding for projects that are identified by the community. These may be projects that the community has identified as being a safety issue or a community want or desire.

“These are primarily new asset projects. From an asset management or financial management perspective, we do tend to focus on renewal or maintenance of our existing assets without spending too much money on new assets.”

Road project

The total urban and rural road length in Council’s area is 803 kilometres. An important road project that was recent-

ly completed at a cost of \$245,000 was the realignment of the junction between Church Road and Elderslie Road at Broadmarsh.

The intersection of these roads was at an angle of 30 degrees and the project entailed converting this into a ‘T’ junction. The project met its stated objective of maximising sight distance and improving parking facilities in the vicinity.

The junction is critically located as it is a School Bus Stop Area. The work on realigning the junction was initiated in response to the lodgement of a petition by the local community with Council. As the project served to enhance safety levels for school children it received Government funding in the form of \$90,000 from the Road Safety Black Spot Program.





Bridge projects

There are 152 bridges and major culverts within the municipal area. Three important bridge projects that were completed are:

Elderslie Road Bridge: This required total replacement as the condition of the existing structure had deteriorated to a point where it could not be repaired. During the process of putting up an entirely new bridge at a cost of \$871,000, a slight realignment was done to eliminate a sharp bend on the south-eastern approach.

The reconstruction of this bridge was essential as it provides access to the Broadmarsh / Elderslie area. The contract was undertaken by AusSpan, who did an excellent job of completing the project in an extremely competent manner.

Brown Mountain Road Bridge: The timber structure of the bridge, which had been in existence for many years, needed to be replaced. When the new bridge was constructed in its place, it was designed in a manner that a centre pier was removed. This facilitates the passage of water during peak flow periods.

There are a number of orchards in the area and the bridge is important as it provides access to them. The project cost was in excess of \$440,000.

Rotherwood Bridge: The old bridge

had a timber deck and timber rails on a steel sub-structure. A relatively inexpensive project was executed at a cost of \$208,000 where a pre-cast segmented concrete deck was installed on the existing steel sub-structure. The new deck allowed a steel guard rail barrier to be installed, which provides a much higher degree of safety compared to timber rails.

Planning for the future

Council has formulated a 10-year plan to ensure that its municipal area is provided with constantly upgraded infrastructure and amenities. It has devoted a great deal of energy and time to co-ordinate its activities with the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources to improve the safety and standard of the Midland Highway and other State Roads along with road junctions.

The leadership and direction provided by Council have made the municipality one of the best managed in the state.

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