



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Converting the Community's Vision into Reality

Port Stephens Council is a local government area in the Hunter Region of New South Wales.

Phone: 02 4980 0255

Website: www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au



Port Stephens

Converting the

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Port Stephens Council

WHAT: Port Stephens Council is a local government area in the Hunter Region of New South Wales.

WHERE: NSW 2324

WEBSITE: portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Port Stephens Council is a local government area in the Hunter Region of New South Wales. It has an area of about 858 square kilometres with a population of over 69,000. The main population centres are Tomaree Peninsula, Tilligerry Peninsula, Medowie and Raymond Terrace. The population in Council's area has been growing steadily and is expected to be more than 80,000 by 2031.



Stephens Council The Community's Vision into Reality

The growth in the number of people has put a greater responsibility on Council to provide amenities that match the community's requirements. Council has risen admirably to the challenge and has, over the years, taken on a number of projects for the benefit of residents.

In the recent past, Council has completed the realignment and sealing of a significant stretch of

East Seaham Road, the new Shoal Bay Wharf as part of stage one of the Shoal Bay foreshore project, and two new car parks for the Nelson Bay CBD. Another major achievement of Council has been the speed at which it approves development applications, largely attributable to Council's ePlanning initiative. Port Stephens Council is one of the few councils that has the capability to accept development applications



electronically, significantly reducing processing times.

The new method also eliminates the need to submit large amounts of paper documents to Council. In 2014-15, Council approved more than \$345 million worth of new developments from 983 applicants.

Port Stephens Council's executive team is headed by its General Manager, Wayne Wallis. Staff are divided into four groups; Facilities & Services, Development Services, Corporate Services and the Office of the General Manager. This makes for greater focus and allows a high degree of service to be delivered to residents.

These four groups are further divided into 12 service units with a total employee strength of about 500. In addition, a large volunteer strength, approximately 800 in number, supports Council in its activities.

Wayne Wallis has been successful in making Port Stephens Council achieve its operational objectives. Speaking about the achievements of Council, Wayne Wallis said, "We made significant additions to our trophy cabinet with a swag of awards recognising the excellence of our organisation across a range of fields, including planning, tourism, human resources and economic development.

"Of particular note is our commitment to the safety of our workforce that resulted in the lowest workers compensation premium on record for 2015-2016 of \$568,590, down from \$1.86 million in 2009-2010."

In the recent past, Port Stephens Council has won the 2014 Planning Institute of Australia (NSW) award for improving planning processes and practices and the 2015 StateCover excellence award for workplace health and safety. It was also highly commended for excellence in workforce management at the NSW Local Government excellence awards.

Among the other accolades that Port Stephens Council has to its credit is the 2015 Trip Advisor excellence award for Fingal Bay, Shoal Bay and Halifax Holiday Parks. It also received silver at the Hunter/Central Coast tourism awards for excellence in the visitor information services category for Nelson Bay Visitor Information Centre.

Capital works section

About four years ago, Port Stephens Council restructured its services and facilities group. A decision was made at that time to introduce a section manager who would be in charge of the whole section works process. This section would handle all activities from survey and design right through to actual construction on the ground.

In the last three years, there has

been tremendous growth in the area of community and recreation projects in Port Stephens. This has been necessitated by the growing population and demand for such facilities.

Shoal Bay

Greg Kable, Capital Works Section Manager of Port Stephens Council says, "This year we have a budget of \$23 million. One of the more important projects we have been working on is the rejuvenation of the Shoal Bay foreshore, a very well-known tourist destination.

"We have just completed the first stage of works to the value of about \$2 million, which included a new recreational wharf, boat ramp and car parking. We also developed a shared pathway network in addition to a road upgrade and landscaping projects with particular focus on the foreshore area."

This project has had a big impact on Shoal Bay. A commercial precinct opposite the foreshore area has benefitted immensely from the Shoal Bay rejuvenation.

A number of issues were addressed at the time of executing the project. There is a seagrass area where the wharf is located, so the wharf had to be designed with this in mind. The work was carried out in coordination with Maritime Services and National Parks



to ensure that the seagrass bed was not compromised during the construction of the wharf or ongoing use.

Care to manage the dunes was done in consultation with the community groups that maintain them. It was ensured that the works carried out could be subsequently maintained by local volunteers.



Port Stephens Council has been actively involved with the Shoal Bay Community Association, a volunteer organisation that has been of immense help in rejuvenation of the area. Council has worked closely with them for the project to deliver a result that they are in agreement with, and which also attracts more tourists to the area.

Lemon Tree Passage Aquatic Infrastructure Upgrade

A sum of \$1.3 million has been made available for this important project through Transport for NSW's Boating Now program. The works include replacing the original pontoon with two new pontoons, widening the boat



Marine Contracting Solutions

Construction with integrity is the key element of our success.



**Proud Partners to
Port Stephens Council**

Hunter Wharf & Barge has 25 years of experience, with a reputation for delivering high quality, green construction throughout Australia.

HWB clientele throughout Australia, includes local councils, RMS, Energy Australia, Land and Property Management Authority, Honeysuckle Development Corporation, Goulburn Murray Water, Fulton Hogan, Comdain Infrastructure, Domestic jetties, Repairs & Rebuilds.

 0414 866 030

 peter@hunterwharfandbarge.com.au

 www.hunterwharfandbarge.com.au

ramp and providing an additional boat access lane.

New netting for the swimming enclosure is also a part of the project. The work is being done to attract people to the headland, delivering benefits including improved safety for boating and greater encouragement for families to use the playground.

Medowie Multi-purpose Community Centre Project

This centre will serve a number of purposes for the growing community of Medowie. It will be a sports complex as well as being a building to provide a clubhouse for sporting organisations and importantly, an evacuation centre.

Plans for the \$3 million building project are in the process of finalisation. Sporting bodies have been requesting a facility of this nature for Medowie for some time now. Facilities will also include a bowling green, car parking and a playground.

Council has strong financial management

Port Stephens Council is extremely well managed and is acknowledged for its financial prudence. In the Annual Report for 2014-15, Bruce MacKenzie, the Mayor of Port Stephens, elaborated on this point, "Council's financial performance continues to be outstanding with this year's result achieved in spite of the

financial burden placed upon us by the April storms (in 2015).

"When you consider what has been achieved after being \$13 million in debt only a few years ago, it is a point of major satisfaction.

"This is a high performing and financially sustainable organisation which has achieved all this while still having the lowest residential rate in the lower Hunter, with no increases required over the rate peg. It is a result that many of our neighbours envy."

Contractor Listing Hunter Wharf & Barge

hunterwharfandbarge.com.au

Business
view
magazine
Australia | New Zealand

USA \ CANADA \ BRAZIL \ CARIBBEAN \ AUSTRALIA \ NEW ZEALAND \ MID EAST

www.BusinessViewMagazine.com.au