

Council News

Spring 2021 edition



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ARMIDALE
Regional Council

Message from the Mayor

As our state emerges from constant lockdowns and we begin to live in a world with COVID I sense a level of optimism returning to our region.



I am constantly amazed and uplifted by how well our community has dealt with what has been a constant barrage of uncertainty and hardship during the last several years of drought, bushfires and the pandemic. Difficult times remain for our businesses and the broader community. It is vitally important that we continue to support our local businesses.

For a long time now, I have had confidence that the future will be very positive for our region. A new Council will be elected in December and will start working for you with the new executive leadership team. Under the inspiring leadership of our General Manager James Roncon, we are already seeing a major improvement in the operations of Council. I and my colleagues acknowledge James for the work he has been undertaking with all staff and councillors on the culture of the organisation and embedding a values-based leadership model.

A number of significant projects are either

underway or are in the final preliminary planning stages. I commend councillors and Council staff for taking advantage of every funding opportunity during what has been an unprecedented spend by the State and Federal Governments to stimulate our hard-pressed regional economy.

The stabilisation of the Dumaresq Dam wall is progressing well and contractors are on target to wrap-up the project by late February 2022. Preliminary works and engagement with landowners are underway on the Puddledock Raw Water Harvest Main and Pump Station Augmentation. This significant project will upgrade aged infrastructure and make it far easier to access water from the city's back-up reservoir. It will be part of our plan to ensure a safe, secure water supply for the Armidale region.

The September 2021 Council Meeting approved a Development Application for a service centre at the Airside Business Park including associated retail building, fast food outlets and truck stop. This is a significant milestone for the Business Park adjacent to the New England Highway and secures an anchor tenant for the park. Other sales at the precinct are now occurring.

A new stage for the Beardy Street Mall is underway. The stage has been identified in the latest revitalisation plan for the mall. This was also an important mall feature requested by the community and will provide further opportunities for the community and council

to conduct regular events.

The Kempsey Road will also be the beneficiary of a Fixing Local Roads Grant of \$2.96m. The State Government has also announced it will accept the Independent Panel for Road Classification Review and Regional Road Transfer's recommendation to take back ownership of Armidale-Kempsey Road between the Waterfall Way and Belgrave Street, Kempsey. This is welcome news for Council and to the community in the area.

Malpas Dam wall raising planning continues. Large scale road improvements are continuing on Waterfall Way. Several, job creating Renewable Energy projects are in the pipeline and some have commenced operation. Council is developing a policy to take advantage of these projects for you.

There is much about which to be enthused as we move ahead.

This is my final contribution to this newsletter as Mayor of Armidale Regional Council. I have enjoyed my almost six years as Administrator, Councillor and mayor in the Armidale regional community. It has been a very high honour to serve you and I will miss the wonderful people I have met and who have befriended and supported me. I wish you all the best for the future as our region strongly progresses in the coming years.

Best wishes.

Cr. Ian Tiley
Mayor

Restore & Thrive

Council's Restore and Thrive Turnaround Strategy received a serious injection of positivity during a hugely successful World Café event to review the organisation's new 'Back to basics' roadmap and values.

The World Café was held recently over two days, in four sessions, with over 180 staff and Councillors participating.

Armidale Regional Council General Manager James Roncon said the World Café was an exciting opportunity to bring teams together.

"This was the first time a world café has ever been held virtually, anywhere in the world," he said

"It wasn't without a few initial technical

glitches, but everyone adapted really well and had the opportunity to share their views, constructively, and in the spirit of collaboration and mutual respect for each other."

"We want to be a high performing organisation that sets the standard for how a business should operate."
James Roncon

The culture change initiative begins with values and behaviours based leadership. As an organisation the culture is well and truly under the microscope.

"The organisation is starting to get its swagger back," said James Roncon

"It was really pleasing to see staff and councillors break the shackles of the past and develop values

and behaviours they all want to live and breathe.

"Leading through lived values gives staff

the freedom to explore and challenge the way we do things and not be afraid to do so. Leadership is about encouraging people to find their purpose.

"It should be a model that thrives because it is lived and breathed by the whole staff group."

Council is now focused on setting a standard that all staff and councillors can aspire too that in-turn is reflected out in the community. A strong focus on values and behaviours will be a key component of future recruitment.

"Following the World Café the next stage of the journey for Council is to adopt the strategy map and start putting it into practice.

"While we will be striving to be perfect all of the time, we will have days when we miss the mark.

"We will own our mistakes, accept responsibility and be better next time."



Compass Women in Leadership graduates. From left: Katrina George, Wendy Warner, Caitlin Doughan, Aimee Hutton and Lilian Colmanetti.

Women mean business on leadership program

Women at Armidale Regional Council are unlocking their leadership potential so they can be seen and heard in the work place - and they mean business.

Council is embarking on its 'Restore and Thrive' Turnaround Strategy to deliver long term success with a focus on 'back to basics', to reset the operations of Council and earn the respect of the community once again.

An integral part of this strategy is developing a workforce that reflects the diversity of our region, and women in leadership roles are crucial in bridging the gender diversity gap.

Council has partnered with the Dattner Group whose flagship leadership courses and women's programs are assisting women in council at all levels of leadership, on a transformational journey that links women's ambition with their deepest sense of purpose and core values.

Council's Executive Manager People and Culture Annie Harris said the program aligns with the values based leadership model Council is now adopting.

"Nine women in various leadership roles have been, or are currently enrolled, in the program," said Annie Harris

"The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from staff on the program. Our hope is that we start to see women step up and drive change within the organisation and not only be seen, but more importantly heard and valued for their contribution.

"Council is aware, like a vast majority of Councils particularly in regional areas, that it has a way to go in ensuring gender parity within its leadership group. This program is absolutely the first step to changing this.

As we see more women moving into typically male dominated areas of our operations, to me, this investment just makes good sense. We know that the impact of this program is not only on current participants, building confidence and leadership capability, but it will develop strong role

models and mentors for the next generation of women who join Council."

I'm confident that with the programs we have in place and with a values based leadership model embedded into the organisation more women will join me at the executive level before too long."



Save the date

2021 NSW Local Government elections

Saturday 4 December

Voting is compulsory

elections.nsw.gov.au/lge21
1300 135 736

Work underway on new Beardy Street Mall stage

The reconstruction of the Beardy Street Mall stage has begun, marking a significant milestone in the Mall Revitalisation program.

The all-weather sound shell design will heighten the capacity for Council and the community to hold regular outdoor events, with the flow on effects set to significantly benefit surrounding businesses.

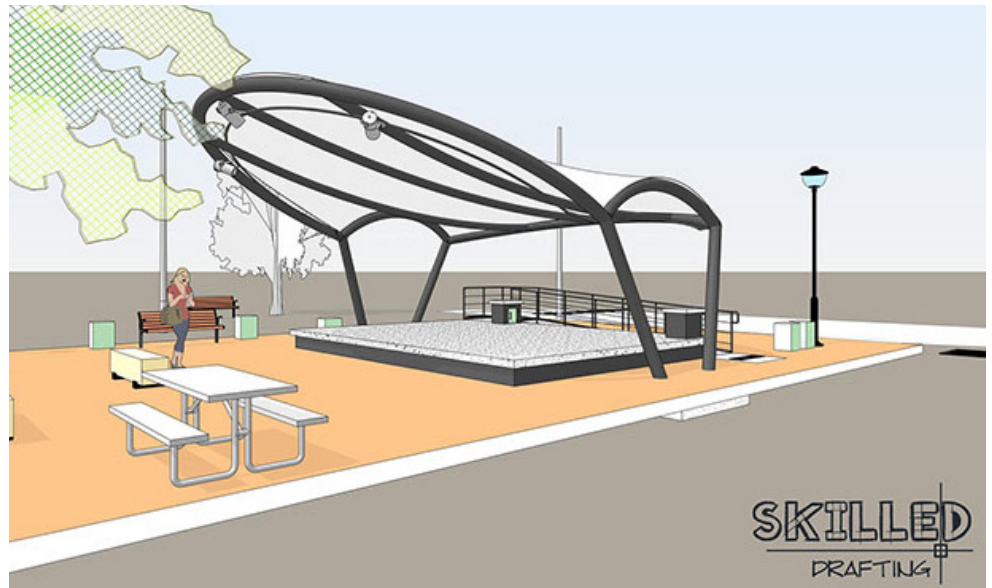
The new stage will be covered and suitable for all weather conditions, and include updated power outlets that provide for live music, community events and public forums.

The contemporary structure has a light footprint in keeping with the alfresco feel of the mall. Structural elements of the sound shell and stage design echo the heritage features of the neighbouring post office and old court house. While still maintaining a uniquely twenty first century appeal rather than imitating nearby heritage listed buildings.

"A new stage was very important to the community when asked during the extensive community consultation that was undertaken in 2017 with the now rejected King and Campbell design," said Mayor Tiley.

"Council has listened to the community and incorporated this feedback, including a new stage into The Armidale City Mall Vibrancy Plan 2015-2035. It also demonstrates Council's commitment to keep the central mall free of vehicle traffic."

In 2018 further consultation was undertaken with community members



who were instrumental in driving the overwhelming community feedback to reject the King and Campbell design. A Mall Community Reference Group was convened and advised that a new stage should be an architectural statement, acoustically enhancing, less than 1m in height for access compliance and have an all-weather cover.

Vaccination targets have been met and restrictions have eased on outdoor events Council will facilitate a regular summer schedule of community events, spearheaded by the return of the popular Twilight Food Markets and our showcase Christmas in the

Mall celebrations.

The reconstruction of the stage platform is underway and should be completed by the end of the November, weather permitting. The sound shell will be installed later in the year and the entire project completed in time for Christmas in the Mall celebrations.

The stage reconstruction is the key component of a project that's already seen the redevelopment of the playgrounds and refurbishment of the bus shelter. The project has been funded by a \$423,100 grant from Round 1 of the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund.

Libraries sign up to book recycling program

With around 4.5 million books from Australian libraries needing to be replaced each year, the toll on our landfills and the environment is quickly growing. That's why the Armidale Regional Libraries has signed up to the Sustainability Project, which is an initiative aimed at diverting books from landfill.

Organised by book supplier James Bennett, the initiative has seen more than 140 schools and councils from across Australia come together to give books a second life. Since June 2021, the project has diverted more than 245,000 books from landfill, with these unused titles going to communities in need, or recycled to make new products. These products are then sold, with funds directed back to participating libraries to purchase new books, or donated on the library's behalf to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Ian Tiley said it's an important project for Council to be a part of.

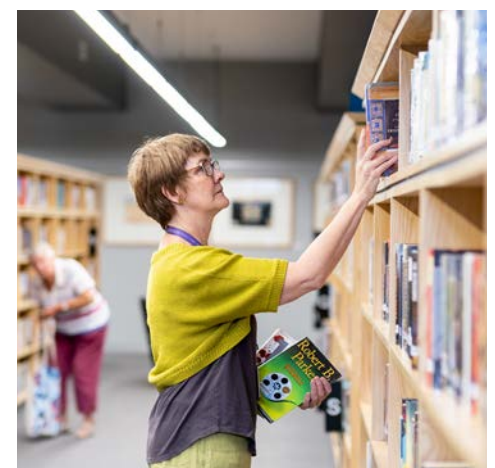
"Our libraries have to dispose of thousands of books each year in order to keep collections fresh and relevant, so you can imagine how much of an impact this could have on landfills and the environment," said Mayor Tiley.

"By taking part in this initiative, Council is not only demonstrating its commitment to sustainability and environmental protection, but also supporting literacy and education in disadvantaged indigenous communities."

Through the Sustainability Project, the Indigenous Literacy Foundation has received more than \$4000 in donations, while more than \$15,000 has been shared back to libraries to purchase new books.

Armidale and Guyra's libraries regularly purchase new material, which is why Mayor Tiley is encouraging the community to explore the exciting collection on offer.

"Our collection consists of almost 95,000 items, so there is no shortage of things to read, watch or listen to," said Mayor Tiley.



"While there are new titles constantly being added, there are also all of the classics, and a wide range of material written by local authors, so there is something for everyone to discover."

If you would like a free membership to the library, visit the Libraries page on Council's website.

Improvements at Armidale Airport set to boost the region's aviation industry

Armidale Regional Airport is preparing for a boost in aviation activities as construction to improve infrastructure for aircrafts, operators and passengers' powers ahead at the precinct.

Council embarked on the \$2.45 million project, designed to expand and enhance aircraft ground movement, to include a taxiway, runway lighting improvements, installation of a refuelling apron, stormwater drainage and remediation of a grass runway.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Ian Tiley said the development supports critical air infrastructure and will address identified issues currently impeding operations or preventing the growth of general aviation activities at Armidale Regional Airport.

"The developments will facilitate improved delivery of essential goods and services, increase connectivity of our region to

domestic and global market opportunities, and meet the operational requirements of aeromedical and other emergency services in the area," said Mayor Tiley.

Armidale Regional Council General Manager James Roncon said the expansion will eliminate congestion and provide greater capability for larger type aircrafts at the airport. Stormwater and drainage improvements will eliminate nuisance flooding and enable all weather access for general aviation aircrafts.

"The installation of a refuelling apron provides greater flexibility to aircraft travel, giving options for pilots' using or within range of the airport to refuel without absorbing reserves to arrive at their destination."

"The Armidale region is growing and we're preparing our aviation industry for its progression," said Mr Roncon.

Since the relocation of the NSW RFS facilities, the airport played a major role in the black summer fires.

Armidale Regional Airport Manager Wes Summers said the grass runway was damaged during the intense aerial firefighting activities in summer 2019 and needs urgent remediation.

"The remediation work combined with other project developments will amplify bush fire capabilities for the Armidale region and wider communities.

"Overall, this is a major step in the right direction for our aviation industry, and it only has a positive flow on effect for all other business and organisations benefiting from aviation activities across the region," said Mr Summers.

The project is jointly funded by the Federal Government's Regional Airports Program and Armidale Regional Council.

Community encouraged to recycle household goods

With the warmer weather now upon us, it's the time of year that many people begin to undertake some spring cleaning to freshen up after Winter. The community is being reminded of the importance of correctly disposing of household and electronic waste during this time in order to maximise the amount of waste being diverted from landfill.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Ian Tiley said it's the perfect opportunity for people to get familiar with the wide range of services available at the region's Waste Management

Facilities and Community Recycling Centres.

"Correct waste disposal is so important in protecting our environment and local ecosystems, so I would strongly encourage everyone to think twice about throwing something into the red-lid bin if there is any chance it could be recycled," said Mayor Tiley.

"Our Waste Management Facilities accept a huge range of items that can't be collected kerbside, but can be recycled, for example an old mattress or a broken electrical appliance. There are so many ways to ensure your

household waste is given a second life."

Even if old appliances are broken and can't be reused, their parts can be used to make new items, which is why it's important not to put them in general waste. For example, the springs in an old mattress can be melted down and used to build new infrastructure, such as train tracks.

Mixing electrical waste with general waste can also be dangerous, as these items can contain toxic materials such as lead and mercury that have detrimental effects on the environment.

WHEN YOU RECYCLE IN YOUR HOME YOU HELP PROTECT MY HOME



To help you decide what to do with your household waste, here is a helpful list of things you are able to drop off at Council's Waste Management Facilities and Community Recycling Centres (Armidale & Guyra)

- Batteries (including car batteries)
- E-waste - Broken electrical appliances including computers, televisions, lighting, power tools.
- Household chemicals
- Motor oil and containers
- Paints and non motor oil eg: cooking oil, gas bottles, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, fluorescent globes, mobile phones, x-ray files.

Mini CRC Drop off Stations (located at Council's Customer Service areas in Armidale and Guyra)

- Household batteries
- Fluorescent globes
- Smoke detectors
- Ink cartridges
- Mobile phones

Waste Management Facility:

- Empty paint tin
- Steel
- Wood (including treated and with nails and fittings)*
- Tyres*
- Mattresses*
- Concrete*
- Household recycling

There will be a charge for depositing items marked with an asterisk.

For more information about our waste services and the closest drop off location to you, please visit our website.

Make a splash!

Aquatic centres across the region now open



Monckton Aquatic Centre

152 Dumaresq St, Armidale

Opening hours:
Weekdays: 6am to 7pm
(Daylight Savings Time)
Weekends & Public Holidays: 10am to 7pm (DST) Except Christmas Day
Ph: 6770 3831

Guyra Pool

Dutton Parade, Guyra

Opening hours:
Monday, Wednesday & Friday:
6.30am-8am & 10am-6pm
Tuesday & Thursday: 10am-6pm
Weekends & Public Holidays
10.30am-5.30pm
Ph: 6779 1335

**Family day passes
& multi visit passes
available**

Reuse Farm prepares for future with new software

While the dams may be full at the moment, Australia's climate variability means drought is something the region's farmers will always be wary of. This is why Council's Waste Water Treatment Plan and Reuse Farm has recently started state of the art software program Ag360. Developed by the University of New England, the software is designed to predict rainfall, soil moisture, and livestock performance based on historic data.

Armidale Regional Council's Mayor Ian Tiley said this program eliminates risk associated with climate uncertainty, which will hopefully result in improved overall performance for the Reuse Farm.

"As the seasons become more unpredictable and water is more valuable, we need to ensure our operations are as efficient as possible in order to reduce costs, improve productivity, and reduce risk to staff and livestock," he said.

"Our Reuse Farm is home to 540 head of cattle, 65 hectares of lucerne, and 284 hectares of native and improved pastures, so it's vital we embrace contemporary advancements like Ag360 to improve our practices and protect the welfare of our stock, crops and pastures."

The software's main feature is its ability to record the past in order to predict the future. Staff at the Reuse Farm now have the ability to record rainfall data, paddock



movements, animal weights and animal health treatments. This data is then used to predict future rainfall, pasture availability, stock movements, weight prediction, and the future health of livestock.

"Because of these features, staff at the Reuse Farm can plan ahead, giving them the power to know when livestock numbers need to be increased or decreased, and when pasture supplementation will be required," said Mayor Tiley.

"This will ensure the correct amount of feed is always available, and pastures remain at the highest possible standard."

The farm will trial the program until the end of 2022. For more information about the software, visit www.ag360.com.au.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Former Guyra and Armidale LEPS to merge

Council moves to create a consolidated local environmental planning instrument

In response to requirements from the State Government, Council is proposing to amend the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012 to include provisions from the Guyra Local Environmental Plan 2012 and from the Standard Instrument – Principal Local

Environmental Plan 2006.

This process will result in the creation of the Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan; one plan that will apply to the whole of the Armidale Regional Local Government Area.

A copy of the Planning Proposal (PP-2021-4173) is available for review at: yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au

Book a building or plumbing inspection online

Booking a building or plumbing Inspection is easy through Council's online booking system. You can now book on any device using Council's CityWatch application through an interactive calendar and confirm the booking via email/SMS.

Search 'Book an Inspection' on the Council website

Productivity flows thanks to new irrigation system

Council's Waste Water Treatment Plant and Reuse Farm has found a way to increase efficiency and reduce manual labour costs when maintaining crops grown at the farm through embracing a new centre pivot irrigation system.

Council recently installed two centre pivot irrigators, with another one to go in next month. Centre pivot irrigation has a low operation cost and increases efficiency through reducing human labour and WHS risk, while ensuring an even application of effluent over the land. The centre pivots can also be remotely controlled from anywhere in the world.

Mayor Ian Tiley said it's a positive step towards the future for the Reuse Farm.

"The previous irrigation system that was being used has been in operation for the past 20 years and is starting to show its age," said Mayor Tiley.

"While it has served us well, it's time to embrace contemporary farming practices and modernise the way we do things."

"We hope to eventually move to using



eleven centre pivots, which will allow for more accurate and even disposal of effluent per hectare which will see our crops and pastures thrive."

The region's treated effluent, otherwise known as waste water, is used to water and fertilise the 129 hectares of pasture and 65 hectares of lucerne that is grown on the farm. These draw the nutrients from the soil,

effectively reusing effluent and biosolids.

The hay that is produced from the lucerne crop is harvested from October through to April, and is available for the community to purchase during these months.

To find out more about the Waste Water Treatment Plant, visit the Waste Water Treatment and Collection page on our website.

Funding purchases BBQ trailer to support bushfire & drought recovery

New England Family Support Service will purchase a new bbq trailer to support locals still trying to get back on their feet after the devastating drought and bushfires of 2019.

The group has been granted \$5,000 by Armidale Regional Council, as part of a community grants program funded through the State and Australian Government's Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF).

Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall was joined by Mayor Ian Tiley and Councillor Jon Galletly to congratulate and thank the wonderful team at New England Family Support Service for their continued support

of locals in our community.

The injection of funds will go towards supporting the organisation's Rural Community Connect recovery program run in partnership with the Mazda Foundation. The barbecue and trailer will be taken to rural schools and small communities to help raise spirits during the tough recovery process.

The one-off funding program was designed to help local community groups in their recovery and resilience efforts following the Black Summer Bushfires. Council will profile in the coming months other organisations that are putting this grant money to good use.



NE Volunteer Awards

Mayor Ian Tiley had the pleasure of participating in the New England Volunteer Awards which were held online.

Congratulations to Gretel Kempster from U3A who was awarded New England Volunteer of the Year Award and to Michael Kean from 2ARM FM who was awarded Adult Volunteer of the Year.

It was a double celebration for 2ARM FM who were also named the Volunteer Team of the Year.

Need to find a business or community group?
Visit our online community directory today to search or add a business or group.

Council meetings

The general public is welcome to attend any Armidale Regional Council meeting:

- Wednesday 27 October in Guyra
 - Wednesday 24 November in Armidale
- Seating is limited during COVID-19 restrictions. Register by emailing executiveoffice@armidale.nsw.gov.au

Public Forum

Council holds a Public Forum prior to each Council meeting to hear submissions from members of our community on items of business to be considered at the meeting (Have Your Say) and for invited presentations. The Public Forum is not webcast (live streamed) or recorded. The public is welcome to attend.

For Ordinary Council Meetings, invited presentations take place at 3pm on the day and Have Your Say takes place at 3:30pm on the day.

Live Streaming



Council meetings are streamed live on our youtube channel or via our website!

Contact Us

Call: 1300 136 833

Email: council@armidale.nsw.gov.au
Visit a Customer Service Centre at:
135 Rusden St, Armidale or
158 Bradley St, Guyra

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Local company to develop region's Catchment Water Quality Strategic Plan

Zrog Consulting has been awarded the tender to develop the Armidale Regional Council Catchment Water Quality Strategic Plan.

The company is developing a ten year strategic plan to elevate water quality in Council's storages and improve catchment health. It will outline the goals, high priority actions, supporting initiatives and measurement mechanisms to assess and improve water quality outcomes in the greater catchment areas of Council's storage dams.

This will ensure Council is doing everything that can be done to improve the quality of water entering the storage dams while guiding investment and resource allocation across the greater Malpas, Guyra and Puddledock catchments over the next decade.

Zrog Consulting is an environmental consultancy agency based in Armidale, and has a wealth of experience in stakeholder engagement and using science to help solve complex, environmental problems.

The company will work closely with the



Guyra Dam

community and affected landholders to shape and develop strategies that will benefit the health and longevity of the catchments, with these actions to then be implemented by Council over the next ten years.

This work will complement the work already being done to secure the region's water supply.

It's expected the strategic plan will be developed by December 2021.

New partnership to improve waste disposal and education for social housing tenants

A new partnership between Armidale Regional Council and social housing provider Homes North will increase education around waste disposal and provide more opportunities for the region's most vulnerable to properly discard of bulk waste.

The two organisations will collaborate to implement a Regional Social Housing Waste Strategy, which is a move that Mayor Ian Tiley says will maximise the amount of waste diverted from landfill, while greatly assisting the region's low income earners.

"In the areas that have a high volume of social housing, we often find bulky items are illegally dumped or people hold onto rubbish due to not having the means to go to the waste management facility," said Mayor Tiley.

"Through this pilot program, Council and

Homes North will work together to rectify these issues and increase education around waste disposal."

The program will be trialled for twelve months, and include regular bulk waste and metal collection days for social housing tenants. Skip bins will be provided in five separate locations, and will give tenants the opportunity to dispose of items such as mattresses and white goods. These will then be recycled and correctly disposed of by Council.

This will be complemented by education campaigns to teach people about the correct ways to sort rubbish and how to minimise the amount of waste going into landfill.

Homes North is the region's largest social housing provider and manages over 600 tenancies in Armidale and Guyra.

Works and Projects

Keep up to date with road closures, road works, and major projects by heading to the Works and Projects page on our website.

