Message from the Minister for Local Government

THE HON. JIM COX MHA

On 13 February 2008, I was delighted to be appointed Minister for Local Government. Having held the position previously, I recognise the value to the Tasmanian community of a strong partnership between the State Government and Local Government.

Local Government is an important tier of government. Councils across the nation deliver key services to local communities, ranging from environmental management to infrastructure development to aged care. I’m pleased to again be working with local governments as they provide these vital services.

I have already begun visits to councils around the state. Visiting regions directly is the best way to know what is really happening. For example, I have seen significant achievements around community safety, engaging youth, and urban regeneration. Main street makeovers are rejuvenating towns around the state. They demonstrate what State Government and Local Government cooperation can deliver.

I am looking forward to working closely with LGAT in 2008-09 to strengthen Local Government across the state through the Stronger Councils, Better Service project. I have also asked that there be a wide-ranging evaluation of the partnership agreements program. The program has provided real outcomes for communities, but I believe we can do things better. I expect to receive a report on the program before the end of this year.

Minister Jim Cox MHA, Minister for Local Government
Hobart Opens Outstanding Mountain Bike Track

A spectacular and iconic track for experienced mountain bike riders has been officially opened on Mt Wellington by the Hobart City Council and the Wellington Park Management Trust.

Stage 1 of the North-South Track, which has received widespread recognition, is a shared use track for mountain bikers and bushwalkers. Designed in accordance with the International Mountain Bicycling Association’s (IMBA) guidelines, the track features a main trail, providing a challenging ride for experienced cross country riders, whilst optional technical features, such as jumps and log rides have also been constructed to challenge more capable and adventurous riders.

Local riders were involved in both the design and construction of the track and a recent test ride produced glowing reviews from all participants. The Hobart City Council also engaged one of the world’s most experienced mountain bike track designers, Glen Jacobs, to audit the track with respect to its safety, useability and sustainability. Construction of the North-South Track has involved the combined efforts of the Council’s track crew and two Green Corps teams.

Over two years and close to three kilometres later, the track is a glowing testament to the teams’ high quality workmanship, dedication and commitment to creating a challenging experience and sustainable asset in the harsh but beautiful environment of Mount Wellington.

TOP: A section of the track spans a rock scree with superb views down to the city and beyond
ABOVE RIGHT: A spectacular and unique feature of the track is a section across a boulder
RIGHT: Mountain bike riders putting the track to the test
Brighton Oval Under the Spotlight

Brighton’s Thompson Oval has been given a new lease on life with the installation of a new lighting system. The new lights, funded by Sport and Recreation Tasmania’s Facilities Grants Program, will benefit the many clubs and organisations that use the facility and will create more opportunities for the Brighton community to participate in sport and recreation.

The ground is already home to the Brighton Football Club and Hobart United Football (soccer) Club, which will now be able to host competition games at night and have more flexibility sharing time between the two sports. Both clubs can now focus on growing their membership in both the junior and senior ranks and developing their up-and-coming players, as well as providing a home for those people who play for the social aspect of sport.

The new lighting system also opens the grounds for extended hours to other groups such as cricket, dog and horse training, ethelites, and the Brighton Show.

The project is a great example of how the State Government, local council and sport and recreation clubs can work together for the benefit of the entire community. The State Government provided $56,000 for the new lights, which was matched by Brighton Council, with Betfair contributing an additional $10,000 and sporting clubs providing $10,000 for the project.

Council Business an Art Form

Tasmanian councils are being invited to support business and arts connections for the greater economic and cultural good of their communities by getting involved with the Arts Connecting Communities (ACC) program.

ACC promotes creative connections between local businesses, arts groups and councils and is run by the Australia Business Arts Foundation (AbaF), supported by National Principal Partner, Toyota Community Spirit. The program increases councils’ abilities to support these relationships, assists arts and cultural organisations to develop their skills in attracting business for partnerships and sponsorships, and increases the involvement of business in arts and cultural ventures. In 2007, the cities of Hobart, Clarence and Kingborough joined forces to deliver the ACC program in their areas as a way to enhance their arts and cultural strategies.

The ACC program can be delivered easily by single or multiple council departments and AbaF works closely with council staff to plan the delivery, management and evaluation of the program tailored to resources available and desired outcomes. The program also provides opportunities to link into council priorities across a range of departments, including economic development, events, health and more. The Arts Connecting Communities program is a customised and comprehensive offering to assist councils in supporting their community engagement goals in a unique and manageable way.

To find out more, contact AbaF Tasmania on 6233 5934, or visit www.abaf.org.au/partnering/artsconnectingcommunities.html.

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CRSP Update

Motor Cycle Warning Signs

As a result of consultation between the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Glamorgan Spring Bay Council and Motor Cycle Riding Club representatives, the Glamorgan Spring Bay Community Road Safety Partnership will trial new motorcycle warning signs. Unfortunately motorcyclists continue to be over-represented in our crash statistics and these new signs are designed to provide warning to motorcyclists when special circumstances apply which are not apparent to the rider.

Motorcycle crashes often occur in areas where the layout of the road system may incorporate curves lacking clear definition or where there are changes in road alignment.

In a first for Tasmania the signs will be trialled at two sites on the Tasman Highway, where a significant number of motorcycle crashes have occurred.

Other strategies planned to raise awareness about motorcycle safety in Glamorgan Spring Bay include:

• A motorcycle safety day event involving motorcycle clubs and local riders;
• Council’s promotion of a motorcycle friendly municipality;
• Inclusion of motorcycle safe touring tips on Council’s website; and
• Cooperation from local businesses to accommodate motorcyclist needs and promote safe riding.

Roadside Crash Markers for Waratah-Wynyard

Waratah-Wynyard is the latest local government authority, and the first in the North West to adopt the Tasmanian Roadside Crash Marker Program. On May 8th 2008 Steve Kons MP and Waratah-Wynyard Mayor Kevin Hyland launched the program at Somerset.

The Roadside Crash Marker Program is another community road safety initiative that aims to raise the awareness of road trauma at the sites of fatal and serious injury crashes by reminding complacent drivers of the constant risk of a crash.

Steve Kons MP congratulates Mayor Kevin Hyland for the council’s participation in the program.

Kentish School Bus Safety Campaign

In January 2008 the Kentish Road Safety Committee identified school bus safety as a priority issue for the Kentish region. Drivers and parents are concerned at the speed of passing motorists, and importantly drivers are concerned about children who walk across busy rural roads unsupervised.

To address this issue the Kentish Road Safety Committee developed a road safety ‘postcard’ strategy. This involved a postcard being mailed to every household and business in the Kentish Region. The postcard clearly reminds people of the 40km/h speed zone around school buses with flashing lights.

The postcard also asks adults to be mindful that young children are vulnerable when crossing busy rural roads unsupervised and that it is preferable to have adults take children to and from the door of the school bus.

The Sheffield School bus monitors are collecting data relating to the postcard strategy that will provide further information about the success of the campaign. This will be reported in future school newsletter articles.

Glenorchy Youth Have Their Say!

Potentially life-saving strategies which young car passengers can use to prevent themselves becoming a road crash statistic were discussed at a recent community consultation evening.

The Glenorchy Community Road Safety Committee (GCRSC), in conjunction with the Glenorchy Youth Task Force (GYTF), held the evening to discuss “passenger power” - the positive solutions that young people can apply to high-risk situations.

The idea arose from the Moonah Precinct, alarmed by statistics that young drivers and passengers (17-25yo) account for more than half (53%) of people killed and injured on Tasmania’s roads.

The aim of the evening was to gather information to develop possible strategies to create awareness and education about risks for young passengers.

Members of the Glenorchy Precincts Program interacted in small groups with youth to come up with innovative and realistic ways to stop young people from getting into a car with a driver affected by alcohol or drugs or acting irresponsibly and what to do if they find themselves in such a situation.

The evening captured some great ideas and possible strategies, such as catchy marketing slogans and merchandise, the use of technology that young people use to spread the message and actual strategies to explore, such as a midnight bus or designated driver scheme.

Over the next few weeks a working group will reconvene to progress some of the ideas and strategies in the hope of reducing the high number of young people involved in serious casualty crashes.

MORE INFORMATION?

Anyone interested in obtaining more information regarding the CRSP Program can contact Project Manager, Geoff Frier (DIER) by phone 62 334861 or email geoff.frier@dier.tas.gov.au
Motorcycle Warning Signs Launched

A trial of new motorcycle warning signs has commenced in the Glamorgan Spring Bay municipality to reduce the number of road accidents involving motorcyclists.

The trial, a Community Road Safety Partnership initiative, is the result of consultation with the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Glamorgan Spring Bay Council and Motor Cycle Riding Club representatives.

Every year in Tasmania, at least seven fatalities and 67 serious injuries involve motorcyclists or pillion passengers. One of the ways in which to influence road user behaviour is to place appropriate signs at key positions on our road systems.

The new signs are designed to provide warning to motorcyclists when special circumstances apply which are not apparent to the rider.

Loss of control is a common feature of motorcycle crashes, especially in areas where the layout of the road system may incorporate curves lacking clear definition, or where there are changes in road alignment. These situations can sometimes be difficult to deal with, even for skilled riders.

Where such a road environment exists and there is a history of demonstrated motorcycle crashes, motorcycle safety can be improved by the provision of appropriate warning signs.

It’s the first time these signs have been used in Tasmania and they will be erected at two trial sites on the Tasman Highway, in Glamorgan Spring Bay, where a significant number of motorcycle crashes have occurred.

Other strategies implemented by the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council to raise awareness about motorcycle safety include:

• A Motorcycle Safety Day involving motorcycle clubs and local riders;
• Promotion of a motorcycle friendly municipality;
• Inclusion of motorcycle safe touring tips on Council’s website; and
• Cooperation from local businesses to accommodate motorcyclist needs and promote safe riding.
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Hobart’s Subterranean Heritage Exposed

Today’s generation knows very little about what lays beneath our feet in Hobart, particularly under the CBD, city parks and school playgrounds. Author Peter MacFie is shedding new light on the world beneath Hobart in a new book, Underground Hobart, published by the Hobart City Council.

One of the book’s greatest assets is the rich and colourful history of the buried waterways of the Hobart Rivulet, the Domain Park Rivulet, Sandy Bay-Wellington Rivulet, together with tunnels and drains stretching back almost to the very start of Hobart’s first settlement in Sullivans Cove.

Underground Hobart contains a range of photographs highlighting all aspects of Hobart’s underground. Many portray not just the rivulets, but the wider aspects of burial grounds, installation of water, gas and sewerage together with shops, homes and places of entertainment.

Copies of Underground Hobart are available from the Hobart City Council Customer Service Centre for $24.95.
Landmark Agreement Represents Another Milestone

A regional partnership agreement between three tiers of Government and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community is another milestone in the reconciliation process. The landmark agreement has opened the door for Tasmania’s Aboriginal people to play a stronger role in land management, while improving the state’s skills base.

The Aboriginal Land Management Team Regional Partnership Agreement gives the Aboriginal Community in Tasmania the opportunity to undertake formal training and, in the longer term, to work in the area of Conservation and Land Management.

For the first time, the State Government is formally recognising the need to involve the original owners of the land in managing and preserving Tasmania’s unique natural heritage and is taking concrete steps to include them in that process. The signing formalised agreement between the Australian Government, the State Government, local councils and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (TALSC).

TALSC has taken a leading role in the process by hosting an Aboriginal Community Project/Liaison Officer to progress the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Management Regional Partnership Agreement from a Tasmanian Aboriginal Community perspective. The purpose of the agreement is to set out a strategic and co-ordinated approach to Aboriginal land management throughout Tasmania, maximising opportunities for training and ongoing employment in this sector.

The training program will encompass site protection, site rehabilitation, land care, land management, education projects and tourism. Participants will engage in six months of full-time training at TAFE Tasmania and then be placed with host employers for a further six months for on-the-job work experience.

LGAT Supports ‘Consulting Kids’ Workshops

During April, an international expert in creating child-friendly communities was invited to Tasmania by the Smith Family*, in partnership with the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, to deliver three professional development workshops.

Dr Karen Malone, Professor of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong, presented three full-day, practical workshops in Hobart, Launceston and Wynyard to a total of 135 enthusiastic participants. A dynamic and thought-provoking presenter, Dr Malone is also the Asia-Pacific Director of the global UNESCO-MOST Growing up in Cities (GUIC) project that focuses on children and youth evaluating their quality of life. Local Government was a keen supporter of the events, with Glenorchy City and Waratah-Wynyard Councils generously providing the venues for the Hobart and Wynyard workshops.

Attendees at each workshop were impressed with Dr Malone’s passion and lively delivery and came away with a renewed understanding of why children’s participation in community consultations is so important. Participants were treated to inspiring examples of young people’s unique contributions to research projects around the world and marvelled at how knowledgeable they were when respected as equal partners throughout the consultation process. The afternoon provided first-hand experience of the child-focused consultation process and demonstrated the skills needed to plan, conduct and interpret child-focused research work.

The Smith Family congratulates LGAT for supporting these successful events, which are believed to have contributed significantly to developing community-based skills in this important area.

The Smith Family has recently established a presence in Tasmania and has formed partnerships with four communities to support the early learning, development and wellbeing of young Tasmanian children. Facilitating evidence-based community programs that unlock opportunities for disadvantaged families through education, The Smith Family is focusing in Tasmania on children aged 0-8 and the home school transition.

From L-R, Dr Sue Jenkins, Chair of the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, workshop presenter Dr Karen Malone, and Wendy Armstrong, Community Programs Manager with The Smith Family.

For further information on The Smith Family’s Community Programs, please contact Wendy Armstrong, Community Programs Manager, on 6223 2627 or email wendy.armstrong@thesmithfamily.com.au.

* The Smith Family has recently established a presence in Tasmania and has formed partnerships with four communities to support the early learning, development and wellbeing of young Tasmanian children. Facilitating evidence-based community programs that unlock opportunities for disadvantaged families through education, The Smith Family is focusing in Tasmania on children aged 0-8 and the home school transition.
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JULIE SLOAN
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MICHAEL MCQUEEN
People strategist and sought-after authority on engaging Generation Y in the workplace, at home and in the classroom.

To register go to www.development.tas.gov.au/employerofchoice/conference
For more information, contact Business Point on 1800 440 026 or email: businesspoint@development.tas.gov.au

Department of Economic Development and Tourism
New Process for Registration of Owner Builders

The Building Act 2000 commenced in July 2004 and introduced a system for the accreditation (licensing) of builders. An exception is for genuine owner builders to build on their own land. Changes from 1 July 2007 mean that the Director of Building Control must verify the eligibility of owner builders before a building surveyor can issue a Certificate of Likely Compliance.

This is at an early stage in the building process, before applying for a building permit. The Owner Builder Kit is an essential element of the reforms, a must for anyone thinking of becoming an owner builder.

What is the new owner builder registration process?

If you are considering becoming an owner builder, you must follow these four steps:

1. Develop your plans with your architect or building designer and decide whether you want to become an owner builder. The Owner Builder Kit outlines your responsibilities as an owner builder.
2. Take your completed plans to a building surveyor and advise them of your intention to become an owner builder. Complete an Owner Builder Statement (Form 34 provided in the Owner Builder Kit) and give a copy to your building surveyor.
3. Ask the building surveyor to seek confirmation from the Director of Building Control that you are eligible to act as an owner builder. If you are eligible, and the building design complies with the provisions of the Building Act 2000, the building surveyor will issue you with a Certificate of Likely Compliance.
4. Apply for a building permit from your council’s permit authority. Include all design documents, a completed Owner Builder Statement and the Certificate of Likely Compliance with your application.

Why make these changes?

Registration allows land-owners to determine their eligibility to be owner builders before committing themselves to contracts, or other financial obligations.

What is the definition of an owner builder?

To fulfil the owner builder definition, a person must meet the following criteria:

1. They must not be in the business of building; - an accredited (licenced) builder cannot also be an owner builder;
2. They must be the owner of the land on which the building work is to be carried out (ownership includes contracting to buy land);
3. Must not have already constructed (or performed building work) on more than two buildings as an owner builder since 1 July 2004 (not counting non-habitable out buildings).
4. Have made a signed statement (an “Owner Builder Statement” - in a declaration on Approved Form No. 34)

Which legislation affects owner builders?

• Building Act 2000
• Building Regulations 2004
• Plumbing Regulations 2004
• Housing Indemnity Act 1992 (responsibility of Office of Consumer Affairs).

All are administered by the Department of Justice.

The Owner Builder Kit is available free of charge in printed format or on compact disc by phoning the Workplace Standards Helpline on 1300 366 322. An electronic copy can be obtained from www.wst.tas.gov.au/building.

Winner LGAT News Competition

Congratulations to Rod Taylor of Aurora Energy who was drawn as the winner of the Lena accommodation package featured in the March edition of LGAT News. Rod and his partner will enjoy two night’s accommodation in a luxurious Harbour View Suite, Tasmanian sparkling wine and chocolates on arrival, dinner at the award winning Alexanders Restaurant and a buffet breakfast each morning. The total prize package is valued at $1,000.

Thanks to all our readers who took part in the competition and to Lenna for the generous prize. Enjoy your stay Rod!
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For further information visit www.jmg.net.au or phone Ian Johnston/Mat Clark on (03) 6231 2555
Report Highlights the Value of Parks

Tasmania is unique in having almost 40% of its area reserved in 19 national parks and in more than 400 reserves. A new report, *The Value of Parks*, focuses on the integral role of parks in the social, cultural, environmental and economic health of local communities.

Large, healthy parks provide safe havens for species by protecting vital habitat and protecting bio-diversity. Local, regional and state economies benefit significantly from parks, particularly in Tasmania where parks and natural icons are the central focus of our tourism industry.

Tourism directly contributes about 7% to Tasmania’s Gross State Product - higher than any other state in Australia - which provides significant sources of employment and flow-on economic benefits for local communities. Parks and reserves also have positive health benefits for the community by providing the opportunity for physical activity and recreation.

By having ready access to these remarkable areas, Tasmanians can enjoy not only our renowned natural environment, but also a healthy and engaged lifestyle. The evidence of the benefits of our parks to our environmental, economic and social health is strong, and how we ensure the ongoing protection and good management of our parks will result in a real and measurable impact on future generations.

*The Value of Parks* was compiled by the Parks Forum, made up of park member agencies from across Australia and New Zealand, in partnership with IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and The People and Parks Foundation.

The report can be found on the Parks and Wildlife Service’s website at www.parks.tas.gov.au.
Hobart to Host Ministers’ Conference

Local Government and Planning Ministers from across Australia and New Zealand, and the President of the Australian Local Government Association, will gather in Hobart from 13-14 August for the annual meeting of the Local Government and Planning Ministers’ Council.

At its last meeting, the Council focused on how jurisdictions had progressed towards COAG tasks and items associated with Local Government autonomy and funding. It discussed Local Government sustainability, affordable housing, collaboration on climate change, airport land development, building regulation reform, national planning principles, electronic development applications and e-planning.

Since then, the Rudd Government has announced its new Major Cities Unit.

Tasmanian Minister for Planning, Premier David Bartlett MP and Minister for Local Government, Jim Cox MP will host this year’s conference. Minister Anthony Albanese, Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government will chair proceedings. The Local Government Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet is managing the conference in collaboration with the Land Use Planning Branch of the Department of Justice.

If you would like more information, please contact Robyn Bevilacqua on 6233 5994, or John Elliott on 6233 6758.

Tassie Towns Get Main Street Makeover

Small Tasmanian towns can now enjoy a facelift and improve safety and access, thanks to the Main Street Makeover Program.

So far, thirty communities from across the state have come together to decide how best to upgrade their main street. Every makeover has creative and practical elements, from beautification to infrastructure upgrades, from interpretive signage to pedestrian safety features. Not only do main street makeovers create vibrant community hubs, improve safety and accessibility and increase community pride, they also attract tourism dollars and promote economic growth.

King Island Council recently completed a project at Currie, the Island’s business centre and starting point for the ‘King Island Way’ touring route. Works included paving and landscaping designed to incorporate existing Norfolk Island Pines that were planted along the main street almost a century ago. Seating was also installed, providing an area for locals to congregate. The seats, described as ‘turkey benches’, depict the free-roaming turkeys of the island and represent the island lifestyle of freedom and safety.

Central Coast Council recently completed a project at Penguin, which saw the development of the foreshore to provide a community gathering space for the benefit of locals and tourists alike. Street furniture, playground facilities and foreshore access were upgraded, lighting and interpretive signage was installed to guide tourists’ discovery experience.

Latrobe Council completed its makeover of Station Square with the laying of a 300 kilogram granite rock in April. The design of the refurbished Station draws from the Square’s functional history, while providing a contemporary flexible space to cater for multiple civic uses. Seating is arranged in sociable groups around trees and fountains and a shelter, designed to imitate a train station platform, provides space for exhibitions and performances.

For further information on the main street makeover program, please contact the Local Government Division on 6233 6758.
Living Library Launched in Launceston

Launceston City Council has launched a new initiative that seeks to challenge stereotypes and prejudices in our community, in a very unique way.

Living Library works exactly like a normal library - readers come and borrow a ‘book’ for a limited period of time. After reading it they return the ‘book’, and if they want, they can borrow another one. There are, however, two differences; the ‘books’ in the Living Library are people, and the ‘book’ and reader engage in conversation.

The project is a Tasmanian first and has been coordinated by a special committee in partnership with the Launceston City Council, WD Booth Charitable Trust, Metro Tasmania and the Launceston Library.

Young, Sorell Achiever represents Tasmania at National Congress

Sorell Council’s Community Development Officer, Jess Radford, aged 24, was one of two successful applicants from Tasmania to be selected to attend the Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) 2008 National Congress held on the Gold Coast from 25-28 May.

Jess said the opportunity to attend the congress was invaluable in furthering her knowledge and understanding of issues and challenges faced by Local Government. “Equally, the chance to engage with people working in Local Government from across Australia was exciting, especially in regards to considering new possibilities for the projects I’m currently undertaking in Sorell,” she said.

The annual congress featured key speakers Dr Tim Flannery, Rev Tim Costello and Marcus Akuhata-Brown, with a focus on sustainable environment, community wellbeing and executive development.

Each year LGMA provides sponsorships to two people from each state, allowing them to attend the National Congress. Jess was joined by Ian Brunt from Waratah-Wynyard Council.
Community Strength in Reserve

A detailed consultative process adopted by the Hobart City Council has led to the establishment of the Leonard Wall Valley Street Reserve encompassing a unique parcel of land bounded by Mount Stuart Road, Mellifont and Valley Streets in West Hobart.

Tucked into a steep valley, the reserve is a mixture of bushland in a rural landscape with sheep grazing, while surrounded by residential properties.

The Council originally went to the community with a range of development options for the site including housing, aged care and open space-parkland. The response from the community was clear - the land was highly valued for its bushland and remnant rural qualities. Hence, the council agreed to formalise the area as a park, and began the development of a landscape plan.

Lord Mayor Alderman Rob Valentine said that through cooperation and communication on all sides, the Council was pleased to be able to achieve an excellent result for the West Hobart community, as well as the wider Hobart area. “The Council has received positive feedback on the project and the community has been fully supportive. Many people are now using the walkway for recreation as well as for work,” he said.

This valuable parcel of land has significant links with the foundation of early settlement of Hobart. The reserve, together with large parts of Mt Stuart and Lenah Valley, were the site of the earliest orchards in Hobart Town, providing fruit for the early settlers.

The landscape plan to upgrade the reserve has been developed to facilitate easy pedestrian access through the site and provide passive recreational amenity to enhance the cultural and environmental values of the area. The plan also identified an area at the eastern end of the reserve for a community garden or small scale agricultural site and, following an Expressions of Interest process, the Council accepted a proposal from a group to manage the land.

Local resident, Mr Jim Hughes, chats with Mrs Marjorie Wall at the Leonard Wall Valley Street Reserve in West Hobart

Known as the Valley Street Community Orchard Group, they have the support of 35 volunteers who are keen to develop a community orchard on the former Cato Orchard site. Council has fenced part of the site for the Orchard Group to commence establishment of a Heritage Orchard.

Local resident, Simon Clarkson, who spearheaded the community campaign to save the reserve said, while it has taken five years to get to this stage, it has been a positive project from day one. “I am very keen to work with the community to build up the orchard to provide fruit, not just for ourselves but for the wider Hobart community. Local schools in the area are also keen to be involved,” Simon added.

In 2007, the group was successful in obtaining a $5,000 Open Garden Scheme grant for the project - the only grant awarded in Tasmania. Stages 1 and 2 of the landscape plan have now been completed involving earthworks, paths and fencing to define the area for community use, as well as construction of entrances off Mellifont Street and Mount Stuart Road. A special feature of the plan is the development of a native plant demonstration garden at the Mount Stuart Road entrance. This garden will showcase the use of local native plants in a range of landscape styles and settings.

The reserve is named after well-known local identity, Leonard Wall, who passed away four years ago. Leonard and his wife Marjorie moved to the area fifty years ago. Leonard served as President of the Mount Stuart Progress Association for many years and, with a fascination for birdlife, became a strong supporter of the urban bushland around Knocklofty and Mount Stuart.

“This is a very special area, while the ’67 bushfires burnt most of it out, the large trees remained and the steep tract of land regenerated well,” Marjorie said. “I am thrilled to bits to have the area named after my husband. If Leonard got an OBE or the Order of Australia, it dies with him, while the reserve continues on,” Mrs Wall said.
Knowing What’s Where

A new Government-community council will help to manage the mass of location-based information being gathered by all levels of Government, private enterprise and community groups.

The Tasmanian Spatial Information Council (TASSIC) has been established and appointed as a specialist body to advise the Tasmanian Government on the future development, management and use of location-based information.

The council was formed in response to the increasing reliance on spatial data for a number of critical systems - such as emergency management planning, response and recovery, mining, forestry, State and Local Government planning, water management, traffic planning and management, navigation and the delivery of public utilities.

TASSIC’s seven members have been nominated by key Tasmanian organisations in private, public and community sectors. The cooperative partnership brings together individuals with a wide range of knowledge and expertise in the spatial information industry. Mark Wise of the Hobart City Council has been selected to represent the Local Government as a Council member.

Spatial information is all about knowing where things are - or where they should be. It’s much easier for all of us to plan and manage affairs when you know exactly what’s where. This information helps us to locate and connect people, systems, services and businesses. Spatial information is now used in everyday technology such as GPS units and mobile phones. Internet sites such as Google Earth and Microsoft Visual Earth show how this information can be used in many different ways.

For government, spatial information is especially important in planning and delivering critical community services, such as the management of emergencies, climate change and natural resources. The information we rely on needs to be of high quality, immediately available, accurate and up-to-date. By establishing TASSIC, the State Government is encouraging better management of spatial information, which should not only provide substantial benefits for every part of the Tasmanian community, but is crucial to maintaining Tasmania’s competitiveness in both national and global markets.

Here’s Cheers

The history and significance of Hobart’s early hotels has been highlighted in a newly released coffee table book, Here’s Cheers, published by the Hobart City Council.

Author, Mr Colin Dennison has had a life-long fascination with early Hobart as a collector of historical photographs and as an amateur historian. Recognising the benefit of a lasting record of Hobart’s early ‘watering holes’, the Hobart City Council has assisted Mr Dennison to publish the book featuring many old hotels that still stand today.

At one time during the mid-nineteenth century, there was one pub for every 16 houses, many with fascinating backgrounds. There is the Old Bell Inn where Marcus Clarke wrote part of the famous novel, For the Term of His Natural Life, and the Golden Fleece, located on the corner of Brisbane and Elizabeth Streets, where the first Catholic Church service was held in Hobart. Our early hotels and taverns have also been used by the State Government as a court for inquests and murder trials and have provided a gathering place for important public meetings.

Here’s Cheers is available at Hobart bookshops for $38.50.

Mr Colin Dennison with his newly released book, Here’s Cheers
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A second Partnership Agreement between the State Government and Latrobe Council will focus on environment and land management initiatives, further development of Port Sorell, community wellbeing and safety.

The agreement will build on the strong successes of Latrobe’s first partnership with the State Government, which resulted in the upgrading of the municipality’s Station Square and the establishment of a VOICE youth advisory group. It will see the development of a management plan for the Wesley Vale irrigation project and a feasibility study will be done into using water from Hydro dams to irrigate North-West Coast farmland, allowing for greater vegetable production. The Government will also work with Council to review the Port Sorell strategic plan, in order to support economic opportunities in this fast growing area.

In relation to community wellbeing, the agreement will look at identifying local initiatives that support the Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing and ensuring the ongoing viability of the youth advisory group. There are also four community safety actions that aim to improve communications between Tasmania Police and the council over community safety and crime prevention.

Latrobe Council is the third council in Tasmania to sign a second Partnership Agreement.

Launceston City Council General Manager, Frank Lennon, has been named Professional Leader of the Year - Corporate at the Tasmanian Business Leaders Awards 2008.

The inaugural awards recognise and celebrate the leadership and management achievements of business leaders and managers who have demonstrated excellence in the way they conduct their professional lives.

Mr Dixon relocated from Victoria to take up the position of General Manager in 2006. Since then, he has made a number of major changes to ensure the organisation’s long-term sustainability and improve Council’s “one organisation” culture.

His achievements include overseeing the creation of a $335 million, 10-year major works program as well as the development of Council’s 5-year strategic plan which reflects the long-term vision of the community. He also conducted an operational review to reduce operating costs in order to deliver on key projects for Launceston. The operational review resulted in annual savings of $1.8 million.

Mr Dixon also played a key leadership role in the development of a new model for the delivery of sewer and water services in northern Tasmania, recently adopted by the State Government.
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Highlights of the 96th Tasmanian Local Government Conference

Waves of Change

At a time when Tasmanian councils are required to adapt to significant changes in the way they conduct business, including new water and sewerage reforms, Local Government leaders from across the state came together to explore ways to move with the changing tide at the 2008 Local Government Conference, held from 18-20 June at the Country Club in Prospect.

LGAT President, Mike Gaffney said this year’s conference, themed Waves of Change, addressed the need for Local Government to continually immerse new ideas and community expectations into its environs and importantly, its thinking. “Like the changing tide, Local Government is confronted with new questions and demands each day and our responses and actions must be efficient and effective,” Mayor Gaffney said.

“While the tide remains inevitable, so does the ongoing impact of increased benchmarks and compliance on our strategies, actions and budgets,” he said.

The Local Government Conference, coordinated by the Local Government Association of Tasmania, in association with Local Government Managers Australia (Tasmania) and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia, addressed a range of challenges and opportunities facing Local Government today. Topics included climate change, harnessing creativity and innovation, planning for the future, water and sewerage reform, and managing change in the workplace.

Why Some Towns Thrive and Others Languish

According to organisational psychologist, facilitator and social researcher, Ian Plowman who addressed delegates at the conference, the most innovative communities have fewer leaders and more ‘weirdos’, commonly outsiders, who see and create opportunities invisible to longer-term residents. Dr Plowman said towns that exuded vitality and confidence were not that way because of their geographic location, size or prevailing industry.

“Critical to the success of small communities is people, and not just any people. In fact, location, size and economic development didn’t figure at all in federally funded research that looked at why some towns thrive while others languish,” Mr Plowman said.

“The towns most capable of thriving have more creative individuals, which are commonly the most mobile in the community. By identifying and supporting these people, communities can tap into an invaluable resource and find they already have the innovative talent they crave,” he said.

The Climate Challenge - Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

Plenary speaker and Dean of Graduate Research at the University of Tasmania, Dr Kate Crowley, said the Australian community’s desire for urgent action on climate change had been unequivocal for over a decade. Climate change is rapidly becoming a number one concern for communities across the globe and Tasmanian councils were urged to act now in order to prepare for the potential impacts of global warming on their Local Government areas.

“Local Government is the tier of government most capable of grassroots mobilisation but is also the least powerful and least financially independent. Under these circumstances, Tasmanian councils will need to combine their efforts in order to gain the State and Federal support they need to address climate change issues,” she said.

In her presentation, Dr Crowley addressed how councils can adopt a framework for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. As Chair of both the Tasmanian Environment Industry Council and the State Government’s Climate Action Council and member of the Tasmania Together Progress Board, Dr Crowley has

Continued Page 30
spent the last ten years championing the environment industry, particularly in the area of policy development and implementation.

Sound As Good as you Look

When you speak, it’s important to be at your peak says former Sydney DJ, voice over artist and real estate agent, Steve Barker, who delivered a memorable session on effective communication. During his presentation, Steve provided some helpful tips and mouth exercises that could turn the most average of voices into something to be proud of. And Steve’s unique presentation style certainly gave delegates something to talk about!

Future Shock - Surfing the Waves of Change

Ageing populations, climate change impacts, water and sewerage issues, commodity and energy prices, health pandemics, infrastructure decline, waste management and housing affordability are just some of the issues currently facing Tasmanian councils. Compiling a list is easy - the hard part for Local Government is planning for and overcoming these issues without spending vast amounts of time and money on just another analysis that few want and everyone forgets.

This was the key message from Futurist and Strategic Planner Oliver Freeman, who spoke on the last day of the conference. Mr Freeman said the challenge for councils was to make effective the link between the relative uncertainties of the future with the decisions that must be made today.

“While learning from the past is a time-honoured tradition, planning for the future, particularly when faced with high degrees of uncertainty, requires new competencies and novel methodologies. In planning for the future, councils also need to consider modern challenges and how they will impact on local communities, such as the social impact of online networks like Facebook and Twitter.com,” Mr Freeman said.

Moving Moments

Conference delegates enjoyed the opportunity to stretch their legs and get moving between plenary sessions this year during a series of Moving Moments, sponsored by the Premier’s Physical Activity Council in partnership with Fit ’n’ Kicking. Fitness leaders invited delegates to join them in a Mexican wave to start, followed by a range of stretching exercises. Even Premier David Bartlett took part following his Friday presentation. The Moving Moments were a highlight for conference delegates and are set to become a permanent fixture on the annual conference program.

Outstanding Commitment and Service Award

An Award for Outstanding Commitment and Service to Local Government was presented this year to Rod Sweetnam of the Launceston City Council. Rod has worked in Local Government for the past 32 years, starting in Victoria in 1976. He joined Launceston City Council in 1989 and is currently the Director of Resident and Leisure Services. Rod has also periodically undertaken the role of Acting General Manager. Additionally, Rod has held executive positions on a number of boards and committees in the community including the Amenity Horticultural Training Council of Tasmania. He is also the Local Government representative on the State Fire Management Committee. Rod’s personal commitment to emergency management includes spending more than 25 years as a volunteer fire fighter and the past three years as the Tasmania Fire Service Group Officer in the Meander region. Congratulations Rod!
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CMP Waves of Change Dinner

On day two of the conference, around 400 guests enjoyed an unforgettable night of fine food, wine, entertainment and festivity at the Civic Mutual Plus Waves of Change Dinner, held at Launceston’s historic Albert Hall. In keeping with the conference theme, the hall was transformed by waves of balloons created by world-renowned balloon artist, lan Shuey, the sound of rolling waves, and stunning lighting effects by Scene Change.

The evening kicked off with a captivating performance by Tasdance entitled Five for Silver, a fluid and expressive piece choreographed by Anna Smith, which connects the dancers in one costume. Under the artistic direction of Annie Greig, Tasdance is a major contributor to the Australian Arts landscape. In February, Tasdance became a winner of the prestigious Sidney Myer Performing Arts Awards for the company’s passion, daring and commitment to the artform. Following their performance, the winners of the 2008 Local Government Awards for Excellence were announced, then guests danced the night away to the sounds of Midnight Rendezvous.

Special Thanks to our Sponsors and Supporters

The Local Government Conference has been made possible through the generous sponsorship support of the following organisations:

- Civic Mutual Plus, GHD, Country Club Tasmania, Commonwealth Bank, Australia Post, Marsh, Oak Tasmania, Tasmania Together 2020, Pitt and Sherry, TechnologyOne, the Broadband Development Network, Launceston City Council, Beyond PR, Moore, Simmons Wolfhagen, Quadrant and the Local Government Facilitator Project, Veolia, The Examiner and the Premiers Physical Activity Council. Thanks also to the many trade exhibitors who supported this year’s conference.

Competition Winner

Congratulations to David Brown of the National Australia Bank who registered as a conference delegate and was drawn as the winner of the Deluxe Accommodation Package at Country Club Tasmania. David and his partner will enjoy two nights accommodation in a luxurious manor suite with two hot breakfasts each day. Thank you to Country Club Tasmania for the terrific prize.

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On 19 June, the winners of the 2008 Local Government Awards for Excellence were announced at the CMP Waves of Change Dinner, held at the Albert Hall, as part of the 96th Local Government Conference.

The Local Government Awards for Excellence are coordinated by the Local Government Association of Tasmania and, this year, with the generous sponsorship support of GHD. The awards recognise councils that develop and implement projects and programs, which demonstrate commitment towards excellence for the benefit of Tasmanians. The awards also provide an opportunity to share good management practices and innovative responses to community needs. This year, a total of 24 entries were received from councils across the state. LGAT congratulates the winners and finalists of this year’s awards and thanks all councils that submitted entries for an array of commendable initiatives.

**Sustainable Community Assets Award**

**Currie Waste Management Facility**

**KING ISLAND COUNCIL**

King Island Mayor Charles Arnold with the Gold Award

King Island Council emerged as the overall Gold Award Winner of the 2008 Tasmanian Local Government Awards for Excellence and winner of the Sustainable Community Assets Award for an innovative waste management project. The Gold Award was presented by the Tasmanian Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Jim Cox MP, for the Currie Waste Management Facility.

Prior to the opening of the Currie Waste Management Facility, all waste received by King Island Council was deposited in an uncontrolled manner on a central site in close proximity to sensitive areas. This practice exposed the community to negative impacts relevant to the natural environment, public health, land use planning and economic development.

Council has been proactive in identifying and resolving these issues through the commissioning of a state-of-the-art waste management system, incorporating the Currie Waste Management Facility, the Charles Street Inert Waste Repository and the Parenna Landfill Site. Waste is segregated at the Waste Management Facility into putrescibles, inert and recyclable material. The putrescible waste is delivered into a purpose built shed, where it is compacted, baled and wrapped in a protective covering, which minimises odours and loose materials from escaping. The bales are then transported en masse to the Landfill Site at Pegarah. The facility and its waste management process have markedly decreased potential negative impacts caused by noise, odour, fires, vermin and litter upon the most important of resources - the environment.

**Runner up**

**Emmerton Park Aged Care**

**CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL**

Clear challenges are revealed when examining Tasmania’s demographic trends. In the Circular Head municipality, projections suggest an increase of 45% of people over 65 years of age by the year 2021. Circular Head Council has responded to this with the development of the Emmerton Park Aged Care Complex, providing a solution for the long-term, financially viable delivery of high quality care within a distinctly close knit, rural community.

Emmerton Park minimises the need for Circular Head residents to leave their community in order to obtain appropriate care, delivering a high quality service locally. Co-location of the region’s low and high care places means low care residents can age in place without the
stress associated with moving sites and with improved continuity of care.

**Building Better Futures Though Governance Award**

**Waterways Audit and Signage Project**

**MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL**

Mayor Mark Shelton of the Meander Valley Council with the Building Better Futures Though Governance Award

Meander Valley Council is the first council in Tasmania to undertake a comprehensive audit of its reserve areas with particular reference to known swimming areas. The aim of the Waterways Audit and Signage Project was to identify risks associated with swimming at a number of local venues around the municipality.

Council commissioned the Royal Life Saving Society to conduct a risk management study and safety signage plan. The assessment process involved a site visit to each reserve in the Meander Valley region, including photographing current signage and identifying risks in each area that needed to be addressed in the audit report.

The recommended safety signage has now been erected at all of the reserve areas included in the audit and an inspection process has been implemented to enable regular checks to be carried out to ensure signs are maintained. This project has been beneficial in identifying a number of signage and general safety risks at some of Council’s high use recreational areas, making these places much safer for locals and visitors alike.

**Runner-up**

**Glenorchy Creek Maintenance Plan**

**GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL**

In the past, the management of creeks in the Glenorchy municipality has largely focused on reactive works, undertaken as a result of an issue arising or a complaint. Thanks to Glenorchy City Council’s new Creek Maintenance Plan, Council now has a clear outline of the maintenance requirements for its creeks, including accurate cost estimates and justifications for all the works.

The objectives of the plan are to minimise ongoing maintenance of the creeks, improve their water quality, reduce litter and saltation, minimise erosion, reduce weeds and increase native vegetation, maintain heritage values, and improve recreational opportunities and visual appearance. The plan has been well received within Council and the community and it has already resulted in significant benefits.

**Innovation and Creativity Award**

**Improving Water Quality and Efficiency at Nubeena**

**TASMAN COUNCIL**

Tasman Mayor Jan Barwick with the Innovation and Creativity Award

With the support of local community groups, Tasman Council has been improving water quality and showcasing innovative water recycling options at Council facilities in Nubeena.

Over the past two years, Council has been trialling water sensitive urban design techniques to treat stormwater entering Parsons Bay, as well as increasing water monitoring in Sucklings Creek and Parsons Bay to identify any water quality issues. In addition, Council has been recycling water from the public toilets at Judd Park for reuse flushing, as well as recycling laundry water at the Tasman Multi-Purpose Service so that laundry can be done in-house.

The overall effect is an improvement in the water quality in Parsons Bay, an improvement in the condition of coastal and estuarine ecosystems at Nubeena, and a greater awareness of water quality issues and new water saving techniques. By reducing the reliance on delivered potable water and enabling laundry to be done in-house, the projects have also resulted in significant cost savings to the community.
news and reviews

Runner up

Phenomena Factory
Lanceston City Council

Launceston City Council’s Phenomena Factory is the first project of its kind in Tasmania, transforming a central space within the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery into an interactive science hub that is inherently innovative and creative through the technology it incorporates. The factory enables children of all ages in Tasmania to access the very best interactive science education in the state.

The factory’s external courtyard demonstrates sustainability in relation to energy use and includes a functioning weather station, active wind turbines an undershot water wheel, solar energy displays and references to the site’s underlying geo-thermal ground loop system.

The Phenomena Factory has already had a dramatic impact on the museum’s visitation and a popular vote of confidence from the education community, demonstrated by the many return visits already experienced.

Invigorating Communities Award

Children’s Educational Bike Track
Derwent Valley Council

Derwent Valley Council recently opened an exciting new educational bike track for children, providing a long-lasting facility for community enjoyment, exercise and education. The track allows children to learn real road rules and practice road safety in a fun environment, featuring scaled down road signage and markings, intersections, a roundabout, pedestrian crossing, railway crossing and traffic lights.

A working bee involving Council staff, Timber Communities Australia, the Lions Club of New Norfolk and local volunteers, assisted in clearing the site and preparing it for the project to commence. Additionally, more than 40 long-term unemployed people participated in the project, gaining skills, confidence and pride in their community.

Council developed strong community partnerships during the planning and construction phase of the project and community engagement was enhanced, with all groups successfully working together to achieve a common goal for the benefit of the community.

Runners up

King Island Cultural Centre
King Island Council

King Island Council opened the innovative King Island Cultural Centre to provide leadership in the development and profiling of community based cultural initiatives, which form part of the King Island way. The centre showcases authentic cultural experiences and aims to engage community and cultural groups and local artists by providing them with a place to work creatively together to contribute to a range of exhibitions and activities.

The centre also enables tourists to engage with local artists and provides them with an opportunity to view and purchase local artwork.

Now recognised as a cultural hub, the centre celebrates King Island’s unique culture and heritage through the arts. Council has achieved this through creating authentic experiences, art and craft works that reflect the people, place and lifestyle of the unique Island.
**Responsible Pet Ownership Program**  
GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL

Glenorchy City Council’s innovative Responsible Pet Ownership Program aims to enhance children’s understanding of companion animal issues and the dual responsibilities that pet owners have to their pets and their community. Early education is the key to creating life long attitudes and Council hopes that teaching children the importance of responsible pet ownership will foster a community of responsible pet owners in the future.

The program is offered at no cost to participating schools and builds on existing Education Department curriculum by focusing on values such as empathy, social responsibility and acting ethically. The program is designed for Prep to Grade Six classes and runs for five weeks, covering a wide range of topics, including safety around dogs, keeping your pets safe, health issues and careers with pets. Glenorchy City Council is the only council in Tasmania to employ an Education Officer dedicated to Animal Management.

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News In Brief

Draft Youth Plan Provides Clear Direction
Clarence City Council has endorsed a draft Youth Plan for 2008-2012 to provide a practical direction for Council to meet the needs of young people aged 12-25 years. The strategic, five-year plan offers clear review timelines and annual progress reports. In developing the plan, Council undertook extensive community consultation with young people, community groups and key service providers, involving the use of focus groups and surveying 448 young people in schools, colleges, youth service providers, community groups, shopping centres and at youth events. Council’s Youth Network Advisory Group has also played a key role in developing the plan by providing input into the design and development of the youth survey and assisting in its distribution and planning. The survey results identified that being active and engaged, participating in the life of the City, shaping the future, and health and wellbeing were the most important issues for young people. The draft Youth Plan has been released for further feedback from the community, relevant groups and Government agencies before a final plan is adopted.

Australia’s Cleanest Beach Award
Tasmania’s Freer’s Beach in Port Sorell is one of six national finalists in the Keep Australia Beautiful, Australian Clean Beaches Awards and will now compete to be recognised as Australia’s Cleanest Beach for 2008. Clean Beaches is part of the Keep Australia Beautiful ‘Australian Sustainable Communities’ Awards. The Clean Beaches Awards celebrate the achievements of each finalist and, in a spirit of friendly competition, identify, acknowledge and promote Australia’s best examples of excellence in grass roots environmental improvement in coastal areas from around the country. Hundreds of communities entered the awards this year, with tens of thousands of volunteers donating their time and effort for practical local initiatives.

New Bruny Island Water System
The new Bruny Island Water Supply System was recently opened, providing a safer drinking water supply for residents and businesses sourced from the island itself. Bruny’s small population of 700 swells to 5,000 during the tourist season but the community is not serviced by reticulated potable water. The new system provides reliable, locally sourced drinking water which water carters can now use to fill up rainwater tanks on the island. Additionally, with the persistence of the drought, the new supply has also provided surety of water for fire fighting purposes. Kingborough Council has developed a rigorous monitoring program which will enable them to manage the water supply system in a manner that meets Tasmanian legislation and reflects current best practice in the water industry.

Sand Extraction to go Ahead at Seven Mile Beach
Clarence City Council has approved a proposal for the extraction of dry sand at Seven Mile Beach, providing a much needed source of sand to the building industry in southern Tasmania. The Seven Mile Beach Peninsula is a valuable resource and recreational asset for the region that has been compromised in the past by agricultural and recreational activities, including the introduction of pine plantations. The sand mining proposal includes a long-term Rehabilitation Plan for the area, which seeks to re-establish native vegetation, following the extraction of sand and to re-create dune patterns similar to pre-existing conditions.

Bothwell Units Enable Independent Living
The State Government has opened two new units for low-income, older Tasmanians in Bothwell. The two-bedroom, wheelchair accessible units aim to allow older people in Bothwell to live independently in their community. Funding of $200,000 was provided to Central Highlands Council towards the construction of the units through the Community Housing Program, an Australian Government funded program administered by the Tasmanian Government under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement. The development is a community project and an example of the partnership arrangements in place between Central Highlands Council, the local community and the State and Commonwealth Governments. As a result of this partnership, there are now six independent living units on-site, designed to fit in with the beautiful historic village feel of Bothwell, in accordance with Heritage Commission requirements.
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