

Our Community, Our Story

Our report on the achievements,
challenges and highlights 2015-16





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Introduction

Our Community, Our Story is our way of keeping you informed about the operations of Council during the financial year.

We have produced this report in addition to our Annual Report 2015-16, our primary document for advising the community of our performance during the year.

While the Annual Report contains statutory, operational and financial information, this report provides the narrative behind the highlights and challenges of the year.

The two reports are designed to be read together.

Some of the things we do



How satisfied you were with our service



Some of the things we maintain



About this report

Our Vision is for a vibrant and inclusive community with an outstanding quality of life.

Our achievements in this report are structured using the themes of our Council Plan 2013–17, the document that outlines how Council plans to contribute to our Vision.

Council plan themes

[Strong and engaged communities](#)

[Sustainable environment](#)

[Enhanced amenity](#)

[Quality facilities and assets](#)

[Responsible management](#)

We've also included in this report some of the things that tested or challenged us during the year and a summary of the events and activities we hosted.

Mayor's message

Welcome to 'Our Community, Our Story 2015-16'. This is a report to our community on the work we have done this year told through stories, pictures and videos.

I'm pleased to showcase what we have delivered to maintain our vision for Boroondara, how we have collaborated with the community to create the City we all want to live in and how we have delivered on the commitments we have made in the Annual Plan 2015-16. This is to be read in conjunction with the statutory Annual Report for the full picture of our operations.

A key priority over the past year has been our Boroondara Customer First Program. Smart, convenient digital technologies are steadily becoming more prevalent in all walks of life—and local government should be no different. We're using the opportunities offered by technology to transform the way we work, achieve greater efficiency in our processes and revolutionise your dealings with your Council. We're creating brand new digital and online platforms and services, so you can live and work in Boroondara your way, on your timetable.

This financial year we worked very hard to ensure our facilities continue to serve the present and future needs of our community. This included the on-time on-budget \$13.5 million redevelopment of the Boroondara Sports Complex into a state-of-the-art recreation facility, completed in June 2016, and design work for the Balwyn Library renewal and the North East Community Hub project in Greythorn. The North East Community Hub will offer co-located services and activities in a 'one-stop-shop'. I'm particularly excited about the library lounge for pick-up and drop-off of library books, access to computers, Wi-Fi, community information and library programs. Read more about this project on page 25.



The arts remain a firm priority. Council's continued investment in Arts and our venues enables us to provide world-class performances and exhibitions locally. The Boroondara Arts Plan features innovative programs and service initiatives, balanced with the exciting challenge of developing community access and ongoing development of its major arts facilities: Hawthorn Arts Centre, Kew Court House and Town Hall Gallery.

This is a well run City. We are financially sound and will be debt free within 10 years.

We manage a \$213 million budget, serve over 175,000 residents and maintain quality services and facilities to ensure we have a vibrant and inclusive community with an outstanding quality of life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim Parke'. The signature is stylized and fluid, written over a white background.

Cr Jim Parke
Mayor

Achievements

Theme 1: Strong and engaged communities

Objectives:

Our community has a say in matters of interest to them in achieving Boroondara's vision.

Community needs are identified and responses planned accordingly.

Opportunities are provided to enable people in our community to be supported and involved.

We're in the game

Sport and recreation plays an important role in maintaining and improving the health and wellbeing of our community.

This year, we developed a roadmap to encourage and enable more people to be more active, more often through sport and recreation.

Our *Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016* identifies trends and challenges facing our City, and provides direction for Council and other stakeholders to respond appropriately.

More than 3,400 people provided feedback for the strategy through an extensive consultation process.

Research included a policy and literature review, demographic analysis and a Boroondara participation analysis. Key highlights from the research indicated that participation in sport and recreation was an important contributor to physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Volunteerism was identified as a key feature of the industry, and research indicated that retaining and recruiting volunteers was a challenge for sporting clubs. Survey results indicated young people wanted to volunteer, though tended not to.

Our vision in Boroondara is that all people, regardless of their circumstances, have the opportunity and are encouraged to actively participate in sport and recreation. As a result, they will enjoy a healthier and higher quality of life.



Our new strategy has six priorities: health, wellbeing and social cohesion; diversity and inclusion; participation; partnerships; sustainability; and infrastructure and safety.

Council adopted the strategy in April 2016 and we began to implement a comprehensive action plan attached to it.





A new plan for our libraries

Our new *Library Services Plan: Imagine, Discover, Connect* was adopted this year after a wide-ranging community consultation process.

More than 2,900 people provided feedback to help us develop the plan.

The community suggested improving collections and opening hours, refurbishing Balwyn and Kew libraries, introducing a library lounge in North Balwyn and improving children's services, library spaces, our website and catalogue.

The community told us our libraries were an important component of quality of life. Some 79 per cent of respondents viewed the library as 'a safe place' and 89 per cent of them said 'they always feel welcome'.

Books remained a major service sought by the community, with 95 per cent of library users considering them to be moderately to very valuable.

Services earmarked for delivery under our plan fall within five themes:

- excellent collections that accord with community needs
- community-focused library programs
- spaces that are welcoming and accessible
- high-quality, effective technology
- advocacy and sustainability.

These themes are supported by an action plan designed to maintain and reinforce our reputation as a high quality service whose direction will be consistently aligned with what the community wants.

Arts continue to flourish

Arts and cultural activities are integral to building and maintaining a rich and connected community, and we are dedicated to providing experiences that promote inclusive and accessible participation.

This year, we developed our *Boroondara Arts Plan 2015* to provide the guiding themes and objectives for all the arts and cultural activities we deliver.

The plan will enhance our arts investment and delivery of inspiring and inclusive activities and programs in the community's parks, streets and venues.

Our Arts Plan features a balance of innovative programs and services with the exciting challenge of ensuring community access and ongoing development of the Hawthorn Arts Centre, Kew Court House and Town Hall Gallery.

Feedback from the community throughout the consultation period highlighted key areas that are important to them.

They are seeking access to spaces and information and the continued support of festivals and local arts organisations. While a desire to experience high-quality arts as an audience member is high, they also want to more actively participate in the arts.

As well as these themes stemming from the consultation, we also identified the importance of responsible management of our art and cultural facilities, and our role of advocating the positive impact the arts has in the community.



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Council on your doorstep

An exciting new way of engaging the community was trialed in Ashburton and Balwyn North in September.

The idea of a pop-up council was born from our inaugural Community Innovation Tournament in May 2015.

The winning team wanted to take information about important services and programs to the people, rather than rely on Council's traditional modes of communication.

We set up outdoors on shopping strips, with some elegant street furniture and a smile, and struck up conversations with passersby.

Councillors and Council officers answered questions, engaging the community around the *Add Life to your Years* strategy and the idea of Council coming to where people deliver services.

Local traders were particularly responsive to the project. Often busy and tied to their shop fronts, traders were able to simply walk out of their shops and meet Council at their doorstep.



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Access to our facilities

Two 'pool pods' were installed at the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre as part of an \$11.4 million facility renewal, which included a \$2.8 million contribution from the Victorian Government.

Pool pods are an innovative way to provide independent access to pools for people with a disability or limited mobility.

The pool pods at the Ashburton centre were the first installed in Australia following their successful use at the London Paralympic Games.

Boost for the arts

Artist Pauline Hollyoak was commissioned to create a public mural at the rear of the Hawthorn Arts Centre building to form a lasting positive impact with the local community and centre visitors.

The project gained funding from the Australian Government through the Stronger Communities Programme, which also allowed for new lighting and signage at the rear of the building.

The Hawthorn Arts Centre boasts six artist studios, with the first artist in the program working on the Droplet Project, a series of free workshops exploring multimedia arts, ecology, water and local frogs.



Safe and active travel to school

We worked with three schools in our community to promote active and safe travel to school.

Our Boroondara Active and Safe Schools program is funded by VicRoads and enables us to work closely with the schools.

We conducted infrastructure audits and engaged children to encourage them to walk and wheel to school.

We identified the barriers to active and safe travel to school, both physical and perceived, and then set about removing them through environmental changes, plus education and awareness work.

Students, schools and parents were encouraged to participate and make real changes to their local environment.

The program complements our Walk or Wheel Wednesday and Walk2School programs.

Inaugural Disability Summit

This year, we hosted the Boroondara Disability Summit, the first of its kind in Boroondara.

The half-day event brought together about 150 members of the community, with the focus on people with the lived experience of a disability.

Participants discussed their information needs, experiences and aspirations about key disability topics.

The summit included presentations about civic participation and the opportunities for advocacy and employment.



One strategy to adulthood

Our children and young people are the future of our city.

We have developed one strategy for them to ensure a life stage planning approach for people aged 0 to 25 years.

Council adopted the *Children and Young People's Strategy* in November 2015.

It highlights the importance of the early years and the impact and influence this has on later stages in life.

Through this strategy, we have already adopted the Victorian Charter for Child Friendly Cities and Communities; supported children to learn about road safety by completing the Kew Traffic School renewal and upgrade; and provided high-quality services for children, young people and their families through the renewal of our kindergartens and early learning centres.

Special business rate

We worked closely with the Camberwell Centre and Burwood Village traders' associations to review and re-establish their special rate and charge schemes.

The schemes fund the marketing and promotion activities of the associations.

We consulted extensively with property owners and occupiers in each shopping centre, and Council adopted the Camberwell special rate and charge scheme in February 2016, and the Burwood Village special rate and charge scheme in April 2016.

Each scheme will run for five years.



25th anniversary of the Eisteddfod

This year, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Boroondara Eisteddfod, an annual competition for musicians and vocalists that encourages participation and excellence in the performing arts.

The Eisteddfod has been a major stepping stone in the careers of many young artists and provides the opportunity to further develop their artistic practice.

It provides a supportive and encouraging environment in which young musicians and singers are offered a valuable performance experience enhanced by the chance to share with their peers the positive benefits of participating in the arts.

Supporting our youth

In partnership with Interchange Inner East, Boroondara Youth Services supported the Interchange After 4 group, which is a weekly life skills group for young people with additional needs.

Participants catch the train from Canterbury train station to Glenferrie train station. The group then shops for their groceries together and cook their dinner at 360 Boroondara Youth Services Centre where they socialise as part of an integrated program.

All participants are supported by interchange workers and have the opportunity to interact with City of Boroondara youth workers, as well as other young people attending the centre.

Improving how we communicate

During the year we asked our community how they currently engage with us and how they would like to engage with us in the future.

We asked them about their satisfaction with our current communication channels and their preferred methods of receiving information from us.

We began re-designing our website and the way we deliver digital services, and we will use the feedback to help shape our communication methods in the future.

Library website improved

The development of the new Boroondara Library Service website was completed, providing the community with a website design and functionality that meets their needs.

Positive feedback was received from library website users.

Theme 2: Sustainable environment

Objective:

Our natural and urban environment is improved in a sustainable way.

United Nations award win

A United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Award was presented to Council for *Biodiversity Monitoring in Melbourne's East*, a sustainability project we led on behalf of the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA).

EAGA is a network of seven councils working together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate adaptation to climate change. The region also includes Stonnington, Monash, Maroondah, Whitehorse, Knox and Yarra Ranges councils.

One of the innovative aspects of the project was the citizen science components, which enabled residents to help monitor the local environment and contribute their findings to the research.

We helped the community survey birds at reserves and wetlands across the region, and report the results to Birdlife Australia.

They monitored climate-sensitive plant and animal species by visiting one of three ClimateWatch trails created for the project and by downloading a ClimateWatch app.

Along with the other councils, we used various strategies to protect and manage biodiversity, and by monitoring the health of flora and fauna, we can be better informed and better able to address challenges.

It was a collaborative effort and this award would not have been possible without the contribution of the other EAGA councils and our partnerships with the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology, Melbourne University, BirdLife Australia and ClimateWatch.

The project is ongoing and councils will be continuing to use the project's resources to monitor biodiversity and encourage more residents to get involved.

Recognising our green schools

This year we expanded our Boroondara Sustainability Awards for Schools, which recognises and celebrates the wonderful work of local schools, kindergartens and early education centres.

The awards began four years ago and have grown each year to encourage students to get involved and be recognised for their sustainability projects.

This year's awards recognised the work that local schools were undertaking to embed environmental sustainability within school operations and the curriculum.

The awards encouraged student critical thinking around sustainability issues facing the local and wider community and celebrated student's achievements. They also provided schools and students with the opportunity to share their sustainability stories.

For the first time this year, individual students received awards.

More about the awards in our Awards section: Page 34



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story online





Heading toward a low-carbon future

Progress towards a low carbon future continued during the year when we completed another action in *Our Low Carbon Future Strategy*.

Our Low Carbon Future Strategy sets the direction for our climate change mitigation response to 2020.

The five principles that underpin the strategy were developed to reflect Council's thinking, and guide the selection of the strategy's targets and priority actions:

- leadership by Council within the community
- assume a moral obligation to act
- pursuit of multiple benefits and a 'no regrets' approach to action
- action prioritised by impact
- equity in both strategy and action.

It is our objective to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, reduce the impact of increasing energy prices on ratepayers, and reduce the impact of increasing energy prices on vulnerable sectors of our community.

This year we installed 365 solar panels at Kew Recreation Centre to reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 190 tonnes.

We also began planning for a \$2 million Energy Performance Contract at Council's larger facilities over the next three years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by investing in cost effective low-emission technologies and energy efficiency upgrades.

Detox your home

Our Recycling and Waste Centre became a permanent Detox Your Home centre this year, allowing residents to drop off paint, household batteries, fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent lamps during opening hours.

We had been funding this service for several years to encourage the responsible disposal of these items.

We lobbied Sustainability Victoria about the program and they reviewed and expanded it, resulting in other councils and Boroondara becoming permanent sites.

We no longer pay to dispose of these materials so it has saved us \$120,000 per annum.

Annual detox-your-home days will continue in Boroondara for the disposal of other unwanted household chemicals, including ammonia-based cleaners, detergents, disinfectants, fertiliser, petrol, diesel, kerosene, glues and weed killers.

The program is administered by Sustainability Victoria in partnership with local councils and is funded by the Victorian landfill levy.



Planning for wetlands

Plans for a wetland in Chandler Reserve, Kew, progressed during the year when we completed concept designs and asked the community for feedback about them.

Community members provided feedback about the wetland via email and at an on-site consultation session in March 2016.

Responses overwhelmingly supported the project with a high level of interest and enthusiasm.

Respondents raised the following issues:

- paths should be bike-friendly and wide enough for mixed use
- dogs should be on a leash within the vicinity of the wetland
- a diverse range of vegetation is needed to create a variety of wetland habitat niches for native fauna
- additional seating could be placed along main trail.

All of the suggestions have been considered and, where appropriate, are being incorporated into the detailed design.

This project will help meet pollution reduction targets contained in our *Integrated Water Management Strategy*.

Implementation is subject to funding availability.

Storm water harvesting

Stage one of the Glenferrie Water Management Plan began with the installation of a storm water harvesting and treatment system in Grace Park.

The community told us they wanted a sustainable water management strategy for the Glenferrie Oval precinct, and this system delivers on that strategy.

Stormwater is collected from the Hawthorn Main Drain which passes through the park and is then pumped to a rain garden in the southwest corner, where it is cleaned through bio-filtration.

The rain garden features exotic plants to complement the heritage landscape character of the park, along with a timber boardwalk, new garden beds, seating and interpretive signage.

Treated water is stored in an underground tank before being used for watering within the precinct.

A water refill point in Power Street will enable water to be transported to other parks and streetscapes within the municipality for irrigation during times of water shortage.

Once the tank is full, any excess water, after treatment, is returned to the river system.

Harvesting and using treated stormwater to keep our parks and gardens green reduces demand for our precious supply of tap water.



Recycling projects

Along with four other councils, we partnered with not-for-profit social enterprise Bright Sparks for a pilot project designed to recycle small appliances.

We collected donations of unwanted or broken appliances at various drop-off points, repaired and then resold them at an affordable price, so they are reused and not added to landfill.

Items donated included coffee makers, kettles, sandwich makers, microwaves, clocks, electric shavers and fan heaters.

In another recycling project, we collected plastic planting pots through the transfer station. These pots were broken down and used as virgin material.

Assessing storm water opportunities

We delivered on a commitment to assess the feasibility and prioritise water sensitive urban design infrastructure across the City.

Melbourne Water helped fund the project, a major contribution to future waterway health and more resilient green spaces.

We developed and piloted a multi-criteria assessment framework to prioritise stormwater harvesting and treatment opportunities, and evaluated the costs and benefits of each opportunity to different stakeholders.

Opportunities at Chandler Park and Boroondara Park had the highest cost benefit ratio and net present value.

Significant tree register

Boroondara enjoys a superb urban environment where trees in the public and private domain constitute a major component of the urban scene. Vegetation is an integral part of our landscape and heritage.

We have developed strategies to protect the city's most significant trees, including additional planning controls.

This year, we updated our Significant Tree Study to add 53 listings for significant trees on private land.

These trees are protected as significant trees under our *Tree Protection Local Law*.

The City of Boroondara's data on significant trees is also now live at opentrees.org. This website combines similar data from multiple councils across Victoria including Melbourne, Manningham, Geelong, Wyndham and others. Sharing our significant trees data is a great example of how open data can provide a benefit to the wider public. Data can be used to support research and education, promote innovation, support improvements in productivity and stimulate growth in the local economy.

The significant tree data has been made available by Council to data.gov.au, where we will be increasingly making data sets available as part of a broader movement around more transparent government.

Data.gov.au provides an easy way to find, access and reuse public data. The team works across governments to publish data and continue to improve functionality based on user feedback.

Members of the public, government and the private sector are encouraged to use government data to analyse, mashup and develop tools and applications to benefit all Australians, like the opentrees.org site.

Life without paper

Council continued to move to paperless operation with some significant changes throughout the year.

We gave ratepayers the option to receive their rate notices electronically, and installed an online webform to allow ratepayers to change their address details via our website.

A major upgrade of our accounts payable system allowed us to move to paperless processing of invoices.

Apart from the benefit of reducing paper consumption, it also substantially improved productivity. We did not need to reference paper copies multiple times, so it eliminated the need to alphabetically file and store the documents.



Managing the great outdoors

This year we completed an Open Space Asset Management Plan.

This document provides an overview of the practices and processes used to manage open space assets.

It lists the responsibilities for managing the assets, the estimated future resource requirements to maintain the assets in an appropriate condition and identifies opportunities for the improvement of current asset management practices.

Growing and sharing food

During the year, we collaborated with a volunteer community group to help improve the Winton Road Food Forest in Ashburton.

The group has successfully maintained the permaculture food forest since 2011.

This year, we invited comment on project plans during an onsite tour of the area.

Works included additional garden beds and plants, new paths and a picnic shelter.

The Food Forest project idea came from local residents as part of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Project, a community development program funded by the Victorian Government.

The food forest is located at 38 Winton Rd, is unfenced and open to the public with the idea that the neighbourhood shares the produce in a fair and equitable manner.

Theme 3: Enhanced amenity

Objective:

The character of our neighbourhood is protected and improved.



Protecting our heritage

Council has adopted an updated Heritage Action Plan that outlines our long-term heritage work program.

The Heritage Action Plan, first adopted by Council in 2012, is a program of heritage studies and other projects that identify, protect, manage and promote Boroondara's heritage.

Our studies and assessments have resulted in the protection of heritage places through our Heritage Overlay.

We identified priorities in the original plan and updated them this year to include the key features:

- Suburb-wide heritage studies – close the gaps in the City's heritage overlays for all suburbs.
- Assess individual properties – develop a program to assess potentially significant properties.
- Heritage interpretation – prepare a strategy to guide our program of interpretive signs, plaques, walks and other promotional activities.
- Design guidelines – develop a set of guidelines to help planning permit applicants.
- Staff training – teach our staff about heritage conservation and the City's Indigenous and European history.
- Heritage grants – trial a grants program for minor restoration works to commercial heritage properties.
- Information access – improve online information about the City's history and heritage.

We will monitor the progress of the plan every two-years and review it completely after five years.

Graffiti and art

We plan to fight graffiti through a number of approaches including the use of public art as part of a broader Graffiti Management Strategy we developed this year.

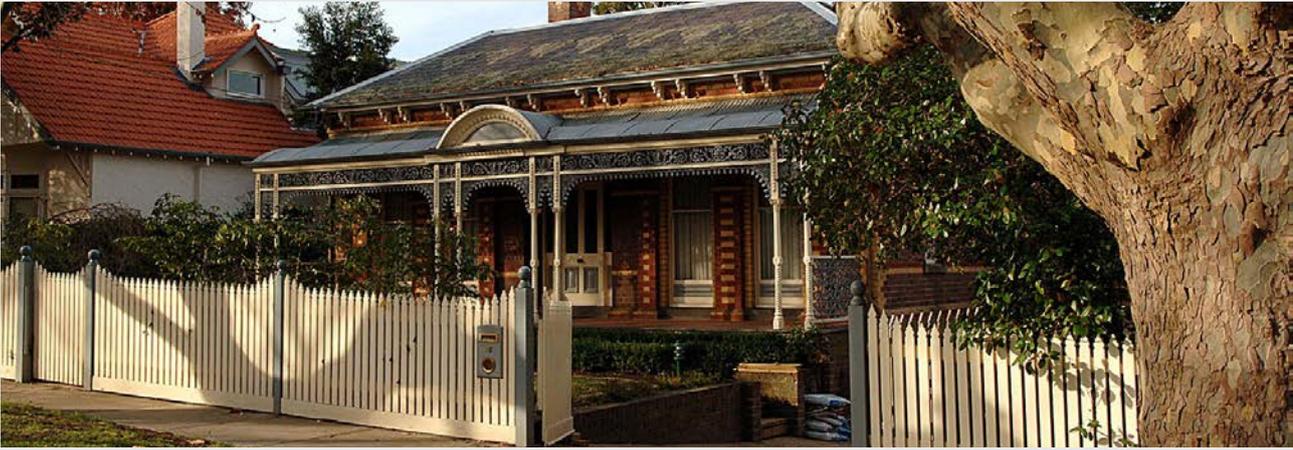
The strategy follows a wide-ranging consultation program earlier in the year when almost 400 local people from across the City provided input.

The community showed strong support for a multi-pronged strategy for tackling the problem of illegal graffiti, which detracts from our otherwise beautiful City.

The strategy outlines how we plan to deal with graffiti on Council's property, and how we can influence the removal of graffiti on assets managed by other public authorities, such as VicRoads, Telstra, VicTrack, Metro Trains, electricity providers and Australia Post.

Our strategy has six key themes:

- Reporting – reporting graffiti to Council, and by Council to other parties.
- Removal – addresses action Council takes to remove graffiti on Council and private property.
- Partnerships – ways in which Council works with other organisations to assist in graffiti management.
- Prevention – focuses on efforts by Council to prevent graffiti occurring, including physical deterrents.
- Advocacy – informs action in relation to graffiti on assets owned by other authorities which Council does not control.
- Internal governance – our structure to oversee implementation of the strategy.



Our housing strategy

During the year, Council adopted the Boroondara Housing Strategy, a high level strategic plan that identifies current and future housing needs in Boroondara to the year 2031.

The strategy is based on an analysis of our municipality's demographic trends and existing housing capacity.

It sets out objectives and strategies to address the key housing issues including neighbourhood character and heritage protection, providing a diverse range of housing options and quality residential design.

Our strategy provides guiding principles and foreshadows further strategic work to support future reviews of the residential zones introduced in Boroondara in 2014, if required.

Key actions include:

- ensure new development retains and enhances the key character attributes that contribute to a precinct's preferred character
- ensure continued identification and protection of places of heritage significance and ongoing assessment of possible heritage places
- ensure the provision of a diverse range of housing
- ensure new multi-dwelling developments in the Neighbourhood and General Residential Zones reinforce a precinct's preferred character
- support greater housing diversity in areas with better access to services and public transport
- ensure Boroondara's commercial areas continue to provide for a dynamic mix of retail, commercial (other than retail) and residential uses
- encourage the use of under-utilised government landholdings for housing (excluding land identified in the Boroondara Open Space Strategy as open space)
- encourage high quality residential design
- advocate for new residential developments to incorporate environmentally sustainable practices into their design.

The strategy does not intend to identify or recommend specific changes to the residential zones, but provide guiding principles to support future reviews of the zones if required.

Following public consultation, the Urban Planning Special Committee adopted the strategy in December 2015.



Breathing life into our laneways

During the year, we developed a Laneways Strategy for Shopping Centres to set the direction and approach for protecting and improving laneways.

Our major shopping centres have an extensive network of laneways which have great potential to enhance the character and amenity of these places.

Successfully revitalised laneways within Boroondara and other cities have demonstrated how laneways may be transformed into unique destinations that provide interest, respite and activity.

They also allow for improved pedestrian accessibility and provide much-needed public open space for people to stop, rest, interact and socialise.

Our strategy provides guidance for Council, the community, and future development to contribute to our vision of 'bringing our laneways to life'.

It provides a strategic approach to conserve, manage and revitalise laneways within the municipality, in particular for the city's four major shopping centres: Balwyn, Camberwell Junction, Glenferrie and Kew Junction.

It will require an ongoing, collaborative approach between Council and the community.

The strategy has five principles:

- **Place creation** – enhance 'sense of place' by improving amenity, creating identity, encouraging creativity and reflecting the area's character or history.
- **Economics** – promote economic vitality by supporting local businesses and considering resource opportunities.
- **Community** – connect the community by encouraging laneway activities, providing socialising opportunities and creating partnerships.
- **Access and function** – improve access and function by linking destinations, prioritising uses, ensuring safety and increasing maintenance.
- **Built form and site planning** – enrich future laneway use by creating opportunities for engagement and interaction (such as retail shops or cafes) or add architectural features with high quality materials that create visual interest.

Late in 2015, we gained community feedback on concept plans to revitalise five laneways around Camberwell Junction, including Stanley Place and Commerce Lane. The plans sought to transform these laneways into unique destinations that provide interest, respite and improved pedestrian access.

The community's feedback has been used to inform a detailed design.

Works are due to take place in 2016-17 and 2017-18, pending budget approval.



Parking fine review

We improved the way we review parking fines to produce more consistent and just decision making.

Parking fines are necessary to protect the amenity of our City, but we recognise the importance of an equitable review system for fines.

We wanted to make the process as transparent, accountable and fair as possible, and we created a framework we believe achieves this.

Policy guidelines, principles and procedures for conducting internal reviews have been improved.

We developed a decision-making matrix, standard operating procedures for parking officers, process and system improvements, and a practice booklet for review staff.

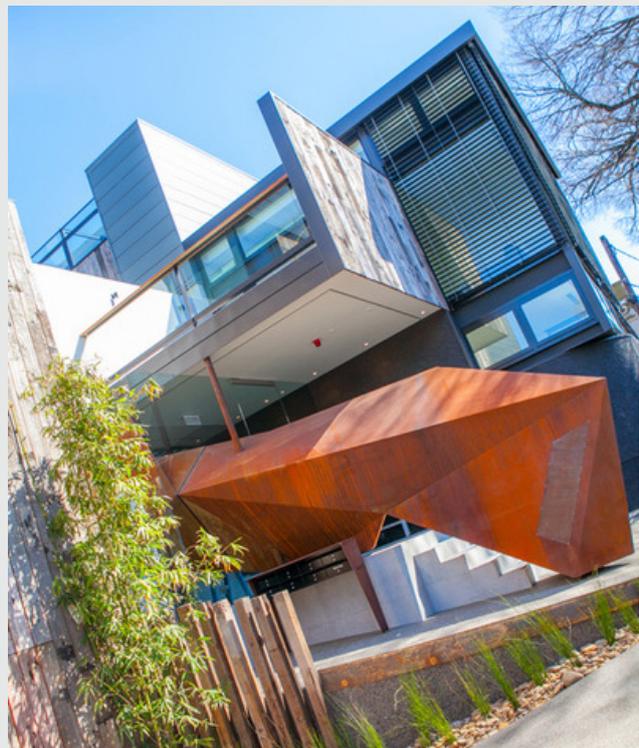
Our new framework embraces the Auditor-General's 2009 report into the withdrawal of infringements.

Managing abandoned vehicles

Our Abandoned Vehicle Program plays an important role in maintaining high standards of amenity across the municipality through the removal and disposal of vehicles left abandoned on land we control.

We reviewed the program this year as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, and identified enhancements that would save money.

A new service provider was appointed to provide the service on a cost neutral basis.



Awards for urban design

Our Urban Design Awards were again an outstanding success, showcasing the best designs in the City.

Six winners and six commendations were recognised across five categories from 21 nominations at a Council meeting in June.

The winners set high standards for future development in Boroondara, with innovative designs and quality finishes while complementing and enriching existing streetscapes.

The judging panel comprised urban design experts as well as Mayor Jim Parke and councillors Philip Mallis and Judith Voce.

More about the awards in our Awards section: Page 34

Planning objections go online

We developed an online form enabling the convenient lodgment of objections for advertised planning permit applications.

People who feel they will be impacted by the approval of a planning permit can object to the application using an online form rather than posting their objection or dropping it off at our offices.

The new online objection form is easy to use and ensures objections are received and considered promptly.

Theme 4: Quality facilities and assets

Objective:

The community's current and future needs for assets and facilities are proactively managed.



Boroondara Sports Complex project

A \$13.5 million project consolidated the activities of the Boroondara Sports Complex and Balwyn Leisure Centre, complementing the objectives of the Gordon Barnard Reserve Masterplan.

We completed the redevelopment of the Boroondara Sports Complex this year, introducing new features to an up-to-date facility that will serve the local community for generations to come.

Features of the wide-ranging redevelopment include:

- new fitness gym and program rooms
- new basketball/netball court
- new crèche
- dedicated and new gymnastics space
- improved general amenity such as change rooms
- improved car park.

We celebrated the achievement with a community open day in July 2016.

The Balwyn Library and Greythorn Early Childhood Centre and Kindergarten services will be temporarily relocated to the former Balwyn Leisure Centre site between late 2016 and early to mid-2018, during the redevelopment of the Balwyn Library and the construction of the North East Community Hub.

The former Balwyn Leisure Centre will then be demolished and returned to open space in 2018.

The extension to the Boroondara Sports Complex was completed within budget.

Plans set for community hub

For many years, Council has been talking with local people about providing a multi-purpose community facility, the North East Community Hub.

This exciting project took a step closer to reality during the year with a detailed design being signed off and a planning permit being granted.

It will offer a range of important community services and programs for people of all ages, including a neighbourhood house, meeting rooms and community program spaces, a library service for pick-up and drop-off of library books, access to computers, community information and library programs.

Other features include a large multipurpose space, an expanded Greythorn Maternal and Child Health Centre, North Balwyn RSL and its memorabilia, an expanded Greythorn Early Childhood Centre and Kindergarten, and consultation rooms for allied health services.

This project has been made possible as a result of the North Balwyn RSL Sub-Branch generously agreeing to a long-term lease with Council for the site in Balwyn North.

During the year, the community provided feedback on concept designs and we developed a detailed plan.

Works are expected to begin in the second half of 2016 to realign an existing sewer and main drain from the site.

Initial site excavation and demolition works are proposed to start in late 2016, in preparation for construction of the new building in early 2017.

The project is expected to cost \$17.2 million.



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Community redesigns library

Community input inspired a design to redevelop the Balwyn Library, one of the most popular libraries in Victoria.

An \$8 million upgrade will transform it into a more contemporary library with attractive and appealing spaces to meet, read and study.

The community told us they wanted a more comfortable space with reading and study areas for individuals and small groups, which minimised noise, clutter and overcrowding.

The detailed design, finalised in April 2016, includes:

- more casual reading and study areas with better amenity and comfortable furniture
- improved access to the collection through a more intuitive layout
- new quiet study area that is separate from the rest of the library
- larger community meeting room that is accessible after-hours
- improved technology, including more efficient wi-fi.
- a special area for young library fans.

Construction is expected to begin late in 2016.

Traffic school upgraded

Our ever-popular Kew Traffic School received a quality makeover throughout the year.

Established in 1954, the school is one of the most popular recreation facilities in our City.

It's a safe environment for children to learn road safety awareness and pedestrian skills.

Children gain confidence and develop road safety skills away from the dangers of our roads through a range of active opportunities.

This year's project renewed and improved the grounds of the school. Community input was gained through information sessions and an online survey.

We removed the existing roads, paths, rubber surfaces and traffic features and installed new roads, paths and pedestrian crossings with new surfaces to teach children the differences between roads and footpaths.

We also reconfigured the layout and added new features, such as driveways and a designated area for off-road skills and bike skills.

Historic elements like the railway crossing, train, tram and play huts were retained and renovated.



Preschool expands

We delivered an exciting renewal and expansion project to include maternal and child health services and extra kindergarten places at the Surrey Hills Preschool.

The Victorian Government helped make the project possible with a \$350,000 grant, with the remaining \$524,000 funded by Council.

The project allows families to access services to meet their children's education and health needs from one convenient location.

Works included an extension to the building, a second teaching room and modifications to the children's bathroom, offices and associated utility spaces.

A Maternal and Child Health consulting room – including a waiting area, kitchen and bathroom – was built to the south-west side of the kindergarten.

Asset protection

At any point in time, there are about 2,000 private building sites under construction in Boroondara.

Our officers deal with the impacts these works may have on Council's roads and infrastructure.

This work includes administering permits, undertaking construction inspections to identify damage, responding to complaints and ensuring that any damage is reinstated appropriately.

More than 1,100 permits were issued during the year with a similar number of final inspections undertaken by two asset protection officers.

Oval gets a facelift

During the year, we reconstructed the Gordon Barnard eastern oval and installed new training lights.

Significant earthworks levelled the sports field, and we improved sub-surface drainage, the irrigation system, turf cricket wicket table and turf surface.

The project provided the community with a high-quality sporting facility that will increase the opportunity to participate in active and passive recreation.

Closing a gap in the trail

In April 2016 Council adopted a design to re-align the City's Anniversary Trail after extensive consultation with the community.

The trail is an off-road shared path used by cyclists and pedestrians that runs north-south for about 12km through the centre of Boroondara.

The trail is off-road except for a section between Riversdale and Prospect Hill roads where users are directed on-road along Spencer and Prospect Hill roads for 330m.

Two bicycle casualty crashes have been recorded at the intersection over the last five years, and the project was designed to redirect people away from the crash black-spot.

Completing this missing off-road section is strategically important and has been designated as a high priority within the adopted Boroondara Bicycle Strategy.

Completing this link requires an equal exchange of land with Camberwell High School.



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Creating a new civic space

During the year, we created a new civic space for the community adjacent to our fabulous Hawthorn Arts Centre.

Council purchased the site at 350 Burwood Road for a future public open space in 2012, and the building was demolished and the site cleared and asphalted to prepare for the official opening of the Hawthorn Arts Centre next door.

We wanted to create a gateway to the arts centre and the Glenferrie Road Shopping Centre, and a welcoming space for people to meet and socialise.

We asked the community what they wanted, and they highlighted the need to:

- maximise greenery and provide shade and protection
- maximise seating opportunities
- consider locations for public art
- improve and simplify access
- develop safety and feature lighting.

The project has created a vibrant, multiuse, outdoor civic space for the community.



Fresh food market upgraded

We continued with the upgrade and improvement works to the Camberwell Fresh Food Market.

Works at the western entrance included landscaping, paving, seating, and a new canopy along the northern entrance.

Further internal improvements included new floor finishes, new bulkheads and signage, and the relocation of shops.

Streetscape at Harp Village

This year, we improved the streetscape of Harp Village as part of our Shopping Centre Improvement Plan.

Feedback from the community during consultation included creating feature spaces with seating and canopy trees, making side street entrances pedestrian friendly, and narrowing the entrance into Station Street while maintaining a left and a right lane turning north into High Street.

Theme 5: Responsible management

Objectives:

Decision-making in the delivery of high quality services by capable and professional people reflects transparent and fair practices.

Sound financial and risk management practices.

Putting our customers first

During the year, we examined how we interact with our customers to identify ways to make it as easy as possible for them to access information and services how they want, when they want.

Our Customer First program continued for its second year, and one of the main tools we applied this year was an intense 20-day Process Improvement (PI) program for our work areas.

We examined customer and organisational “pain points” and then created solutions to relieve them.

These activities take the customer’s viewpoint and aim to make our processes easier for them. A lot of work involved web forms and payments.

For example, a highly-skilled technical staff member volunteered to participate in the 20-day challenge, which resulted in a simplified process for customers submitting front fence applications.

This change ensured two departments – Statutory Planning and Building Services – worked co-operatively for the best customer outcome.

The success of this challenge encouraged other key staff to volunteer to participate in future challenges.

This year, we began to manage customer service requests originating from social media sites. This improved response times and reduced overall staff effort.

We also examined the best way to measure the success of the Customer First program, and began a Customer Experience Evaluation project that will span four years.

A representative sample of customer interactions was selected to help provide baseline data. We will then take a sample annually to assess changes in the level of satisfaction over time. The data will help us further identify issues we can address.



Looking after staff health and safety

Health and safety is paramount at the City of Boroondara.

This year, we researched, developed and adopted a three-year Occupational Health and Safety Strategic Plan.

Some of the key findings of our research indicated that hazard reporting among our staff was low, and that injuries were generally unrelated to reported hazards and near misses.

Data also indicated that the amount of time lost because of injuries had decreased in the previous 12 months, to the lowest rate recorded over the past four years.

Our OHS strategic plan moves us toward a proactive approach of identifying hazards and managing risk, creating a culture where everyone has the knowledge and desire to work safely.

Our plan has six strategic objectives:

- continue to improve the Safety Management System to support a high standard of OHS practice
- develop hazard profiles for the operational areas to create a shared understanding
- develop risk assessment processes to address the hazard profiles and actively manage the hazards
- review and continue to improve the targeted measures to drive safety outcomes
- leaders model the safe behaviours and proactively manage hazards to create a safe work environment
- celebrate the successes and excellence in OHS performance.

Each objective has actions and timelines for the next three years with a statement of achievement to convey the goal for each action.

The plan will be supported by regular, targeted communication with our staff.



Promoting health and wellbeing

Our staff are our most important asset, so we were very pleased this year to deliver a highly utilised health and wellbeing program promoting good physical health at work and home.

We organised a healthy habits challenge with teams of staff participating in building good health habits over six weeks.

More than 40 staff participated and developed healthy habits such as walking daily, eating an improved diet and drinking lots of water.

We also expanded our Health and Wellbeing Program to better manage the environment for staff who report injuries or difficulty completing work tasks because of injury symptoms.

Technology focus on customers

We are rolling out a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to help us engage with our community on a more personal level.

The new CRM processes customer service requests faster and creates a more comprehensive picture of why and how our customers want to use our services. This in turn provides a vastly improved overview of our community's unique needs and enables us to better serve them.

We are currently introducing this new CRM system across our organisation, department by department. It forms an integral part of our Boroondara Customer First program and reflects our commitment to the wellbeing of our community.



Mystery shopper program

Our mystery shopper program provided some quality information to our staff about how we are tracking and how we can improve our contact with customers.

Data was gathered from telephone calls and face-to-face visits, compared to the previous year's assessments where possible and benchmarked against other councils and the local government sector.

Assessors made 250 calls and conducted 25 visits to our offices.

This program helps us understand our customer service performance, establish an independent measure of our customer service and benchmark us against the sector.

Our Getting Through score increased ten points to 66 and our Service Delivery increased nine points to 89, five points ahead of the sector average.

Great progress was seen across our organisation in our greeting skills, but we need to keep working to fine-tune a few elements, such as our salutations and offers to help.

Overall connect times and the manner of our agents (interested, warm and attentive) rose above the local government average.

Our enquiry resolution skills were solid, with near perfect scores achieved for all three criteria.

Our customer service leaders shared the results with our teams and work began to improve our service for customers.

Matching staff with demand

A workforce management system was developed to help us accurately forecast varying phone call traffic to Council.

It helped us calculate the number of staff required every shift to meet service targets.

The system delivers real-time monitoring of service levels and staffing.

We were one of the first local government customer service teams to use this technology to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Support for home support

A new software application and iPads were rolled out during the year to help our 150 home support staff do their job in supporting older people and people with disabilities to stay living independently in their homes.

It helped them manage rostering, client appointments, time and expenses.

It improved communication with staff and streamlined processes for our customers.

Council won the MAV Technology Team Achievement Award for this project.

Community program review

Our Community OnBoard program, which provides networking and business development training opportunities for local community groups, clubs and not-for-profit agencies, was reviewed and evaluated through internal and external surveys.

We received feedback on the effectiveness of the previous year's workshops, as well as suggestions for the program.

We received 76 survey responses and our staff held an internal review meeting with various departments across the organisation.

As a result of this collaborative approach, one workshop on micro-volunteering was delivered in partnership with the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre.

Volunteer centre review

Our Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre undertook an operational review and we improved our membership process, volunteering opportunities and capacity-building programs.

Our centre transitioned to paperless referrals, increasing the time we have to speak with prospective volunteers about their interests.

We also introduced an iPad-based system to capture data at our annual Volunteer Expo.



Focus on research practices

We developed and promoted research resources during the year to encourage a consistent approach to research across the organisation. It encouraged a strong collaboration between departments, providing a platform for future shared research projects.

A process to initiate research projects and communicate findings across the organisation was mapped out by our key service units.

The process was endorsed by our senior leadership team and is expected to improve research quality, provide more support earlier in the life of research projects and ultimately contribute to evidence-based service planning.

Access to information

We recognise the role of freedom of information plays in providing transparency and openness to basic democratic principles, good government and accountability.

The community has a right to access information not exempt under the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

Every year we review a statement listing all the documents concerning the functions of Council.

Documents in this list, called a *Part II Statement under the Act*, are available to inspect through our website or by contacting the relevant department in Council.

Council recognises that every person has a legally enforceable right to obtain access to documents in the possession of Council, other than an exempt document under the Act.

See our website for more information about Freedom of Information requests.



Events and Activities

We hosted well over a thousand events and activities during the year. Almost 500 people participated in our White Ribbon Day event, about 500 people enjoyed our Seniors Week grand finale concert, 120 professionals attended our Early Years conference, 150 participated in Children's Week activities and 17 primary schools took part in 93,499 walks during our Walk to School event.

White Ribbon Day event

A keynote address by domestic violence campaigner Rosie Batty was a highlight of our White Ribbon Day event, held in partnership with Swinburne University at the Hawthorn Campus in October.

The event included speeches by Councillor Coral Ross, Swinburne's Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Jennelle Kyd and Superintendent Matthew Ryan from the Victoria Police Family Violence Command.

Rosie Batty called on attendees to take action in creating the cultural changes required to end family violence.

Attendees took the White Ribbon Oath and marched to Central Gardens for a community barbeque.

Tickets sold out and almost 500 people participated.



Supporting volunteers

Our Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre supported and celebrated volunteering in Boroondara through the International Volunteer Day (IVD) and the 11th Annual Boroondara Volunteer Expo, both at the Hawthorn Arts Centre.

More than 90 volunteers and various volunteer organisations joined us to celebrate IVD in December, while more than 50 organisations and 430 prospective volunteers came to our Expo in March.

We also held a forum in May to help organisations welcome culturally and linguistically diverse volunteers.

It provided advice on the changes organisations could make to their operations, including using simpler language, creating buddy programs and recognising volunteer contributions. More than 30 organisations participated in the forum.

Cyber safety awareness

We partnered with Auburn High School to deliver a free cyber safety forum for parents in May.

The evening aimed to increase awareness of cyber safety for young people and increase knowledge of how to respond to emerging issues that arise from the digital world.

The forum covered important topics including balancing online gaming and gambling, unwanted contact, sexting and prohibited and illegal content.



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Celebrating Indigenous culture

We celebrated NAIDOC in July with the launch of the Missions Songs Project by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musician Jessie Lloyd at the Kew Court House.

The songs offered an opportunity for the community to share in the experience of Indigenous culture. The event had a full house.

A family friendly workshop in June at the Kew Library marked National Reconciliation Week. About 50 parents, carers and children learned about Indigenous culture through storytelling, and a piece of artwork was also produced.

Department of youth

Young people aged 10 to 18 years from a wide range of cultural backgrounds participated in a range of school holiday activities at our 360 Boroondara Youth Resource Centre.

Activities included the 360 Chef Club, creating your own t-shirts, games days, watching movies and making hotdogs and popcorn.

All days and activities were fully booked.

A variety of FreeZa events were held during the year: Push Start Eastern Regional Finals Live Music Event in October; Boroondara Youth Short Film Festival Event in November; Parody Prom Under 18 Dance Event in December and May; and the National Youth Week Live Music Event in April.

A list of other events

- Nine citizenship ceremonies during the year
- Nine Living for our Future workshops and events during the year
- Sports club forums in September and March
- Business networking meetings, workshops and events throughout the year
- Summertime Cinema and Summertime Music Festival in December and February
- Creative professional development for arts professionals in March, April, May and June
- Boroondara Eisteddfod from April to June
- Seniors Week in October
- Casserole Club Christmas lunch in December
- Centenarians morning tea in April
- Adult Learners' week in September
- Boroondara Literary Awards in November
- Recipes for life, health and wellbeing workshops from April to June
- Your heritage ... pass it on: series to celebrate Australian Heritage Week in April
- Page to stage, series of workshops exploring storytelling from May to June
- Neighbour Day and Harmony Day in March
- Boroondara Early Years Conference in August
- Children's Week in October
- Walk to School in October.

Awards

Here are some of the awards Council has presented to members of our community, some our staff have received, and some we have received from other organisations:

Community awards

Citizens of the Year

The winners of our 2016 Boroondara Citizen of the Year awards were announced on Australia Day at the Hawthorn Arts Centre:

Carolyn Ingvarson

2016 Boroondara Citizen of the Year

Kathleen Hanson

2016 Boroondara Young Citizen of the Year

Debbie McColl-Davis

2016 Boroondara Volunteer of the Year

Special Commendations for Service to the Community were awarded to:

Tanya Warms General

Georgia Brown Youth

Barbara Bedford Volunteering

Urban Design Awards

The winners of our Urban Design Awards were announced in June:

Category 1 – Best heritage extensions, additions and alterations

Award-winning project:

12 Mary Street, Hawthorn.

Entrant: **WAF Constructions**

Commendation presented to project:

31 Brook Street, Hawthorn.

Entrant: Richard Bryant of Bryant Alsop Architects

Category 2 – Best small-scale multi-dwelling residential development

Two joint award winners and two commendations are offered in this category

Joint award-winning project:

12 Mountain Grove, Kew.

Entrant: **Virgon Constructions**

5 Aird Street, Camberwell.

Entrant: **Chan Architecture**

Commendation presented to project:

17a Power Street, Hawthorn.

Entrant: **Rossetti Architects**

34 Barton Street, Hawthorn.

Entrant: Tamara Dunkley of **ADDARC Architects**

Category 3 – Best medium-scale, multi-dwelling residential development

Award winning project: 8-10 Simpson Place, Hawthorn.

Entrant: **WAF Constructions**

Commendation presented to project:

818-830 Burke Road, Camberwell.

Entrant: **SJB Architects**

Category 4 – Best institutional (schools, hospitals etc.) development

Commendation presented to project: Strathcona School's Learning Centre, 34 Scott Street, Canterbury.

Entrant: **PMDL Architecture and Design**

Category 5 – Best apartment/mixed-use development

Award-winning project: 729 Burwood Road, Hawthorn East. Entrant: **OLA Studio**

Commendation presented to project:

8-12 Queens Avenue, Hawthorn.

Entrant: **Ascui & Co Architects**





Sustainability awards for schools

Schools and students who were recognised in our 2015 Boroodara Sustainability Awards:

Sustainable Kinder of the Year

Winning entry: Summerhill Park Kindergarten for their rain-garden and water-based play-space projects.

Commendation: Fordham Avenue Kindergarten for their sustainable gardening projects.

Sustainable Primary School of the Year

Winning entry: Chatham Primary School for their water saving, waste reduction, biodiversity and mentoring initiatives.

Commendation: St Bede's Primary School for their community behaviour change programs.

Student Sustainability Projects of the Year

Winning entries:

'*Bialik Tree Day Indigenous Garden*' by year 4 students from Bialik College.

'*Benefits of a Worm Farm*' by year 6 students Isla and Ashley from Solway Primary School.

'*Enviroweek Environmental Exhibition*' by year 7, 10, 11 and 12 students Edward, William, Jason, Alex, Thomas, Finlay, Todd and Harry from Trinity Grammar School.

Commendations:

'*Sustainable September*' by year 5 students Kiera, Geordie and Jake from Bialik College.

'*Alternative Energy Sources*' by year 6 students Irene, Holly, Sophie and Sam from Auburn South Primary School.



Staff awards

Council continues to develop a culture that recognises, encourages and celebrates excellence in the workplace. One way we do this is through our BoroonStar Awards program. During 2015-16, 100 BoroonStar awards were presented to staff throughout the organisation. In addition, service awards were provided to staff recognising their years of service. During 2015-16, 1 staff member received a 45 years of service award, 1 staff member received a 40 years of service award, 1 staff member received a 30 years of service award, 13 staff received 25 years of service awards, 12 staff received 20 years of service awards, 25 staff received 15 years of service awards and 30 staff received 10 years of service awards.

Individual staff who received external awards

Brendan Rea – Planning Enforcement Officer of the Year (Planning Enforcement Officers Association).

Awards for our organisation

United Nations award

Our Council was awarded the United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Awards (Local Government Award) for Biodiversity Monitoring in Melbourne's East. The City of Boroondara led the project on behalf of the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action.

More about this award in our Sustainable Environment section: Page 14

Top customer service

Our Customer Service team won the Victorian Local Government Customer Service Award for its innovative approach to staff learning and engagement. The team also received an honourable mention for Best People Strategy at the National Government Call Centre Summit Awards.

IT team wins help-desk award

Our Information Technology department received a Help Desk Institute Award for Team Certification from the Help Desk Association of Australia. This is the third consecutive year that our IT department has received this award.

Stories win accolades

The publication *Boroondara Remembers: Stories of WWI* was the winner of the Local History – Small Publication Award at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's 2015 Community History Awards. The Gallipoli and Beyond Program was shortlisted in the Centenary of WWI Award category.

Pool project lauded

Our Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre renewal project won the Parks and Leisure Australia (Victoria/Tasmania) award for Leisure Facilities: Development. It also won the Facility Design and Development category as part of the Australian Sport, Recreation and Play Industry Awards.

Australian Reporting Awards

We were presented with a Silver Award for 'Distinguished achievement in reporting' for the City of Boroondara 2014-15 Annual Report in the 2016 Australian Reporting Awards program.

Challenges

While we were busy contributing to Council's vision, everything didn't go our way. Here are some of the things that tested us throughout the year.

Government policy shift

The government has seen wide ranging reviews of environmental policy and legislation relating to water and waterway management, land use planning, energy policy, climate change, native vegetation and the role of Sustainability Victoria and the EPA. It has been an ongoing challenge to ensure we are properly and fully consulted by relevant departments and agencies on various discussion papers and draft strategies and plans, and to prepare effective submissions within required timeframes.

Shopping centre waste problem

This year we worked with traders from the western end of Greythorn Shopping Centre to remove unsightly waste bins and semi-permanent skips from Centre Way.

Finding a solution to this long-standing problem has proven difficult, but Council has worked with local traders to design a new centralised waste facility to manage waste and clean up Centre Way. The facility will be installed in 2016-17.

Delivering capital works

We found it challenging to deliver a high percentage of our Capital Works Program. Our Capital Works budget is prepared in January based on the best information available at the time. But during the delivery phase, service needs and priorities change in some instances, which can impact negatively on the delivery of projects. Projects also incur contract disputes, unforeseen variations, adverse weather and design or planning delays. Despite this environment, we achieved the targeted 90 per cent completion rate.

Parking challenge

Providing on-street parking and providing it equitably remains an ongoing challenge. Introducing parking restrictions can satisfy residents, but reduces parking opportunities for commuters and employees, who invariably park in the next street. This starts the cycle again. A review of the Parking Management Policy provides an opportunity to revisit and review our approach to this ongoing challenge.

Rate capping

The Victorian Government announced rate capping commencing from 2016-17, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). While we remain opposed to this, our prudent management means that we can accommodate rate capping without cutting services in the medium term. However we believe the policy will inevitably have impacts on services and infrastructure in the longer term.

Rate capping creates uncertainty around future rate revenue for councils and is inconsistent with Councils' statutory obligation to develop long-term strategic plans.

Planning issues

Council constantly battles to balance the Victorian Government direction in planning with community expectations. This is a complex and contentious issue with no silver-bullet solution. When Council sought community views about the impact of new single dwellings on our City earlier this year, we received close to 1,000 submissions. There is a majority view that residents are concerned about established homes being demolished and replaced with large modern homes. Single dwellings are built under Victorian Government building regulations and Council's responsibilities and statutory powers regarding the approval of these developments are very limited.

We've had some success with our advocacy to introduce better residential design standards for our community. There is now a limit in the number of dwellings per lot and a two-storey height limit to parts of our City to maintain its residential character. We will continue to address community concerns and keep the community informed on our progress to preserve what we love about Boroondara's streetscapes and heritage.

Complex social issues

An ongoing challenge is the increasing number of reports from residents and our staff about people who are homeless in Boroondara. In each instance, Council's Homelessness Protocol was activated and Council liaised with the relevant community service providers so that they could provide support and other assistance.

School crossing supervisors retire

A lot of our school crossing supervisors retired during the year, impacting what is predominantly an ageing workforce.

A strategic recruitment project undertaken the previous year produced a positive outcome, but the retirements meant our Local Laws field officers had to fill those roles to ensure community safety.





Contact us

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After hours emergencies: 9278 4444

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Website: www.boroondara.vic.gov.au

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Camberwell VIC 3124

Customer Service Centres

Camberwell office

8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell

Hawthorn Arts Centre

360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn

Kew Library

Corner Cotham Road and Civic Drive Kew

Copies

For a copy of the City of Boroondara 2015-16 Annual Report, please call Customer Service on 9278 4444 or visit www.boroondara.vic.gov.au

Feedback

Feedback on this document is welcome.

Please write to:

City of Boroondara

Private Bag 1

Camberwell VIC 3124

or email: boroondara@boroondara.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgments

Council would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of Our Community, Our Story 2015-16.

For speech or hearing impaired

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Speak and Listen 1300 555 727

Free interpreting service 9278 4002

Translation needed?

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Mandarin

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Cantonese

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Greek

Αν θέλετε τη μετάφραση κάποιου τμήματος αυτού του εγγράφου παρακαλούμε καλέστε την δωρεάν υπηρεσία διερμηνείας στο 8692 2943.

Italian

Se desiderate che vi venga tradotta una parte di questo documento, siete pregati di chiamare gratis il servizio telefonico di interpretariato del Comune al 8692 2944.

Vietnamese

Nếu quý vị muốn một phần nào đó của tài liệu này được biên dịch, xin hãy gọi đến dịch vụ thông dịch miễn phí của Hội đồng ở số 8692 2946.