



ACTIVATE WOLLONDILLY 2021

LONG TERM COMMUNITY
RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN



Acknowledgement^{*}

Wollondilly Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land in Wollondilly, the Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples.

We acknowledge the living culture and spiritual connections to the land for the Dharawal and Gundungurra people and that Wollondilly is remarkably placed as the intersection of these two tribal lands.

We recognise the traditional Custodians have occupied and cared for this Country over countless generations and celebrate their continuing contribution to the Shire.

We also acknowledge and remember the Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples who were killed in the Appin Massacre on 17 April 1816.

**We acknowledge our collaboration with the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council*



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MESSAGE

from the Mayor

Wollondilly's response to a series of devastating events over the last few years has revealed the amazing resilience and strength of the local community.

In 2016 a major storm and flood event impacted many of our residents and businesses. Since then we have experienced: an extended period of drought; the destruction of the 2019/20 Green Wattle Creek Bushfire; further damage to businesses and road infrastructure caused by the 2020 and 2021 storm events; and the far-reaching effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Throughout this series of events, community members, local organisations and Council have stepped up to support each other during each emergency and throughout the period of recovery that has followed. The efforts of our individuals, community groups and first responders, has been inspiring.

Recovery from these events will take time. Council is committed to working alongside the community throughout the recovery period and supporting people to access the resources and information that they need at each stage of the journey to build a responsive and resilient community.

The Activate Wollondilly 2021 Long-Term Community Recovery and Resilience Plan builds upon the framework developed following the 2016 flood/storm event. The Plan identifies actions that support community led recovery from the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire, storm events and the Covid-19 pandemic, helps build on our existing resilience and empowers us to prepare for future disaster events.

This Plan puts us in a great place to lobby for funding for events that bring the community together and resources that better prepare us for potential future disasters. It gives us a map of where to go from here, as we continue to draw on that community spirit for whatever the future brings.

Robert Khan
Mayor, Wollondilly Shire

BACKGROUND TO ACTIVATE WOLLONDILLY

In 2016 the Wollondilly local government area experienced a significant storm event. The event caused widespread damage across the Shire, particularly in the Picton CBD where it had a devastating impact on residents, businesses, community facilities and infrastructure.

After the storm event of June 2016 Council set out to improve the preparedness of the community for future natural disasters. Council implemented a series of deliberative engagement strategies to assess Council and community responses to the disaster and to plan for long-term recovery. Information collected was used to develop the 'Activate Wollondilly' Framework.

The Activate Wollondilly Framework is a Council led, strengths based approach to disaster management and preparedness aimed at building resilient, informed and educated communities able to respond and recover from natural and man-made disasters impacting the Wollondilly LGA. The framework enables a review of how Council engages with the community, builds community awareness of disaster management, preparedness and resilience, enhances cooperative responses between agencies that improves functionality, service delivery and achievement of outcomes. The framework ensures emergency management plans are community lead living documents that are updated as lessons are learnt, mitigation strategies are identified and implemented and control measures are put in place ready for future events. The Activate Wollondilly framework will be reflected in mitigation strategies such as the Flood Strategy, Bushfire Risk Management Plan and future mitigation plans as required.

The framework strategically aligns with priority action areas of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience. It aligns by providing a framework for coordinating effort, understanding and reducing risks, a communication framework through both online channels and paper based resources that builds capacity in a partnership approach and provides reflective processes to evaluate recovery efforts and capabilities.

The Activate Wollondilly Framework will continue to evolve as we experience future disasters and as our community changes. Following the flood and fires of 2016 and 2020 the Wollondilly Local Recovery Plan was reviewed by the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee. The 2020 review ensures that Activate Wollondilly 2021 plan aligns with the NSW State Recovery Plan, Greater Sydney Recovery Plan and the Local Emergency Management Plan.

FOREWORD

The following document is a Recovery Action Plan which was initiated largely in response to the Green Wattle Creek bushfire which impacted Wollondilly Shire in 2019/ 2020. The Recovery Action Plan contains a number of short-term actions which council will be undertaking to support the long-term recovery of the shire and build greater resilience towards future disasters. The document highlights the transition from the floods of 2016, subsequent bushfires, drought and Covid-19 pandemic.

The Recovery Action plan details the objectives and actions of the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee in the short, medium and longer term. The Recovery Action Plan enables planning and resource allocation to deliver disaster recovery initiatives and facilitates communication and engagement with people and communities to engage and support them in their recovery journey.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME

Immediate Term 0- 6 months

Medium Term 6-12 months

Longer Term 12+ months

Lake Burrangorang, Nattai

OVERVIEW OF
THE COMPONENTS OF THE

ACTIVATE WOLLONDILLY FRAMEWORK



THE COMPONENTS OF THE ACTIVATE WOLLONDILLY FRAMEWORK

1. RECOVERY COMMENCES WHEN RESPONSE COMMENCES

2. MAYORAL RELIEF FUND

Emergency financial support is enabled through the activation of the Mayoral Relief Fund. This fund is immediate and addresses a gap in getting emergency relief out to victims on the ground quickly.

3. COMMUNITY RECOVERY INFORMATION CENTRE (CRIC)

Establishment of an immediate Community Recovery Information Centre (CRIC) with the view of establishing Community-led and driven Community Hubs located in the midst of the affected area.

4. LOCAL RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY COMMITTEE

Supported by a Local Resilience and Recovery Committee who disseminate information, represent community views, identifies needs, and promotes community well-being. The Local Community Recovery & Resilience Committee has representation from community members, service providers and government agencies who work with Council on representing the needs of community and reports to the Local Emergency Management Committee.

5. COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT

The toolkit includes information, resources and strategies that will equip residents, stakeholders and council with information to guide them through steps or sequences that may save their lives, protect their property and develop cohesiveness in recovery after a natural disaster.

This includes resources such as:

- Mayor's Relief Fund
- Local Disaster Recovery Plan Toolkit
- How to prepare your family to ensure your safety during a bushfire with links to Local Emergency Agencies
- Wollondilly Emergency Management Guide
- Get Ready Wollondilly
- Get prepared App
- Home Emergency Kit Checklist and
- Emergency information in regards to Fires, Floods, Storm & Tempest, Drought, Key Response Support Agencies; and
- Council Hardship Policy

6. DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUE DEBRIEFING SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS PAPER FOR IMPROVEMENT

These sessions are with local residents and a variety of local cohorts and stakeholder groups. As a result of the workshops a recommendations paper is produced that informs strategic planning documents and identifies strategies and actions, resources and new policies. These outcomes are incorporated into the review of the Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan, Wollondilly Local Disaster Recovery Plan and the events and initiatives relevant for short, medium and long term recovery into the Activate Wollondilly Long Term Local Recovery and Resilience Plan.

7. ACTIVATE WOLLONDILLY LONG TERM LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN

A Long Term Local Recovery and Resilience Plan is developed after each disaster event and is informed by the deliberative dialogue debriefing sessions, recommendations paper and other feedback received after an event. The Plan guides a strategic and action focused approach to programs, activities and initiatives regarding community led recovery and resilience in Wollondilly. The Long Term Local Recovery and Resilience Plan assists in the pace and speed of recovery and the strategic approach to help community, community groups and business continuity as a result of an event. It is an evolving and living document that is community focused, led, driven and implemented. This plan also links to other Regional and State Recovery Plans.

The Activate Wollondilly framework has been utilised to develop Activate Wollondilly 2021: Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan. This plan will guide the recovery work following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire, 2020 and 2021 storm events and Covid-19 as well as the work Wollondilly Shire Council will undertake to build community resilience for future disasters.

INTRODUCTION

During 2019 Wollondilly Shire was in the midst of the worst drought on record. NSW had been declared a state of drought in August, 2018. The low moisture levels created by the prolonged period of drought combined with higher than average temperatures throughout spring and summer in 2019/ 2020 resulted in intense weather conditions and the worst bushfire season recorded in NSW.

On the 27th November, 2019 a lightning strike ignited the Green Wattle Creek Fire which continued to burn in and around the Wollondilly Shire until the 10th February, 2020. The Green Wattle Creek bushfire caused major devastation; 270, 700 hectares of land was burned in Wollondilly, resulting in a burn scar of 63.9% - the fourth highest in Australia for the Black Summer period.

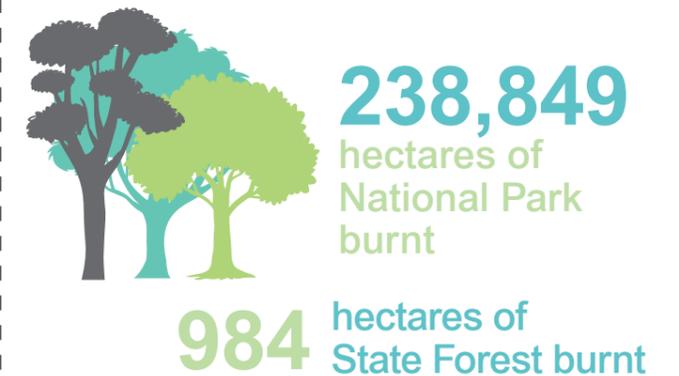
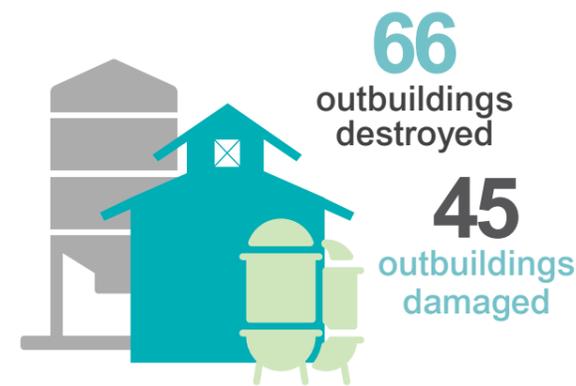
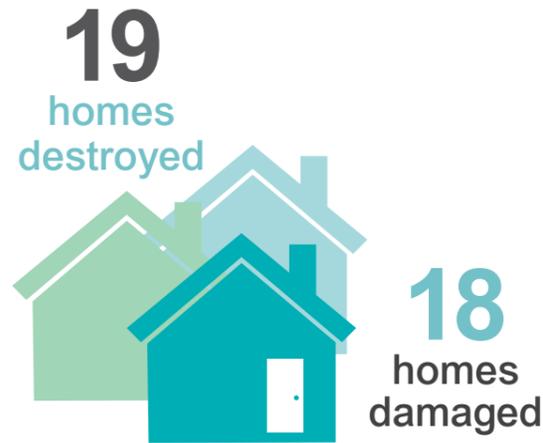
The impact of the Green Wattle Creek bushfire in Wollondilly Shire was devastating. On the 19th December, 2019 NSW two RFS volunteers from Horsley Park; Deputy Captain Geoffrey Keaton and Firefighter Andrew O'Dwyer were killed when their truck rolled over while fighting the Green Wattle Creek bushfire in Buxton. A further eighteen people were injured and seventeen people were rescued in Wollondilly.

Shortly after the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire was declared to be officially extinguished the Wollondilly Shire was affected by flooding. Flooding impacted businesses, residents and public assets, placing further strain on many people across Wollondilly Shire.

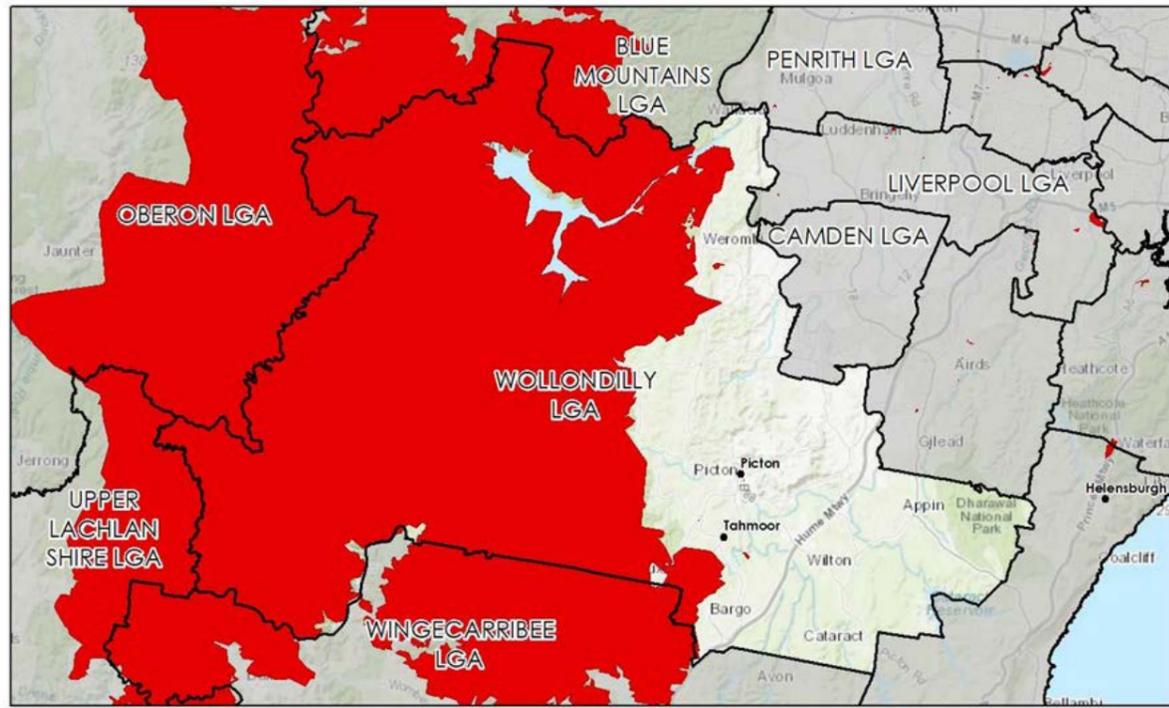
This was further exacerbated by the Covid-19 Global Pandemic which started in March, 2020. Many services and businesses including the Recovery and Resilience Hub set-up in Buxton to support residents impacted by the bushfire were forced to close due to NSW Health restrictions. Closures and lock-downs were a further economic set-back for businesses already impacted by the drought, bushfires and floods. For residents the opportunity to connect with other people for support were lost due to lock-downs and fear of contracting Covid-19, community events were postponed and vital repair and rebuild work was delayed for many.

Wollondilly Shire Council has developed Activate Wollondilly 2021: Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan to guide recovery work taking place across the shire following a series of disasters including the Green Wattle Creek bushfire, flooding and Covid-19. This plan not only takes into account the devastating impacts of the Green Wattle Creek bushfire, but the cumulative effects of the prolonged drought, flooding and the global pandemic Covid-19.

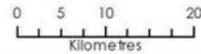
Significant Impacts OF THE GREEN WATTLE CREEK BUSHFIRE



WOLLONDILLY LGA



2019-20 Burnscar

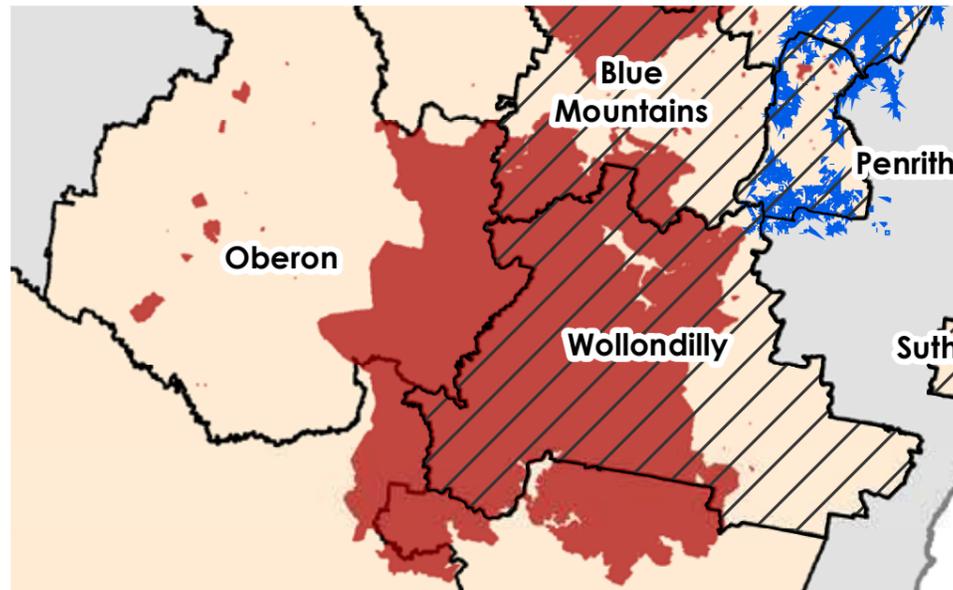


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Map highlighting burn scar following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire in Wollondilly LGA taken from: National Bushfire Recovery Agency 'NSW LGA Profiles' 28.02.2021

2019 - 20 Bushfires & March 2021 Flood DRFA Activated LGAs



2019-20 Burnscar (May 2020)

DRFA 2019-20 bushfire activated LGA

2021 NSW flood footprint (22 March 2021 web service)

DRFA March 2021 flood activated LGA within bushfire declared LGAs

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NATIONAL DISASTER RECOVERY PRINCIPLES

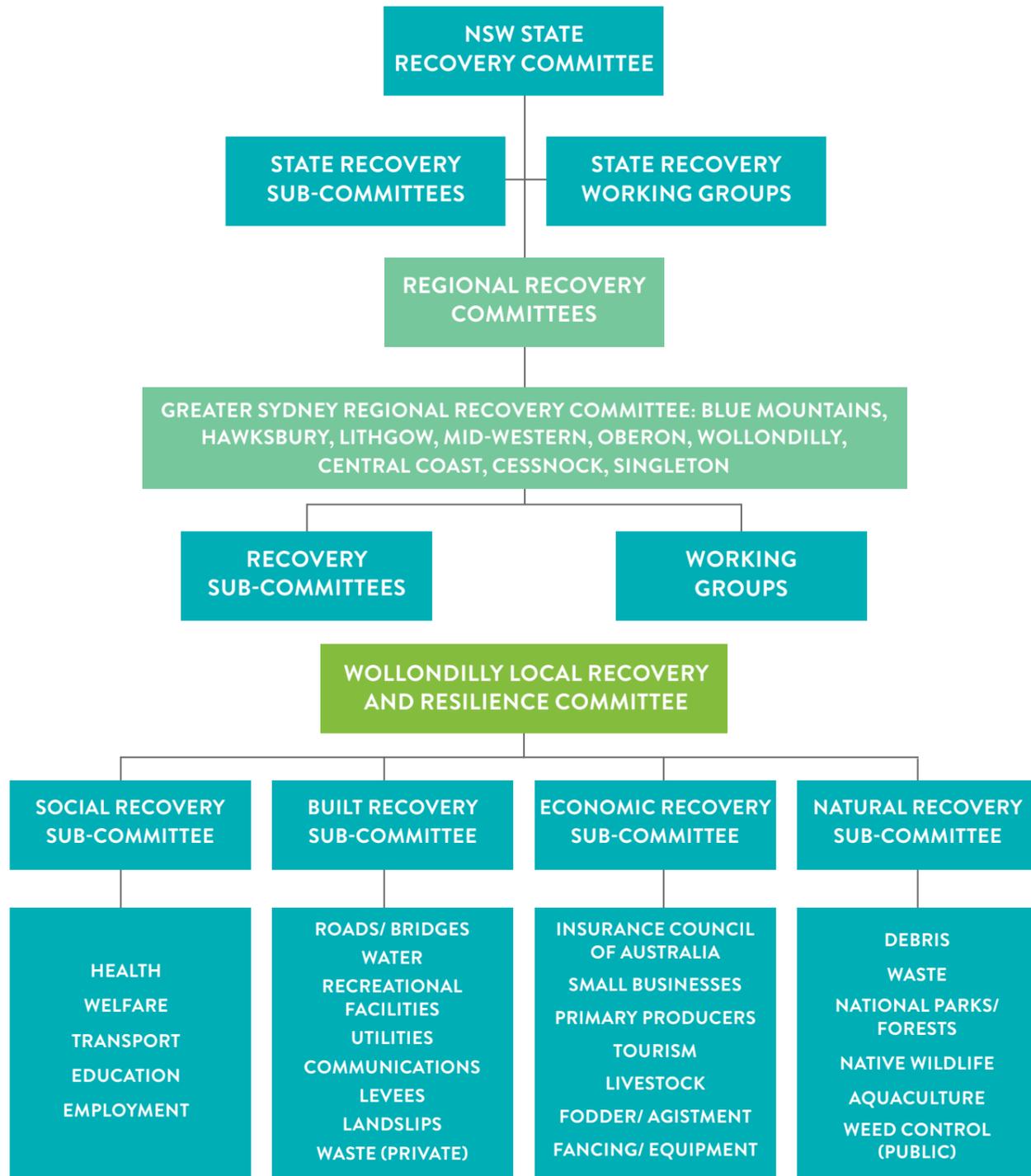
The Activate Wollondilly Framework and the Long Term Recovery and Resilience Plan aligns with the National Principles of Disaster Recovery. An explanation of these principles and how Wollondilly Shire Council will meet them is outlined below.

PRINCIPLE	HOW WILL WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLE
<p>PRINCIPLE 1: UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT Successful recovery is based on an understanding of the community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council has undertaken a number of community engagement activities in the period following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire. Learnings from this engagement will inform Activate Wollondilly 2021 Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan.</p> <p>Learnings from previous disaster events in the Wollondilly LGA will also be taken into account.</p>
<p>PRINCIPLE 2: RECOGNISE COMPLEXITY Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will ensure that we are responsive to the dynamic nature of emergencies and the community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilising the Resilience NSW funded CRO position. • Ongoing meetings of the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee. • Maintaining Council Recovery team representation through the Local Emergency Management Committee through the Local Recovery Coordinator role. • Ongoing community engagement activities. • Facilitating interagency meetings. • Provision of information and resources.
<p>PRINCIPLE 3: USE COMMUNITY LEAD APPROACHES Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.</p>	<p>Community members have been involved in the development of Activate Wollondilly 2021 through our Local Recovery and Resilience Committee and the Working Group.</p> <p>Council will continue to deliver recovery projects to empower community members and build community capacity.</p> <p>Asset mapping including the identification of community leaders.</p> <p>Providing opportunities for volunteer training. Developing a Community Led Recovery Hub Toolkit.</p>
<p>PRINCIPLE 4: COORDINATE ALL ACTIVITIES Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and need.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council hosts a monthly Recovery and Resilience committee which involves a broad range of stakeholders and aims to ensure a coordinated approach to recovery activities. We also attend a variety of external recovery meetings for this purpose.</p>

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<p>PRINCIPLE 4: COORDINATE ALL ACTIVITIES Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and need.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire has established relationships with a variety of stakeholders to partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery Support Service • Resilience NSW • South-West Sydney Local Health District • Local community groups and organisations • Tharawal Aboriginal Land Council. • Red Cross • Greater Sydney Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee • Bushfire Mental Health Steering Committee (Wollondilly and Wingecarribee) • Wollondilly Health Alliance
<p>PRINCIPLE 5: COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council utilises a number of communication methods to ensure that we are communicating effectively in the recovery space. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Recovery officer who can act as a key point of contact between residents and various teams within council. • Resource library in the library foyer. • Social media including Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. • Communications team who manage many tasks associated with provision of information, promotion and community engagement. • Dedicated Web Pages on our website including 'Emergencies' and 'Have You Been Affected by Fire'. • Hosting a variety of meetings including a Bushfire Awareness Working Group, Local Recovery and Resilience Committee • Emergency Management Toolkit. • Bushfire Mental Health Steering Committee • Community Outreach including the Dilly Wanderer and Mobile Libraries. In 2021 Council will be developing a Mobile Recovery and Resilience Hub vehicle to enhance our outreach work.
<p>PRINCIPLE 6: RECOGNISE AND BUILD CAPACITY Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council utilises an Asset Based Community Development model that seeks to identify existing assets and community leaders and provide capacity building opportunities where possible.</p> <p>Council recognises the importance of community leading their own recovery and will seek to provide opportunities for feedback, leadership, education and valued project roles wherever possible.</p> <p>An Asset Mapping and Community profile project being implemented in 2021 utilising BCRRF Stream 1 Grant funding will support this principle.</p>

RECOVERY IN THE BROADER CONTEXT

Wollondilly Shire Council is part of a broader state and regional recovery structure. In addition to the NSW State Recovery Committee, Wollondilly Shire Council is part of the Greater Sydney Regional Recovery Committee. The structure of these internal and external recovery committees is depicted below.



Social, Built, Economic and Natural Recovery Sub-Committees are enacted as needed. These are not ongoing committees.

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL'S ROLE IN RECOVERY

Council's, in partnership with State and Federal government, are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of their communities by participating in local emergency management and recovery efforts.

Council's principal roles and responsibilities include:

- Building and promoting disaster resilience
- Systematically taking proper account of risk assessment in land-use planning to reduce hazard risk
- Representing community interests in emergency management to other spheres of government and contributing to decision-making processes
- Ensuring all requisite local emergency planning and preparedness measures are undertaken
- Ensuring an adequate local council emergency response capability is in place, including resources for the local volunteers
- Undertaking public education and awareness to support community-preparedness measures
- Participation in recovery operations including leading and participating in recovery committees and coordination,
- Ensuring appropriate local resources and arrangements are in place to provide and support emergency relief and recovery services to communities
- Participating in post-emergency assessment and analysis.
- Delivering services or activities to help restore the community, and
- Engaging with the community and stakeholders to support community-led recovery.

EXTERNAL RECOVERY STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to Wollondilly Shire Council there are a number of external government and non-government organisations that play an essential role in community recovery these stakeholders include:

- Non-Government Organisations.
- Community Groups.
- The South-West Sydney Local Health District.
- Service NSW.
- Services Australia.
- Legal Services.
- Networks and Interagencies.

Council will seek to work alongside and support external groups and organisations to undertake recovery and resilience building work in the Wollondilly Shire wherever possible.

COMMUNITY engagement



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To ensure that the Activate Wollondilly 2021 Long-Term Recovery and Resilience Plan is informed by the needs of the community a number of community engagement activities have been undertaken including:

- Reinstatement of the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee.
- Deliberative engagement: two series of community debriefing forums facilitated by Disaster Recovery Expert Anne Leadbeater.
- Greater Sydney Outreach Survey.
- Ongoing Community Sentiment Surveys.

LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

The Local Recovery and Resilience Committee was established as part of the Activate Wollondilly Framework. The committee was re-instated when the Green Wattle Creek bushfire began impacting Wollondilly Shire and the first meeting of the re-instated committee was held on Monday 16th December, 2019. The Terms of Reference was reviewed to ensure that the committee was able to respond to the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire event and that there was a strong community representation.

AGENCIES REPRESENTED IN THE LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

The following community members and organisations have had or currently have representation on the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee.

LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Community members from across Wollondilly Shire	Salvation Army
Warragamba Silverdale Neighbourhood Centre	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Wollondilly Resilience Network	Tharawal Land Council
Picton CWA	NSW Police (Camden LAC)
St Stephens Thirlmere	Wollondilly Local Emergency Management Committee
Community Links Wellbeing	Picton Chamber of Commerce
Rotary Club	St Vincent de Paul Society
Federal MP Angus Taylor's Office	Lifeline Macarthur
Local State MP Nathaniel Smith's Office	National Bushfire Recovery Agency
Resilience NSW	South West Sydney Local Health District
Greater Sydney Committee	South West Sydney Primary Health Network
Red Cross	Wollondilly Shire Council

NOTE: Other agencies and organisations may have representation in the Local Recovery Committee over time.

DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Wollondilly Shire Council employed independent disaster recovery expert Anne Leadbeater (OAM) to plan and host two series of community debriefing sessions to gather community feedback and establish the recovery needs of the community.

Anne Leadbeater is a survivor of the 2009 Victorian Black Saturday fires and a consultant who specialises in disaster recovery and community resilience. Ms Leadbeater has worked with communities recovering from drought, fire, flood and cyclone in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland, and in 2014, headed up an international team to evaluate the Christchurch Earthquake Appeal for New Zealand Red Cross. Anne Leadbeater has authored published papers on drought policy, communicating in emergencies, and the role of community leadership in disaster recovery.

Deliberative engagement sessions were held in two stages:

Stage 1: Review of a Community Recovery Hub Forums

During the Green Wattle Creek bushfire a group of volunteers from the communities of Wollondilly Shire and Wingecarribee Shire set-up a 'Community Recovery Hub'. Wollondilly Shire Council shifted its initial emergency response centre at Council's Administration Building in Picton to the community led recovery hub at Balmoral. This was the first time the community led recovery hub model had been utilised in Wollondilly Shire.

As this was the first time a community led recovery hub model had been used in Wollondilly Shire, it was important to gather community feedback. Three separate forums were held:

- Workshop 1 comprised Hub staff and volunteers
- Workshop 2 included service providers and agencies and
- Workshop 3 comprised members of the community.

The Purpose of the forums was: "to identify future considerations and lessons learnt about supporting a community recovery hub model".

A hybrid of Zoom and face-to-face sessions were held to ensure that we complied with Covid Safe practices and that the maximum number of people were able to participate.

Following the three workshops the 'Review of Community Recovery Hub Model June 2020' report was finalised and released. This report summarises the feedback gathered about the Community Recovery Hub and made five key recommendations about how recovery centres should operate in future disasters. The five recommendations will be used in the development of Activate Wollondilly 2021: Recovery and Resilience Plan.

The five recommendations were:

1. Framework for Community Recovery Hub: Work with community leaders and recovery agencies to design a framework to support establishment and operation of a community recovery hub.
2. Community Recovery Hub Toolkit: Drawing on previous disaster experience, design and develop a toolkit of resources to support the successful operation of a community recovery hub.

3. Mapping Community Capacity: Identify community strengths, capabilities, risks and challenges through the development of individual community profiles.
4. Community Leadership: Identify and support community leadership in disaster recovery by establishing roles for individuals and groups to be involved in emergency management.
5. Donations Management: Work with community groups, service clubs and recovery stakeholders to design a strategy for receiving, coordinating and distributing donated goods within Wollondilly Shire.

Stage 2: Green Wattle Creek Bushfire Recovery Actions Review Community Forums

Stage 2 involved:

- Five workshops facilitated by Anne Leadbeater in the bushfire impacted communities of Bargo, Buxton, Oakdale, Warragamba and Picton.
- Focus group at the Yerranderie Community Association meeting.
- Online survey using the Your Say platform on Wollondilly Shire Council's website.

Wollondilly Shire Council received the final report written by Anne Leadbeater from the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire Recovery Actions Review Community Forums. The report makes eight recommendations including:

1. Mapping Community Capacity: Identify community strengths, capabilities, risks and challenges through the development of individual community profiles.
2. Community Leadership: Identify and support community leadership in disaster recovery by establishing roles for individuals and groups to be involved in emergency management.
3. Agency Collaboration: Improve emergency management and resilience outcomes through a supportive and collaborative approach to planning and service delivery.
4. Building Preparedness and Resilience: Draw on local knowledge and experience to develop a communication strategy for emergency preparedness, response and recovery.
5. Framework for Community Recovery Hub: Work with community leaders and recovery agencies to design a framework to support establishment and operation of a community recovery hub.
6. Community Recovery Hub Toolkit: Drawing on previous disaster experience, design and develop a toolkit of resources to support the successful operation of a community recovery hub.
7. Donations Management: Work with community groups, service clubs and recovery stakeholders to design a strategy for receiving, coordinating and distributing donated goods within Wollondilly Shire.

GREATER SYDNEY OUTREACH SURVEY

In partnership with Service NSW and Resilience NSW Wollondilly Shire Council conducted the Greater Sydney Outreach Survey. The purpose of the survey was:

- To further understand the needs of the community and identify how we can help you Council could support residents in their recovery from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire.
- To inform residents about assistance that is available and refer residents to services that could help them.

The Greater Sydney Outreach Survey took place between September 2020 and December 2020. The survey was distributed to 155 residents who were impacted by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire including residents who lost their home, residents who suffered damage to their property or business, residents who were evacuated and residents who accessed Wollondilly Shire Council recovery supports in the period following the bushfire. The survey was sent via email and could be completed online or over the phone with a trained Red Cross volunteer.

53 residents participated in the Greater Sydney Outreach survey which has provided Wollondilly Shire Council with further insight to the ongoing recovery needs of residents across Wollondilly Shire. Many respondents were also provided with referrals or information to assist them in their recovery.

ONGOING CUSTOMER SENTIMENT SURVEYS

Customer sentiment surveys were undertaken with the broader Wollondilly Community. These surveys gauge the general health and wellbeing of the broader community and asked for feedback about the impact of bushfires, flooding, Covid-19. They also sought to identify the needs of the community and their biggest concerns at the time of being surveyed.



The Robin Davies Wollondilly Community Nursery



LONG TERM ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RECOVERY

The key focus areas of recovery are:



KEY FOR ACTION PLAN

PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY	
<p>PLANNING Project is currently under investigation with relevant stakeholders to assess, plan or identify community led opportunities and needs</p>	
<p>ON TRACK Project is in the process of being implemented and is on track for completion. No additional action required.</p>	
<p>ON-HOLD DUE TO COVID Project is currently on-hold due to government guidance on COVID-19 regulations, but planning is still taking place.</p>	
<p>COMPLETE Project completed. No additional or ongoing action required.</p>	

SOCIAL RECOVERY

The Green Wattle Creek bushfire has had a significant social impact on the Wollondilly community. Each individual's experience of the bushfires as well as their recovery journey will be unique. Some of the social impacts of the Green Wattle Creek bushfire include:

- Loss of shelter - 19 homes were destroyed and a further eighteen damaged resulting in a number of people being displaced from their homes.
- Psychosocial impact including trauma, stress and anxiety.
- Financial loss and/or hardship.

Goals of Community/ Social Recovery Include:

- Supporting the health and wellbeing of individuals including emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing.
- To provide immediate support to residents impacted by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire through the establishment of a Recovery Centre.
- To support community members to access the services, financial support and information that they need in a timely manner.
- To ensure that recovery is community led.
- To continue to identify emerging social issues impacting on community wellbeing, recovery and resilience.
- To work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders including services, community groups, government agencies and emergency services.
- To work in partnership with community based organisations and services to develop and implement a range of projects that provide psychosocial support and address identified individual and community needs.
- To provide ongoing opportunities for community connection.
- To provide ongoing opportunities for building community capacity, resilience and preparedness.
- To support a regional recovery context whilst maintaining a local focus.

SOCIAL RECOVERY			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	STATUS
Assisting Impacted Residents to Access Information and Services	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will work to ensure that impacted residents have access to the information and services they need to recover. This will be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a Recovery Hub in the period immediately following the fire. This allowed residents to access immediate financial support and information and to connect with service providers. • Providing relevant and timely information to residents in a number of ways including on our website, on social media, via EDMS and newsletters and via the resource hub in the foyer of Council's office in Picton. • Working closely alongside the Recovery Support Service for Wollondilly-Community Links Wellbeing. • Maintaining connections with key support services so that council staff can refer residents or provide information as required. This includes welfare agencies, mental health services, housing services, legal services and humanitarian services. 	Immediate - Long Term 12 months +	
Financial Support for Impacted Residents	<p>186 individuals or families were provided with financial assistance from the Mayor's Relief Fund.</p> <p>Funds utilised for household purchases, replacement of furniture and white goods, clothing, bedding, tree and debris removal, replacement of trees and gardens, fencing, replacement of tools, trailers and vehicles.</p> <p>100% of all donated funds were distributed- a total of \$454,926.</p>	Immediate - Medium Term 6-12 months Complete	
Support of Community Led Recovery Projects	<p>Organisational payments of up to \$10,000 were made available to the following organisations for community projects providing targeted support to bushfire impacted residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paws Pet Therapy \$8,850 to work exclusively with school students in bushfire impacted communities providing pet therapy. 	Immediate-Medium Term 0-12 months Complete	

<p>Support of Community Led Recovery Projects continued...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Links Wellbeing \$10,000 to provide mental health supports to children, young people and adults. • Our Community Pantry- \$10,000 for hampers for impacted residents. • Buxton Community association \$9,968 for the provision of community based activities and events in Buxton. • Picton CWA \$9,350 for resources to support the continuation of the Community Led Hub. • Buxton P&C \$10,000 towards the reconstruction of play equipment destroyed at the school. • \$10,000 Australian Wildlife Foundation for the regeneration of gardens, picnic areas and facilities. • Wollondilly Anglican Church \$10,000 series of community events to facilitate community connection. 	<p>Immediate-Medium Term 0-12 months</p> <p>Complete</p>	
<p>Community Recovery Events</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will host a number of Community Recovery events which will aim to boost community spirits and provide opportunities for social connection and connection with services. These events will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Fun Days in the bushfire impacted communities of Warragamba and Bargo. • Live Music events in the bushfire impacted communities of Oakdale and Buxton. • Recurring large scale events Illuminate and the Festival of Steam which will be expanded with the support of bushfire recovery grants. <p>Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to seek out funding opportunities to host community events across the Wollondilly Shire.</p>	<p>Immediate-Medium Term 0-12 months</p> <p>Complete</p>	
<p>Development of a Recovery Hub Toolkit</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council has commissioned Disaster Recovery expert Anne Leadbeater to develop a Community Recovery Hub Toolkit. The Toolkit will provide a framework for the establishment and operation of a Community Recovery Hub. The toolkit will be localised to the Wollondilly Shire; however, this model will also be able to be shared with other organisations. The development of the toolkit will be informed by the feedback obtained during the review of the Community Recovery Hub forum.</p>	<p>Longer Term 12 months +</p> <p>February 2021- March 2022</p>	

<p>Provision of Training for Volunteers and Community Leaders</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will be providing a number of training opportunities for volunteers and community members who have an interest in supporting community recovery from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and other disasters. Training will be on topics such as self-care, vicarious trauma, community engagement skills and psychological first aid.</p>	<p>Longer Term 12 months +</p> <p>July 2021- June 2022</p>	
<p>Asset Mapping and Development of Community Profiles</p>	<p>As per the recommendations in a Wollondilly Shire Council commissioned report: 'Review of Community Recovery Hub Model June 2020' Wollondilly Shire Council will develop asset maps and community profiles.</p> <p>These resources will not only support the development of the Community Recovery Hub Toolkit, but also support emergency planning and identification of community leaders and people with an interest in contributing to recovery activities as a volunteer.</p> <p>Asset mapping will also identify opportunities for development and improvement of existing assets across Wollondilly.</p>	<p>Longer Term 12 months +</p> <p>February 2021- June 2022</p>	
<p>Mobile Recovery and Resilience Hub</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will be developing a Mobile Recovery and Resilience Hub. This vehicle will allow us to provide ongoing community outreach support as the shire continues its recovery from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire.</p> <p>When future disaster events occur the Mobile Recovery and Resilience Hub can be utilised by Wollondilly Shire Council to provide immediate recovery support to impacted communities.</p> <p>When the vehicle is not being used for recovery activities it will be utilised to provide resilience building activities including education and awareness raising projects as well as social/ community events. Resilience building projects will take place across Wollondilly Shire utilising an outreach model.</p> <p>This project has been funded with a grant for the Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Fund Stream 2.</p>	<p>Longer Term 12 months +</p> <p>May 2021- Ongoing</p>	
<p>Support of the Community Led Memorial Playground at Telopea Park</p>	<p>The Telopea Park Memorial Playground was a project led by volunteers from the Buxton RFS and involved the construction of a fire truck style children's playground to be built as a tribute to late RFS volunteers, Andrew O'Dwyer and Geoffrey Keaton, who tragically</p>	<p>Medium Term 6- 12 Months</p> <p>January 2020- December 5, 2020</p>	

<p>Support of the Community Led Memorial Playground at Telopea Park continued...</p>	<p>lost their lives while battling the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire in Buxton in December, 2019.</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council provided in-kind project management and financial support totalling \$25,000 towards this project. Other organisations who provided support for the Telopea Park Memorial project included the Hon. Warwick Smith (Australian Capital Equity & Coates Hire), the Rural Fire Service Association, Wingecarribee Shire Council, TRN, Moduplay, Gillie and Marc, AGL, Commonwealth Bank & Picton District CWA, Boral Maldon, Budget Direct Insurance and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Gilbert & Roach, Keeley Stone Masons, Coopers Engineering, Lions Tahmoor, Lions Ulladulla, SIMEC, Tahmoor Garden Centre, Macarthur Credit Union and Ulysses Motorcycle Club Macarthur and Wollondilly.</p>	<p>Medium Term 6- 12 Months</p> <p>January 2020- December 5, 2020</p> <p>Complete</p>	
<p>Local Recovery and Resilience Committee</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council reinstated the 'Local Recovery and Resilience Committee' in November, 2019. This committee is comprised of community members, chambers of commerce members, community based organisations and Wollondilly Shire Council staff. This committee will remain in place, however the Terms of Reference will be reviewed to ensure that the committee continues to meet the needs of the Wollondilly Community. The Terms of Reference review will also ensure that the Committee meets the newly established guidelines regarding 'Community Resilience Networks' which will be released by Resilience NSW in 2021.</p>	<p>Immediate - Long Term 0- 12 months +</p> <p>December 2019- ongoing</p>	
<p>Preparedness and Resilience Building Exposition</p>	<p>In 2021 Wollondilly Shire Council will work with Wingecarribee Shire Council and the National Bushfire Recovery Agency to host a Resilience Building and Preparedness Exposition. The exposition will cover topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster preparedness; • Disaster resilient building; • Disaster resilient landscaping; • Explaining Bushfire Attack Ratings (BAL Ratings); • Modifications that can be made to existing homes and properties to improve disaster resilience; • Insurance; • Wellbeing services; and • Continuity planning for businesses. <p>The exposition will provide a variety of information including key note speakers, information stalls and market stalls.</p>	<p>Immediate - Long Term 0- 12 months +</p> <p>April 2021- September 2021</p>	

<p>Wellbeing Programs</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will be partnering with external service providers to deliver wellbeing programs for residents. These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Traxside 'Revive' program supporting bushfire impacted youth. • Tuff and Restore program which will support bushfire impacted men and women. <p>Council will also support community Wellbeing initiatives being delivered by other organisations in the Wollondilly/ Greater Sydney region through promotion and identification of suitable community venues.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>March 2021-</p>	
<p>Supporting Isolated Communities</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will work alongside external service providers and response agencies to support isolated communities. Some isolated communities in Wollondilly were significantly impacted by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire including Yerranderie, the Burragorang Valley and Nattai. Residents in isolated communities can face unique barriers to recovery. Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to provide outreach to isolated communities to assist them in their recovery and disaster resilience.</p>	<p>Immediate - Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Supporting Children and Young People</p>	<p>Supporting Children and Young People to Ensure their Needs are Identified and incorporated into recovery planning, resilience building and preparedness programs.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>March 2020 Ongoing</p>	
<p>Rotary Funded Children's Voices Project</p>	<p>The Wollondilly Children's Voices Project captures the voices of children that have been impacted by the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire Event, to ensure children and young people's wellbeing has been considered and their perspective incorporated into our future preparedness and recovery initiatives. The project was funded by a \$15,000 grant from the Rotary Club of Wollondilly North and delivered in partnership between Wollondilly Shire Council and the Rotary Club of Wollondilly North.</p> <p>The project involved six face-to-face workshops across bushfire impacted communities of Wollondilly that were hosted using the Dilly Wanderer van. Workshops were facilitated by the child librarian, a team of child psychologists and supported by Paws Pet Therapy. Children participated in play activities, story time and art activities. The artworks children produced to share their stories from the fires will be published into a book.</p>	<p>Medium Term 6 - 12 months</p> <p>June 2020 -</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">Rotary Funded Youth Voices Project</p>	<p>The Youth Voices project was developed to support young people impacted by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire. The project was funded by a \$10,000 grant from the Rotary Club of Wollondilly North and delivered in partnership between Wollondilly Shire Council and the Rotary Club of Wollondilly North.</p> <p>The Youth Voices project had five aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide young people with an opportunity for fun and social connectedness. • To give young people the opportunity to participate in fun, outdoor activities that promote and build resilience. • To introduce children and young people to local mental health supports in a fun and informal way. This has two benefits: it will support us to identify any children or young people who have significant concerns after the bushfires and help develop a pathway for warm referrals to bushfire support services. • To provide children with the opportunity to connect with and rebuild trust with the NSW Rural Fire Service and reduce any trauma association that children may have with fire trucks/ fire brigades. • To develop a resource that can be used to educate others about the impact of natural disasters on children and young people. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Medium Term 6- 12 months</p> <p style="text-align: center;">September 2020 - February 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Complete</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Connect and Interact Wollondilly-Improved Digital Communication</p>	<p>Connect and Interact Wollondilly supports sustained community recovery and resilience by providing public WiFi and interactive kiosks in bushfire impacted communities. Internet connectivity in public spaces provides universal communications access.</p> <p>Connect and Interact Wollondilly will support sustained community recovery and resilience by providing public WiFi and interactive kiosks in bushfire impacted communities. Reliable internet connectivity in public spaces provides communication and information access for everyone.</p> <p>An interactive kiosk extends the offering by providing a public information device to deliver location relevant information, advice and warnings. The device can be used to search and obtain information. It will also be used as a community engagement platform to collect feedback and suggestions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May 2021 - Ongoing</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">Development of an Emergency Dashboard/ App</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will work alongside the National Bushfire Recovery Agency to develop and implement an emergency dashboard and/or App to efficiently and effectively provide immediate emergency information to residents. Council will investigate existing models and grant funding opportunities to support the project.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2021- July 2022</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Advocacy</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to advocate on behalf of residents and local services about the emergency and recovery issues of the community.</p> <p>Key issues identified in community engagement which are current priorities for Council include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved information sharing between agencies to overcome barriers to impacted people accessing support. • Improved evacuation routes for Wollondilly. This includes advocating to the state government for the construction of a bypass in Picton. • Advocating on behalf of isolated residents who are facing unique barriers to recovery. • Advocating for improved telecommunications / connectivity in outlying villages and towns. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Immediate - Long Term</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Communities of Interest</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will support the creation and continuation of communities of interest which will allow residents to share their knowledge and skills, learn from others and connect with other residents in the community. This project was funded by the Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Fund Stream 1 grant and will support community by building individual and community capacity by providing opportunities for training and development, exchange of information and community connectedness.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Long-Term 12 Months +</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2021 - June 2022</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Youth Facilities that Support Wellbeing and Social Connection</p>	<p>Small scale BMX track located at Bargo and Oakdale. This project has been funded by bushfire recovery funding from a joint State and Commonwealth grant. This project is in the investigation stages and will be implemented in 2021/22.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Long-Term 12 Months +</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May 2021- June 2022</p>	

<p>Community Education</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council is proposing a number of community capacity building activities to raise awareness and provide education about disaster preparedness. The goal of these projects is to build community resilience.</p> <p>This will include workshops on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping in a fire risk area. • Bushfire awareness. • Flood awareness. • Preparing your home and business for natural disasters. • Architecture and building requirements in high fire risk areas. • Indigenous land management practices. 	<p>Medium - Long Term 6 Months +</p> <p>March 2021 - June, 2022</p>	
<p>Supporting Resilience through Community Connectedness</p>	<p>There is significant research to show the link between community connectedness and community resilience. Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to support community connectedness through a number of projects and initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach work such as the Dilly Wanderer, Mobile Library and participation at community events. • Hosting and participating in networks such as the Community Services Catch-Up, interagency meetings and community committees. • Establishing and supporting Communities of Interest. 	<p>Immediate - Long Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Get Ready Wollondilly</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council has joined the 'Get Ready Council' program. This provides us access to our own 'Get Ready Wollondilly' logo as well as number of Get Ready resources. Get Ready information will be shared on social media throughout the year, in our printed communications including Community Newsletter, rates notices and waste calendars.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Additional Facilities for Supporting Community Connectedness</p>	<p>Council will build community resilience by providing additional facilities to encourage community connectedness. This includes Picnic Shelters located in bushfire impacted communities of Bargo and Oakdale and improved signage in smaller villages. This will provide additional opportunities for social interaction and social connectedness.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>May 2021 - June 2022</p>	



ECONOMIC RECOVERY

There are approximately 4,412 local businesses operating in Wollondilly. These businesses provide approximately 14,144 jobs. The Green Wattle Creek bushfire impacted businesses and the economy in numerous ways:

- It is estimated that the Green Wattle Creek bushfire resulted in \$8.1 million worth of damage to the local economy of Wollondilly (NBRA 2021).
- 673 businesses in Wollondilly were approved grants following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire due to being impacted by the fires (NBRA 2021).
- Several businesses lost assets in the fires including infrastructure, work vehicles, tools, equipment and machinery.
- Many people forced to take time off work to protect their properties or to volunteer with the NSW RFS.

The goals for Economic Recovery include:

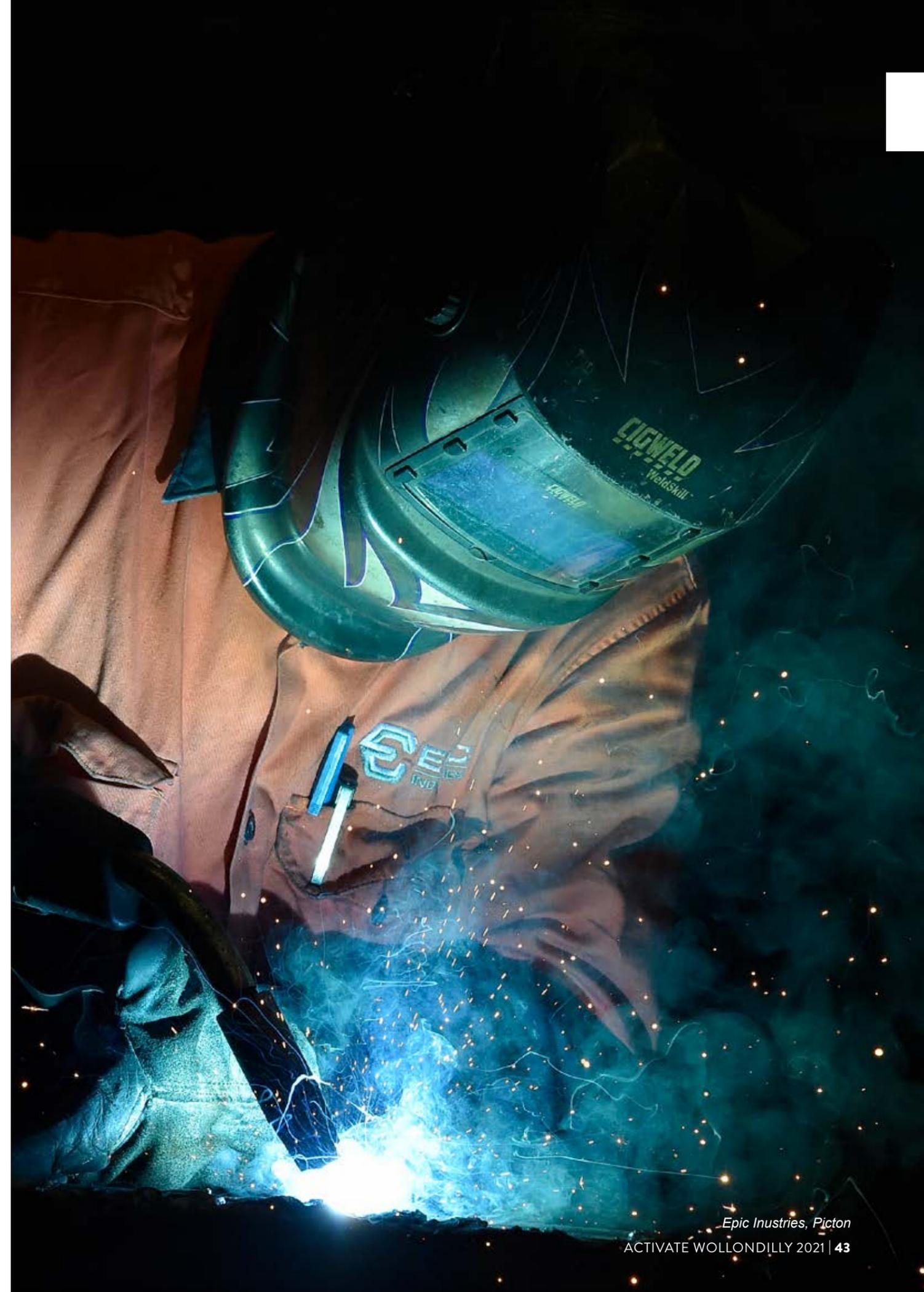
- To assist local businesses to access the information, services and financial support they need to recover from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and other recent disaster events.
- To support the businesses in Wollondilly to build their economic resilience.
- To increase tourism and visitor numbers to Wollondilly.
- To encourage residents to shop locally and support local businesses.



Historic Post Office, Picton

ECONOMIC RECOVERY			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	STATUS
Regional Tourism Bushfire Recovery	Wollondilly Shire Council will develop a Visitor Guide to help increase tourism to the area and stimulate the economy. The Visitor guide will be in print and in digital format (which will be available on the visit Wollondilly Website). Market research indicates that 83% of visitors are domestic day trippers or visiting friends and relatives; as a result the guide will be a blend of lifestyle content and visitation opportunities.	Long Term 12 Months + March 2020 - July 2021	
Enhancement of Existing Major Events to Increase Visitor Numbers	Wollondilly Shire Council will be utilising bushfire recovery grant funding aimed at supporting tourism and economic development to enhance two of the region's major events: Illuminate and the Festival of Steam. The goal will be to increase visitor numbers to Wollondilly Shire and stimulate the local economy.	Long Term 12 Months + January 2021 - June 2022	
Business Continuity Planning Workshops	Wollondilly Shire Council will partner with Resilience NSW and other services to provide business continuity training. This will help build business resilience to future disasters.	Long Term 12 Months + June 2021- June 2022	
Business Concierge	Wollondilly Shire Council will host the Service NSW Business Concierge program at Council's Chambers in Picton. The Business Concierge can provide a range of supports and information including assisting businesses to apply for recovery related grants. Wollondilly Shire Council staff will work alongside the Business Concierge to promote the service to businesses across Wollondilly.	Medium - Long Term 6 Months + Ongoing	
Supporting Small Business Recovery	Wollondilly Shire Council will utilise \$100,000 of bushfire recovery grant funding develop and implement economic development and tourism projects to support small business recovery within bushfire affected communities.	Long-Term 12 Months + March 2020	
Providing Businesses with Relevant and Timely Information	Wollondilly will continue to provide timely and relevant information to business through our Business Wollondilly EDMS, newsletters, online alerts and on the Tourism and Business section of our website.	Immediate- Long-Term 12 Months + December 2019 - Ongoing	

<p>Supporting Local Businesses through Grant Projects</p>	<p>Where possible Wollondilly Shire Council will support local businesses by ensuring that the criteria of grant projects encourages residents to spend money at local businesses. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotary Regeneration Grants which provided residents with \$300 worth of vouchers to be used at up to six nurseries across Wollondilly Shire. • Community Regeneration Small Grants of up to \$2,000. Eligibility criteria is that any purchases or work to be undertaken must be purchased from a Wollondilly supplier. 	<p>Long-Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Strengthening Young People's Employability</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will provide a number of vocational training opportunities for young people in 2021.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the primary outcome will be the building of knowledge and capacity of young people to be actively engaged in employment following the bush fires. This will assist in the revitalisation and rejuvenation of the economic climate of the Wollondilly Shire.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>March 2021 - November 2021</p>	
<p>Smart Working Hubs</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will be constructing a Smart Hub in the Wollondilly Shire. This will assist business continuity in the event that workplaces or infrastructure are impacted by disasters by providing an alternative workspace for businesses if needed.</p>	<p>Long-Term 12 Months +</p>	



BUILT RECOVERY

In the Green Wattle Creek bushfire the impact on built assets was significant:

- 37 homes were destroyed or damaged.
- 11 facilities destroyed or damaged.
- 111 Outbuildings destroyed or damaged.

Goals for Built Recovery include:

- To support residents who lost their homes or were displaced by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire.
- To assist and support residents during the process of rebuilding.
- To reduce the financial hardship of residents who lost their home or outbuildings in the fire.
- To support residents to 'build back better'.
- To promote community resilience by providing education about building a home in bushfire prone areas as well as modifications that make existing homes more bushfire resilient.

BUILT RECOVERY			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	STATUS
Waived Fees	<p>Deferral and assistance with rates payments - \$100,000 grant funding allocated to establish a Rates Payment Assistance Grant to directly support ratepayers whose homes are lost or uninhabitable due to the fires</p> <p>Pre-Development and Development application fees have also be waived for property owners rebuilding after the black summer fires.</p>	<p>Immediate-Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>January 2020 - ongoing</p>	
Dedicated Planner/ Certifier	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council have allocated a Dedicated Planner/ Certifier to assess development applications for homes/ structures being rebuilt after the bushfires as well as completing certifications. This will allow bushfire impacted residents to access a fast-tracked assessment process.</p>	<p>Immediate-Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>January 2020 - ongoing</p>	
New Resources	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council Planning and Environment teams are working alongside the National Recovery and Resilience Agency to develop a number of resources aimed at supporting residents to rebuild after a disaster as well as resources around landscaping, land management and resilient constructions and renovations.</p>	<p>Immediate - Medium Term</p> <p>February 2020 - July 2020</p>	

Workshops/ Webinars	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council has partnered with the 'Australian Institute of Architects' to develop a 'Rebuild' webinar. The first Webinar was hosted in December, 2020. Future Webinars/ workshops will be hosted in 2021 and focus on topics including BAL Ratings, building on bushfire prone land and landscaping in bushfire prone areas.</p>	<p>Medium-Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>November 2020 - June, 2022</p>	
Back Creek Culvert, Oakdale	<p>In the flood event of February 2020, the Back Creek Culvert and a section of Burratorang Road, Oakdale was washed away by stormwater resulting the road being closed for an extensive period of time. The culvert and corresponding road were rebuilt and the road was re-opened in July, 2020.</p> <p>This project was made possible by \$1.2 million Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)</p>	<p>Immediate - Medium Term</p> <p>February 2020 - July 2020</p>	
Big Hill Road Reconstruction	<p>After the storm/ flood event in February, 2020 Big Hill Road was impacted by a landslip. Work was undertaken to repair and reopen the road in 2020 and work was to be ongoing in 2021. Following a second major rainfall event in March 2021, further landslips have occurred resulting in closure of the road. Investigations into road stability are being conducted and a plan for reconstruction will be subsequently announced.</p>	<p>Immediate-Medium Term</p> <p>February 2020-Ongoing</p>	
Sheehy's Creek Road Repairs	<p>Sheehy's Creek Road suffered significant damage during the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and subsequent flood event of February 2020. This is a significant issue as Sheehy's Creek Road is not only an access road for Yerranderie Residents, but also for emergency services. The Burratorang Valley is at significant risk during a natural disaster event and Sheehy's Creek Road is the primary access point to the valley and to defend the shire in the event of a threat from the Western Side. Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to seek grant opportunities for major upgrades for this road.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

<p>Improved Digital Communication</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will improve digital communication through the installation of Smart Message Boards including public WiFi and interactive kiosks in several villages across Wollondilly. This will be undertaken as part of the Connect and Interact Wollondilly project funded by the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund Stream 2 Grant.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>May 2021 - Ongoing</p>	
<p>Improved Evacuation Routes</p>	<p>Better planning for adequate evacuation routes has been identified as a critical issue for Wollondilly as a result of the 2020 Green Wattle Creek Fire Event.</p> <p>With over 50,000 people living in Wollondilly Shire on the urban fringe with limited public transport options there is predominately 1 mode of transportation (private vehicle) to evacuate and move.</p> <p>Both the southern and northern ends of our Shire have only 1 access point (dual carriage way – one lane each direction).</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to advocate to Federal and State Government for a bypass to be built in Picton and additional access roads in the Northern and Southern ends of the shire as these will play a critical role in improving evacuation and access points.</p> <p>The Hazard and Emergency Study (HAEMS) which is being undertaken by Wollondilly Shire Council will also consider risks to safe and efficient evacuations and identify areas for improvement.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Improved Staging Areas for First Responders</p>	<p>Brimestone Staging Facility – initial consultation and investigation and Yerranderie equipment storage facility investigation and implementation. This will assist emergency services such as RFS and the SES when responding to an emergency in the Burrangorang Valley/ Yerranderie. This project is in the investigation stage.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>April 2021 - Ongoing.</p>	



Sheehy's Creek Road, Oakdale

NATURAL RECOVERY

The Green Wattle Creek bushfire had a devastating impact on the natural environment in Wollondilly Shire:

- The Green Wattle Creek bushfire left a burn scar of 270,700 hectares. This equates to 63.9% of the total area of Wollondilly Shire- the fourth highest burn scar in Australia for the Black Summer period.
- 1,337 sq/km of bushlands and forests burnt (84 per cent of bushlands and forests) impacting flora and fauna.
- A large number of damaged trees that fell or needed to be felled as they were dangerous and posed a risk to the community.
- Changes to the natural habitat including increased prevalence of weeds and pests.

Goals for Natural Recovery include:

- To ensure public safety by removing dangerous trees on public land and managing roadside vegetation.
- To provide support for regeneration of bushfire affected land.
- To provide support for the recuperation of local ecosystems and wildlife.
- To promote environmental resilience through community education.



NATURAL RECOVERY			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	STATUS
Waste Clean-Up	<p>Due to the significant impact of the bushfire on private land Wollondilly Shire Council provided a number of supports to impacted residents to assist with clean-up after the fires. These supports included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skip bins bushfire impacted communities to allow for quick and convenient disposal of bushfire related waste. • Tip fees were waived for bushfire impacted residents allowing them to dispose of bushfire associated waste. • Partnered with Lang O'Rourke to assist residents who experienced loss of homes, outbuilding or structural damage. This included supporting residents to access demolition and clean-up services. Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to support Public Works to assist residents with structural clean-up as required. • Additional support was extended to Wingecarribee Shire Council and its residents to assist them in their clean-up from the Green Wattle Creek and Morton bushfires of 2019/ 2020. These costs have since been reimbursed by Wingecarribee Shire Council. <p>Wollondilly Shire Council covered the costs of clean-up and waste management out of existing funds and has claimed reimbursement of these costs from the NSW Government Public Works Advisory.</p>	<p>Immediate - Medium Term</p> <p>0- 12 months</p> <p>December 2019 -</p>	
Community Grants	<p>In December, 2020 Wollondilly Shire Council received grant funding from the joint Commonwealth and NSW Government Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund- Stream 1. This money has been used to set-up a community grants program offering 32 grants of up to \$2,000 to regenerate their bushfire impacted properties. Grants closed on 2/04/2021 and funding will be distributed from May, 2021- December 2021. The purpose of these grants is to support flora and fauna, assist residents to regenerate their gardens after the bushfires and to support the economy of Wollondilly by stimulating local business.</p>	<p>Long Term</p> <p>12 Months +</p> <p>March 2021 -</p>	

Rotary Regeneration Grants	In December, 2020 Wollondilly Shire Council partnered with the Picton Rotary Club to deliver a small grant project projects. Small grants were available to residents for purchases relating to regeneration of the natural environment around the home. Twenty residents were allocated \$300 of vouchers that could be used at up to six nurseries across the Wollondilly. The purpose of these grants was to support bushfire impacted residents to regenerate their lost gardens while also supporting local nurseries across Wollondilly who had been impacted by bushfires and other disaster events.	Medium Term 6- 12 Months December 2020 - June 2021	
Community Nursery	Wollondilly Shire Council's Community Nursery is allowing bushfire impacted residents to access twenty free additional native tube stock plants. Impacted residents wishing to access the plants can contact the Community Recovery Officer to access these plants.	Medium - Long Term 6 Months + September 2020 - June 2021	
Workshops	Wollondilly Shire Council will be hosting a number of workshops focusing on topics such as regeneration, landscaping in a bushfire prone area and supporting wildlife. These workshops will be funded by the joint Commonwealth and State funded BCRRF Stream 1 grant. Workshops will be delivered across Wollondilly Shire using the Mobile Recovery and Resilience Hub.	Long Term 12 Months + April 2021 - June 2022	
Native seed collection, propagation and Community Workshops	Seed collection, processing, propagation and storage alongside community workshops to discuss bushfire resilient strategies for homes and private properties. This project has been funded by the National Bushfire Recovery Fund.	Long Term 12 Months + March 2021-	
Communities of Interest	Creating and supporting a community of interest with a focus on environmental regeneration and resilience which will allow residents to share their knowledge and skills, learn from others and connect with other residents in the community.	Long Term 12 Months + March 2021 - June, 2022	

Management of Vegetation on Roadsides and in Public Spaces	<p>As a result of the Green Wattle Creek bushfire a number of dangerous trees have been removed. This is an expensive and time consuming project as trees need to be assessed and then trees deemed dangerous need to be removed by suitably qualified professionals. In some cases this involves collaboration with external companies such as Endeavour Energy or contract arborists. Many dangerous trees have already been removed, however more potentially dangerous trees are continuing to be identified and followed by Council's Environment Team.</p> <p>Once dangerous trees are removed, green waste must also be disposed of appropriately.</p> <p>The Green Wattle Creek bushfire and subsequent periods of high rainfall have resulted in an increase of weeds and changes to the natural environment. Plants such as Wattle are currently thriving and posing an issue on roadsides in some bushfire impacted communities.</p> <p>Council will use existing budgets to manage vegetation on roadsides and in public spaces, while also continuing to seek out opportunities for additional funding for management of vegetation and removal of green waste.</p>	Long Term 12 Months + November 2019 -	
Chainsaw Course	<p>Residents and service providers have regularly given feedback that ongoing clean-up of fallen and felled trees has been a significant issue following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire.</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council partnered with TAFE NSW and Habitat for Humanity to secure the 'Statement of Attainment in Chainsaw Operations – Trim and Cut' course which was hosted at Moss Vale TAFE and which was free for residents in the bushfire impacted LGAs of Wollondilly and Wingecarribee.</p> <p>The purpose of the course was to assist Habitat for Humanity to source appropriately trained volunteers to assist in bushfire clean-up, while also providing residents with the skills to safely and efficiently operate a chainsaw.</p>	Medium - Long Term 12 Months + September 2020 - Ongoing	



Sheehy's Creek, Oakdale

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP

As stated above Council's, in partnership with State and Federal government, are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of their communities by participating in local emergency management and recovery efforts. For this reason Wollondilly Shire Council will utilise a continuous improvement approach to review and enhance Wollondilly Shire Council's disaster recovery work.

After the 2016 storm event that impacted Picton, Wollondilly Shire Council spent a significant amount of time working alongside disaster recovery experts to develop emergency management, recovery and preparedness frameworks. This allowed us to respond very quickly to the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and immediately implement structures, committees and programs such as the Mayor's relief fund that had been established previously.

Recovery from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire has been unique and in many ways unprecedented due to the effect of cumulative events including the draught, bushfires, floods and Covid-19. This has posed new challenges and provided opportunities for learning and further refinement of emergency management and disaster recovery practices.

Wollondilly Shire Council is committed to continuous improvement of our emergency management and disaster recovery practices. We know this will not be the last disaster to occur in the Wollondilly Shire and that Recovery is a key and ongoing function of council. For this reason the Continuous Improvement Working Group will review our internal policies and procedures, as well as our actions during and following the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire to ensure that we are implementing a best practice approach to emergency management and disaster recovery.

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	STATUS
<p>Community Recovery Officer Position</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council has employed a Community Recovery Officer with funding from Resilience NSW. This is a twenty four month position.</p> <p>The CRO is embedded in Wollondilly Shire Council's Community Outcomes team and is responsible for the development of a range of recovery initiatives alongside community groups and stakeholders. In addition to funding for the position, \$140,000 funding has also been allocated to support community recovery and resilience building activities.</p> <p>The CRO works closely alongside the Resilience NSW funded 'Recovery Support Service' Community Links Wellbeing to support individuals impacted by the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and address emerging recovery issues in the community.</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council advocated for an extension of this position due to the ongoing recovery work still being undertaken following the Green Wattle Creek bushfire and to support the community through future disasters. An extension was announced in April, 2021 and this position will now be in place for two years.</p>	<p>Medium - Long Term 6 Months +</p> <p>July 2020 - July 2022</p>	

<p>National Bushfire Recovery Agency Position</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council is hosting the National Bushfire Recovery Agency 'Recovery Support Officer' for Wollondilly Shire. Recovery Support Officers are local people help in the day to day support of individuals, providing advice and help on all the support available.</p> <p>RSOs connect with people, communities, primary producers and businesses affected by bushfires to ensure we understand their experience and can help on their road to recovery, including making sure they are aware of supports available to them.</p> <p>The RSO will work alongside Wollondilly Shire Council's Recovery team to develop and implement recovery and resilience building projects. The RSO position commenced in Wollondilly in November, 2021.</p>	<p>Medium - Long Term 6 Months +</p> <p>November 2020 - December 2021</p>	
<p>Hazard Management and Emergency Study</p>	<p>Following the 2019-20 bushfires and local flooding in Picton Wollondilly Shire Council has identified the need to produce a shire-wide Wollondilly Hazards and Emergency Study (HAEMS). The need for this work has grown from the draft Wollondilly Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 Action 18.12 from Planning Priority 18 'Living with Climate Impacts'.</p> <p>Priority 18 requires the preparation of a study in partnership with emergency service agencies that evaluates the threats and risk levels deriving from both natural and manmade hazards.</p> <p>This study is intended to inform current and future planning proposals, ensuring that all potential risks are assessed early and adequately through analysis of the cumulative effects of multiple hazards across the entire LGA.</p>	<p>Medium - Long Term 6 Months +</p> <p>March 2021 - July 2021</p>	
<p>Staff Training</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will be providing additional internal training to staff working with impacted residents and businesses. This will include topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster impact/ recovery. • Trauma informed practice. • Recording asset/ property damage. 	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>May 2021 - October, 2021</p>	
<p>Internal Review Meetings</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council will hold internal working group meetings to review actions during the Green Wattle Creek bushfires and identify any potential areas requiring improvement.</p>	<p>Medium-Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>June 2020 - June 2021</p>	

<p>Donation Management</p>	<p>Management of donated goods posed many challenges to Wollondilly Shire Council as well as many other community based organisations during the Black Summer Bushfires.</p> <p>For future disasters Wollondilly Shire Council will only accept cash donations to the Mayor's Relief Fund or gift cards in lieu of donated goods.</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council will partner with Givit for donations of physical goods or to assist residents to access donated items.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>January 2021 - June 2022</p>	
<p>Volunteer / Service Register</p>	<p>Following the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire Wollondilly Shire Council established a service/ volunteer register. This acted as a database of community members who were willing to donate services to bushfire impacted communities. This was a very successful initiative. Council will create a framework to capture learnings from the 2019/ 20 bushfires and support the set-up of skills registers for future disaster events.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p>	
<p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council works in partnership with various emergency and recovery stakeholders.</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Council will continue to engage with a broad range of stakeholders through working groups, interagency and network meetings and events. Council will remain open and receptive to potential partners for emergency, recovery and resilience related projects to ensure that we can respond to community needs.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Policies and Procedures</p>	<p>Wollondilly Shire Council's Community Recovery Officer will be researching best practice in disaster recovery by meeting with other councils who have been significantly impacted by Natural Disasters. This will support us to review our existing policies and procedures to ensure we have implemented a best practice approach.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>March, 2021 - July 2021</p>	
<p>Databases</p>	<p>Council will review the procedures for data management including the use of internal databases to ensure that information is effectively shared between council departments working with impacted residents to reduce the need for residents to submit evidence on multiple occasions.</p>	<p>Long Term 12 Months +</p> <p>January 2021 - July 2022</p>	

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation of Activate Wollondilly 2021: Long- Term Recovery and Resilience Plan will be based on strategies recommended in the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience 'National Disaster Recovery Monitoring and Evaluation Database'. The following monitoring and evaluation strategies will be utilised:

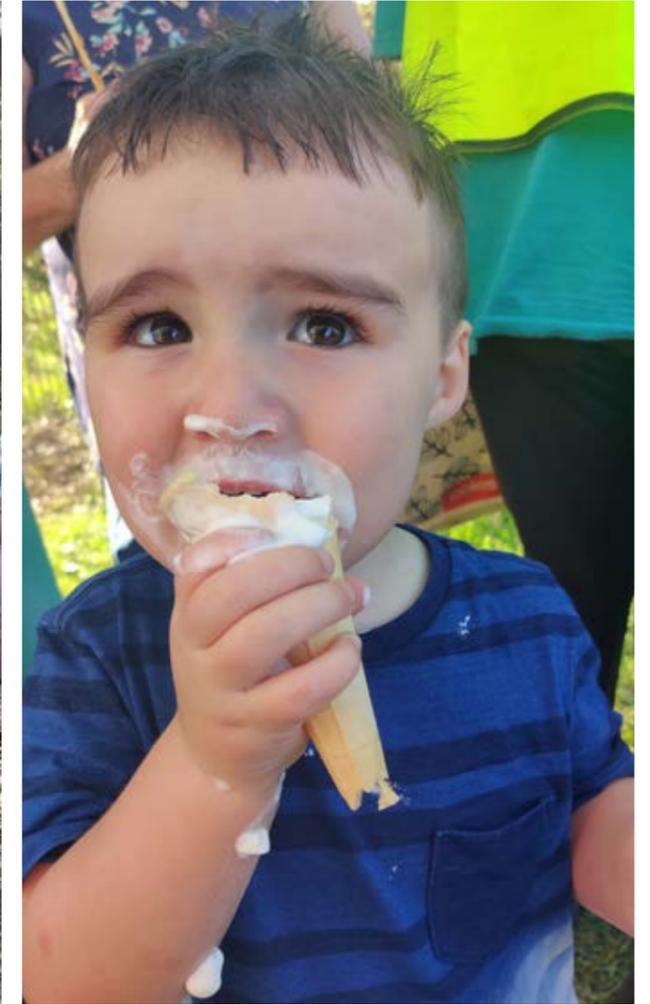
MONITORING AND EVALUATION			
CATEGORY	OUTCOME TITLE	HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED	OUTCOME INDICATORS
Resilience and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members are aware of the risks of future disasters Government, private sector and civil society and organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bushfire Awareness/ preparedness courses. HotSpots courses. Workshops/ webinars around building and landscaping in high fire risk areas. Communities of practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring attendance at workshops, webinars and communities of practice. Surveys delivered at the time the course is completed and again 6 months after the workshop/ webinar to establish what changes participants have made to be more prepared for disasters or to reduce their risk and whether or not they feel more prepared for a disaster.
Social Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members are able to manage their own safety Community members are able to respond to their own needs and support the other members of the community Community members are aware of each other's potential needs from future disasters through formal and informal networks and plans (i.e. social connectedness) Community members have social networks to support each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bushfire Awareness/ preparedness courses. HotSpots courses. Workshops/ webinars around building and landscaping in high fire risk areas. Communities of practice. Development of a Community Recovery Hub toolkit. Asset Mapping and development of community profiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring attendance at workshops, webinars and communities of practice. Surveys delivered at the time the course/ webinar is completed and again 6 months after the workshop/ webinar to establish what changes participants have made to be more prepared for disasters or to reduce their risk. Surveys to establish perceptions of safety from disaster. Monitor community participation in asset mapping workshops. Monitoring attendance at communities of practice.

Social Domain			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys to team leaders and LEMC members 6 months after development of asset maps to establish if and how they are being used and whether or not any changes need to be made. Surveys delivered at the time the community of practice commences and again 6 months after the workshop/ webinar to establish what changes participants have made Evaluation after the toolkit has been implemented including number of community members who volunteered, whether or not volunteers who participated in training volunteered at the community recovery hub, community forums held after the disaster to review the community recovery hub as was done after the Green Wattle Creek Bushfire.
Economic Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses or not-for-profits can attract appropriately skilled workers. Businesses or not-for-profits have business continuity plans and dynamic organisational resilience practices that address relevant risks and threats Businesses or not-for-profits know and understand the risks and threats of operating in the area The workforce has transferable skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development opportunities for youth and young people. Bushfire Awareness/ preparedness courses. HotSpots courses. Workshops/ webinars for businesses about disaster preparedness and risk mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys distributed via the Chamber of Commerce and the Wollondilly Shire Council Tourism and Development Team mailing list to ascertain whether or not cafes and hospitality organisations feel as though they can attract skilled workers. Surveys undertaken at 3, 6 and 12 months to identify if meaningful employment has been achieved or if young people have continued further study to compliment the skills acquired through this project.

Economic Domain			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys delivered at the time the community of practice commences and again 6 months after the workshop/ webinar to establish what changes participants have made to be more prepared for disasters or to reduce their risk. • Surveys delivered to businesses after a disaster occurs to ascertain whether or not their business experienced disruption or loss. • Youth un-employment figure for Wollondilly Shire will be monitored.
Environmental Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community is aware of the risk of future disasters on biodiversity and ecosystem is minimised • The natural environment operates to maintain healthy biodiversity and ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops/ webinars around landscaping in high fire risk areas. • Community grants project supporting regeneration of private land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications submitted for grants demonstrate that purchases to be made will in fact support biodiversity and local ecosystems. • Plants and landscaping materials being purchased/ planted are suitable to the local environment and the level of bushfire risk in the area. • Surveys six months after the grants have been given to establish an approximate number of native plants re-planted and the number and types of native species that are in the grant funded area.
Built Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure is built in accordance with changing recovery needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops/ webinars around building and landscaping in high fire risk areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring attendance at workshops and webinars. • Monitoring DA approvals for risk fire areas.

Built Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure is built in accordance with current knowledge and practices for mitigating disaster impact • Infrastructure is built with regard to local disaster risks 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys delivered at the time the course is completed and again 6 months after the workshop/ webinar to establish what changes participants have made to be more prepared for disasters or to mitigate risks. • Rebuilt properties have increased fire safe design.
Wollondilly Shire Council Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures are updated to reflect best practice and learnings from previous disaster events. • Staff members participate in training and professional development. • Hazards and Emergency Management Study is completed and risk mitigation strategies are developed and implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and procedure reviews. • Meetings with benchmark councils and organisations have taken place. • Hazard and Emergency Management Study is Completed. • Staff training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures are updated to reflect best practice approaches to disaster recovery. • Monitoring community feedback including surveys and customer portal/ complaints. • Staff indicate that they have acquired new knowledge or skills by participating training and/ or will change the way they perform recovery work. • Internal review meetings are held. • Feedback is sought from the Local Recovery and Resilience Committee. • Feedback questionnaires to be delivered to staff participating in training. • Monitoring monthly and quarterly CRO and NBRA reports to monitor the outcomes being achieved by staff. • Monitoring attendance at events, interagency and networking events. • Ensuring that projects are undertaken in partnership with external recovery stakeholders.

Supporting our local Community Members





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Lake Burrangorang and valley in Nattai