

# Bellevue Ward update

Councillor Jim Parke | June 2013



## Lowest rate rise in a decade

Thanks to Council's astute financial management, the 2013–14 property rate rise of 4.7 per cent is Boroondara's lowest increase in over a decade.

The 2013–14 Council Plan and \$197 million Budget is a fiscally responsible blueprint for the delivery of more than 150 high quality services and excellent facilities to the local community. It features a strong focus on culture and the arts.

### Budget highlights

In the coming 12 months, Council will open the new Hawthorn Arts Centre at the former Hawthorn Town Hall and the redeveloped Hawthorn Aquatic & Leisure Centre.

The \$18 million Hawthorn Arts Centre is the City of Boroondara's largest ever contribution to the arts. The centre will become a feature of greater Melbourne's arts landscape, drawing performers, practitioners

and audiences from Boroondara and beyond. When opened later this year, the Hawthorn Arts Centre will offer expanded services to the community and professional groups.

The arts, including the Boroondara Eisteddfod, literary events, cultural facilities at the Kew Court House, the civic art collection and other programs, have also received \$2 million in funding.

Planning and design work will also begin on an expanded Boroondara Sports Complex (see details on page 3).

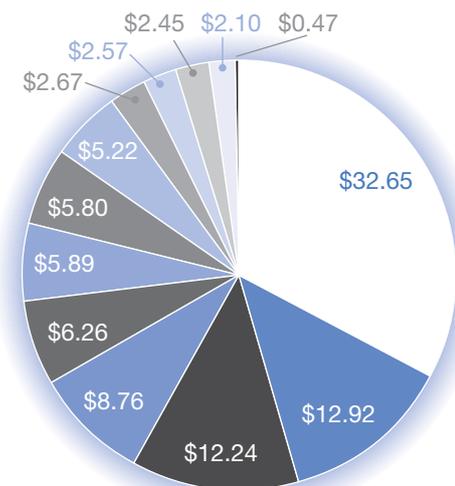
Almost \$13 million will be spent on aged, disability and health services, including meals on wheels, immunisations and aged care and disability support.

Boroondara's five libraries will continue to operate seven days a week at a cost of \$8 million in 2013–14.

In Bellevue Ward, better drainage in Frater Street, Kew East will protect homes on the lower side of the street from flooding during moderate rainfall. Council committed to these works after a local resident raised the issue with Bellevue Ward Councillor Jim Parke.

Improvements will be made at Freeway Golf Course in Balwyn North, including work on its greens, tees and bunkers.

Designs to upgrade Glass Street Kindergarten in Kew East have been funded in the new budget, with the improvements themselves expected to take place in 2014–15.



### For every \$100 of expenditure, Council delivers the following services:

Building projects	\$32.65
Environment and waste management	\$12.92
Health, aged, community and family services	\$12.24
Parks, gardens and sportsgrounds	\$8.76
Libraries and arts programs	\$6.26
Roads, footpaths, safety and drainage	\$5.89
Planning and building	\$5.80
Local laws enforcement	\$5.22
Engineering and traffic	\$2.67
Leisure, aquatic and recreation centres	\$2.57
Communications and customer service	\$2.45
Rates and property services	\$2.10
Economic development	\$0.47

Continued page 2 >



Bellevue Ward  
Cr Jim Parke

Including parts of  
Kew East and Balwyn North



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Dear neighbour,

On 24 June 2013, the 2013-14 budget for the City of Boroondara was adopted. It provided the lowest rate rise in over a decade, notwithstanding unexpected financial challenges and the long term financial strategy providing for a 5 per cent rate rise. During the remainder of the term, Council will focus on five key themes – strong and engaged communities; sustainable environment; enhanced amenity; quality facilities and assets; and responsible management.

Last term, Council invested \$200 million dollars in infrastructure. With that came significant borrowing commitments. This term Council has taken steps to minimise borrowings and pay off loans more quickly. That strategy will yield significant benefits for our ratepayers in coming years, making the hallmark of this Council term the promotion of culture, the provision of high quality services, the development of great facilities and a legacy of astute financial management.

The project to consolidate the Boroondara Sports Complex and the Balwyn Leisure Centre activities is now a step closer with the appointment of Williams Ross Architects to undertake design work. The project is due for completion by mid-2016 at a forecast cost of \$11.7 million.

In addition, Council continues to pursue its commitment to the provision of a community hub in Bellevue Ward. The recent purchase of two lots in the ward represents the first steps in Council delivering this commitment.

This edition of the Bellevue Ward Update includes information on Lighter Footprints, a local community group that works hard to address global warming. While in recent years we have witnessed an effective campaign against the science of climate change by those opposed to taking action to cut emissions, most in our community recognise the need to act now. Lighter Footprints is hosting a Public Climate Forum on 13 August 2013 (details on its website) which is sure to provide some thought-provoking debate.

Much is happening on the political front, including the looming federal election and the referendum to decide if local government should gain financial recognition in the Australian Constitution. The next Bellevue Ward Update will canvass that question in much more detail.

Best regards



Cr Jim Parke

> Continued from page 1

## Lowest rate rise in a decade

### Sound fiscal management reaps future rewards

Council will borrow \$9 million less than originally anticipated to fund building projects over the next two years, slashing interest payments.

From 1 July 2013, all Victorian councils must pay their portion of a \$397 million shortfall in the Defined Benefit Plan Superannuation fund, caused largely by global financial volatility in 2011.

Council must borrow to repay the higher than anticipated \$14.3 million owed by the City of Boroondara. But, Council will repay the loan over five years, rather than the standard 20, saving \$9 million in interest.

By repaying borrowings faster, Council will build its capacity in case of further superannuation scheme liabilities.

## Vote **YES** at the referendum



You will be asked to vote in a referendum on election day to decide if local government should be recognised in the Australian Constitution – let's make it a resounding 'yes'!

A recent High Court decision suggested the Australian Government does not have a general power to directly fund local government.

This decision puts at risk the validity of Federally-funded programs, such as Roads to Recovery and facilities that provide sporting, cultural, early learning and health services to every community.

Local government is responsible for more than \$60 billion worth of community infrastructure, however, it is simply beyond the capacity of councils to use only ratepayer money to provide all the public facilities people rely on each day. This referendum seeks to formalise what has occurred for over a decade.

To learn more visit [www.localgovrecognition.gov.au](http://www.localgovrecognition.gov.au) .

## State fire services levy

Your 2013–14 rates notice will include a new fire services property levy.

From 1 July 2013, local councils must collect this levy from property owners on behalf of the State Revenue Office. However, this money is not part of Council revenue and will not be used by local governments. It will help fund Victorian fire services.

For more information, visit [www.dtf.vic.gov.au/firelevy](http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/firelevy) .

# Investing in our future – Bellevue Kindergarten

Bellevue Kindergarten in Balwyn North opened its new, second teaching room in May.

Funded by \$300,000 in Victorian Government Children's Capital Program grants, the extension allows the kindergarten to meet new universal access requirements of 15 hours of funded four-year-old kindergarten per week, while also providing an eight-hour weekly program for three-year-olds.

Congratulations to the Bellevue Kindergarten Management Committee, past committee members Helen

Schweiger and Shannon Coughlin, architect and former Bellevue Kindergarten parent John Vos and the kindergarten community on their dedication to completing the second teaching room.

Council staff also supported the kindergarten throughout the project.

**For more information visit**  
[www.bellevuekindergarten.org.au](http://www.bellevuekindergarten.org.au)



Original founders of the kinder - Colin Hamley (left) and Harold Porter (right) - were also the kinder's first treasurer and first secretary respectively and have been close friends since the kinder opened 55 years ago - they are the perfect duo to officially open the kinder's second room.

# Greythorn Shopping Centre update

## Special rate scheme declared for Greythorn Shopping Centre

Council has again declared a five-year, special rate levy scheme for Greythorn Shopping Centre. An estimated \$48,000 will be collected from the 74 traders at the centre in the first year. The money will be used by the Greythorn Traders' Association for marketing, special events at Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day and other celebrations, graffiti management and the traders' newsletter.

This approach has been successfully used by the traders' association for 16 years and has seen them work together for the betterment of the Greythorn Shopping Centre.

## New footpath adds safety



Safety is a priority and now pedestrians have an easy walk to the Greythorn shops.

A new footpath has been constructed along Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North improving pedestrian access to the Greythorn Shopping Centre.

Council acted after residents raised safety concerns. There was no footpath leading directly from Trentwood

Avenue to the shops, forcing pedestrians to either walk along the road or cross over Trentwood Avenue to the footpath opposite and then cross back again to the shops.

**For more information please visit**  
[www.greythornshoppingcentre.com.au](http://www.greythornshoppingcentre.com.au)

# Architect named for redevelopment

## Williams Ross Architects have been selected to design the Boroondara Sports Complex redevelopment.

The first phase of this \$11.7 million project, which has now begun, is to develop a preferred concept design for a consolidated facility on the Boroondara Sports Complex

site that will continue to accommodate the programs and activities enjoyed by users of the Balwyn Leisure Centre and the Boroondara Sports Complex.

The second phase will involve the development of a precinct plan to ensure the Gordon Barnard Reserve and facility users, and neighbours contribute to the development of a plan for the site including traffic management, parking and landscaping. This will begin in August and continue through to October 2013.

We want everyone with an interest in the project and the reserve, to have an opportunity to learn what we have in mind, share their suggestions and track how their input has been considered in the final outcome.

Follow the project's progress by visiting [www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/bscproject](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/bscproject). Read about the project's background and projected timeline, download regular project bulletins and/or register to receive updates.

# Neighbourhood Watch hears from Ward Councillor

Freeway noise was the hot topic at the Kew East Neighbourhood Watch May meeting.

The group received an update from Bellevue Ward Councillor Jim Parke on noise investigations along the Eastern Freeway. VicRoads is evaluating how effective noise absorbing measures on the Monash Freeway and resurfacing on the Eastern Freeway at Balwyn

North have been. It is also undertaking truck noise monitoring at two locations on the Eastern Freeway.

An app for iPhones and iPads has been created for residents to accurately measure freeway noise from inside their homes.

2LOUD was developed in a Council-funded study by Deakin University. Data from the app was collected in May and June, and is expected to assist ongoing advocacy to reduce freeway noise.

For more information: [www.2loud.net.au](http://www.2loud.net.au)

## Lighter Footprints Climate Action Group

Lighter Footprints formed seven years ago as a non-partisan group of citizens concerned that action on climate change amounts to 'too little too late'.

With 97 per cent of climate scientists sounding alarm bells at the rate of carbon emissions, and with both major political parties acting like they don't understand the seriousness of the problem, the members lobby politicians at all levels of government to take action to reduce those emissions quickly.

Time to prevent really disastrous and unstoppable shifts in climate, landscape and oceans is short. This decade (2010 to 2020) is referred to internationally as the 'critical decade' after which the chance of holding the temperature to liveable limits is small.

Understanding the science is behind our drive for a rapid transition from fossil fuels to a low carbon economy based on renewable energy and sustainable living.

Lighter Footprints and its community partners want to see rapid transition to zero carbon emissions from energy generation, and reduced transport



Care about our environment? Join Lighter Footprints.

emissions (eg good rail transport), greater energy efficiencies in buildings, and sustainable living patterns around public transport nodes, with more access through walking and bike-riding.

Contact Carolyn Ingvarson, Convenor on 0411 115 186

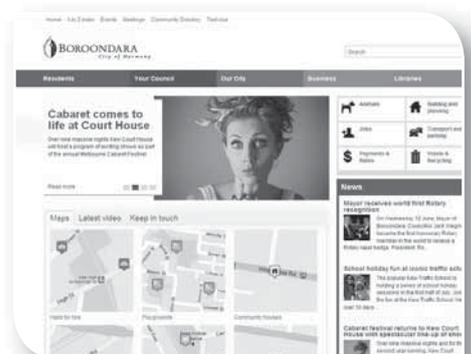
Visit: [www.lighterfootprints.org](http://www.lighterfootprints.org)

## New-look website faster, brighter, better!

Jump online to City of Boroondara's website - find what you need.

The old content management system needed to be upgraded, so Council took the opportunity to update the site's look and feel too.

The new content management system, Sitecore, has made searches more effective. Maps, highlighting features such as off-lead dog parks, are more prominent; there's more news; and easy linking to Council's YouTube channel, facebook and twitter feeds.



Powerful thoughts ...

Almost always, the creative dedicated minority has made the world better.

Martin Luther King Jr