

A photograph of three people standing in a vineyard. On the left is a woman with short brown hair wearing a white shirt with a blue floral pattern. In the center is a woman with short grey hair and glasses wearing a white t-shirt. On the right is a man with a grey beard and bald head wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a crest. They are all smiling. The background shows rows of grapevines, a green field, and a large mountain under a clear blue sky. A green curved graphic element is at the bottom of the photo.

# SINGLETON EDIT

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**SINGLETON**  
COUNCIL

# Mayor's Message

Cr Sue Moore  
Mayor

If the future depends on what we do today, then 2024 is an important year for Singleton. And as a Council, we're doing a lot of work to make the future bright for everyone across our local government area, with a focus on building resilience to changes likely to impact our community from a range of sources.

It's this spirit of community and resilience that has shaped our nation, and there are countless examples of triumph over struggle told in the stories of the people who quite literally handcrafted the foundations for the Singleton local government area we know today. 2024 marks the bicentenary of the Broke village following thousands of years of Wonnarua, Wanaruah custodianship of the land. It's 200 years since European exploration brought agriculture, viticulture, and rapid development of this precious village, proving our community is in itself a symbol of what hard work and perseverance can achieve.

The Broke Bicentennial calendar of events, developed and curated by dedicated volunteers in our community, is a living showcase of what is special about Broke, and the ongoing importance of our area as a centre for history and heritage, an industry leader in viticulture, a beacon for the arts, culture and sport, and ongoing connection to the land.

The commemorations began with the Festival of Small Halls in January and will continue throughout the year with a range of events to suit everyone – from the popular annual Little Bit of Broke Festival in March, the iconic Broke Village Fair in September through to a special recreation of the 1874 Broke



versus Bulga cricket match in October. And of course, there'll be the Back to Broke weekend on 12-13 October with activities across the weekend including open day, village heritage walks, oral histories and photograph displays, not to mention the Spirit of the Vines official dinner. I encourage everyone to follow along with the Broke Bicentennial 2024 Facebook page, which is a one-stop destination for information on events designed to honour our past, celebrate our present, and look forward to our future. It's also shaping up to be an incredible online celebration of the stories that shaped Broke, the families that built it, and the connections that bind us together.

Ultimately, this momentous occasion is timely to bring us together to honour the past, embrace all that we have in common and dream a shared vision for the prosperous future of our area. It's an open invitation to everyone to experience all that is special about the Broke village, and its importance to the Singleton local government area.

2024 is also a year for us to elect our new Council, or if you're so inclined, to stand for local government. Council elections will be held on Saturday 14 September 2024. If you're passionate about making Singleton a better place, then there's no greater reward than working in the service of our community.

## RATES CRUCIAL TO CREATING VIBRANT COMMUNITY

With 2024/25 annual rates notices hitting mailboxes in the coming months, Council is encouraging all ratepayers to take time out to learn how their rates are calculated each year, and what services and improvements they fund.

Dwight Graham, Council's Director Corporate and Commercial Services said with rates making up almost 50 per cent of Council's annual income, Council's proactive approach to grants management has reaped millions in rewards over the last five years.

And in a time where everyone is responding to the ever-growing squeeze on resources, Council too has not been immune to inflation and cost of living pressures.

"We understand that the cost-of-living crisis coupled with inflation and increases to interest rates means it's a challenging time for a lot of people in our community, and every dollar spent needs to be done so wisely," Mr Graham said.

"Much like household budgets, Council too is also facing increasing pressure with increased fuel, insurance, utility, material and labour costs.

"On a positive note, benchmarking suggests that Singleton has some of the lowest typical residential rates in the Hunter region."

Mr Graham said an important part of calculating rates was residential land values. Every three years the Valuer General (State Government) is required to revalue all land across NSW, with the most recent revaluation taking place during 2022/23. Increases to land values were used to calculate 2023/24 rates.


"To put it simply, there is a fixed charge for everyone, and a variable charge known as 'ad valorem' which is based on the value of your land set by the Valuer General, as well as domestic waste services charge which can only be used for waste-related services or costs including kerbside collection, education, and waste levy," he said.

### How rates are calculated

Land rates calculation formula:


$$\left( \frac{\text{Land Value} \times \text{Ad Valorem}}{100} \right) + \text{Base Amount}$$


### What your residential rates fund

 **\$1271.76** average residential rates 2022/23

 **\$612.43** roads, bridges, footpaths + drainage

**\$122.91** community facilities such as sports clubhouses, halls and public amenities 

 **\$227.32** parks + sporting fields

**\$181.82** community services such library, gym and swim, arts and culture, youth venue 

 **\$127.28** responding to natural disasters and community programs such as events and economic development

\* Based on average rates for 2022/23, including maintenance and capital works projects. Excludes waste, water and sewer charges.

"To supplement rates, Council applies for and has been extremely successful with grant applications in recent years to ensure we can deliver the infrastructure, services and programs our community needs, and to ensure that we are also delivering a vibrant and progressive community now and into the future.

"But rates are critically important, and while they only make up 48 per cent of our annual budget, they help Council fund footpaths, roads, cycleways, playgrounds, library, pools – all the things we love about living in Singleton.

"The rest of our income comes from grants, user fees and charges, development contributions and interest on investments.

"It cannot be overstated how seriously Singleton Council takes our responsibility to sustainable financial management, and our community can be rest assured that our proactive approach, which has delivered consecutive budget surpluses, is proof that while we have a focus on the here and now, we also have our eyes firmly set on the horizon to ensure our long-term financial viability."

“Broke’s history is something that needs to be celebrated.”



Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore with Broke Residents Community Association's Evelyn Hardy and Mick McCardle

# BACK TO BROKE

Broke will celebrate its bicentenary in a big way in 2024, delivering a year-long showcase of the history that put the village on the map and the qualities that make it the thriving community it is today.

Located beneath the majestic Yellow Rock, Broke is home to some of the Hunter Valley’s best boutique vineyards, cellar doors, acclaimed fine dining, World Heritage-listed National Parks and ancient Aboriginal rock art.

All these things and more will be celebrated as part of the Broke Bicentennial 2024 program, which will encompass the A Little Bit of Broke festival in March, Broke Village Fair in September, a showcase of historic photographs and oral histories, the lighting up of Yellow Rock and the headline Back to Broke event in October.

Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore said the bicentenary was a chance for everyone to come together to celebrate the villages’ rich history and vibrant community spirit.

“The passing of time can often lose small towns to history, but not here in Broke.

Instead, Broke’s resilient community has used its historic foundations to build it into the thriving centre for wine production, tourism and culture that it is today,” she said.

“A fantastic program of events has been curated by members of the Broke Residents Community Association to mark the bicentenary. We hope as many people as possible come out to be part of this milestone and help us to write the next chapter in the story of Broke.”

The bicentenary marks 200 years since the first land grant and settlement of Broke by the Blaxland family but for thousands of years before it was home to the Wanaruah, Wonnarua people – the area’s traditional land owners.

Once established, Broke village was a vital stop on the Great North Road, the trail built by convicts to haul livestock from Sydney to Newcastle and the Hunter Valley.

Shortly after, it was discovered that the region’s soil and climate were well suited to grow wine. Classic Hunter grape varieties such as semillon, chardonnay and shiraz slowly made their mark in the village.

Broke is now home to close to 20 cellar doors and has become an emerging artisan food and event destination.

The bicentenary celebrations will culminate in a weekend of festivities from 11-14 October. The celebrations will begin with the Spirit of the Vines at Margan Wines and Restaurant followed by Back to Broke with open days at

St Andrews Church, a village walk and music recital, and a recreation of the 1874 cricket match between Bulga and Broke.

Back to Broke, to be held at the recreation ground 12-13 October, will be a whole-of-community celebration featuring food trucks, historic costumes, live entertainment and markets.

Mick McCardle, President of Broke Residents Community Association said the bicentenary program offered something for everyone, whether they had visited the village before or had yet to discover it.

“The bicentenary is an opportunity for us to celebrate our milestones from over the 200 years, and the fact that we’re still here and thriving,” he said.

“Broke’s history is something that needs to be celebrated. A lot of historical towns like ours have gone by the wayside but we are fortunate to have industries that have created a sustainable future for Broke.

“We’d encourage everyone to check out what’s on offer in Broke during this milestone year of celebrations.”

## 2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**15 - 17 March** | A Little Bit of Broke, Broke Fordwich Wine Region

**25 April** | Anzac Day Bicentennial Commemoration, Broke War Memorial

**18 September** | Broke Bicentennial Village Fair, McNamara Park

**October** | Historic Broke in Photographs and stories including oral history interviews, Broke Hall

**October** | Illuminating Yellow Rock + historic buildings across Broke

**11 October** | Spirit of the Vines official dinner, Margan Wines Barrell Room

**12 October** | Recreation of the 1874 Broke v Bulga cricket match, Broke Recreation Ground

**12 - 13 October** | Back to Broke Bicentennial Weekend, Broke Recreation Ground

**12 - 13 October** | St Andrews Church Open Day, St Andrews Church of England



Utilities Engineer Arun Kumar and Coordinator Utilities Engineering Clayton Miesel

## WATER + SEWER WORKS FLOW

Residents will reap the benefits of a number of large water and sewer infrastructure projects in the pipeline this year, starting with more reliable water supply.

Council's annual water main renewal project is underway, with the town's drinking water pipes located in Boundary, Barton and Broughton streets now being upgraded.

The \$1.6million project will also include the realignment of a 250m section of water main in Maison Dieu.

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning said some innovative waste management strategising would deliver greater sustainability outcomes as part of this year's renewal project.

"The tender for the water main renewal project this year included a range of new waste management terms which, while taking more effort for our contractor to carry out, will save a lot of money on waste disposal fees," he said.

"Most waste that comes from this annual project is usually sent to landfill. But, by making sure that what we dig up is segregated properly, not lumped in together, it can be categorised

as virgin excavated natural material instead.

"This type of waste is in high demand at our own Waste Management Facility as they use it to cap landfill waste. By taking care to sort waste, we're able to reuse the materials in more sustainable ways and make significant cost savings."

Delivering greater environmental outcomes and improving the efficiency of operations is the aim of a number of projects that have been delivered in the past year and are planned for 2024.

A \$1million chemical dosing upgrade and \$600,000 sludge lagoon relining at the Sewer Treatment Plant was completed at the end of 2023, paving the way for a \$4.8million upgrade to the sludge lagoon and drying beds at the Plant.

A \$600,000 upgrade will also be carried out to the Mount Thorley raw water substation this year.

Mr Fitzpatrick-Barr said these significant capital works projects would ensure Council is delivering a sustainable wastewater treatment system for the Singleton community of now and into the future.

## Capital works update

### ✓ Completed

Mirannie Road Widening: \$350,000

Falkiner Crescent Footpath: \$50,000

Broke Road Reconstruction: \$1.4m

Gym and Swim Sand Filter Upgrades: \$200,000

Broke Road Rehabilitation: \$400,000

Singleton Netball Courts 7 - 12: \$700,000

Milbrodale Road Flood Repairs: \$500,000

### ⚙ Underway

Singleton Netball Courts 1 - 6: \$500,000

Sportsfield Lighting Upgrades: \$1.6m

Inlet Road Culverts Reconstruction: \$1m

Goorangoola Causeway Upgrade: \$700,000

Putty Valley Road Sealing: \$2.5m

Athletics Building Construction: \$1.4m

Broke Recreation Ground Upgrade: \$800,000

Nowlan Park Playground: \$100,000

### ▶ Coming up

Lizards Bridge and Dyrning Road Bridge Replacements: \$600,000

Glendon Road Rehabilitation: \$400,000

Wilcox Avenue Footpath: \$300,000

Town Entrances Landscape Upgrades: \$300,000

Drainage Relining: \$200,000



Investing in ways that reduce the severity and impact of disasters is a high priority.

Council's Anna Burnheim, Paul Smith, Kylie Wallace, NSW Reconstruction Authority's Simone Dyrning and Council's Sharni Goldman

## NEW SIGNS TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Seven new digital variable message signs have been installed across the Singleton local government area to provide timely and consistent messaging aimed at reducing the risk of disasters and enhancing emergency preparedness across town and outlying villages.

The signs aim to mitigate the risks associated with floods, bushfires, storms, heatwaves, and other hazardous events.

They have been installed in strategic locations including the villages of Broke, Jerrys Plains, Elderslie and Glenridding in addition to Townhead Park, the SES headquarters and Blaxland Avenue in Singleton.

The \$295,350 project was 100 per cent funded by the NSW Government's Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF).

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning Services said the new variable message boards improved communication with the travelling public and locals, enhancing safety and promoting greater situational awareness about the hazards affecting the Singleton local government area.

The structures include a solar-powered sign strip, which ensures the sign will operate during an event even if mains power fails.

"Investing in ways that reduce the severity and impact of disasters is a high priority," Mr Fitzpatrick-Barr said.

"Over the past three years, the Singleton LGA has copped disaster after disaster which has had significant impacts on our community.

"While we continue to support recovery efforts, it's equally important that we continue to invest in risk reduction to help lower potential impacts and improve our response to future disasters.

"This project is all about giving local residents timely and accurate information so our community can make informed decisions before, during, and after disasters and severe weather events.

"These signs provide real time information controlled remotely at the click of the button, ensuring signs can be instantly updated, reaching a wide audience of approximately 40,000 motorists each day in just seconds.

"Severe weather events are happening with increasing frequency, and these new electronic signs installed in strategic locations across the LGA will give motorists the most up-to-date information — not only during a disaster event, but when preparing for a future disaster event."

# WHAT'S ON THIS AUTUMN

If you're looking for something to do in Singleton Hunter Valley this Autumn, there's a packed schedule of exciting events across our LGA.

From signature Council events, Broke Bicentennial celebrations through to festivals and expos, sustainability initiatives and giveaways, there's plenty to see and do in Singleton.

Check out some highlights below + explore more at [singleton.nsw.gov.au/whatson](https://singleton.nsw.gov.au/whatson)

## March 2024

### 3 March

Clean Up Australia Day, Townhead Park

### 7 March

Council Kiosk, Broke

### 13 March

Anh Do - The Happiest Refugee,  
Singleton Civic Centre

### 14 March

Singleton Explore Women's Wellness,  
Singleton Civic Centre

### 15 - 17 March

A Little Bit of Broke,  
Broke Fordwich Wine Region

### 16 March

Free Tyre Drop Off Day  
Singleton Waste Management Centre

### 16 March

Jerrys Plains Community Fair + Car Boot Sale,  
Jerrys Plains Recreational Ground

### 23 March

Get Ready Expo,  
Singleton Council Grounds

### 24 March

Earth Hour

## April 2024

### 13 April - 26 May

A Decade of Inflation: Braddon Snape,  
Singleton Arts and Cultural Centre

### 25 April

Anzac Day, Burdekin Park

### 26 - 28 April

The Gum Ball, Dashville

### 27 April

Singleton Rodeo, Singleton Showground

### 27 April

Free Compost Giveaway,  
Singleton Waste Management Facility

## May 2024

### 4 May

Firelight, Singleton Town Centre

### 11 May

Free Mattress Muster,  
Singleton Waste Management Facility

### 18 May

Putty Road Truck Drivers Memorial  
Annual Service, Garry Miller Memorial Park

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