



SINGLETON EDIT

Mayor's Message

Cr Sue Moore
Mayor

After another year of significant challenges for many in our community, the festive season is a timely opportunity for everyone to come together to reflect, give thanks and celebrate.

This year Council has had a real focus on delivering projects, programs and outcomes that continued to enhance Singleton's liveability. The focus was firmly set on the "local" – whether that be through the delivery of new shared pathways, bike tracks and sporting infrastructure to get people active and involved in their local environment, community events, arts and culture, business development programs and growing more ways for us to experience and engage with local places and local people.

In a community and an economy renowned for coal mining, Singleton continues to move to meet the future head on. Council recognises the need to act now rather than wait for decisions beyond our control that have the greatest potential to change our community. The best thing about this is that our approach relies on partnerships with our community, working together to identify what we can do now to futureproof our local government area for the generations who will come after us.

This year we also continued to work in partnership with all levels of government, particularly through our Advocacy and Infrastructure Agendas, for a cohesive approach to the future vitality and prosperity of Singleton.



Given our recent history of storms, fires and major flooding, emergency management was an important subject, and we worked hard calling on the NSW Government to fund process improvements both in the immediate response and ongoing recovery of disasters ahead of their first budget in September 2023. The State Government also announced permanent additional train services in Singleton, the result of more than a decade of campaigning.

We're extremely proud of our partnership with our community and other levels of government, and how we have made 2023 another successful year in our purpose to create community.

And there's no better time than Christmas to bring everyone together, and no better way than a wide range of community events to be part of in Singleton this summer that are welcome and accessible to all. With the Christmas tree now installed at the beautiful Baileys Union Park and Christmas on John Street on the way on Friday 8 December, it is truly the season to be merry and bright.

Best wishes to you and your family for a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

BE PREPARED THIS SUMMER

As the entire state gears up for the most significant fire season since the 2019/2020 Black Summer, Singleton residents are being encouraged to prepare early and plan for extreme weather.

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning Services said the long-range forecast showed areas of Singleton which had recently experienced flooding were among those facing the highest risk of fire during spring and summer. He said every resident of the Singleton local government area should know their bushfire risk and have a plan for emergency events.

"After a few seasons of intense rainfall and floods, we know that there has been a lot of stress on our communities, especially those in rural areas," he said.

"Many of our localities have seen exponential vegetation growth because of La Niña rainfall, which is contributing to increased bushfire risk. But far too often people think it's the job of the authorities to be ready, which breeds a false sense of security — that is why we're calling on every household to be prepared to support their own household and their own safety during the upcoming severe weather season.

"We also recommend people familiarise themselves with the new Fire Danger Ratings system, and what they need to do at each warning level; and when there is a fire ban, know what that actually means and where to find information — from the new Hazards Near Me smartphone app, to listening to ABC Radio during an emergency.

"Bushfire season also coincides with school holiday periods, so it's a critical time to be prepared and have an understanding of the landscape not only at home, but also where you're moving into new areas when holidaying."

Over the past two years, Council has introduced significant improvements to the way the local community prepares for high-risk weather. Partnering with the Local Emergency Management Committee and emergency services agencies, this includes the creation of Get Ready teams across rural localities, the formation of the Community Resilience Network, the annual Get Ready Singleton Emergency Services Expo event and other disaster preparedness and resilience education initiatives. Singleton Council is also working with Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook councils to develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan, which will provide a realistic roadmap on how each Council area can become more drought resilient.



Putty RFS Brigade (L to R): RFS District Officer John 'JR' Ryan, Group Captain Fred Turner, Inspector Mark Denton, Group Captain Warren Welsh, Inspector Stephen Kada, Council's Infrastructure Services and Emergency Support Officer Kellie Doherty, Operational Officer Mark Tobin, Council's Coordinator Compliance and Systems Anna Burnheim, and Captain Ken Mackett



FESTIVE SEASON LIGHTS UP SINGLETON

The festive season has arrived in Singleton with the Christmas tree now lighting up Baileys Union Park, and the countdown is on for the town's beloved annual Christmas on John Street event.

Singleton's town centre will be transformed into Santa Claus Lane on Friday 8 December 2023, when Christmas on John Street returns from 5.30–9.30pm.

Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore with Business Singleton's Laura Kelly and Santa and Mrs Claus (John and Isabella Bailey from Singleton Rotary).

Bringing all the magic of the festive season, John Street will be overrun with street performers, performances from Singleton Town Band and local dance groups, food trucks, market stalls, laneway bar, kid's activities, fireworks and a truckload of cheer.

Mayor of Singleton, Cr Sue Moore said it was not only the festivities that made Christmas on John Street such a well-attended annual event, but the sense of community coming together to launch the holiday season.

"The best thing about Christmas on John Street is the wonderful festive spirit and the sense of community that really takes over the entire town centre," she said.

"This event brings thousands of people into Singleton's town centre for a massive evening of fun, festivities, cheer and celebrating – all the things that make this a most wonderful time of the year.



The best thing about Christmas on John Street is the wonderful festive spirit and the sense of community that really takes over the entire town centre.

"In keeping with tradition, Singleton firefighters will chauffeur Santa to the event in their 1960s Bedford vintage truck and Singleton Rotary is once again offering free photos at their North Pole grotto.

"Our retailers will also be open for late night shopping so you can check off all the items on your Christmas list."

Business Singleton President Danny Eather said locals will be spoiled for choice when it comes to Christmas shopping this year, encouraging shoppers to check out the huge range of stores, boutiques, cellar doors and services operating across Singleton before heading out of town or online to purchase gifts.

"We're really encouraging shoppers to support local this Christmas," he said.

"Dollars spent in local businesses stay local. That money flows back into the community through local employment, sporting clubs, community groups and into other businesses, not to mention supporting the local business operators and their families.

"Not only are there so many benefits to buying locally, but there is so much variety here in Singleton that you don't need to look hard or far to find the perfect gift. And if you don't know what to gift someone, let them choose. Gift your loved ones a Spend in Singleton gift card, which are accepted by over 130 businesses in the Singleton Hunter Valley."

Singleton's retailers will also be celebrating the festive season by lighting up their windows with Christmas displays this season and taking part in the popular Christmas consumer competition for 2023.

Anyone who spends \$40 in participating stores across Singleton will receive an entry into the competition running from 17 November - 15 December 2023. One winner will be drawn each Friday for four weeks, and will receive a \$150 Spend in Singleton gift card. All entries will go into a major prize draw.

Council's Jetpatch Operator Steve Jones
and Team Leader Jet Patcher Nate Smith



SMOOTHER TRAVELLING

Roads across Singleton received first-class attention in 2023 as Council broke ground on a number of big-ticket items, including flood recovery works, and major upgrades to busy roads throughout the local network.

Reopening Broke Road and works to replace culverts along The Inlet Road, both of which were severely damaged during record flooding in July 2022, launched almost \$6million of works to repair the local road network in the Bulga, Broke, Milbrodale and Paynes Crossing villages.

Justin Fitzpatrick-Barr, Council's Director Infrastructure and Planning Services said it was great to see flood recovery projects underway on top of the wide-ranging improvements made to other roads across Singleton.

"For more than a year we have been working towards repairing Singleton's road network that was extensively damaged by the four major flooding events in 2022, but unfortunately we were slowed down by factors outside of our control like material availability and access to disaster funding," he said.

"To tick off so many projects this year and restore road connectivity across Singleton has been great to see. But not only that, the work

we have done ensures the local road network can better withstand any future disaster event."

Further upgrades to Broke Road plus works to repair surface damage to streets throughout the Broke village and along Milbrodale Road will continue into 2024 in addition to almost \$1.4million in works to improve road safety along Mirannie Road, rehabilitate further sections of Glendon Road and complete high friction surfacing to Bimbadeen Road.

Improving rural roads that connect residents and visitors to Singleton's cultural and tourism attractions was also firmly in the spotlight in 2023. Council completed road safety improvements to Welshs Road at Milbrodale, home to the heritage-listed Baiame Cave and 4WD haven Tuff Truck, and began a \$2.03million project to upgrade a 2.5 kilometre section of Putty Valley Road, which provides access to the world heritage-listed Wollemi National Park.

With a \$175,000 contribution from Hunter Valley Operations, Council completed a \$355,000 project to repair the damaged Lemington Road and reopened it to the public. In other projects, Council repaired the road surface and drainage to Gardner Circuit and Elderslie Road.

FOCUS ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE EXCEEDS SERVICE BENCHMARKS

Efforts to provide improved customer experience for Singleton residents and businesses are paying off, with Council exceeding benchmarks across customer satisfaction, customer ease, and trust.

Vicki Brereton, Council's Director Organisation and Community Capacity said with a purpose to create community, and with the people of Singleton at the heart of everything Council does, we aim to hold ourselves to the highest accountability in how we serve all of our customers, including our residents, local businesses, investors and visitors.

"We've made a commitment to put our customers first as the hero of our story, and to improve the experience for people contacting Council, and these results show the very real gains that are being made," she said.

"In saying that, we know that we don't always get it right each and every time, but we are trying hard and always looking for ways to improve and evolve. And we're making every effort to ensure we deliver what we say we will and be consistent, approachable, responsive and efficient.

"Council receives a high volume of interactions with residents and other customers, recording almost 6,000 customer service calls in the first quarter of 2023/24, more than 500 face-to-face interactions, and over 3,500 customer service emails.

"In holding ourselves to the highest standards, we want to be sure that we're meeting our customers' expectations of excellence, which is why we frequently ask for your feedback with over 86 Council services now receiving feedback through our Voice of the Customer system — from planning and regulatory services to waste, water and sewer to infrastructure and everything in between.

"We're committed to building a culture and capability to deliver excellent experiences in all interactions with Council, creating a platform to be the council people want to do business with. This means listening to our customers and using what you tell us to drive continued improvements to deliver truly excellent customer outcomes."



Members of Council's Customer Service and People + Culture teams

CX HIGHLIGHTS

85% overall customer satisfaction rating

4.1 / 5 customer ease score

4 / 5 customer confidence score

65% net promoter score (+15% on target)

WHAT YOU SAID

"Straight onto the issue and followed up by a phone call to ensure I was happy with the outcome. Outstanding customer experience."

"In three working days the issue was reported, investigated and fixed. Very happy with the prompt service."

"Felt very privileged to have access to my local library with very dedicated staff. The staff are extremely helpful and always welcoming and smiling. What a great bunch of people."

"Your staff are an asset to Council."

"I was impressed that Council took action so quickly."

WHAT'S ON THIS SUMMER

FUN FOR EVERYONE.



ACCESS SUMMER 2023 FESTIVAL

singleton.nsw.gov.au/accesssummer

Events from 24 Nov - 7 Dec



CHRISTMAS ON JOHNST

FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER
5.30-9.30PM



AUSTRALIA DAY EVE

Twilight

25 JAN TOWNHEAD PARK FROM 5.30-9.30PM



AUSTRALIA DAY

Friday 26 January 2024

Livestream the Citizenship and Australia Day Award ceremonies at singleton.nsw.gov.au/australiaday



 Find out more at singleton.nsw.gov.au/whatson

CONTACT US **T** 02 6578 7290
E council@singleton.nsw.gov.au
12 - 14 Queen Street
Singleton NSW 2330
singleton.nsw.gov.au
   



SINGLETON
COUNCIL