



GWYDIR  
SHIRE COUNCIL

*A Gwydir*  
**SNAPSHOT**  
*2008 - 2009*

To be the recognised leader in Local Government  
through continuous learning and sustainability



*Of particular note:*

On 18th November 2008 at the inaugural meeting of the Australian Council of Local Government the Prime Minister the Hon. Kevin Rudd MP and the Minister for Local Government, Hon Anthony Albanese MP announced \$300million through the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program in the 08/09 financial year for local councils and shires to stimulate economic activity and support jobs in local communities.

From this program Gwydir Shire Council received \$352,000. This amount was used to upgrade parks at North Star, Upper Horton and Gravesend. In addition, monies were allocated to the construction of the Warialda Tourist Centre and the renovation of The Roxy restaurant kitchen. These projects reinforced the value Council places in its smaller villages; to create new industry and employment opportunities through the provision of exceptional tourist and hospitality facilities.

On 25th June, a second meeting of Australian Council of Local Government, Canberra was held and as a result Gwydir Shire Council received another funding allocation of \$134,000 through the Federal Government's economic stimulus program.

Council held a family Picnic Day on 3rd October 2008 at the Warialda Recreational Grounds which brought together the whole of Council's staff for a day of enjoyment and socialising.

Mayor Bob Tremain also called for fundraising for the Victorian Bush Fire victims and hosted two Victorian Bush Fire Appeal Concerts in February. The Bingara concert featured Melinda Schneider. With the Warialda concert featuring Sally Anne Whitten and Jared Scott.

A monster raffle was also run with huge support from the community. Monies raised totalled \$11,200. These monies are currently held by Council in trust for Mansfield Council awaiting their advice.

Council conducted two Auctions in December 2008 in Warialda and Bingara. This process proved very successful with Council undergoing a 'spring clean' and creating an additional income stream.

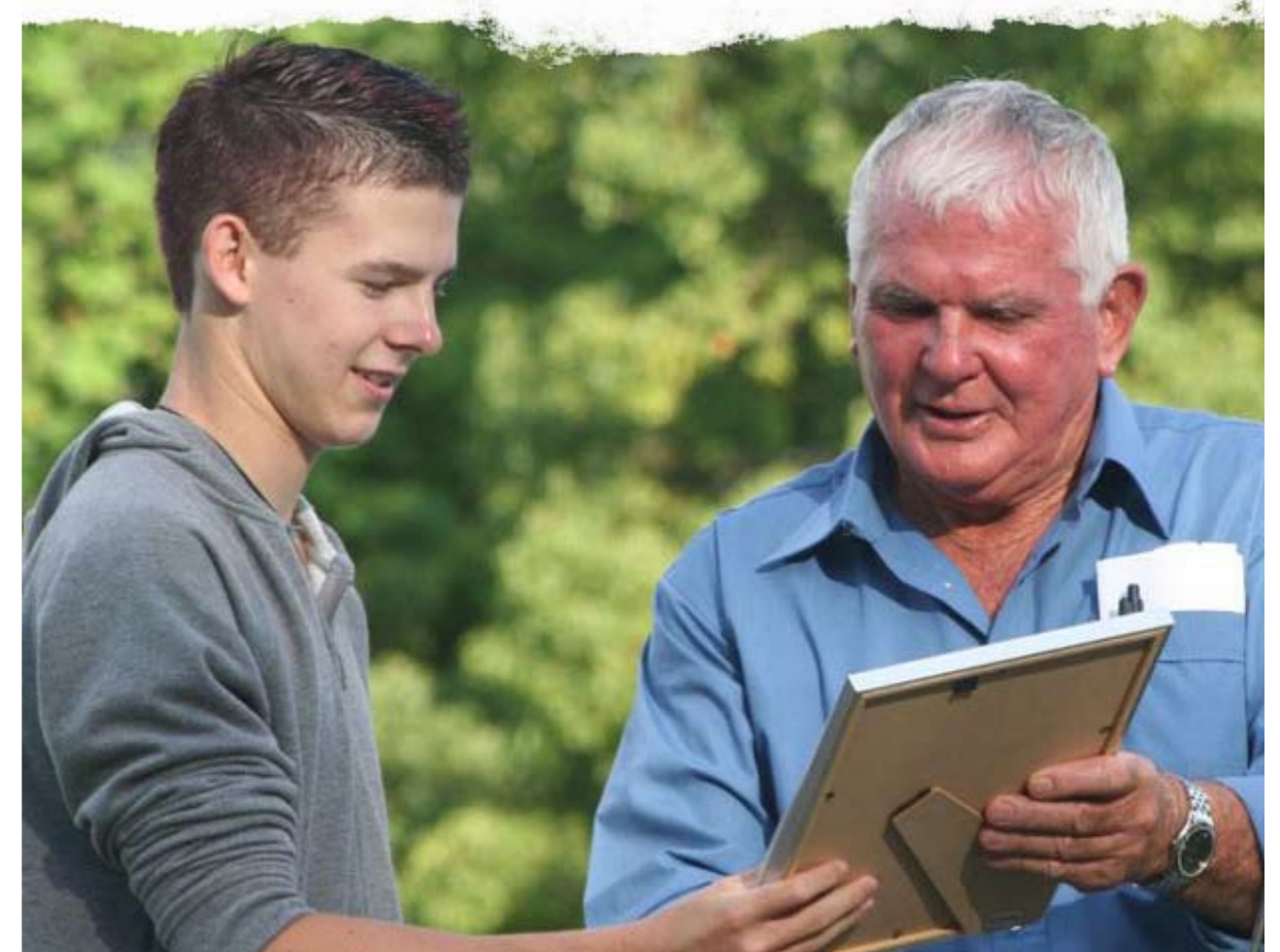
Council representatives continue to meet and liaise with Country Energy regarding the proposed Intelligent Network Program. Gwydir Shire has been short listed as a test case community for Country Energy's northern pilot program.

Council's General Manager by invitation spoke at Department of Environment and Climate Change Integrating Sustainability in Local Government forum. The topic of the forum was: What are the implications for government strategy and practice.

The Gwydir Shire also greatly benefited from the opening of Multi Purpose Facilities in Bingara and Warialda.

Mayor Bob Tremain launched two great initiatives for the Shire's youth during the year. The first, was the Mayor's Essay competition. School students highlighted their understanding of the role of Gwydir Shire.

The second, was the Mayoral Achiever's Award. This Award acknowledged an outstanding 'all round' school citizen at each school in the Shire.



Council continues to support and facilitate a great number of external services in the area including a legal service, Centrelink, RTA, Community Colleges, Home Care, CMA, Landcare groups, veterinary services. It also supports local schools particularly with transport and awards.

Council supports both financially and in kind community groups.

The Hon. Richard Torbay MP conducted a tour of the Shire in February and visited local Schools and attended an official dinner with representatives of Council, Bingara and District VISION 20/20 and Warialda Chamber of Commerce. Due to flooding Mr Torbay was unable to visit the schools in the northern part of the Shire.

Community consultation continued with Public Meetings hosted by Council in March 2009 Warialda Rail, Warialda, Yallaro, North Star, Croppa Creek, Rocky Creek, Coolatai, Crooble, Gravesend, Bingara and Upper Horton.

During the period Council representatives met with Hon Gary Gray AO MP Parliamentary Secretary and the Hon Maxine McKew MP Parliamentary Secretary to discuss Gwydir projects and potential funding opportunities.



## Local Government Elections

The Local Government elections were held on 13th September 2008. All six of the inaugural Councillors who stood for re-election were re-elected, with Cr Mark Coulton, Cr John Wearne and Cr Doug Clark retiring. Mrs Angela Doering, Mr Rod King and Mr Claude Nichols were elected in their place. Mr King was previously an elected Councillor on the former Bingara Shire Council.

The new Council formed was:

- Mayor Bob Tremain
- Deputy Mayor David Rose
- Cr Catherine Egan
- Cr Peter Caskey
- Cr Clem Gordon
- Cr Peter Pankhurst
- Cr Angela Doering
- Cr Rod King; and
- Cr Claude Nichols

On 14th April Cr Gordon resigned. As a result a by-election was held on 11th July with Cr John Coulton being elected.

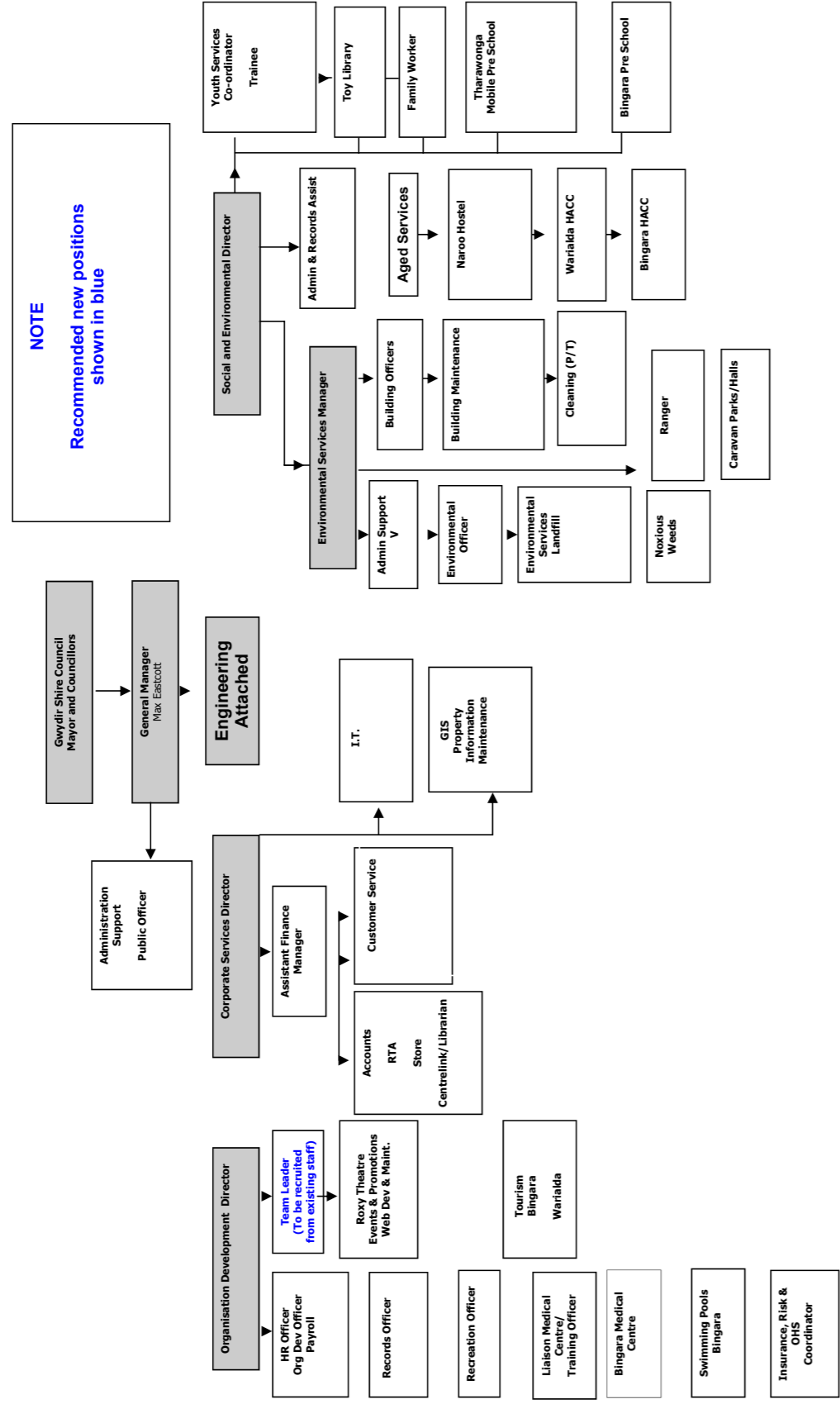
Council reaffirmed its strategic direction by readopting its Vision, Values and Mission Statement at its April Ordinary Meeting.

During this period the Council organisation was lead by the Senior Management Team consisting of:

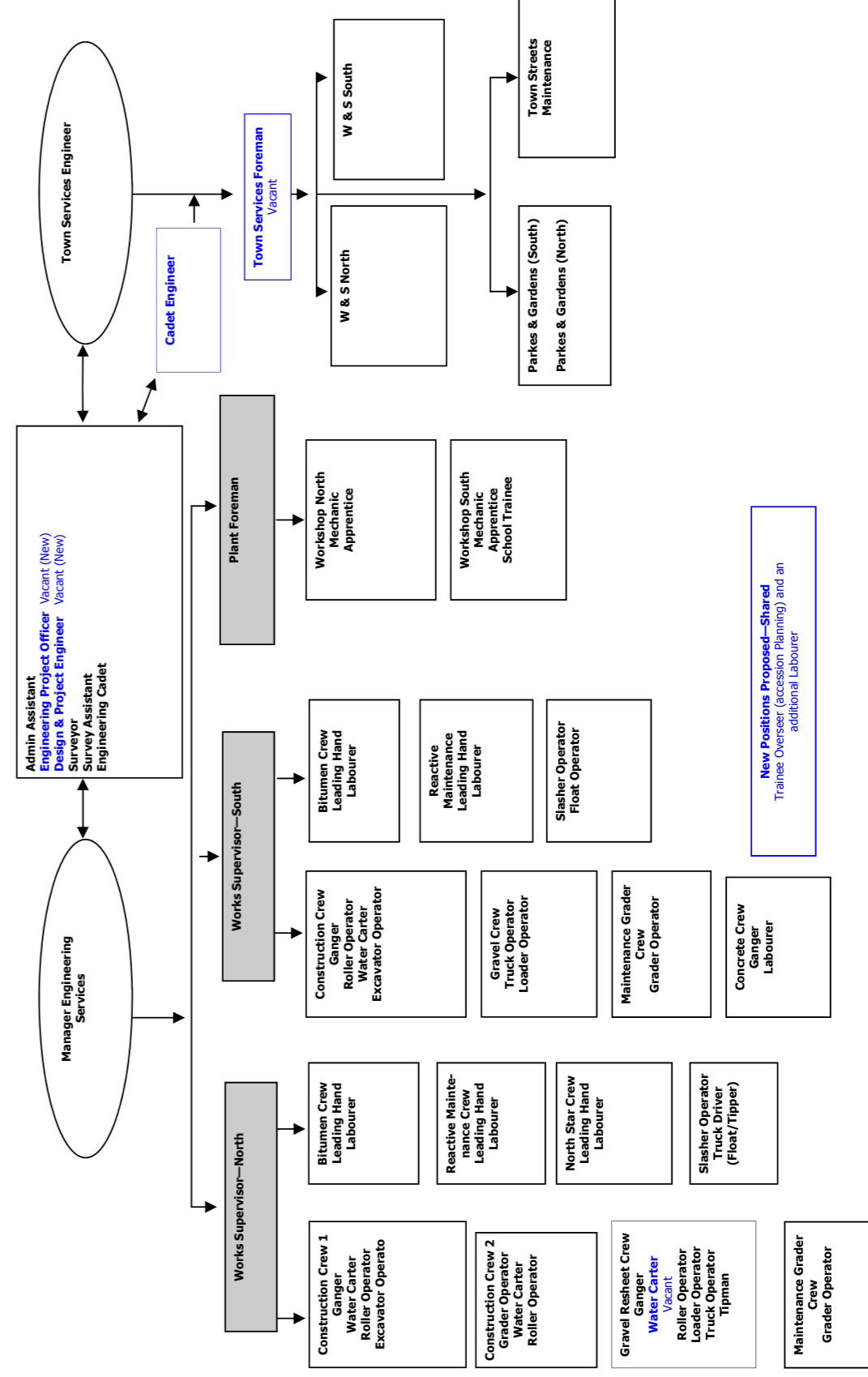
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|------------------|---|
| Max Eastcott     | General Manager;                            |
| Leech Daley      | Organisation Development Director;          |
| Ron Wood         | Corporate Services Director;                |
| Roger McGrath    | Environmental and Social Services Director; |
| Alan Kerr        | Manager Engineering Services;               |
| Andrew Cooper    | Town Services Manager;                      |
| Glen Pereira     | Environmental Services Manager;             |
| Suzy Webber      | Social Services Manager;                    |
| Tim Cox          | Assistant Finance Manager; and              |
| Carmen Southwell | Public Officer and Executive Support.       |



Gwydir Shire Organisation Structure  
May 2009



Engineering Structure  
May 2009





## *Gwydir Shire Council's*

### Vision Statement:

To be the recognised leader in Local Government through continuous learning and sustainability

### Mission:

To ensure that the Council's long term role is viable and sustainable by meeting the needs of our residents in a responsible caring way, attract sustainable development while maintaining the traditional rural values, character and culture of our people

## *Council's Values*

### For our Community and Visitors:

We will provide a safe, clean and healthy environment in which all people have the opportunity to participate in, and share in the Council's services and facilities.

### For our Community Committees:

We will seek their opinion in relation to the services in which they assist us, offer relevant and timely support, and recognise their valuable contribution.

### For our Staff:

We will create an atmosphere of team support which encourages frank and honest communication, and the use of common-sense and innovation in a safe and friendly working environment with the aim of efficiency.

### For our Councillors:

We will treat all Councillors equally and ensure that they are provided with accurate and timely advice and expect that they will treat each other and the staff with due respect.

## *Gwydir Shire Council continues as a learning organisation*

The Gwydir Learning Region (GLR) changed its structure during 2008/2009 and set its sights on raising its profile and its influence nationally. The Council is now represented on the Board of the Australian Learning Communities Network Inc.

The GLR has developed a very close relationship with the Department of Education and Training and continues to meet regularly with representatives of the Department and the Teachers Federation.

Gwydir Learning Region Website was developed with a blog allowing for interaction with and between participants.

Gwydir Shire Council supports the concept of the GLR by example. During the 2008/2009 period Council signed up its 100th trainee.

The GLR concept has been promoted by various members of Council's staff at conferences and seminars during the year such as the Rural Education Forum Australia held at Dubbo in September 2008.

In addition, Council's Mr Rod Smith was guest speaker at the NSW Learning Communities Forum in August 2009. Mr Smith presented the concept and important role of the GLR.



### Employee Achievements

New England Vocational School Student of the Year 2009 – **Eloise Brown**

Community of College of the North Inland Student of the Year – **Wendy Gill**

Trainee of the Year – **Ben Cook** (Year 10)

Bingara Community Awards Large Business Category Winner  
**Bingara Medical Centre**

*Council and staff won recognition and a number of Awards in 2008/2009*

### Organisation Achievements

New England and North West Region 2009 Nominee to State Awards – **Employer of the year**

Warialda Australia Day Awards - Event of the Year – **Civic Reception Warialda Centenary of Rugby League**

Volunteers of the Year - **The Roxy Volunteers**

Orange Festival - Winner Large Float - **Bingara Library Service**

Bingara Australia Day Awards - Event of the Year – **Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia 23rd National Rally**



## Engineering

2008/2009 was another busy and successful year for the Engineering Department. An extensive capital works' program was completed across a broad range of areas.

During this year a number of changes were made to the Department's structure. Following the appointment of a Manager Engineering Services, the Director's position was made redundant and the split between Asset Operations and Town Services confirmed. This resulted in a more efficient Department with obvious cost savings to Council.

Developing and implementing detailed asset management plans for all assets was continued. Significant progress was made on this complex task. In-house designs and surveys were also completed for all capital works' projects from conceptualisation through to final project delivery. The recently completed Stormwater Drainage Studies were reviewed and a budget response is underway.

Baroma Downs Road construction was deferred until 2009 to allow full completion of the Elcombe Road under the Roads to Recovery program. This important project delivered a fully sealed route from Gravesend to Bingara and is already seeing additional use by motorists.

Of course numerous other assets were maintained and enhanced including Council's Aerodromes, Saleyards, Depots, Radio and Television Transmission Towers, Council's Plant and Fleet, Quarries, and Workshops.

Asset Operations Staff also continued a significant Maintenance Works' Schedule in accordance with the Road Maintenance Management Plan. These maintenance works included unsealed grading, pothole patching, reseals, edge repairs, heavy patching and drainage repairs as set out on the following pages:

## Specific Projects

Slaughterhouse Creek Bridge and Approaches

Council's Engineering Department also undertook a major project for the RTA, involving culvert and roadwork construction totalling \$1.7million. This significant project was implemented through Council's existing Road Maintenance Management Contract with the RTA. This contract and relationship with the RTA continues to provide construction work and an income stream for Council.

This Project involved the construction of a new concrete bridge and road approaches on the Gwydir Highway at Biniguy approximately 40 kilometres west of Warialda. The upgrade of the existing Slaughterhouse Creek Bridge, which was built in 1937, had been earmarked due to

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the requirements to improve road safety, reduce traffic impediments and improve the overall condition of the State Highway linking Grafton and Glen Innes to the west of New South Wales.

Council worked in conjunction with the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) to construct the road infrastructure covering 680 metres including an upgrade of an existing box culvert. The new multiple cell box culverts located approximately 140 metres east of the bridge allowed an extensive drainage line to flow under the Highway.

This project has allowed Council employees to liaise with external contractors and agencies and abides by legislative and regulatory requirements that would not normally be mandatory. Council's Project Manager and employees need to be congratulated on completion of such a high quality project and commended on the time and effort that they have committed.

Road Name and Number	Length of Works
<b>Reconstruction, Rehabilitation North</b>	
HW12 Gwydir Highway	1km
SR3 Elcombe Road	5.5km
RR63 Yetman Road	1.5km
MR 63 Fossickers Way	3.km
<b>Reconstruction, Rehabilitation South</b>	
MR132 McIntyre Road	1.8km
MR133 Killarney Gap Road	11.537km
MR134 Delungra Road	11km
Upper Horton Village Streets	Reconstruction
<b>Bitumen Reseal North</b>	
SR4 Baroma Downs Road	1.6km
SR8 Gragin Road	1.2km
RR7705 North Star Road	5.1km
SR3 Elcombe Road	1.6km
SR14 Mosquito Creek Road	3.2km
Warialda Streets	1.5km
<b>Bitumen Reseal South</b>	
MR133 Killarney Gap Road	3.9km
SR1 Copeton Dam Road	2.5km
SR15 Gulf Creek Road	3km
SR16 Trevallyn Road	3.4km
Bingara Streets	900m
Upper Horton Village Streets	880m
<b>Gravel Resheet North</b>	
SR10 Yallaroi Road	13km
SR14 Mosquito Creek Road	6km
SR13 Oregon Road	7km
<b>Gravel Resheet South</b>	
SR16 Trevallyn Road	7.2km
SR32 Pallal Road	5km
<b>Self Help Program North</b>	
SR77 Boonery Park Road	1km
SR78 Dewrang Road	1.5km
SR265 Innesvale Road	1.5km

Road Name and Number	Length of Works
<b>Bridges, Causeways and Culverts North</b>	
Slaughterhouse Creek Bridge	
SR3 Elcombe Road	15 Sets of Culverts (incl. of Construction)
<b>Bridges, Causeways and Culverts South</b>	
MR133 Killarney; Hell Hole Creek Rocky Creek ('The Oaks' & 'Wahroonga')	Widening of Causeway
SR15 Gulf Creek Road	Install new 600mm pipeline
SR31 Eulorie Road	Replace 475mm pipes
SR100 Kelly's Access Road	Construct new causeway
<b>Town Infrastructure North</b>	
Warialda Town Footpaths; Plunkett Street Stephen Street Holden Street Geddes Street	Total of 100mtrs
<b>Town Infrastructure South</b>	
Ridley Street, Bingara	200m Kerb & Guttering
Town Street Footpaths	60m
Tourandi Lodge, Bingara	Construct and Seal Car Park

### Emergency Services

Council continued its extensive support of the local emergency services through both direct financial and in-kind contributions. Several new plant items were purchased including two Cat 7 Tankers. The previously completed draft Disaster Management Plan was fully completed and implemented. The Emergency Risk Management Plan was also implemented and a review begun throughout the year. Emergency exercise training was conducted during the year and proved to be beneficial for those Emergency Personnel involved.





### *Specific Projects continued*

#### Killarney Gap Road

Gwydir Shire Council in conjunction with Narrabri Shire Council made an application to source funding from Federal and State Governments to upgrade the Coonamble to Bingara Road. As a result, Auslink and Roads to Recovery funding was approved. Construction involved a detailed design process enabling the road to be re-aligned in particular circumstances and multiple drainage structures being installed, renewed and/or improved. In all, there were 5 causeways renewed, 4 pipe culverts renewed, 5 new pipe culverts installed and 3 new box cell culverts installed.

Council had vast resources allocated to this project with up to three full construction and concrete Council work crews on site at the same time. Council employees have worked tirelessly to achieve this remarkable outcome. Praise needs to be given to the Council crews for re-aligning and constructing such a considerable length of Regional Road in the speedy and professional manner in which they conducted themselves. The road was officially opened on 27th August 2009.

#### Argyle

This Project involved the reconstruction of a 3km section of MR63 between Warialda Rail and the Gwydir Highway intersection. The construction has been on the drawing board for the past 14 years and eventually funding was made available by the Road and Traffic Authority (RTA) to carry out the work in the 2008/2009 financial year. This narrow misshapen section of road has now become a well wide shaped safer portion of road. Work was carried out by Council Staff. The project showed the professional capability of the Council's road construction crew to provide a quality product within a limited time period.

### *Specific Projects continued*

#### Emergency Fire Water Tanks for the RFS

Emergency Fire Water Tanks were delivered to Coolatai after the RFS identified a lack of emergency water supplies at Coolatai Village. Council applied for funding under the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) for an amount of \$10,500 to provide a 22,500 litre concrete water tank equipped with automatic filling devices.

Council was successful in gaining this funding and we were able to not only install an Emergency water supply tank for the Coolatai Village but also supply a second 22,500 litre tank to replace the existing corrugated iron tank which supplies water to the Sportsground area of Coolatai. This water is also available in case of a fire emergency.

An extra automatic switching device was fitted on the electric pump on the bore and a quick fill pump installed beside the main road. All the base work for the tanks to sit on and the water connections were carried out by Council staff with assistance from local electrical companies.



#### 40km High Pedestrian Activity Zone

Warialda Central Business District (CBD) became a 40 kilometres per hour zone in early 2009 with widespread construction works being undertaken throughout the Warialda CBD. These works included renewing water mains, street resurfacing, street stencilling and installation of traffic calming devices. Council crews that worked on this high public profile project have excelled in the means in which they have completed this project and need to be commended.

### *Specific Projects continued*

#### Macintyre Road

Gwydir Shire Council has been striving towards sealing its entire Regional Road network.

This goal was achieved with the completion of the Macintyre Road project.

#### Warialda Showground & Recreation Ground Entrance

Warialda Showground and Recreation Ground has been given a new look and improved access. This access has been the first stage and an integral part of the proposed expansion of the Warialda caravan park allowing more public projects to follow on, such as the erection of new showground entrance gates and the construction of the Centenary of Rugby League Monument recognising Warialda's great significance in the history of Australian Rugby League.

#### RTA Software

Council identified a need for a more regulated inspection and recording process system for the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC).

It was found that many Councils were using the efficient and



### *Specific Projects continued*

productive program REFLECT WITH INSIGHT (RWI) so this was purchased with minimum cost to Council.

Reflect with Insight (RWI) is a comprehensive Inspection and Maintenance Management Software System. It is a feature rich software product that can be used for the planning, recording and analysis of any group of maintenance activities for any class of asset. It provides Complaint registration, Inspection creation, Defect and Accomplishment recording, Budgeting, Workload planning, and Costing for all of Council's routine maintenance. Council staff received on site training of the product which to date has become a valuable asset to Council.

#### Elcombe Road

Elcombe Road has been transformed with the final section of gravel being reconstructed and sealed. Numerous causeways have been upgraded and replaced allowing this once secluded local road to accommodate the vast increase in commercial and tourist vehicles safely and without delays. A number of Council resources and diverse expertise have been utilised in the undertaking of the many challenges involved in the successful completion of the construction.

#### Self Help Program

Many rural residents have taken advantage of Council's Self Help Program allowing works to be undertaken that would not normally be done. Residents provide some form of resource to the projects whether it is a grader, haulage trucks, roller and/or a gravel source. Council has a great appreciation for the assistance residents provide through time and resources to accomplish these projects and look forward to continuing such a worthwhile partnership.





## Town Services

### Water Supply Systems

Gwydir Shire Council supplies water to the communities of Bingara, Warialda, Gravesend and North Star. During the year regular operational maintenance of the water supplies was carried out.

Unplanned maintenance consisted of repairs to one hundred and fifty (150) service lines of which twenty nine (29) were renewed from the main to the meter. Thirty seven (37) water main breaks also occurred during 2008/2009. These were all repaired in a timely and efficient manner. Several equipment problems were experienced during the year. Bingara's water supply pump station required a large non return valve to be replaced. The chlorine injection system at Bingara also required servicing.

Capital works consisted of the following:

- Installation of seven hundred metres (700m) of a new water main;
- Installation of telemetry monitoring equipment of two bores in Warialda and one bore at Gravesend;
- Replacement of 29 service lines;
- Installation of 12 new water connections.

Council participated in Stage One Local Government Shires Association (LGSA) Water Loss Management Program where nightly flows in Bingara and Warialda water supply were measured to identify system losses. These flows indicated water losses of around 10ML/year in Bingara and 25ML/year in Warialda. Stage Two of the Program focuses on locating and repairing the leaks. This will be carried out during 2009/10.

Council continued with its program to better account for water use by metering all Council's parks and gardens.

### Sewerage Service

Council supplies sewerage services to the towns of Bingara and Warialda. During the year operational maintenance of the sewerage systems was carried out.

Unplanned maintenance consisted of attending to seventy two (72) sewerage blockages throughout the year. All were attended to in a timely and efficient manner. Warialda Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) recycled 28ML of treated effluent to irrigate the Warialda Golf Course.

### Bingara Water Supply Augmentation

On 26th November 2009 Council's Mayor, Deputy Mayor and General Manager met with the Minister for Water, NSW.

Following this meeting, on 19th December, 2009 approval was given by the Minister to call for tenders for the design and construction of a water treatment plant at Bingara. Financial assistance at a rate of 67% of the tender price of a water treatment plant for Bingara will be provided through the NSW Government's \$1.1 billion Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program.

Since then Council has completed a Review of Environmental Factors, noise survey, geotechnical investigation and detail land survey for Bingara water augmentation. Tender documents have been prepared by NSW Department of Commerce and Tenders for Augmentation were called 12th July 2009.

The Bingara Water Augmentation project estimated cost is \$4,550,000. The State Government will fund sixty seven percent (67%) of the project and the balance of thirty three percent (33%) is to be financed through loans raised by the Council.

Capital works for sewerage services during the reporting period included:

- Relining of 1630m of sewerage main;
- Installation of holding tank and submersible pumps at Warialda Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP);
- Installation of telemetry monitoring of STP effluent pumps;
- Purchase of backup generators for Warialda STP and sewerage pump station No 2;
- Construction of a storage shed at Bingara STP.





### Park Improvements

- Replacement of the treated pine fence at Cunningham Park, Bingara;
- Replacement of stock fence between Cunningham Park and Halls Creek, Bingara;
- Installation of pipe rails fence at Apex Park, Warialda;
- Installation of a covered shelter over an existing table at Bicentennial Park, Bingara;
- Installation of a concrete slab and table at All Nations Hill, Bingara;
- Installation of electric barbecue and shelter extension including concrete floor at Moffat Park, Gravesend; and
- Installation of irrigation system at Hospital Park, Warialda.

### Playgrounds

Gwydir Shire has a total of eight public playgrounds located at the following locations:

- CWA Park, Cunningham Street, Bingara;
- Cunningham Park, Keera Road, Bingara;
- Apex Park, Gwydir Highway, Warialda;
- Captain Cook Park, Holden Street, Warialda;
- Hospital Park, Long Street, Warialda;
- Moffat Park, Gwydir Highway, Gravesend;
- Upper Horton Park, Cobbadah Street, Upper Horton; and
- Railway Park, Edward Street, North Star;
- Batterham Lookout, Bingara;
- Nancy Coulton Lookout, Warialda;
- Audrey Hill Lookout.

During the year, the parks and reserves were regularly inspected to ensure their suitability for passive and active recreation. Periodic and routine maintenance work was conducted as required. Playgrounds were inspected for non-compliance and equipment replaced where necessary.

An amount of \$15,000 was injected into the Railway Park, North Star with the installation of additional playground equipment, park shelters and tables. Upper Horton Park playground equipment was upgraded in May /June 2009. The \$24,000 project consisted of removing dated non-compliant equipment and replacing it with new equipment. In addition three sets of covered table and chairs were erected.

### Parks

Gwydir Shire Council has two major towns and seven villages throughout the shire. The following parks are located in the following areas:

**Bingara:** CWA Park Cunningham Street, Cunningham Park Keera Road, Bicentennial Park East Street, All Nations Hill Hill Street

**Warialda:** Apex Park Gwydir Highway, Captain Cook Park Holden Street, Hospital Park Long Street, Rotary Park Inverell Road

**Gravesend:** Moffat Park Railway Parade, Anzac Park Railway Parade,

**North Star:** Railway Park Edward Street, Anzac Park David Street,

**Coolatai:** Pioneer Park

### Street Trees

A number of trees were planted in the following locations though out the Shire:

- Killarney Gap Road, Bingara;
- Inverell Road, Bingara;
- Spring Street, Bingara;
- Anzac Park, Gravesend;
- Gwydir Highway, Warialda;
- Captain Cook Park, Warialda.

Council participated in a program called Ro Trees with its sister Council; Willoughby City Council. An area on All Nations Hill, Bingara has been allocated for tree planting. Upper Gwydir Land Care planted the trees on behalf of Willoughby Rotary Club.



### Myall Creek Massacre Memorial Site and facilities

The extremely unique Memorial (which is a place of national significance and is listed as the 79th treasure on the National Heritage List) was maintained throughout the year. Not only are the facilities regularly maintained but the Memorial Walk is regularly inspected and maintained. Council continues to support the Friends of Myall Creek Committee and its concerted efforts to enhance this important area. Such efforts include the concept planning of a Cultural Display Centre.



### Gardens

Council maintains numerous gardens throughout the Shire. It is Council's aim to have the gardens flowering 70% of the year. Improvements this year included:

- The Warialda Town Streetscape project of constructing concrete garden blisters and installing water systems in Hope and Stephen Street;
- The garden on the corner of Maitland and Cunningham Streets (known as Fays Park) corner Bingara a rock gardens and log rail fence was constructed.

### Sportsgrounds and Showgrounds

Council maintains the following grounds:

- Gwydir Oval, Bingara;
- Bingara Showground;
- Recreation Ground and Nicholson Oval, Warialda;

### Swimming Pools

Both Warialda and Bingara Swimming Pools are now leased to private contractors. As a result of the leasing of the Pools they are opened for public use for longer hours and also available for hire for private functions.

### Sportsground Improvements

Construction of cricket nets at Nicholson Oval, including concrete slab, galvanised frame, chain wire mesh and synthetic turf -this project was \$30,000.

Sporting and other recreational facilities were regularly inspected. Periodic and routine maintenance work was carried out as required. Council worked in conjunction with a number of sporting groups to improve the various facilities.

### W.O.W Fitness

W.O.W Fitness held its first biathlon in March 2009 with over 20 participants ranging from primary age to senior. The day finished with a barbecue and presentation and families enjoyed the pool's water slide for the rest of the afternoon. This biathlon was very successful, promoting W.O.W Fitness and in raising funds for new equipment.

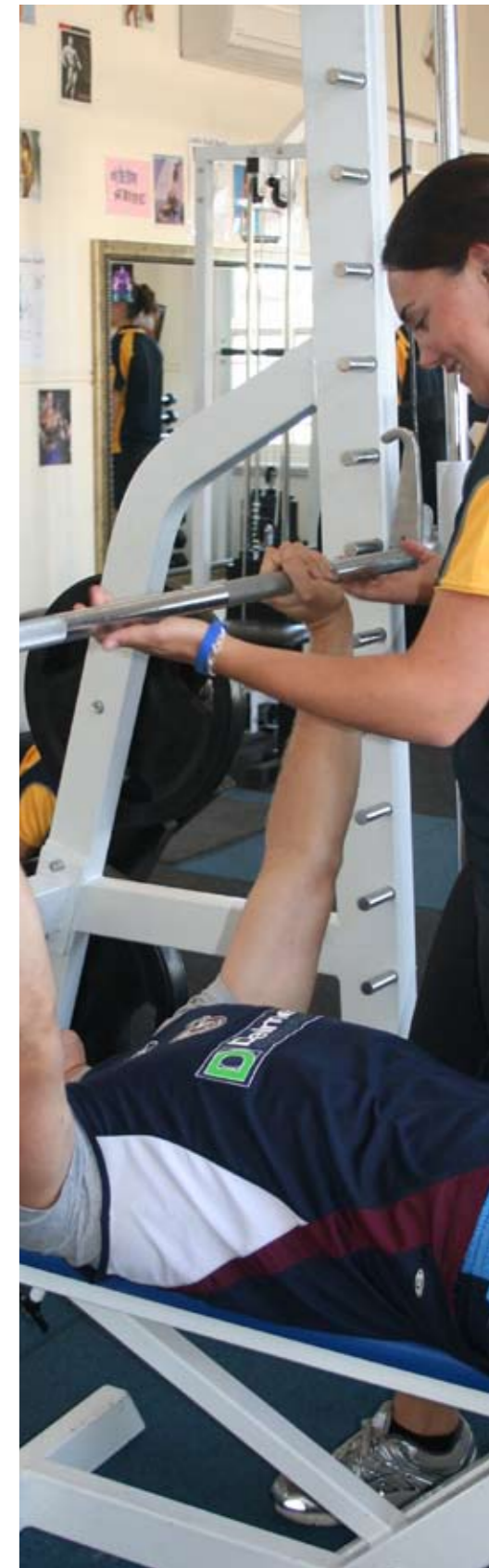
Programs were run specifically targeting special populations group in our community. A boys challenge group was conducted which proved extremely successful, to the extent that even though the course is now completed a high percentage of the boys are now members of the gym and train with other friends.

Warialda High School and Warialda Public School utilise the gym for sport activities.

After receiving some funding the gym and its instructors travelled to North Star to run a health and fitness activity day where students from North Star, Croppa Creek, Tuloona and Yetman School participated in activities outside there normal sports routines.

As always the fitness class is running strong with four Year 12 students and three Year 11 students currently undertaking Certificate III in Fitness.

Successful ongoing programs include Punch fit, Ladies Class, Bootcamp, Circuit, Boxing, Pilates, Yoga, Thai Chi, Resistance Training and Aqua.



Warialda and Bingara libraries also provide the following services:-

- 'Summer reading club' - for children
- Story time for toddlers and Pre School Bingara
- Christmas storytelling and activity session with preschool children
- Bulk loans provided for Mental Health Forums as required
- 'Like authors initiative'
- National simultaneous story time 27/5 @11 am
- State Library of NSW cookbooks
- Winter in the Library, Holiday fun
- Playgroups visit
- August Local Government Week

## Libraries

This year saw the relocation of the Bingara Library to the Neighbourhood Centre. Council's Local Priority Grant Funding (NSW State Library Funding) covered not only the relocation but the refurbishment of the library including new shelving, fittings, IT wireless network and public access computers, disabled access, signage, specialist children's resources and audio visual equipment. This project was also partly funded by a Library Development Grant - Country Libraries Fund 'Bingara Library - A Neighbourhood Service for Young & Old'. Since the relocation the library staff have offered new and improved services including -

- assistance to students with their homework,
- assistance with Family History (micro reader available for use),
- "My Quiet Book" - (four beautiful books were made and donated by Betty Thomas)
- A 'Kiddies' Corner at the Bingara Show
- Participated and won the Orange Festival for best large float
- Outreach service to aged residents with the cooperation of Touriandi Staff, HACC and Home Services (Bingara)
- School visits (Bingara)
- Neighbourhood Centre and Centrelink related activities
- Noelene Briggs Smith presented an Aboriginal History Collection of weapons and artefacts.



## Environmental Services

A new ablutions block was installed at the Upper Horton Sportsground.

Council with communities held Clean Up Australia Day projects in Bingara, Warialda, Croppa Creek and North Star.

During the year major renovations were undertaken by Council at several community halls. Coolatai Hall was lined insulated and painted. Yallaroi Hall was also lined insulated painted and had a new kitchen installed.

Council staff were trained in asbestos removal and supervision. Staff have since used these skills on the Warialda Tourist Centre project.

A flag pole was erected at Crooble.

At North Star a shade shelter and soft fall area were constructed.

The aged units in Whitfield Place, Bingara and Holden Street, Warialda were renovated with new kitchens being installed.

### Waste Management

Council has continued to operate its eight landfill sites satisfactorily over the last year. However, difficulties have been experienced with the lighting of fires and the unauthorised dumping of asbestos materials.

WorkCover also advised that the pits used at the main landfill sites of Warialda and Bingara needed to be reconstructed to reduce the possibility of injuries due to falls into the pits. In response Council has moved to closing the landfill sites after hours and increasing surveillance to prevent undesirable activities occurring.





This has caused inconvenience to members of the community who do the right thing; this preventative action will need to be intensified further over time.

In addition the design and construction of waste cells at the landfill sites has been altered to accommodate WorkCover and safety requirements. This action will have a flow on effect by reducing the life of the landfill sites and may result in increased wind blown litter around the site areas. Inevitably this imposition will increase Council's costs by necessitating an increase of man power maintaining the facilities and by bringing forward the replacement of the landfill sites.

Council is now the sole provider of kerbside waste pickup service across the entire Shire. This has necessitated the purchase of a new larger and more efficient garbage truck (\$300,000) for this purpose. The existing smaller truck has been maintained as a backup unit for the service.

Council continues to move towards its strategic objectives:

- providing a flexible waste service;
- able to meet community needs; and
- achieving a sixty percent (66%) reduction in waste to landfill.

This year the amount of recyclable material processed has increased by 184 per cent from the preceding year.

During the year, the Council continued to act on reducing waste, maintaining the Shire's existing high quality environment and encouraging sustainable resource use.

To this end, Council has been able to maintain a high tonnage of recyclable material by processing nine hundred and ninety (990) tonnes of materials over the reporting period. This has been achieved

by community support for the domestic fortnightly kerb side 240 litre recycling service to Bingara, Warialda, Gravesend and North Star.

Skip bins are utilised at the eight landfill sites for use by the rural community for the disposal of recyclable materials.

### Environment

Council has continued to work in partnership with the Border Rivers Gwydir Catchment Management Authority, the Upper Gwydir Landcare Association and the Warialda Rivercare Committee to restore and rehabilitate degraded sections of Crown Land along the waterway within the Shire. Council also negotiated a salinity grant through the Catchment Management Authority which is being utilised to assist property owners to repair and upgrade their on-site sewage management systems and reduce adverse impact on the environment.



Council is on the Steering Committee of the Halls Creek Regeneration Project which is providing \$111,000 of funding to improve and rehabilitate the environmental sustainability of Halls Creek.

Stabilisation works at the mouth of Halls Creek will commence in the 2009/2010 period as well as the Gwydir River frontage beautification project.

## Human Resources (HR)

Council is committed to having a productive, multi-skilled workforce with staff enjoying satisfying careers and receiving realistic training and development opportunities.

This ongoing commitment provides for the delivery of quality services to Council's customers.

A summary of training activities conducted during 2008/9 is as follows:

### Trade Apprenticeships

- Certificate III in Automotive Mechanical - Heavy Vehicle Road Transport - 1 Staff Member (Third year in 2009)
- Certificate III in General Construction - 1 Staff Member (Third Year in 2009)
- Certificate III in Automotive Mechanical - Heavy Vehicle Road Transport - 1 Staff Member (First year in 2009)
- Certificate III in Horticulture - 1 Staff Member (First Year in 2009)

### Existing Worker / New Entrant Traineeships

- Certificate III in Civil Construction - 9 Staff Members to complete by May 2010
- Certificate IV in IT - 1 Staff Member to complete in July 2010
- Certificate IV in Digital Media - 1 Staff Member to complete by December 2009
- Certificate III in IT - 1 Staff Member



### School-Based Apprenticeships / Traineeships

- Certificate III in Construction - 1 Staff Member (SBA) - (Completion in Dec 2012)
- Certificate II in Business - 1 Staff Member (SBT) - (Completion in June 2009) - This Staff Member was named as New England Vocational Student of the Year. She has, since July 2009 been offered full-time employment in Tamworth and has accepted this offer.
- Certificate II in Horticulture - 1 Staff Member (SBT) - (Completion in December 2009)
- Certificate II in Horticulture - 1 Staff Member (SBT) - (Completion in April 2011)
- Certificate III in Children's Services - 1 Staff Member (SBT 2009) - Tharawonga Pre-School

### Traffic Control

- Gwydir Shire Council conducted the following training in:
- Design and Inspect Traffic Control Plans (Orange) - Three participants in Oct 2008
- Apply Traffic Control Plans (Yellow) - 31 participants in February 2009
- Select and Modify Traffic Control Plans (Red) - Seven participants in July 2009
- Traffic Control Using Stop/Slow Bats - Eighteen participants

### Senior First Aid

- Gwydir Shire Council conducted the following training during 2008/9
- Sixty-six participants - Provided by Graham Moxey and Bingara Community College (NSW RLSS)

### Governance, Economic Development and Tourism

- InDesign computer training - 3 participants
- PhotoShop - 3 participants
- Dream Weaver / Web Design - 2 participants
- TRIM Record keeping - 2 participants
- Bachelor of Business degree - 1 Staff Member (USQ)
- Bachelor of Business degree - 1 Staff Member studying at Southern Cross University

### Operations

- Dangerous Goods Driver's licence - two employees
- Conversion of Workcover machinery tickets to photo licences - continuing process
- Forklift Licences - Six employees gained their forklift licences during 2008/9
- Excavator licences - Two employees gained their excavator licence during 2009/9
- Back Hoe / Loader Licence - One employee





### Engineering

Bachelor of Civil Engineering – 1 Staff Member (Cadet Engineer) is studying at UNE  
 Bachelor of Civil Engineering – 1 Staff Member is studying at USQ  
 Civilcad training –1 Staff Member  
 Diploma in Spatial Information Services – GIS Mapping –1 Staff Member, TAFE Riverina

### Fitness Training for Gym Instructors

1 Staff Member has recently completed Certificate III and Certificate IV in Fitness (Personal Trainer)

### Environment and Health

Identification and removal of Asbestos Products – all of our Health and Environment and Building team and all of our Water and Sewerage and Town Services team  
 Supervision of Removal of asbestos products – all of our Health and Environment and Building team and all of our Water and Sewerage and Town Services team  
 Operation of Landfill Sites – 1 Staff Member  
 Certificate III in Asset Management (Landfill) –1 Staff Member

### Children's Services

Diploma of Children's Services – 2 Staff Members are studying this course through TAFE New England Armidale Campus.  
 Certificate III in Children's Services –1 Staff Member at Tharawonga Mobile Resource Unit is studying this course through TAFE New England Inverell Campus.

### Human Resources

Mental Health First Aid – Members of the HR team completed this training  
 Accidental / Incidental Counselling – Members of the HR team completed this training  
 OO-Soft Job Evaluation Software – all of the HR team, Managers and Supervisors completed this training  
 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – Fifteen employees of Council and community members will complete this course during September 2009

### Water, Sewerage and Town Services

Associate Degree in Civil Engineering – 1 Staff Member is studying for a at USQ  
 Smartrain Chemical Application – four employees  
 Certificate IV in Horticulture – TAFE Tamworth – 1 Staff Member  
 Certificate III in Water Operations – TAFE Western Institute – 1 Staff Member – will commence studies in latter half of 2009 after completing his Certificate III in Civil Construction.

### Other Achievements

- Pre-employment medicals were conducted for all new staff;
- Hepatitis vaccines and regular testing of at-risk staff in the water and sewerage and weeds areas were conducted throughout the year;
- The Health and Well-Being program continued throughout the year. This involved subsidisation of membership to WOW Fitness Gymnasium;
- Council conducted a Mens Health "Pit Stop Program" at the Warialda Depot. Approximately 70 staff attended on the day;
- Mental Health First Aid courses were held in Bingara and Warialda and were well attended by staff. Three courses were held over the reporting period;
- Position Descriptions have been reviewed for all positions at Council; it is now scheduled that this will occur annually and before recruitment;
- All positions at Council have undertaken job evaluation process.

Council continues to build on the principles of Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), encouraging ethical behaviour and increasing awareness among its employees of both the Code of Conduct and public duty principles.

EEO principles are integrated throughout the procedures and practices of the whole organisation.





## Risk Management

Established an Events Management Plan as part of a sub committee of the Northern Inland Risk Group;  
This Events Management Plan is now being rolled out to all NSW member councils of StateWide.

### Records

- TRIM was set up to be used by all office staff to enter their own records
- End User Training was undertaken for all applicable staff
- Extensive security measures have been installed to ensure the integrity of the records system
- Administrator training was undertaken for staff responsible for records
- The bulk of council incoming records are recorded in electronic form
- Extensive appraisal, destruction and archiving of records were undertaken. All records in the manual records system were appraised up to December 2008

## Tourism

### Warialda Tourist Centre and Logo

This period saw considerable planning and development of the site for the Warialda Tourist Centre. Building works started in July 2009 with construction to be completed by the end of November 2009. The Tourist Centre has already proven to be an attraction in itself with the sandstone look construction and contrasting colourbond panelling already capturing the interest of travellers and the community.

The building is aesthetically designed to entice visitors to stop in Warialda. This will assist to capture travellers, who in the past, have just driven along the Gwydir Highway and through the town without stopping. When complete the Tourist Centre will not only house a number of local collections, including the memorabilia of

the Warialda RSL Sub-Branch, and tourist information displays but will be available to the community for meetings. This will ensure that the Centre is utilised functionally by the community as well as the travelling public. The Warialda RSL Sub-Branch made a significant financial contribution towards this project. The focus of the Centre will not only be to capture tourists; but, through the internal marketing and promotion profiling of what Warialda has to offer, encourage those tourists to stay longer, and experience the whole of the Shire area.

### Websites

Warialda now has a modern and efficient interactive, informative website. This website also includes community pages, special interest pages, heritage and historical information for Warialda and surrounding areas. The Warialda website address is [www.warialdansw.com.au](http://www.warialdansw.com.au). The website has been promoted throughout the Council area and at all promotional events. The website is experiencing a large volume of 'hits' and is being used externally to obtain information of the area.



Promotion and marketing will be undertaken through consultation with the Warialda Chamber of Commerce, Warialda Tourism Committee and local businesses.

A Warialda Logo has been developed through consultation with the community committee.



The screenshot shows the Warialda website interface. At the top, it says "WARIALDA Home of the Tumbledown Gums" with a "Place of Wild Honey" banner. Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: "About", "Accommodation", "Attractions", "Warialda History", "Warialda Businesses", "Events Calendar", and "Contact". There are also "external links" for "Gwydir Shire Council". A "Warialda Weather" section is visible with a "Click here" button. A "Learn more about Warialda" section features a map of the area and a "Where are we?" section with a map showing Warialda's location relative to Balfour Peak, Grag, and Kelowna. The footer includes "Powered by Google" and "MapData Sciences Pty Ltd, PSMA - Terms of Use".

The reporting period saw the succession of Gwydir Country with *Gwydir Good Life*. This change was due to a staff member writing a song and gifting the song to the Council to promote the area. Television advertising was undertaken to launch the *Gwydir Good Life* brand. This advertising included a series of business advertisements from Warialda and Bingara and a separate tourism advertisement for the *Gwydir Good Life*. The song was the theme throughout all of the advertisements.

The website includes information on accommodation, business, events, weather and history. Since its launch it has been expanded to include dedicated pages for community not-for-profit organisations. Council staff have worked closely with such groups widening their exposure through the use of the internet.

The website gives Warialda and, all those in the community who wish to participate, an international presence. Bingara website is continually updated and has proven to be a valuable asset to not only residents but visitors and potential visitors.

### Gwydir Good Life

Advertising through television not only ensured that all within the viewing area were aware of the Gwydir Good Life but also proved very effective in increasing the awareness of local residents of the Gwydir Good Life brand. Both Bingara and Warialda are now accredited RV Friendly towns.



### Town Signage

Town signage has been designed and public consultation undertaken, for Warialda, Upper Horton and Gravesend Communities.

These signs are designed to be constructed from sandstone look timbercrete blocks and will feature metal cut outs that will be significant to the particular area it will be erected.

Council staff assisted the Warialda Chamber of Commerce to successfully apply for funding for a contribution towards the construction of the Warialda town signs.

Discussions are now being held with RTA to negotiate their placement.

### Day Tours

A series of Day Tours have been developed and undertaken to the attractions in the Warialda, Bingara and the wider Gwydir area. These tours have been developed and promotional material produced and forwarded to bus companies and community groups within a reasonable distance of including into Queensland.

A number of these tours have already been conducted in Warialda. A 'Warialda Walking Tour' has been developed. This tour was developed in conjunction with some community volunteers and council staff.

Volunteers are armed with information on the sites within the town and are able to take interested persons on a walk around the town. Those who have attended these walking tours to date have enjoyed them immensely.





## Events and Promotion

**Centenary of Rugby League Celebrations – Warialda**  
**Civic Reception:** Saturday 11th October - Warialda Town Hall. A fabulous night in recognition of the outstanding contribution Warialda has made to the National Rugby League as part of the Centenary of Rugby League Celebrations. Live entertainment was provided by Jamie Fleggerbein and The Wolverines. The feature of the night was the naming of the Warialda Team of the Century. The night was compered by Mr Grant Goldman and guest speakers were Mr Noel Kelly and Mr Noel Cleal.

**Legends Park - Warialda**  
**Official Opening:** Unveiling of Rugby League monument. A sculpture was donated by Mr Kerry Canon and Cr Peter Caskey volunteered his time and expertise by constructing the monument and mounted the sculpture. The Legends Park is record of Warialda's football history for all to see – a tribute to players both past and present.

**Motorhome Rally – Bingara**  
**Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia - 23rd National Rally:** 13th to 19th October - Bingara Showground. The rally was the biggest event Bingara has ever hosted with over 1000 motorhomes and 50 exhibitors attending the week long event. Catering: Council coordinated local community groups to join forces and cater for the Rally. This effort raised an amount of \$5000 which went towards the construction of a Helipad at the Bingara Multi Purpose Service.

**A Taste of Bingara:** Tuesday 14th October included finger food and refreshments, then the Official Opening by Mr George Barton, Olympic Skeet Shooter followed by a Gwydir Showcase - a fabulous smorgasbord of entertainment from around our beautiful Gwydir;  
**Local Government Forum:** Thursday 16th October from 10am. Gwydir Shire invited surrounding councils to Bingara for morning tea and a detailed tour of the rally site.

**Open Day:** Saturday 18th - 10am to 4pm (the only day the Rally site was open to the public). Market stalls, entertainment, refreshments, motorhomes for sale and joy flights. **Tourism Promotion and Day Trips:** Council staff coordinated a number of day tours around the Gwydir Shire and provided motorhomers with an onsite tourism information stand.

- Warialda Events**
- Warialda Off Road 200 – state championships Hunter Rivmasta OffRoad 200 NSW Championship Round 5 and the Premier Long Course Series Round 3
  - Rhythm on the Reedy & Warialda Christmas Carnival
  - Warialda Honey Festival
  - Australia Day Celebrations
  - Pitstop Program – Men's Health Check – Warialda employees and at Motorhome
  - Warialda Races
  - Warialda Show
  - Business Breakfast
  - Warialda Agricultural Industrial Trade Exhibition (WAITE)
  - Warialda Medical Centre opening
  - McMaster Research Station Open Day
  - Bushfire Appeal Concert

- Gravesend Events**
- Rodeo

- Bingara Events**
- Relay for Life
  - Bingara Races
  - Veterans Golf Week September
  - Bingara Steer Wrestling Classic
  - Matt Hollywood/ Councillor Farewell
  - Australia Day Celebrations and Gwydol
  - Bingara Show
  - Orange Picking Ceremony
  - Bingara Orange Festival
  - Regenerative Energy Forum
  - North West Film Festival
  - Birds Australia Northern NSW Branch Field Trip 19,20,21,22/9
  - Nasho's Ex Serviceman's Reunion
  - Easterfish
  - Bushfire Appeal Concert

- North Star Events**
- Centenary of Wheat Celebrations
  - North Star Water Treatment Plant

- Upper Horton Events**
- New Year Rodeo and Campdraft
  - Pony Express
  - Sports Ground Trust - Department of Lands Crown Reserve Trust Award – Semi Finalist (top 10 out of 400 nominations)





## The ROXY

The Roxy had a busy year with a vast number of events being held which attracted large numbers. The numerous benefits that these events bring to the town are both tangible and intangible. Easily measured is the economic impact that The Roxy has on local businesses with the increase of trade experienced as a result of the events being held. Of the 10,704 people who attended a range of events held at The Roxy during this reporting period; a large number travelled from outside the Gwydir Shire. A regional breakdown of attendance figures indicate that attendees are increasingly coming from outside the immediate vicinity. Using the Tourism Research Australia and Regional Tourism NSW economic data it is estimated that the Roxy has injected in excess of \$200,000 into the Bingara economy over the reporting period.

Throughout the year, The Roxy has received considerable regional press coverage across a range of mediums, including print media, radio, and television and on film. The Roxy featured in the major Australian motion picture "Charlie and Boots" starring Paul Hogan and Shane Jacobson. This motion picture was released in September 2009.

EVENT	NO. HELD	ATTENDANCE
Live Productions	12	3332
Film Screenings	34	1568
Film Festivals	2	1114
Film Shoots	1	95
Community Events and meetings	6	542
Seminars/Presentations/Forums	9	471
External User's Meetings	38	462
Public Meetings	4	166
Group Tours	14	424
Weddings	2	190
Gwydir Shire Council events	8	373
Gwydir Learning Region events	5	207
Bingara Central School Events	3	1128
NWTC workshops, meetings	8	256
<b>TOTAL ATTENDANCE ROXY EVENTS</b>		<b>10328</b>
<b>ROXY TOUR WITH TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICER</b>		<b>376</b>
<b>TOTAL ROXY ATTENDANCE</b>		<b>10704</b>

## Aged Services

BINGARA HACC and Warialda/ Delungra HACC MSO continues to provide services with:

- Meals on Wheels
- Local transport - appointments, shopping, social activities
- Inter town transport - for specialist/medical/appointments to Inverell, Warialda, Barraba, Tamworth, Armidale and Moree
- Centre Based Day Care - local and inter town excursions
- Monthly Access Bus - Tamworth and Inverell (alternate trips)
- Social support
- Volunteer Information and Recognition days
- Organised Day Trips and Activity Days

HACC Services have over 60 Volunteers.

### Naroo Age Care Facility

After all the upheaval of the extension, this year has seen all residents settle well into the new surroundings. The hostel now has the ability to accommodate 21 residents; one of these is a respite arrangement which should be utilised for the majority of the year.

An activity officer provides a variety of activities during the week, weekend activities are ones that can be prearranged and on some occasions conducted by volunteers. One resident is a keen gardener and proudly presents the kitchen staff with a variety of produce. Another part of the regular activity program is acknowledging birthdays and anniversaries. We have a couple who have just celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary, what a mile stone!

It was a real privilege to have both Mark Coulton and John Coulton involved in the Open Day which celebrated the official opening of the new wing and the contribution that the community have made to this facility in the past eighteen months. With contributions to the building and to refurbishing we have received close to \$100,000.00 that is a fantastic effort for a small community.

Council also has rental accommodation available for the aged and frail with six, one bedroom units at Whitfield Place, Bingara and thirteen, one bedroom units in Holden Street, Warialda.





## Bingara Medical Centre

### Achievements

- Gwydir Business Awards winner 2008
- Dr Lisa Brown gained her fellowship with Royal Australian College of General Practice
- Jodie Cooper obtained Cert IV in Practice Management
- Jodie Cooper completed Cert III in Pathology Unit - Perform Electrocardiography
- Ann-Maree Anderson obtained Diploma of Practice Management
- Maria Coote completed course-Recognise and respond to domestic and family violence (Part of Training Package CHC02 Community Services)

## Social Services

The Social Services department is responsible for the smooth running of our youth service, the early intervention family service, the toy libraries, preschools, vacation care, community housing and Social and Cultural planning. The reporting requirements for our funding bodies are complex and time consuming and require us to provide a high quality service in this area.

The Council continues to support the following programs to develop and promote services that provide for the needs of children, young people and families:

### Bingara Preschool

Bingara preschool is a community based preschool, managed by the Gwydir Shire Council. We cater for twenty children each day between the ages of two and six years. We provide a dynamic and individualised preschool program for each child and support learning and development through play, exploration and discovery, in a safe,

stimulating and supportive environment. We implement a transition to school program in the final term of each year in close collaboration with Bingara Central School to ensure a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten. We value and celebrate the various skills, understandings and experiences each individual brings to the preschool environment and encourage parents and community members to come in and share their own skills and interests with the children and staff through our volunteer program.

- 37 children attending over four days filling 65 positions;
- Through improved administration and reporting processes Bingara Preschool has attracted extra funding so that it is no longer subsidised so heavily by council.
- A joint project to construct a new shade shelter, softfall area and sandpit was undertaken by Council and the Bingara Preschool Fundraising Committee.

### Tharawonga Mobile Children's Resource Unit

The Tharawonga Mobile Preschool provides the opportunity for people living in remote and outlying areas to allow their children to attend a Preschool. The Mobile Preschool services the Crooble,

### Gwydir Toy Library

Our libraries offer a large range of high quality toys, equipment and resources for children 0-7. We have over 900 toys or resources on offer and we cater for all children's needs and abilities. Many people are pleasantly surprised with the range, quality and cleanliness of the toys. There are 50 members at Bingara Toy Library and 38 members at Warialda Toy Library. The Toy Library was represented at all major events in the Shire as well as several Health and Well Being Forums throughout the year. The Library attracted \$3,000.00 funding from FRRR to purchase new toys.





North Star, Yetman, Yallaroi and Tulloona areas. Tharawonga mobile resource unit aims to provide a non-profit mobile resource unit of the highest standard for the service of individuals, families and communities so that each participant or participating body gains benefit from the program appropriate to their stage of development, with the emphasis on early childhood development. It also aims to enable all children to gain assistance with their development through contact with others in a suitable environment, provide a social meeting point for parents in an environment which will stimulate discussion of ideas leading to community self-help, make the resources of the organization available to individuals or families who request guidance, to assist the community, families and individuals to access both local and non-local services, such as Community Health, Far West and Bush Children's organisations. Preschool sessions include a variety of educational experiences through play. Programming is done to suit the individual needs of the children, covering pre-maths, science, literacy, creative play, cognitive skills development and social development in preparation for school.

- 67 children attending preschool and playgroups at 5 different venues;
- The Art Exhibition at Yallaroi Hall in August was an opportunity to display the children's work in a friendly and sociable environment and allowed the fund raising Committee to raise over \$3000.00 in one evening. This was also an opportunity for Council to show case the fantastic work that was done of the Yallaroi Hall to make it a venue for the entire community to use and be proud of.

### Youth Services

The youth service covers Gwydir Shire as an advocacy and referral service. This service allows clients to access many forms of counselling including health and well being, careers, mental health and relationships. The Gwydir youth service offers personal and practical assistance and skills development in areas such as communication, information technology and goal setting. The service also provides a Youth Week program for the Shire and runs a Youth Centre from Bingara. There have been several special events through the year

and the service ran classes in resume and Business letter writing. Young people at risk were invited to attend Youth in Search camps. The annual student exchange with Willoughby council was held to give our young people the opportunity to see what life is like in the city and to host students from Willoughby to give them a country experience. While working closely with the Roxy Manager, Bingara Community College, Schools in our Shire and other departments within Council we have provided a balanced and exciting service for the young people of our Shire.

- Youth Centre - there were over 1500 points of contact with young people during the reporting period at the centre
- Inverell Community Health - adolescent counseling service
- Reconnect - mediation for families and adolescents
- \$5500 grant received for the Living Healthy in the Gwydir project This project included promotions at community festivals/events and the publication and launch of a cookbook
- Youth Week Activities across the Shire which over 100 young people enjoyed
- Youth In Search" Camps for young people
- Save- A- Mate, first aid and drug and alcohol education Programs
- Gwydir Community Drug Action Team - \$6,000 in funding was gained to run programs around drug and alcohol education

### Vacation Care program

Vacation Care is available to children aged 5 -12 years of age. The Council with partial funding from the NSW Department of Community Services offers this service to assist families with childcare needs and to offer stimulating activities to our local children during holiday periods. This service covers Bingara, Warialda and Gravesend and is offered twice a year for a period of one week in each town. Over 250 children have attended vacation care programs this year at Bingara, Warialda and Gravesend



## Community Housing (Warialda)

There are three low income houses available in Warialda which are let out to suitable tenants. These tenants go through an interview process by which it is determined who is in greatest need by a grid set out by the Department of Housing. These tenants are given a three month trial period and offered different levels of support depending on their situation.

- We have had the same tenants in all three houses for the past 12 months.

- Special events for young people across the Shire
- Willoughby student exchange
- Bingara Youth Centre open five days per week
- Nutrition and cooking classes for young people and their families
- Continued support of junior sporting bodies and development of activities via free access to Council venues
- Counseling support to Schools
- July school holidays - art and craft workshops - Bingara and Warialda
- Lions donation of free drug and alcohol resources for young people and families
- New outdoor cinema equipment
- Nutrition and cooking classes for young people and their families

## Bingara Neighbourhood Centre

The Neighbourhood Centre offers advocacy & referral, meeting rooms, free internet access, access to visiting services, selected programs and community meeting space, photocopying, printing, and fax services are available. There have been four courses run in the past twelve months through partnerships between the Neighbourhood Centre, Bingara Community College and Bingara Central School.



Cert 111 in Business, Life Experience Counts, OH&S Green Card  
Cert 1 in IT. There has been 480 points of service since January 2009 with the computers at the Neighbourhood Centre enabling residents and visitors to stay in touch with the world of information technology. There have also been over 100 requests for information regarding services in our Shire or how to access visiting services.

- Salvation Army Welfare Program is now run through the Neighbourhood Centre
- Free public access internet facilities

## Early Intervention Family Worker

The role of the Early Intervention Family Worker is to support families with children 0-5 years of age. The service offers parenting information and assistance with developing good nutrition and living skills. The Early Intervention Family Worker helps families with referral to appropriate services and access to counselling and crisis support. The Early Intervention Family Worker also runs playgroups in Bingara, Warialda and Gravesend. Distribution of Gwydir Shire Commemorative Birth Certificates to families along with a parent bag featuring services relevant to families within the Gwydir Shire and a special fridge magnet containing important numbers for families were also distributed through this service.

- Gwydir Shire Early Intervention Family Service - 64 families in Gwydir Shire access this service with 91 children. There were 938 points of contact with families and 1165 points of contact with children aged 0 -5 years.
- 24 workshops were run to disseminate information for families of children in this age group including 123 Magic and Sue Dengate's FAILSAFE program and the PPP parenting program.
- 573 families attended playgroups with 767 children attending.
- PPP parenting program - 3 staff trained
- Child restraint fitting capability - staff trained
- 20 Gwydir Shire Birth Certificates and gift packages were presented to 'new residents' during the year
- Early Intervention Family Worker relocated to Toy Library





## Governance

Assistance was made available to the elected Councillors including in-house induction training, Solutions training and Department of Local Government (DLG) induction training. Additional support during the year was provided through mediation, mentoring and DLG training. Council assisted the Candidates of the September 2008 Local Government Elections and July 2009 by-election through training and by providing information to them as requested.

Improved governance procedures and the implementation of the findings of the Department of Local Government Better Practices and Review Report proved a greater challenge than first anticipated. Council's staff are resource and time poor. Despite these factors Managers have made great progress in enacting the Department's recommendations, especially in the Finance and Records areas but a lot of work still needs to be undertaken.

To ensure that this work continues Council has required a quarterly review and report to be submitted to its Community Strategy and Planning Committee Meetings. Council continues to consult with and listen to the community. Meetings were held in March at eleven venues throughout the Shire area.

Council supports and attends the business breakfasts organised by the New England Credit Union. In addition, Council and the Warialda Chamber of Commerce jointly hosted a business breakfast in December 2008. The cost to attend the breakfast was an 'idea'. The ideas collated were drafted into a five year progress plan for the Warialda community. This plan attracted funding for the Warialda Chamber of Commerce. In addition, the ideas were integrated into Council's strategic objectives.

A new Council website was launched during the reporting period. The website is much more aesthetically pleasing, interactive and user friendly than its predecessor. The existing Council website will be phased out over the coming year. Council has been active and

collated over 200 email addresses. The first Council newsletter was not only posted to residents but emailed to those on the email list. Council has also purchased software and is planning to undertake online surveys in due course.

Dealing with complaints and requests is an ongoing issue and process. Community complaints received have been attended to by Council staff. However some complaints have not been dealt with within a reasonable time frame. These delays have been highlighted at Senior Staff Meetings when each Manager is issued with a list of outstanding requests. This process has dramatically reduced the number of long outstanding requests. During 2009 Council received 617 requests. As at 11th December only 23 were outstanding. Of these 14 were receipted in the last two weeks and the remaining nine are being dealt with by staff in consultation with the resident.

The current Customer Service Request system is to be replaced and a new system activated during January 2010. A corporate calendar was established and maintained during the year. Councillors are now required to declare any gifts received at every Council and Committee meeting. This process is undertaken in an effort to improve their awareness as to their duty to declare such gifts and to improve record keeping practices.

External Committees of Council are:

- Local Government Border River Project
- Joint Weight of Loads Committee
- Fossickers' Way Promotion Committee
- Traffic Committee
- Regional Tourism Committee
- Warialda Chamber of Commerce
- Bingara and District VISION 20/20
- Bingara Historical Society
- Gravesend Historical Society
- Bush Fire Liaison (Service Level Agreement) Committee
- Border Regional Organisations of Councils
- Copeton Dam Trust
- Arts North West
- B Division





GWYDIR  
SHIRE COUNCIL

*A Gwydir*  
**SNAPSHOT**  
*2008 - 2009*

**Gwydir Shire Council**  
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Designed by Louise Campbell, Gwydir Shire Council