

Newsletter

September 2016



DrumMUSTER

The next DrumMUSTER collection will be on Wednesday 7 September 2016.

Please call Susan Burley at the Shire on 9622 6113 to arrange a time for collection. You will need to quote the number of drums when registering.



School Xmas Banner Project

The weather may not have turned warm as yet but the Shire is already planning for Christmas. The Shire's nine schools have been asked to design banners to be part of this year's official Christmas decorations.

Schools' can choose how they approach the project, they can produce the banners in a group or invite submissions from individual students based on a Christmas theme. Each school puts forward the design of their choice, with the Shire imposing the designs on street banners.

The Shire has 19 banners in Northam and Bakers Hill. The students designs will be spread across the sites complimenting the Shire's annual Christmas banner display.

Northam Farmers Markets Commence

The New Northam Farmers Markets kick off on the 'village green' in Fitzgerald st Saturday 10th September.

The markets will be held each month on the 2nd and 4th Saturday from 8.30am to 1pm.

Light & Lock Programme

A key initiative of Shire of Northam Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2016-2020 has received \$20,000 funding in the 2016/2017 Shire of Northam Budget.

The Lock and Light Program will support vulnerable residents to live independently through improving their personal safety when in their homes. The program aims to deter potential criminals and increase the sense of security of householders.

The objectives of the project are:

1. To increase the awareness of the general community regarding safety and security in the home environment.
2. To provide vulnerable residents with security assessments of their own homes and to upgrade home security in 'priority' homes to reduce the opportunity for crime.

Vulnerable residents will be offered private, professional home security assessments that will highlight weaknesses and report on equipment that can be installed, and/or behaviours that can be adopted, to address security risks. Each household will then be able to apply for funding up to an agreed limit for the installation of home security devices. Examples of equipment that will be available include security doors, window locks, door peep holes, window security screens, sensor lighting and UV pens for property marking and identification.

The Shire is currently working with a range of local service providers to finalise the programme details. Further information will be provided through local media, the Shire Website and Facebooks pages in the coming weeks.

President's Message

Council adopted the Shire budget unchanged at their Council meeting on the 17th August.

Some property owners will experience a rise in rates this financial year. Council has tried to limit these to around 2.75%, however this has been difficult due to inconsistent changes to valuations, provided to Council by the Valuer General. The Shire has reduced its rate in the dollar amount payable however a combination of a revaluation of all GRV properties and a change from Unimproved Value for some rural residential and Industrial properties to Gross Rental Value will result in a range of properties receiving more significant increases in their rates payable.

To assist these property owners the Council has chosen to phase these more significant increases over three years to reduce the impact on those property owners affected. This change in method of valuation has been adopted to improve the consistency of rate charges across the residential and commercial sectors of our community.

A range of commercial properties are benefitting from rate decreases due to the inconsistency across the revaluation with residential properties being increased and commercial properties remaining stagnant. The result of this will no doubt be beneficial to our small business community who in some areas are experiencing difficult economic conditions.

Rates are being put to good use supporting an excellent mix of projects from major infrastructure developments such as the Aboriginal and Environmental Centre and Northam swimming pool redevelopment to improving day to day Shire service delivery. Included are some innovative new programmes such as the Lock & Light aimed at increasing security for vulnerable members of our community plus additional funding to the Engineering and Works Team to assist in rural verge maintenance.

A lot is happening around parks and recreation at the moment. Works have commenced on upgrading the swan enclosure at Bernard Park. New exercise equipment has been installed in Broome Terrace and an exciting new playground at George Nuich Park has just been completed. As spring approaches these new facilities will offer enhanced opportunities for outdoor enjoyment.

Combined with major private investments headlined by the new Dome and shopping centre developments, the Shire is experiencing strong economic growth and improved community amenity.

In Wundowie I recently attended a community workshop session for the Wundowie community plan and was very pleased to see the strong level of commitment the community have to planning for growth in that locality over the next ten years.

The communities of Bakers Hill/Clackline and Grass Valley will also be given the opportunity to develop community plans over the next 18 months.

Wundowie Community Consultation Update

Community consultation for the Wundowie Community Plan 2016-2026 concluded late August with over 350 wishes placed on the wishing tree, 120 surveys and more than 50 people participating in community workshops.

The Shire of Northam is now collating the results and will bring a draft strategy back to the community for comment prior to it going to Council for final endorsement.



What's On

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Sept		
30 Aug—1 Oct	They Served with Honour Exhibition	Northam
3	Community markets	Northam
9 –10	Agriculture Show	Northam
9-11	Avon Writer's Festival	York, Northam, Toodyay
10	Farmers Market	Northam
24	Farmers Market	Northam
25	Avon Valley Spring chamber Music Festival	
Oct		
1	Community Markets	Northam
8	Farmers Markets	Northam

Northam Pool Update

Northam Council has recently endorsed concept designs and costings for the development of the Northam Swimming Pool. The concepts were developed in response to community preference for a new swimming pool to replace the ageing pool.

Council have endorsed the pool design, including 50 metre outdoor pool, leisure pools, and associated facilities to be constructed at Northam Recreation Centre, further consolidating the Henry St Sporting Precinct as the sport and Recreation hub of the Shire.

Whilst Council has approved the project to proceed, it is subject to the ability to attract external funding to assist. Officers are now in the process of seeking grant funding for the development, and will report back to Council in March 2017 regarding the amount of funding sourced. A final decision will be made at this time.

Northam Ag Show

The 2016 Northam Agricultural Show will be held on Friday 9th September (5pm-9pm), and Saturday 10th September (9am- 5pm) at the Northam Showgrounds on Peel Terrace. As always, the show will be celebrating all that Northam has to offer over 2 action packed days, and there'll be something for everyone at the event. Entry for adults is \$10, and children are priced at \$5.

Full details of the event including schedules, information on amusements and exhibitors, and the history of the show can be found on the Northam Agricultural Show website at www.northamshow.com.au, or on Facebook by searching for the Northam Agricultural Society page. Programs can be obtained from the Northam Visitor Centre.

Last Chance Cat Sterilization Subsidy

The Shire of Northam, local vets and the Department of Local Communities are offering Shire residents vouchers valued at \$150 each to assist with Cat registration, sterilization and micro-chipping.

To be eligible Shire Residents need to attend the Shire of Northam main office and complete a cat registration form.

Avon Readers & Writers Festival

Bigger and better than ever, this year's Avon Readers and Writers Festival is a must for anyone who loves a good story.

Commencing in York 9th August, the Festival opens in Northam Saturday the 10th before concluding in Toodyay Sunday the 11th.

The program this year includes 26 presenters, music, workshops and panel discussions with the Festival's signature event, the dinner, being held at the Riverside Hotel in Northam on the Saturday night.

Tickets start at \$16.50 and may be booked online at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/avon-valley-readers-and-writers-festival-tickets-25712563971>

Events programs are available from the Northam Library section of the Shire of Northam website www.northam.wa.gov.au