

**JANUARY - JUNE 2021**

# **SIX MONTH REPORT CARD**



**PREPARED BY**

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# ADAPTING TO A NEW NORMAL

## WELCOME TO THE 8TH EDITION OF ROXBY COUNCIL'S SIX MONTH REPORT CARD.

If 2020 was about surviving the global pandemic, then 2021 has been about learning to thrive during it. Roxby Council has become adept at functioning efficiently during lockdowns and dealing seamlessly with new restrictions as they come into place.

The enforced switch to periods of virtual work has enabled us to connect with our workforce and community in new ways. Roxby Council meetings are now held online, via Microsoft Teams, which paradoxically makes them more accessible. Never before has Council had so many followers on social media, especially Facebook and page clicks on our website.

Despite the global uncertainty and ever-present prospect of lockdowns, Council has focused not just on the renewal of assets, but also on capitalising on Covid-19 recovery grants. These grants will support local projects that will offer significant benefit to the community as a whole.

Roxby Council has also developed several key documents that pave the way for the long-term sustainability of the town. The Annual Business Plan & Budget, Long Term Financial Plan and Strategic Plan all paint a picture of Council's good financial health and commitment to developing and maintaining essential infrastructure.

The town's main employer BHP is also thriving, despite the tough economic times.

BHP's total Australian economic contributions totalled \$34.1bn for the 12 months to June 30, up 3 per cent from \$33.1bn last year, partly on the back of improved production at Olympic Dam.

The total payments to the South Australian Government, including taxes and other payments, were \$136 million, up from \$110 million in 2019-20, while the royalty figure was up 32 per cent from \$77 million last year.

The first six months of this year has also seen commitment to looking after the unique arid landscape in which Roxby Downs is situated. The positive impact of Council's ongoing recycling awareness campaigns can be seen in the reduction of waste to landfill figures.

Changes to Council's Cats By-law that put tighter restrictions on cat ownership to protect the many rare and threatened birds and animals in the region, were largely welcomed by the community.

As we look towards the second half of this year we do so with optimism and hope in light of the positive financial outlook for both Council and the region, and also an end in sight to lockdowns, restrictions and cancelled events.

We welcome and look forward to hearing your feedback. Please provide comments and suggestions at [roxby@roxbycouncil.com.au](mailto:roxby@roxbycouncil.com.au)

# HIGHLIGHTS

## SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS



The Richardson Place Rotunda upgrade was completed in August 2021.

Roxby Council has had significant success in obtaining funding from State and Federal grants to support major investment projects in the town.

These include:

- Sports Precinct Upgrade (new multipurpose tennis and netball courts) - \$1.3m from the Office of Recreation Sport and Racing (ORSR).
- Pump Track - \$625,000 from the State Government's Infrastructure Partnership Program.
- Basketball Half-court - \$120,000 from the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program.
- Richardson Place Rotunda Upgrade - \$19,421.61 from the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Roxby Council has developed a five year Strategic Plan, guiding Council's planned operational activities. The plan outlines Council's priorities that will position Roxby Downs for the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic with prudent strategic investment to ensure sustainability and resilience.

It is a dynamic document that Council will review from time to time in line with the changing and emerging needs of the community. The Strategic Plan clearly states Council's aspirations and commitment to achieving the best outcomes for the community. Council will continue to focus on improving quality of life for all our residents, enhancing our customer service and value proposition, and the sustainability of assets.

## ROXBY & ANDAMOOKA ROUND TABLE

The region's Covid-19 working group, the Roxby & Andamooka Round Table, continued to meet virtually during the first half of this year to maintain a consistent local approach to managing Covid-19 restrictions and messaging.



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# HIGHLIGHTS

## LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN



Roxby Council has prepared a Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), ensuring Roxby Downs remains a safe, vibrant and liveable town into the future.

Under the LTFP, future rates growth is constrained, with any rates increases capped in line with the CPI.

Roxby Council Chief Executive Roy Blight described the LTFP as a window into the next decade, which shows Council will continue to manage its affairs in a sustainable way. 'Our focus will be on minimising rates and maintaining a balanced budget,' Mr Blight said.

Council will concentrate on capital renewal over the next 10 years, including maintenance and replacement of assets before the end of their life span.

Before committing to any new projects Council will seek funding from other sources to reduce the local cost burden.

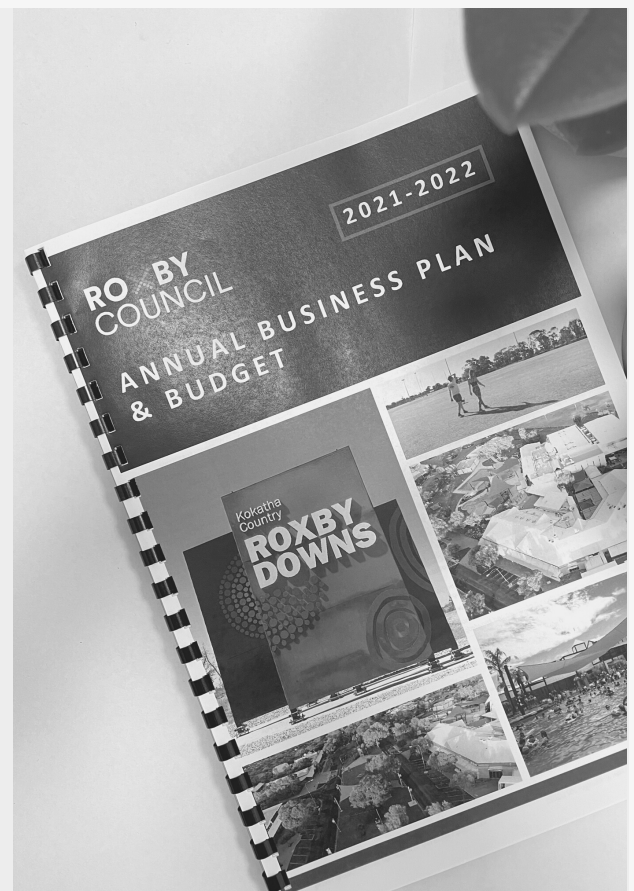
## ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

The Annual Business Plan and Budget for 2021/22 was endorsed on 30 June 2021. The plan ensures that Roxby Council continues to develop and maintain essential infrastructure and provides important services like a library and a vast array of recreation and leisure facilities, as well as development services and waste collection.

The Plan and Budget outlines Council's priorities for the year and ensures adequate local stimulus, without avoidable costs or rating burdens.

Roxby Council continues to be debt free and have sufficient reserves to meet future commitments on maintenance and capital expenditure projects. This emphasises Roxby Council's good financial health, during a time in which most councils carry long term debt in their budget.

Council remains dedicated to creating a safe, affordable and liveable community in Roxby Downs.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## NEW OLYMPIC DAM ASSET PRESIDENT



New Olympic Dam Asset President Dr. Jennifer Purdie.

In February this year, BHP appointed Dr. Jennifer Purdie to head up operations at Olympic Dam.

Dr. Purdie has more than 30 years of global management and leadership experience in the mining, energy, heavy manufacturing, and infrastructure sectors. She brings a strong balance of operational, commercial and technical skills to Olympic Dam and the capability to combine strategy with project execution.

Operations at Olympic Dam have recently gone from strength to strength. In the 2021 financial year, copper production increased by 20 per cent to 205 kilotonnes (kt) (172 kt in FY2020). This was the highest annual copper production since Olympic Dam was acquired in 2005. Record gold production of 146 thousand troy ounces (koz) was also achieved.

## ROXBY'S BLUE TREE

Roxby Council helped to locate and install a Blue Tree on the corner of Pioneer Drive and Olympic Way in May, to promote mental health awareness. The project was an initiative of local resident Andy O'Rourke, who wanted to spread the message that it was okay not to be okay.

The installation of the Blue Tree was supported by Roxby Council and local businesses, as well as a strong cohort of volunteers.

Roxby Council also helped promote the new addition to the streetscape with a Facebook video. That video quickly became Council's top performing post with an engagement of 5.1k, 264 'Likes', 25 comments and 35 shares.

The Blue Tree continues to be used as a meeting place for locals and is a poignant reminder about mental health.



Community members at the Blue Tree to commemorate RUOK? Day.

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## UPDATED CATS BY-LAW



Roxby Downs is situated in a unique arid environment, which is home to many rare and endangered birds and animals. The town is also home to many residents, who own cats as pets. As a requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act, Council reviewed its Cats By-law in May this year and proposed tighter controls for cats living within the township.

The changes mainly centred around the effective control of cats, which meant cats would be required to be contained within the garden or kept on a leash or in a cat carrier in public areas. The draft By-law was made available for public feedback and Council ran a community consultation campaign, including a survey. The vast majority of respondents were supportive of the stricter controls for cats within Roxby Downs.

The updated Cats By-law was ultimately adopted by Council and is currently being reviewed by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

## KOKATHA ART DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Roxby Council began working with the Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation on the Art Development Project in May this year.

The \$60,000 dollar project, which is jointly funded by Council and BHP is a multi-faceted art prize that will ultimately result in three paintings and a sculpture being commissioned by Roxby Council, to be placed at key locations in the township.

The pieces of art will depict the connection the Kokatha have to Roxby Downs and will help strengthen the ties between the town and the region's Traditional Owners.

The project also incorporates medium and long term objectives, including an art exhibition, artist workshops for the community and ultimately the development of a thriving Kokatha art industry in Roxby Downs.



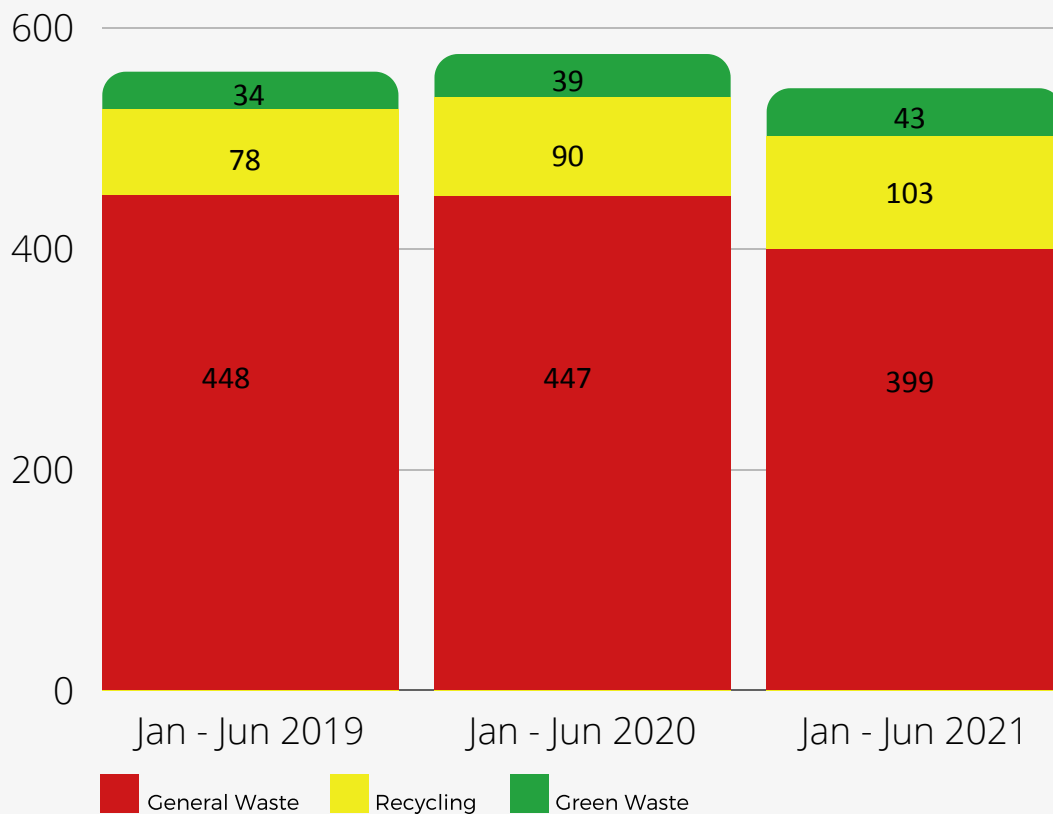
A representation of Roxby Downs by Kokatha artists: Shirley, Lee and Jennifer Williams. 2019

The Kokatha Traditional Owners welcome people from different communities and countries that come to live in Roxby to either mine, visit, or pass through.

The Sleepy Lizard (Gulda) is the significant totem of the Kokatha country. Symbols within the painting represent waterholes, the Kokatha, people coming from across the world, the mines and the sharing of culture and knowledge.

# ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSETS

**TONNAGE OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTED  
(ALL BINS JAN TO JUN 2019 - 2021)**



## WASTE MANAGEMENT

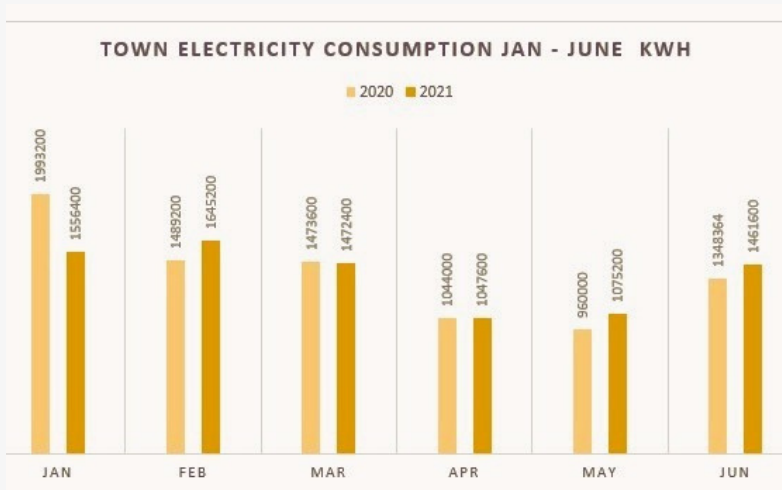
All Bins	Jan – June 2021	Jan-Jun 2020	Change % compared to last year
Total Number Household Bins Serviced	51,393	49,760	+3.28%
Total Tonnes Household waste collected	546.05	575.29	-5.08%

Waste generated by households decreased by 5% during the first six months of the year, compared to the same period in 2020. However, the total number of bin lifts increased by 3%, which may be indicative of greater occupancy (fewer vacant residential properties) or a reduction in the average number of people per residence. In summary, the total generated waste reduced from 447 tonnes in 2020 to 399 tonnes in 2021.

Recycling and Green Waste both increased for the same period. This is a positive outcome, which may be the result of a growing community awareness of the importance of diverting waste from landfill.

# ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSETS

## ROXBY POWER



Monthly township power consumption in 2021 compared to 2020.

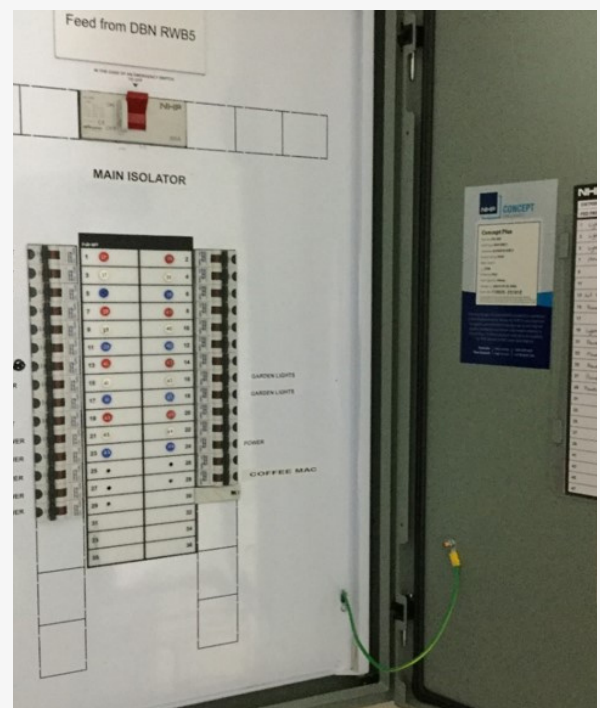
Township electricity consumption from Jan-June 2021 showed a similar usage pattern to the same period in 2020. However, between January and March consumption in 2021 was 5% less than in 2020, and from April to June 2021 power consumption increased by almost 7% compared to 2020. This may be attributed to the cooler summer and autumn in 2021 than the previous year. Overall total township power consumption was 8.25M kWh for the January - June period. The monthly totals are shown in the graph.

Power maintenance during the first half of this year included works to improve the resilience of the Roxby Power network, with the following undertaken:

- Surge arrestors installed on the western overhead power line to reduce likelihood of outages due to birds colliding with the power lines. This work was carried out after two bird strikes occurred in short succession.

Additional work carried out during the period includes:

- Replacement/upgrade of 3 x electrical switchboards at Roxby Link.
- Upgrade of 19 street light poles to LED and replacement of 1 street light pole after being hit by a vehicle.
- Replacement power cables installed on Stuart Road and Wirrda Street after cable faults occurred.
- Replacement transformer meters installed to 33 out of 38 transformers (86% complete).
- 15 domestic power meters replaced.

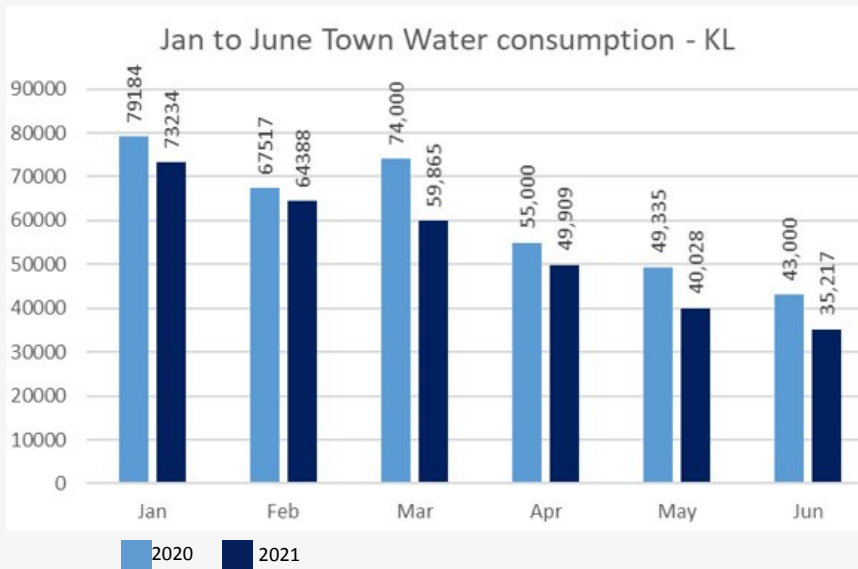


Example of a replacement distribution board at Roxby Link.



# ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSETS

## ROXBY WATER



Water usage during the first six months of this year was 45,000 kiloliters lower than during the same period the year before. This means the township used the equivalent of 18 Olympic sized swimming pools less water. March saw the biggest decrease in water, which may be the result of the cooler, wetter start to the year. March 2021 recorded 25.6mm of rain, compared to an average rainfall for that month of just 7mm. The reduction in water usage could also be a result of water saving measures and a shift in community attitudes towards water conservation.

A range of maintenance work was carried out between January and June as is summarised on the following page. Additionally 35 water meters were repaired or replaced. The water mains isolation valve on the corner of Olympic Way and Pioneer Drive was also replaced.



Replacement of the water mains isolation valve.

# ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSETS

## TOWN WATER SUPPLY



Drip legs on the chlorine dosing system.

Drip legs were fitted to the chlorine dosing system to prevent clogging of the filter and a possible chlorine leak. This additional equipment was included in the routine maintenance program for 2021-22.

## WASTEWATER

Works carried out on the sewer network included:

- All sewer pump station chambers cleaned twice.
- 3 sewer connection blockages cleared.
- 7 pump station blockages cleared.

Sewer Mains:

A section of sewer mains was replaced in Arcoona Street, following the discovery of significant tree root intrusion.

Sewer Pump Station A  
Pump #1 and #2 at Pump Station A were replaced.

Sewer Pump Station H  
Installation of replacement check valves for pump #1 and #2.



Tree root incursion in a section of sewer mains.

# ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND ASSETS

## SEWER LAGOONS

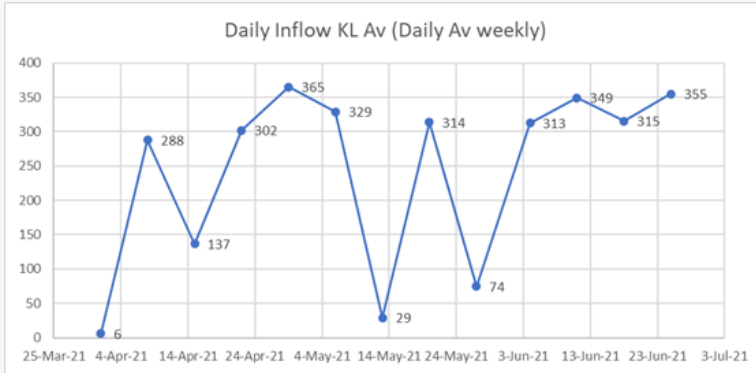


Figure 4: Average daily wastewater volumes received from BHP ODS Camp 1 April to 30 June 2021.

All sewer lagoon transfer pipes were cleaned bi-monthly.

BHP began commissioning of wastewater from ODS camp to sewer lagoons in April 2021.

Installation of a chlorine analyser system was required by SA Health as a new licence condition, which is due for completion in 2021/22.

A total of 22,231 KL of additional wastewater was received and processed for re-use to 30 June 2021. (1 Olympic size swimming pool holds about 2,500KL for comparison).

BHP is currently sending over 300 KL wastewater per day (peak 395 KL/day).

## SAFETY SIGNAGE

Replacement safety signage was installed at the wastewater processing facility:



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# ASSET SERVICES

## ROAD RE-SEALING WORKS

The Road Resealing Program was completed for 2021, as per the 3-year contract with Downer EDI. The following streets were re-surfaced:

- Emeroo Court
- Myall Street
- Wangianna Street
- Olympic Way



L to R: Wangianna Street, Olympic Way, Myall Street.

## FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT WORKS

Footpath sections were replaced at the following locations:

- Arcoona Street
- Stuart Road
- Hermit Street
- Tutop Street



L to R: Arcoona Street, Hermit Street, Stuart Road.

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# ASSET SERVICES

## SIDE ENTRY PIT REPLACEMENT WORKS

Replacement side entry pits were installed at the following locations:

- Alberrie Street
- Curdimurka Street
- Pioneer Drive
- Burgoyne Street
- Olympic Way
- Callanna Road
- Stuart Road



Olympic Way



Pioneer Drive

## KERB AND GUTTER REPAIRS

Kerb & Gutter repairs

Repairs and replacements were carried out at the following locations:

- Emeroo Court
- Wangianna Street
- Quandong Street
- Pioneer Drive
- Axehead Road
- Stuart Road
- Nyaroo Court
- Richardson Place

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# EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS

## FUNCTIONS



Roxby Council Chief Executive Roy Blight and SAPOL Senior Sergeant Sam Thorn at the Filipino Heritage Celebration.

The first half of the year was a challenging one, due to Covid-19 density and operational requirements constantly changing. Roxby Link has had to adapt and rethink the way functions are delivered to ensure Covid-19 requirements are met. An unexpected benefit of this is that it has led to the strengthening of relationships with other local businesses. Whenever possible, Roxby Link has outsourced some components, and therefore shared the income of the larger events.

A number of functions were held in the Roxby Link Auditorium during the first half of the year including; BHP workshops/forums, the postponed 2020 Roxby Academy of Dance concerts, the RDAS Year 12 Formal and multiple community seminars. Highlights included the 75 years of Australian Friendship - Filipino Heritage Celebration and the return of live performances, with the Melbourne International Comedy Festival Roadshow performing in Roxby Downs. In celebration of Reconciliation Week this year, the NUNGA Screen event (formerly known as Black Screen) was held. The free short film showcase featured an entertaining program of independent films for all ages. This year was the 6th year Roxby Link has participated in this important cultural event.

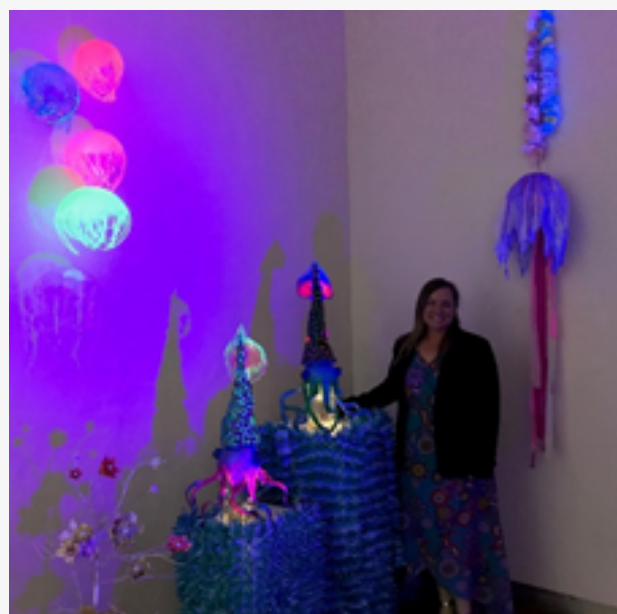
# EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS

## ART GALLERY



Some of the sea creatures at the Blacklight Eromanga Sea Exhibition.

Four local exhibitions were held at the Art Gallery between January and June 2021. During that period Roxby Link staff were also busy planning for the annual SALA festival, which ran until August. Highlights included local artist Leila Day presenting her debut exhibition with an opening night. The 30 attendees enjoyed hearing the inspiring story behind her Blacklight Eromanga Sea Exhibition. The exhibition featured marine creatures of Australia's ancient inland sea emerging through the black light. Sculptures, canvas and jewellery moulded, shaped and created into belemnites, jellyfish, ammonites and fossils of the Eromanga Sea were on display.



Artist Leila Day at her exhibition opening.

## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Visitor Information Centre had a quiet start to the year during January, February and March due to the ongoing impact of travel restrictions and border closures. The normal influx of international travellers during this period was noticeably absent. Numbers picked up in April when the peak season began for interstate and intrastate travellers. May proved to be the busiest month with 487 people through the door. A large majority of visitors were from New South Wales. There was a total of 1443 visitors to the centre between January and June 2021. The Arid Recovery Sunset Tours attracted 99 participants, which is the highest attendance rate in the last four years.



Inside Roxby's Visitor Information Centre.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## WEBSITE

TOP FIVE PERFORMING PAGES ON THE ROXBY COUNCIL WEBSITE

		255.92% <span style="color: green;">▲</span> <small>64,613 vs 18,154</small>
1.	/	
	Jan 1, 2021 - Jun 30, 2021	6,339 (9.81%)
	Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020	2,786 (15.35%)
	<b>% Change</b>	<b>127.53%</b>
2.	/lifestyleandsport/cinema/session-times	
	Jan 1, 2021 - Jun 30, 2021	4,587 (7.10%)
	Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020	125 (0.69%)
	<b>% Change</b>	<b>3,569.60%</b>
3.	/lifestyleandsport/livinginroxbydowns	
	Jan 1, 2021 - Jun 30, 2021	3,470 (5.37%)
	Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020	304 (1.67%)
	<b>% Change</b>	<b>1,041.45%</b>
4.	/lifestyleandsport/Roxbylink	
	Jan 1, 2021 - Jun 30, 2021	2,164 (3.35%)
	Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020	570 (3.14%)
	<b>% Change</b>	<b>279.65%</b>
5.	/council/employment	
	Jan 1, 2021 - Jun 30, 2021	1,645 (2.55%)
	Jan 1, 2020 - Jun 30, 2020	392 (2.16%)
	<b>% Change</b>	<b>319.64%</b>

Roxby Council's website has become a source of reliable information for the community during, and in the aftermath, of Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions.

Council's Communications Team's continuous efforts to ensure the website remains relevant and up-to-date have made it an important community asset for Roxby residents.

This can be seen in the significant gains in engagement on the website's five most popular pages.

Clicks onto the home page (which is listed as 1. on the adjacent table) were almost 10% higher during January to June than they were the previous year. Visitors to the Living In Roxby Downs page grew by more than 5%, while clicks on the Roxby Link page grew by more than 3%. The Communications Team's strategy to create greater traffic to the website by posting links on Facebook appears to be working effectively.

## FACEBOOK

Roxby Council's Facebook audience has continued to grow with more than 2000 people now following the Roxby Council Facebook Page. This is an increase of around 250 followers from June 2020.

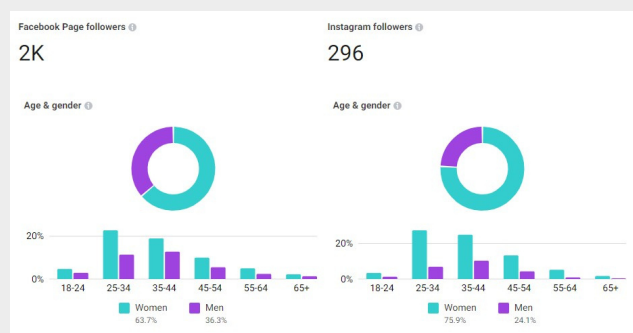
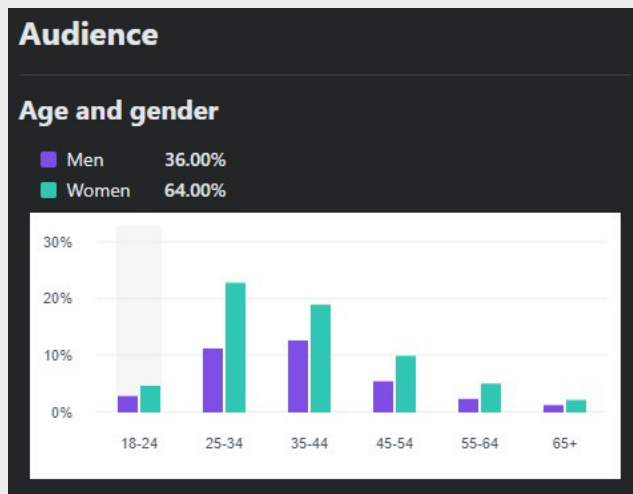
The largest proportion of followers continue to be women between the ages of 25 and 30 years old.

Council began increasing the regularity of Facebook posts early this year to meet an increasing community reliance on social media as a source of information.

The void left behind by the closure of Roxby Downs' newspaper further increases the need for regular Facebook updates.

The Communications Team also began producing and posting more video content on social media. This has proved positive with a significantly higher number of views on videos than static posts.

One of the highest performing posts this year was a video about the installation of a Blue Tree in Roxby Downs to raise awareness about mental health. Roxby Council will continue to use video as an important communications tool.





# COMMUNICATIONS

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS



Roxby Council conducted three community engagement and feedback campaigns during the first half of this year.

The first was in regard to Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget. Council held a 'live' Facebook event during which Chief Executive Roy Blight and Corporate Services Group Manager Drew Ellis discussed the document. Council also prepared an online survey community members could fill out.

The second community consultation conducted by Council was the Updated Cats By-law. For this consultation Council prepared a short video as well as the consultation pack and again released an online survey. 39 of the surveys were completed with a strong community sentiment towards strengthening the by-law.

Finally, Council conducted community consultation on its Draft Long Term Financial Plan. The consultation page on Council's website was viewed almost 50 times but only 2 respondents filled out the online survey.

## OTHER COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Roxby Council produces and presents two radio programs on the local RoxFM radio station each week.

These are:

Council Catch-up - the latest Council and community news on Thursdays between 9am and 10am.

The Vibe - events and community news on Fridays between 1pm - 2pm.

SMS Broadcast is proving a valuable tool in terms of direct messaging to customers in regard to pending Roxby Power and Roxby Water invoices, and Dog and Cat Registrations.

Online material about key events, consultations, and local information is consistently supported by hard copy material to ensure that everyone within the community (whether or not 'connected') can access reliable, up to date and accurate information.



Council's Esther and Eloise present Council Catchup on Thursday mornings from 9am - 10am.