

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS flood recovery coordination NEWSLETTER

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Meet the team...

Sandra Hobbs

Economic Recovery Group Chairperson



"I have worked predominantly in the Community Services sector over the past 30 years in government, not for profit organisations and as a private consultant.

As well as chairing this committee I am the General Manager of the Central Highlands Development Corporation (CHDC). The CHDC is a not-for-profit organisation advocating for economic growth for the Central Highlands through positive marketing and promotion of the Central Highlands as a locality of choice. We also aim to enhance the skills base of the Central Highlands and stimulate business development as well as sustain and refresh our organization. It is this experience which has led my approach to the economic recovery of our community.

The CHDC was established to coordinate and promote economic development initiatives in the Central Highland region and is currently providing information and support to 1660 members identified on its Business Register.

As Chair of the Economic Recovery Group, my role is to coordinate planning and implementation of economic and financial recovery recommendations for the impacted areas of the region on behalf of the Central Highlands Regional Council. The group is made up of representatives of the rural, business and industry sectors as well as key government departments.

I am looking forward to continuing to work with other community representatives to support businesses to build resilience for recovery process and the future".

Soccer Club fights back

Even after experiencing extensive losses in the flood the Emerald Soccer Association is down but not out of the game.

The club suffered an inundation of 1.5 meters of water though both the clubhouse and the cafeteria virtually ruining all of the equipment, paperwork, jerseys, electrical equipment and much more. However, they are still expecting a full sign on for the season, "We just couldn't let everyone down, the kids love it and it is times like these that the community needs it's clubs and teams", Club President Mike Featherstone said.

Between community support and government assistance the club hopes to be ready for competition soon. "We have lost at least \$11 500 worth of equipment plus a



further \$5000 in structural damage. Local businesses have banded together and helped up get some jerseys together which has just been phenomenal", Mike said.

The club is expecting a bumper sign-on of 300 juniors and 100 seniors, however there is no hiding the sadness at the loss of things that cannot be replaced,

"We celebrated our 50 year anniversary last year and now we have lost all historical memorabilia. The black and white pictures along with so much else were turned into mush. It is just devastat-

ing to see", Mike said.

When they heard the flood was coming, Mike and others tried to save the club. "We got everything up way higher than the 2008 water line but it wasn't far enough. We had no idea how big this one was going to be", he said.

The season will go on and Mike is welcoming new players, "The show must go on and we welcome everyone of any age and any skill level. We aren't going to turn anyone away based on ability or anything like that".

The sign on is on the 5th of March at 2pm at Morton Park. For enquiries or please contact Mike Featherstone on 0418 460 709.



Legal Aid: declined insurance not the end of the road

People who have had their insurance claim denied are encouraged to make contact with Legal Aid Queensland.

Receiving a letter of disapproval is not the last step and options of recourse are available to

residents. Legal Aid is offering a free referral service to solicitors who are volunteering their time to work with flood effected people.

The preliminary assistance is not means or asset tested. As well as insurance issues

advice can also be given on cases of tenancy issues, family law as well as many other situations that may arise out of the flooding in the region.

Contact Legal Aid on: **1300 65 11 88**
www.floodlegalhelp.qld.gov.au

Other News...

Monster Garage sale

To celebrate the closing of the Household Resource Centre and to raise more fund for flood affected residents, there will be a Monster Garage Sale at the Emerald Showgrounds sports area shed on the March 5th from 8am to 2pm.

Items that were donated but not required for distribution will be sold, with all the funds raised to be used to purchase much needed fridges and the like for families who lost everything.

The Rotary Club will be running a barbeque and the Lions Club will be looking after drinks. All proceeds made by these charities will remain with them so they can continue their own community work. SES volunteers will be helping the Coles volunteers with the running of the sale which promises to include a vast amount of clothes and handbags as well as books, prams, highchairs, cots toys, bric-a-brac, heaters and linen.

The Mayor will address the crowd at 10am and present volunteers with certificates of appreciation at the event.

Goodwill passed on

More donations from the HRC were sent to the community of Woorabinda and were welcomed with open arms. A community sale was held with all proceeds being donated to the Children for Football Boots appeal which supplies football boots to children in underprivileged communities.

Salvo's

Representatives from the Brisbane Salvation Army have arrived in Emerald to distribute funds from their Flood Appeal which has risen over \$18 million for disaster affected communities all over Queensland. Residents who have

experienced flood related hardship are encouraged to call the Salvo Disaster Relief Assistance Care Line on 1300 66 22 17 to register for contact from the Emerald team who will then organise a time to meet applicants for assessment. The support, which ranges from food and furniture to financial assistance as well as referrals, is not means or in-undation tested and will be given on a case to case basis depending on need.

Timber Australia

Timber Australia is asking residents to be aware that leaving sodden wall lining in place will impede recovery and can cause serious mould issues.

The peak body for the timber industry says they were receiving reports of residents being told by insurance companies to leave wet walls in place whilst application for cover is being made.

Timber Australia is discouraging this behaviour saying that leaving walls intact will encourage corrosion leading to structural damage as well as the health implications of mould developing.

Further information is available at www.timeberqueensland.com.au

Flood Enquiry

Anna Bligh has announced that the Queensland Floods Commission of Enquiry will be including input from the Central Highlands Region. The commission, Ms Bligh said, aims to "seek answers to the questions that Queenslanders have about those flooding events which devastated much of our state". She also stated that people that were affected will have the opportunity to have personal input into the inquiry.

It has also been acknowledged that participation in the proceeding will be

traumatic for some who experienced extensive losses. To assist in the process the Department of Communities has donated \$300 000 to Lifeline to provide face-to-face support to those who are involved in the enquiry and the enquiry consultation process. The assistance will also be offered to those who "seek to prepare submissions", irrespective of whether they are finished and presented.

Important Contacts:

Central Highlands Flood Recovery Coordination

26 Opal Street
07 4987 7267

recovery@chrc.qld.gov.au

Central Highlands Regional Council

1300 242 686

www.centralhighlands.qld.gov.au

Lifeline 24 Hour Crisis Counselling

13 11 14

Anglicare Central Queensland

07 4982 4358

Lifeline Emerald

07 4982 3730

Emerald Neighbourhood Centre

07 4982 1696

Salvation Army Disaster Relief Care Line

1300 66 22 17

Legal Aid

1300 65 11 88

Building Services Authority (BSA)

1300 272 272

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