



Norfolk Island | Issue no. 12 | February 2022

Administrator's update

Understanding what a sustainable permanent and visitor population for Norfolk Island might be, is all about the capacity of the island's infrastructure, planning and environmental constraints – it is not about who someone might like, or not, as the case may be – that is not the basis for a population strategy.

Key components include: waste management; everything that comes on and can't be recycled or reused must be returned to the mainland – at a cost to the community. Power generation – dependant on imported diesel – we all understand we can do better! Water and food security (the capacity for the community to feed itself with less imported product) is paramount for the environment, social and health outcomes and the economy – it just makes good sense.

My thanks to community members, Council management and Departmental staff for sharing this vision with Assistant Minister Marino during her recent visit – she was heartened by the consistent messages and collaboration. She appreciates from personal experience the importance, need and opportunities of this approach for a remote community.



Assistant Minister Marino visits Norfolk Island

From 4-6 February, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories, the Hon Nola Marino MP, visited Norfolk Island. While on Island the Assistant Minister met with a range of stakeholders from across the community and business sector. The Assistant Minister saw the significant progress made on the Australian Government-funded community infrastructure projects and met with staff at the hospital and the school about the transition to Queensland as an enduring state service delivery partner.



What's on at Kingston

Work has been progressing at Kingston over recent months, with a number of projects to enhance the existing built and natural appeal of the world heritage site nearing completion.

The majority of the works on the historical Royal Engineers Office (REO) have been completed, with the damaged column cored through and a stainless steel bar inserted and grouted into place.

The portico was reconstructed and minor works to finalise the repairs of the columns will be undertaken as soon as the current COVID-19 restrictions ease.

The upgrades to the REO will help ensure that this important building will continue to stand as not only a feature of Norfolk's rich history, but as a gateway and information hub for visitors visiting Kingston for years to come.



Office of the Administrator

New Military Barracks, Kingston, Norfolk Island 2899

Newsletter

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Great support for bee survey to protect our biosecurity

I would like to acknowledge the support the Norfolk Island community gave to Dr John Roberts while he was on island conducting the bee component of the Norfolk Island Pest and Disease Survey in December last year.

As you are aware, there is a sentinel hive located at Government House and it was good to learn a little more about how to monitor these hives alongside other beekeepers on the island.

It was great to see so many other people participating in the bee survey, attending John's presentations and allowing John to sample hives across the island. I would like to thank in particular Merv Buffett and Clare McPherson for their leadership in supporting the survey, and the Flora and Fauna Society for hosting one of John's presentations.

I look forward to seeing the results of the survey later this year.



Plant Pest and Disease Survey on Norfolk Island

Between 14-19 March, a group of scientists from Agriculture Victoria Research will be running surveys and community workshops to understand the status of pests and diseases that may impact Norfolk Island's important agricultural and native plant species.

Led by Ross Mann and Fi Constable and funded by the Australian Government, Agriculture Research Victoria will be looking to work with growers on Island to take plant samples from across farms and home gardens, targeting agricultural plant species and weeds.

Data from individual properties will be sent directly to participants and not shared publicly. I encourage all growers on Norfolk Island to participate in this important study, which will help us understand how to manage the island's biosecurity and conserve our extraordinary natural environment.

If you are interested in participating in the survey please call the Department's office on 23315 or email: Norfolkislandteam@infrastructure.gov.au

COVID-19 response update

The Australian Government in partnership with the Queensland Government, Emergency Management Norfolk Island (EMNI) and Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) continues to work collaboratively in response to the COVID outbreak on Norfolk Island, to minimise the risks and impacts for our community and support our pathway through COVID recovery.

Vaccines remain our best defence against getting seriously sick and requiring hospitalisation due to COVID-19. The vaccination clinics went well, with almost 1250 boosters now delivered and more than 100 local children aged from 5-11 armed against COVID.

Residents are reminded to immediately isolate and get tested if they are experiencing any symptoms, including sore throat, fever, cough, tiredness and loss of taste or smell.

Current consultations

PFAS community engagement

Until 4 March 2022, Senversa and the Departments of Health and Infrastructure are holding virtual community engagement on the final outcomes of the detailed environmental investigation into per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels related to historical use of firefighting foam at the Norfolk Island International Airport.

You can participate in the consultations here: www.norfolkpfas.com

Kingston SMP and HMP consultations

GML Heritage and Conrad Gargett will be visiting Norfolk Island in the week of 28 February 2022, to consult with the community on the preparation of a Site Master Plan for Kingston, and the update of the current Heritage Management Plan.

The community is invited to meet the project team and share their views on the key opportunities and pressures for Kingston at drop-in consultation sessions that will be held at the Golf Club between 4—6pm on Monday, 28 Feb 2022.

More information can be found at kingston.norfolkisland.gov.au/projects or by contacting the Kingston team on +6723 23177 or +6723 23315

Norfolk Island state services transition update

It has been a high tempo for the commencement of Queensland's delivery of state services on Norfolk Island, with Queensland Health providing invaluable support and resources to the Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) through the recent COVID outbreak. Affected patients received care from both NIHRACS and Queensland's Metro North Hospital and Health Service and this support has been appreciated by those in the community.

At Norfolk Island Central School, Queensland Department of Education officials worked closely with staff to prepare the school community for the start of first term. Senior students are undertaking the NSW curriculum in 2022 and 2023 to complete their NSW Higher School Certificates.

Students and teachers alike were excited for the first day for the full school community on 7 February. Assistant Minister Marino was impressed when she visited the school on 4 February with the school's infrastructure improvements and readiness for the year ahead. Further information is available at https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk_island/norfolk-island-state-services-transition



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