



# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

#### Introduction

Founded in 2018, the Braidwood Community Association is an inclusive community group open to all full and part-time residents of the Braidwood District. It is an incorporated organisation. It holds monthly public meetings and has an elected committee which also meets monthly.

The **Objectives of the BCA** are to:

- Promote and develop Braidwood and its surrounding areas, to further enhance the well-being and sustainability of our community.
- Provide a forum to discuss issues affecting the Braidwood community
- Develop collaborative strategies to address these challenges
- Reflect the interests of the Braidwood community to all levels of government
- Help strengthen local community capacity through networking with other community organisations
- Assist in activities which will enhance the natural and built environment of Braidwood and surrounding areas, including the provision of community facilities.

To achieve these objectives, the BCA

- Acts as a conduit with QPRC Council staff and Councillors on many issues
- Works with other community groups to support local projects and advocate for Braidwood and surrounding region
- Conducts community surveys to ascertain priority issues of concern to the town and district residents
- Conducts Meet the Candidates events for Local and State government elections
- Applies for grants and supports grant applications by other community organisations
- Submits responses to QPRC public consultations on local issues
- Engages with State Government representatives to present the views of Braidwood residents
- Maintains and encourages contact with organisations providing services for Braidwood and District
- Engages with local residents on an individual basis on issues that concern them

Since 2018 the Braidwood and District community has faced serious challenges from drought, bushfires and floods, as well as the Covid 19 pandemic. The BCA worked with many local organisations during that time to provide assistance and promote a coordinated community response to these challenges. We have supported grant applications for bushfire recovery projects, and developed close relationships with representatives of our villages and other localities. These relationships are ongoing and mutually supportive.

During those years, the issues of housing affordability, water security, traffic movements through the town and strategic planning for future development have emerged. The BCA has addressed some of these issues via submissions to Council and the State Government. Attached to this report is a list of our submissions for the period 1 July 2022 -30 June 2023. They can be viewed in full on our website, [www.braidwoodcommunity.org.au](http://www.braidwoodcommunity.org.au)

## Achievements since the last AGM:

- The **Braidwood Skate Park** was completed and opened on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023. This project was funded mainly from a grant of \$680,660 from the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund. The grant application was made by the Braidwood Youth Performing Arts Association( BYPAA), supported by the BCA. Extra funding was received from the Mulwaree-Veolia Trust for BBQ facilities and community fundraising added nearly \$7000 to the budget. QPRC Disaster Recovery Funding provided facilities including footpaths and an extra picnic table and shelter. BCA and BYPAA representatives worked with the NSW Public Works Advisory, QPRC staff and the contractor, Grind Projects, to deliver this project. A few minor works are still to be completed (tree planting, water stations, shade sails). This project has been an outstanding success and shows what can be achieved when a community works together to achieve a common goal. The BCA and BYPAA extend our sincere thanks to all the organisations and individuals who contributed to the success of this project.
- Council has provided several new **footpaths in Braidwood**. The BCA has consistently advocated for more footpaths, and we thank QPRC for responding to this need.
- \$120,000 has been allocated for **accessible paths and ramps** to improve accessibility to the Braidwood Pool and public toilets at Ryrie Park, following consultations with the QPRC Community Development team. Discussions with QPRC on other accessibility issues in town have commenced.
- The BCA and BYPAA held discussions with Council's General Manager Rebecca Ryan and QPRC Senior staff re the creation of a **Community Hub at the Old Library**, with a focus on Youth activities. This has resulted in an agreement to allow not-for-profit community groups to use the space without charge. The Old Library has been renamed The Glasshouse, reflecting its north facing design and the concept of nurturing with a focus on Youth activities. An online booking system will be set up for community use. QPRC will handle commercial bookings. This arrangement began on July 1st and will be reviewed after 12 months. Disaster Recovery Grant Funding has provided some equipment for this space. BYPAA are using the space for youth activities, and we are currently looking into the use of the space for a Play Group and meeting place for our "Young Mums".
- **Development of a Braidwood Structure Plan**. QPRC developed a Discussion Paper and engaged in community consultation during March and April 2023. The BCA engaged actively in this process, having discussions with the planning staff and inviting them to a BCA meeting. Our submission on this Discussion Paper can be found on our website.
- **Affordable Housing Strategy**. QPRC held a public consultation on a proposed Affordable Housing Strategy from 24 November 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023. The BCA's submission can be found on our website.
- **Traffic issues in and around Braidwood**. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) conducted a consultation in May 2023 on the *Braidwood and Bungendore Transport Study*. BCA representatives were included in a meeting with representatives from TfNSW on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023. Our submission on this can be found on our website. A final report from TfNSW has not been made public.
- The BCA made a submission on QPRC's options for a **Special Rates Variation** in January 2023.
- The BCA made a submission on **QPRC's Draft Operational Plan 2023-24**.
- **European Wasp Action**. The BCA has worked with the Braidwood Urban Landcare Group (BULG) and the Braidwood and Villages Business Chamber (BAVBC) to provide information about European wasps to the community. Assistance with the provision of traps will also be offered. Braidwood Community Bank (Bendigo Bank) has generously provided funding to assist with this.

## Ongoing issues and projects – Planning for the Future

- **Development of the D&S site** and the relocation of the Council Works Depot. QPRC conducted a public consultation on this project in July-August 2023. Information on this project, called 88 Wallace Street Renewal, can be found at <https://yourvoice.qprc.nsw.gov.au/88-wallace-street-renewal>

- **Community transport.** The BCA recognises a need for community transport for Braidwood, especially for medical transport. Valmar Community Aged and Transport Services offer a fortnightly bus service to Goulburn, as a result of consultations with the BCA. Valmar also offer medical transport but considerations such as driver requirements and permitted driving hours make this difficult to implement in practice. The BCA will continue to advocate for the provision of medical transport by the NSW Dept of Health.
- **Braidwood Community Plan.** QPRC are keen to create a Braidwood Community Plan. Some consultations have been held with community groups. Using the information available, Jacquelyn Richards, QPRC Director, Community, Arts and recreation, is developing a draft Plan for Consultation.
- **More footpaths and development of new walking paths for public recreation.** The BCA will continue to advocate for this, and for funding to repair and upgrade the existing path along Flood Creek created by the Braidwood Urban Landcare Group.
- **Improved services and support for young residents.** The BCA supports and encourages projects to provide opportunities and recreational activities for young residents. We hope to develop the potential of The Glasshouse to create a centre for our youth.
- **Improved services and support for senior residents.** The BCA consults with the QPRC Community Development team on the provision of services and information for Seniors. Councillors and council staff have been invited to the First Thursday lunches held each month at the Braidwood Servicemen's Club, where many of our senior residents meet. With QPRC help we hope to develop a guide to Aged Care Services available for Braidwood and District residents.
- **Safeguarding Braidwood's heritage.** The BCA supports the protection of Braidwood's heritage buildings and looks forward to the final report from the 15 Year Review of Braidwood's State Heritage listing.
- **Water Security for Braidwood.** After the last drought and the bushfires, QPRC engaged the NSW Public Works Advisory to assess short-term and long-term options to address the water security issues at Braidwood. The PWA report was presented to the Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023. as an Item for Information. The BCA will request that this report is included in the agenda for the Braidwood Community meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023. The report can be found at [Braidwood Water Supply - Water Security Assessment and Drought Contingency Plan](#)
- **Environmental Issues:** The BCA supports the QPRC Urban Forest Strategy and encourages Council to provide funding for this. The BCA supports better management of Braidwood's Creeks, and acknowledges the work done over many years by the Braidwood Urban Landcare Group.