

## Our backyard just became a whole lot bigger

It's no secret our region boasts stunning natural assets which are the perfect backdrop for outdoor adventure and an idyllic lifestyle

We now have over 10,000 incredible km<sup>2</sup> to explore... about the same size as Jamaica!



1



2



4



3

1 190km of pristine coastline – the length of 3,800 Olympic swimming pools

2 The World-Heritage listed Barrington Tops – at 1,586m it's the highest point in NSW outside the Snowy Mountains

3 The great sparkling lakes of Wallis, Smith and Myall Lakes – a unique triple lakes system found nowhere else in Australia

4 The sheer 200m drop of Ellenborough Falls - the second highest single-drop waterfall in the Southern Hemisphere

Be a tourist in our unique area and explore all that the region has to offer. Click through from our website to the tourism sites for Great Lakes, Manning Valley and Gloucester, or drop into your nearest Visitor Information Centre, to find the perfect spot for your next day-trip or weekend getaway.

## Communication to connect our communities

Here at MidCoast Council we like to stay in touch, so keep an eye out for the variety of communication channels we'll use to keep you updated



## Business as usual?

Merging three businesses into one is no mean feat, and while we expect it to take some time before the "behind the scenes" integration is complete, we have made a commitment to our community to continue to deliver quality services such as your rubbish collection, library services, Development Applications and sporting fields.

Over time you'll see positive change. By taking the best systems and processes and developing 'fit for purpose' services, we'll create better, faster and smarter ways to do business with you. *Take a look at the FAQ's on our website to find out more.*



**Our website** is updated daily with the latest news and information, and provides links to online options to conduct your regular Council business.

**Local newspapers** will continue to publish Council news and information that's relevant to your specific area.

**We use Facebook** to provide regular, topical news and events, and this is a great place to chat with us.

**MidCoast Council meetings** are open to everyone and they're a good way to stay updated on Council business.

**Regular community meetings** held across the region will be advertised well in advance, using all our communications channels.

You can also email us at any time, and you can call or visit the same Council offices that you always have.



## How to contact us

Keep this list handy if you're looking for information or have any questions.

### In person or by phone:

**Forster** 4 Breese Parade **6591 7222**

**Gloucester** 89 King Street **6538 5250**

**Taree** 2 Pulteney Street **6592 5399**

**Tea Gardens** Myall Street **4997 0182**

**Stroud** 6 Church Lane **4994 5204**

### After-hours emergencies

Visit our website for contact numbers relevant to your area.

**Website:** [midcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://midcoast.nsw.gov.au)

**Email:** [council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au)

**Facebook:** MidCoastCouncil

### Water and sewer

MidCoast Water 1300 133 455

## MidCoast Council

Catching up... with

## Interim General Manager Glenn Handford



Glenn has spent 35 years in local government, 22 of those at the former Great Lakes Council

Based at the Forster office, Glenn will also spend time regularly in Taree and Gloucester.

We asked Glenn about his priorities and what he aims to achieve at MidCoast Council. His goals include:

- **Building constructive relationships** with the community
- **Providing a strategic direction** to ensure a sustainable long term financial position
- **Delivery of quality services** leading to satisfied customers
- **Establishing** and continuously improving business systems and services
- **Developing partnerships** with government agencies to deliver community outcomes
- **Building a constructive staff culture** that leads to quality outcomes for all customers
- **Ensuring** a smooth transition to an elected council

## Let's talk Rates

You may have noticed that your 2016/17 Rate Notice looks different, but the rating structure, rating categories and line items are the same as they've always been.

Here's a few key things you should note:

- There has been no change to charges, except for increasing rates by the standard rate peg, or by a previously approved Special Rate Variation [SRV].
- This means the rate peg increase of 1.8% has been applied to both the former Greater Taree and Great Lakes Council areas, while the second year of Gloucester's SRV (+13%) will apply in that area.

# Tackling the tasks ahead

## John Turner, Administrator for MidCoast Council



After a long career in local government and over 23 years as the NSW Member for Myall Lakes, John Turner has been appointed by the NSW Governor as our Administrator. But he won't be flying solo, with an Independent Advisory Group [IAG] and a Local Representative Committee [LRC] to assist him in representing the diverse views and aspirations of communities across all corners of our region.

John explains how the formation of these two groups will provide him with local guidance to deliver positive forward momentum over the next 14 months, from advice on big picture strategic matters, to making robust day-to-day decisions that benefit the whole community.

### How will you achieve local representation across such a large geographic area?

There are challenges and needs across all three former council areas, and that's where the two advisory groups come in. Although I know the areas the new council encompasses well, I'll be relying on input from local representatives who live and work across the region, and have intimate, on-the-ground experience of those communities.

### Who are the local representatives?

The two groups include former councillors from each area so you'll see some familiar names. The IAG is chaired by Jan McWilliams, and includes Len Roberts, Kathryn Bell, and Katheryn Smith. The LRC is a larger group, also chaired by Jan, alongside Trent Jennison, Robyn Jenkins, David West, Carol McCaskie, Leigh Vaughan, Karen Hutchinson, Jim Henderson and Frank Hooke.

### What's your first priority now the two taskforces are set up?

To ensure it's business as usual for all residents of MidCoast Council and a smooth transition from three separate entities to one.

- Visit our website for more information on John's background and experience.



- For 2017/2018 the NSW Government is waiting for IPART to release its report on the review of the rating system and will determine how they implement their rates policy moving forward.
- We may ask that the SRVs applied for last year by Manning and Great Lakes regions be reconsidered, as these are still necessary to address our financial needs - there's no certainty around if or when this will happen, but we'll make sure you are kept updated.
- Distribution of this year's rates is based on plans produced by each region prior to the merger, meaning your rates will be allocated in your region.
- Where rates will be spent in future years is yet to be determined, but our aim is to provide the same quality of services you've come to expect, or higher, in every community.

## Register for your rates in your inbox



- Costs to print and post your Rates and Instalment Notices are on the rise - currently around \$5 per property per year, for almost 50,000 ratepayers!
- Registering for your rates by email means we save money, and have more funds to use on projects that benefit our region.

*Manning and Great Lakes residents, check your Rate Notice for how to register. Note: Gloucester, we're aiming to roll out in your area soon... watch this space!*