



# News from your local councillor

## Cr Mark Edwards

Division 5: Southern Moreton Bay Islands edition



November 2020

### Dear island resident,

Merry Christmas to everyone and I wish you all a happy New Year.

As 2020 draws to a close we can reflect upon a year that has been unique and also look to the future that hopefully will hold good fortune and peace on Earth.

This has been a historic year, with the global pandemic affecting all of us. It has brought great sadness for the families of those who succumbed to this disease.

At the time of writing, there is no vaccination yet some promising medical advances and I hope that 2021 will mark the beginning of the end for COVID-19.

Redlands Coast has been fortunate in the few cases recorded and it has been due, in my opinion, to good management, health protocols and mostly because of our community doing the right things to prevent the virus spreading.

In 2020, the local government election was held and I was again humbled to be re-elected for a third consecutive term (12 years) as your local representative. The final distribution count was 66 percent of votes in my favour.

This term, I will be advocating for the largest infrastructure investment on record for our

division and also livability improvements. As an example of the latter, I have asked Council to consider trialling upgrades to our public toilets, including the provision of soap dispensers and paper towels.

On the larger scale, Redland Bay's Weinam Creek redevelopment is kicking up another gear with preparations for the roads and underground services for the multi-level carpark, shopping centre and associated shops and medical services.

I also hope that our three levels of government can work more closely together and deliver improved transport options. Redland Bay-Cleveland Road must be upgraded and the island roads could finally be all sealed with shared funding.

There are a number of exciting proposals that will improve our city over the coming year and I look forward to representing your interests as we strive to make Redlands Coast the best place to live.

**Cr Mark Edwards**  
Division 5 – Islands

### Helping community

Every month I make many visits to residents and organisations on the islands. One recent visit to the Bay Islands Community Services at Macleay Island highlighted again the importance of those island groups which support and provide a range of valuable services for our community. Angela Collins heads up the Macleay Island operation at 35 Southsea Terrace, which has its main operational site at 55 Jackson Road, Russell Island.

For more than 25 years, this organisation has been providing a range of support services for all ages, people with disabilities and those in need. They are a great example of islanders helping islanders, which Council has been proud to support along with other community organisation. They all need donations of goods to provide to the needy, so if you have unwanted furniture, white goods or other items please donate them. Contact Angela on 3409 5613 or any other island service organisation.

### Shoreline management

Council is inviting community members to provide feedback on its draft Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS).

The CHAS is a city-wide strategy for the protection of the city's coastline, including islands. It assesses the vulnerability of infrastructure, assets and property to coastal hazards, and recommends actions to help adapt and manage these risks.

As part of the project's next phase, Council is presenting the draft CHAS for community consultation until 18 December 2020. This engagement phase follows the project's June 2020 survey, which asked community members what they valued most about Redlands Coast, plus their understanding and any experiences of coastal hazards.

A project update fact sheet was released in September 2020, highlighting the survey's key themes. The fact sheet can be viewed on the project's Your Say page. To submit feedback and for more information, visit [yoursay.redland.gov.au/CHAS](https://yoursay.redland.gov.au/CHAS)

### Advocating for our islands

For the first time in many years, I recently took two weeks' leave and travelled inland to visit family and to also look at how far western regional councils provide for their communities.

The most western towns I visited were Quilpie, Thargomindah and Cunnamulla, all of which are smaller than our islands community. In the thousands of kilometres I drove, I found vibrant communities with hospitals, aged-care facilities and a range of permanent government services that are absent from our islands. I like that these communities are thriving and a lot of that is due to the funding that they receive for being rural and remote. Our islands, which can also be considered remote with a range

of demographic challenges, also deserve such funding and permanent government services. This is a position that is supported by Council, and Mayor Karen Williams continues to lobby the State and Federal governments to make this funding available to our island communities.



*SUPPORT: Council is keen to see our islands get the same funding consideration and government services as remote centres such as Thargomindah in western Queensland.*

## Dealing with midges

Many residents will be well aware that midge season is here.

Unlike mosquitoes, which Council does treat, there are unfortunately no midge-specific insecticides available and no chemicals approved or safe for use in the Moreton Bay Marine Park, where biting midges breed.

Council has a marine parks permit from the State Government that allows us to use certain chemicals in the marine park environment, like the ones we use for mozzies, but the permit does not allow for the use of chemicals that are effective on midges.

Using chemicals where the midge larvae live can harm fish and other marine creatures.

However, we can treat mosquito larvae and have a year-round spray program.

Thankfully, unlike mosquitoes, midges are not known to transmit any human diseases in Australia. But Council hasn't given up the challenge of finding a better

way to manage midges and is partnering with industry research bodies and other councils to keep up to date with the latest research and practices.

While biting midges are endemic to our environment, you can take measures to protect yourselves during the peak breeding season, including:

- Wearing insect repellent and long, loose-fitting clothing if heading outdoors at dawn and dusk.
- Installing fine mesh fly screens where midges are making their way through into homes. Fly screens can also be treated with UV stable insecticide.
- Increasing air flow around your home.
- Keeping vegetation surrounding the house to a minimum to reduce insect-harboring areas.
- Privately initiated barrier treatments from qualified pest controllers.

Further information on biting midges can be found on Council's website at [redland.qld.gov.au/midges](http://redland.qld.gov.au/midges)

## Pet care over Christmas

The excitement and stresses of the Christmas holiday season can rub off on your furry family members, so here are some tips from Council's animal management team to help keep your pets safe:

- If your pet is likely to be overwhelmed with lots of people visiting, put them in another room or area where it will be quiet.
- Look out for signs of stress and protect them from any unwanted attention.
- Do not allow children to hug or kiss your dog. Even a dog that usually tolerates this may not do so in a high-stress situation with lots of noise and people.
- If your dog licks his lips, shows the whites of his eyes or turns his head away when a child or adult is patting him, intervene immediately as they are signals of stress.
- Other signs that your dog does not welcome attention is when it tries to walk away or hide, growls or raises the fur on its back,

- Don't feed your pets table scraps as some Christmas fare can be toxic or just unhealthy for them.
- Always ensure pets have access to shade and plenty of water, especially if you are away during the day.
- If you take your dog in the car with you, ensure they are properly restrained, have plenty of ventilation and that you regularly stop for water breaks.
- Don't leave your pet in the car.

If you want to gift a pet this Christmas, check out the furry friends available at Council's animal shelter by going to Facebook to see the most current list of animals available for adoption.

If you want to help them out over the holiday season, the crew at the shelter would appreciate donations of food, toys and towels. No pillows or feather doonas please.



# TIME TO 'GET READY'

Summer regularly brings the threat of significant weather events and bushfires to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands, so I urge all residents to ensure they are ready.

**Prepare your home and a family emergency plan**

It pays not to leave it until you hear there is a storm or fire on the horizon which might force you to evacuate your home in a hurry.

To ensure you can be best prepared, information for all residents and visitors to Redlands Coast is available at [disaster.redland.qld.gov.au](http://disaster.redland.qld.gov.au). Meanwhile, Council continues to be proactive in its fire management.

## Prepare your home

- Clean gutters and downpipes.
- Secure loose items around your property.
- Trim trees around the house (check with Council first), install metal screens and ensure LPG cylinder relief valves point away from the house to minimise fire risk.

## Make a household emergency plan

- Prepare an emergency kit with essentials such as medications, legal papers, first aid, a battery operated radio, batteries, pet food, money and a torch.
- Identify a safe place to evacuate to in a bushfire and decide how you'd look after your pets.
- Decide whether to go early or stay and defend in bushfire situations.
- Make sure everyone in your household knows the plan.
- Have your bushfire survival plan ready.

Visit [ruralfire.qld.gov.au](http://ruralfire.qld.gov.au) for more information.

## Know your neighbours

- Your neighbours can be a source of support during emergencies.
- If you don't know who owns the property next door contact Council on 3829 8999 for their details.
- Those without family or friends close by who would like more social contact can organise for a Red Cross check-in call by phoning **1300 885 698**.

## Be Informed

Visit [disaster.redland.qld.gov.au](http://disaster.redland.qld.gov.au) for information on how to prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters. For weather and warning updates:

Bureau of Meteorology [bom.gov.au/qld](http://bom.gov.au/qld)

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