

STRONGER TOGETHER

From community to workplace, wellbeing matters

COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER: MENTAL HEALTH WEEK AT LONGFORD

Longford Memorial Hall was alive with colour, conversation, and creativity on Saturday, October 11, as residents gathered for the Moments That Matter: Community Wellbeing Festival supported by the Mental Health Council of Tasmania and the State Government. A celebration of mental health, connection, and local spirit. Hosted by Northern Midlands Council as part of Mental Health Week, the festival embraced the theme "Appreciate the Little Things" by offering simple, hands on activities that promote everyday wellbeing. From seedling repotting and mini art workshops to live music, Mahjong lessons and indoor bowls, the event invited attendees to slow down, connect, and enjoy life's small joys.

A Strong Turnout and Positive Energy

It was a strong turnout throughout the day, with families, seniors and young people filling the hall and spilling into conversations around the morning tea tables. More than 200 scones were served by the Country Women's Association which became a friendly barometer of participation, with locals catching up over tea and coffee while exploring displays and trying new activities. "It was wonderful to see so many people come together," said Mayor Knowles. "The energy in the room was heartwarming, people were laughing, learning, and sharing stories."

Intergenerational Connections in Action

One of the festival's standout successes was its ability to bridge generations. Seniors joined younger participants at creative stations and games, fostering friendships and mutual learning. A highlight was the Mahjong table, where older residents taught newcomers the rules and strategy of the game. For one attendee, learning Mahjong was a bucket list dream come true: "I've always wanted to learn," they shared. "Today I not only learned, but made new friends."

Local Clubs See New Sign Ups

The event also delivered tangible benefits for local organisations. The Longford Garden Club, Perth Indoor Bowls Club, The Country Womens Association, The Longford Art Group, Men's Shed and other community groups reported fresh membership enquiries and sign ups. "We had several people express interest in joining our club," said a representative from the Longford Garden Club. "It's great to see people discovering hobbies that support mental health."

Leadership and Community Spirit

Mayor Mary Knowles OAM praised the festival's inclusive design and the community's enthusiasm for the theme. "Events like Moments That Matter remind us that wellbeing is built in small steps; sharing a cuppa, trying something new, joining a local club and friendship" Mayor Knowles said. "When we do those little things together, our community grows stronger. I'm proud of the way our residents, volunteers and local groups came together to support each other during Mental Health Week." Live entertainment by pianist Catherine Rowe set an upbeat tone, while Norm King's lure making demonstration drew curious onlookers. Children and young at heart enjoyed art stations and seed planting activities. These simple, joyful experiences reinforced the message that appreciating life's little things can make a big difference to mental wellbeing.

Looking Ahead

Supported by the Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Tasmanian State Government and many local volunteers, the festival underscored the power of collaboration in promoting inclusion and reducing stigma. With overwhelmingly positive feedback, Northern Midlands Council plans to continue supporting initiatives that celebrate everyday practices for wellbeing. "We're already thinking about next year," said Mayor Knowles. "Events like this remind us that the pathway to better mental health often begins with small, accessible steps - and those steps are easier when we take them together." For more information about community groups near you please visit the Northern Midlands Business and Community Directory at: <https://www.nmba.asn.au/business-directory>

COUNCIL PARTNERS WITH RAW



Northern Midlands Council is proud to announce a new collaboration with Rural Alive and Well (RAW), a leading Tasmanian organisation dedicated to mental health outreach and suicide prevention in rural communities. As part of Council's ongoing commitment to staff wellbeing, RAW will visit Council offices to deliver tailored sessions focused on mental health awareness, resilience-building, and practical support strategies. The initiative aims to equip staff with tools to recognise early signs of stress, foster open conversations about mental health, and connect individuals with appropriate resources. RAW's experienced outreach workers will provide interactive workshops and confidential support opportunities, ensuring staff feel empowered to prioritise their wellbeing.

"Council recognises that mental health is just as important as physical health," said Nathan Lowe. "Partnering with RAW allows us to strengthen our internal culture of care and ensure our team has access to expert guidance and practical strategies."

This proactive approach reflects Council's broader commitment to creating a safe, supportive workplace and promoting mental health across the Northern Midlands region. Staff sessions have commenced this month, with follow-up resources and ongoing support available through RAW's outreach network. For more information about RAW and its services, visit www.rawtas.com.au



- 1 Potting seedlings and seeds with the Longford Garden Club
- 2 Learning Mahjong
- 3 Members of the Perth Indoor Bowls Club join the Longford Art Group for some creative fun
- 4 Councillor Dick Adams OAM and David Swann admire work done by the Longford Men's Shed
- 5 Works of art ready to take home
- 6 Mayor Mary Knowles OAM joins local artist Dee Alty
- 7 Fiona gets some coaching from Carol of the Perth Indoor Bowls Club

CONTACT US

(03) 6397 7303

council@nmc.tas.gov.au

ADDRESS

13 Smith Street, Longford TAS 7301

PO Box 156 Longford TAS 7301

OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday

8:45am - 4:30pm