

Doors to new Duke of Kent Community Building officially open

Wagga Wagga City Council was pleased to welcome guests and members of the community into the new Duke of Kent Community Building, which officially opened its doors to the public today (24 June 2024).

Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga, Councillor Dallas Tout welcomed special guests including First Nations Elder Aunty Mary Atkinson, who provided a warm Welcome to Country, and members of the Wagga Wagga Veteran & Vintage Motor Club (VVMC) and University of the Third Age (U3A), who are long-term users of the previous site.

Members of the Motor Club also displayed several cars and motorbikes on site during the event, using the freshly installed carpark to showcase a key aspect of their members' passion for classic vehicles.

Council's Manager City Growth & Regional Assets Ben Creighton described the venue as a versatile facility capable of suiting a variety of purposes.

"The new Duke of Kent Community Building has been designed to meet the growing need for diverse, adaptable event spaces in our city," Mr Creighton said.

Highlights of the building's construction include a new sound system and a soundproof wall divider, which will allow the space to serve multiple user groups. Fresh office spaces have also been created for ongoing use by the VVMC and U3A.

External upgrades include a new 22-space carpark, while solar panels and upgraded storm water and sewer systems ensure the site will be well supported by its surrounding infrastructure. A multi-purpose undercover area has also been erected.

U3A Wagga Wagga President Daphne Carswell OAM is delighted the Duke of Kent building is now available for some of the many popular activities for which the organisation is known.

"U3A Wagga Wagga is a rapidly growing non-for-profit organisation, offering up to 35 courses weekly for over 500 current members," Ms Carswell said.

"This centrally located new facility will allow U3A Wagga Wagga to continue to grow and provide learning, social interaction and physical activities for the Wagga Wagga members of the community in their 3rd age."

VVMC Vice President Rob Le Lievre was equally pleased to see the venue now open for both community engagement by the club, and enjoyment by their members.

"The Duke of Kent Community Building has provided the Wagga Wagga Veteran & Vintage Motor Club members with an excellent, cohesive site," Mr Le Lievre said.

"This new space elevates the VVMC's ability to promote historic motoring through the City of Wagga Wagga to all people, and our members look forward to the ease with which the club will be able to operate in the new building."

The Mayor thanked the Vintage Motor Club and U3A as continued valued partners in use of the site, noting the venue will be equally accessible to other community groups and members of the public via the online booking system on the Council website.

“This building represents something that is core to Council’s purpose, which is supporting community organisations in our city by ensuring they have enhanced infrastructure available which caters to the needs of many,” Cr Tout said.

“To that end, we very much look forward to seeing the benefits the community overall will experience in future through this refreshed and rebuilt community space.”

The project was fully funded by Wagga Wagga City Council.

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Media Opportunity

What: Official opening ceremony for the new Duke of Kent Community Building, which will include a Welcome to Country by Aunty Mary Atkinson.

It will also be attended by representatives from the University of the Third Age (U3A) and Wagga Wagga Veteran & Vintage Motor Club (VVMC).

Who: Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Cr Dallas Tout; Wagga Wagga Veteran & Vintage Motor Club (VVMC) members including Vice-President Rob Le Lievre; University of the Third Age (U3A) Wagga Wagga members, including President Daphne Carswell OAM.

When: Monday 24 June 2024 at **10.30am**.

Where: Duke of Kent Community Building, 26 Shaw Street.

Contact 6926 9190 or media@wagga.nsw.gov.au

About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of more than \$236M.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre, and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as ‘the City of Good Sports’.

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