

**Next Council Meetings:
20 April 2026 and 18 May 2026 at 10am in the Council Chambers**

From the General Manager - John Brown

There has been recent discussion about proposed changes to Tasmania's electoral districts, and Council has considered what this could mean for Break O'Day. These changes form part of a statewide redistribution process designed to balance elector numbers and reflect population shifts across Tasmania. While we recognise the importance of maintaining balanced voter numbers, we are concerned the current proposal does not reflect how our community lives and connects. Break O'Day has strong, day-to-day links with the north-east and east coast for services, employment, education and travel, with many residents regularly moving between these regions. Under the proposal, the Division of Lyons shifts further toward southern Tasmania, placing our municipality on the edge of the electorate and less aligned with the areas we are connected to. At the same time, Glenorchy is proposed to be included in Lyons, while councils such as Brighton, Sorell, Tasman and Glamorgan-Spring Bay — which are closer to us and share more in common — have been removed. This appears to prioritise numbers over community connection, with the Hobart metropolitan area now forming a significant part of multiple electorates. Council believes this has the potential to weaken effective regional representation and reduce the visibility of our community's needs at a federal level. We have made a submission asking the Commission to reconsider options that better align Break O'Day with the north-east (Bass electorate), or to clearly explain why our community should remain within a reshaped electorate that no longer reflects these connections.

WATER WATCH: Dry conditions place local water supplies under pressure

Ongoing dry weather across Tasmania is starting to impact local water supplies, with Break O'Day now being closely monitored.

TasWater has advised that below-average rainfall, combined with forecasts for continued dry conditions, is placing increasing pressure on water catchments across the state including in St Helens and St Marys, which are currently on "watch" status.

TasWater Head of Communications and Engagement, Liz Hafner, said many parts of Tasmania have experienced a significantly drier year than usual, "Continuing dry weather, along with minimal rainfall forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology, is placing increasing pressure on water catchments across Tasmania, including those in the Break O'Day region," Ms Hafner said.

"Many areas have recorded well below average rainfall this year, and forecasts indicate a 75 per cent chance of continued dry conditions over the coming months.

While there are currently no water restrictions in place in St Helens or St Marys, the Scamander township is already on Stage 1 restrictions — meaning St Helens and St Marys could follow if dry conditions continue.

The ongoing lack of rainfall means restrictions may be required unless water use reduces or significant rain is received," Ms Hafner said.

Reduced flows in key river systems, including the St Patricks and Swan catchments, are also contributing to the pressure on local supplies.

How you can help:

Council and TasWater are encouraging all residents to be mindful of their water use now, to help delay or avoid the need for restrictions. Small changes at home can make a big difference when adopted across the community, including:

- Keeping showers short (aim for 4 minutes).
- Fixing leaking taps, toilets or pipes
- Running dishwashers and washing machines only when full
- Using water-efficient settings on appliances
- Watering gardens early morning or late evening to reduce evaporation
- Using a bucket instead of a hose for outdoor cleaning
- Mulching gardens to retain soil moisture

By working together and reducing unnecessary water use, the community can help protect local water supplies during dry periods.

For the latest updates on water supply systems, visit: www.taswater.com.au/news/water-supply-status



Aquatic Feasibility Study Update

There has been strong interest in the proposed aquatic facility and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey and share their thoughts. We received more than 860 responses.

All feedback has now been collated and a draft consultation report has been prepared for Council. This will be considered at the April Council meeting, where Councillors will endorse the consultation report and decide whether to proceed to the next stage, developing a full business case for the project.

This marks an important step. The feedback we've received will help ensure any future decisions reflect what our community wants and needs as well as both community and Council capacity to pay and maintain the facility. We genuinely appreciate everyone who contributed—it makes a real difference when people take the time to have their say. After the April Council meeting, we will publish the full consultation report in the Council website under Community Engagement.

Cats in the Community: Have Your Say Help shape Tasmania's next Cat Management Plan

The Tasmanian Government is asking for feedback on how cats are managed across the state — and we're encouraging everyone in Break O'Day to have a say.

You don't need to own a cat to take part. Cats can impact wildlife, farming, and neighbourhoods, so this is something that affects the entire community.

Council often hears concerns about roaming cats and their impact. While we do have a role, most of the rules around cat management are set by the State Government — which is why it's important that local voices are heard.

This is your chance to share your thoughts on what's working, what's not, and what you'd like to see improved. Community feedback will help shape the next Cat Management Plan for Tasmania.

- Read the Discussion Paper
- Share your feedback www.nre.tas.gov.au/invasive-species/responsible-cat-ownership/tasmanian-cat-management-plan

Consultation closes 5pm, Friday 15 May. Have your say and help find the right balance for pets, people and the environment.

IN BRIEF

FUEL SUPPLY UPDATES - STAY INFORMED

A Fuel Supply webpage has now been established on the TasALERT platform www.alert.tas.gov.au/fuel-supply-facts. This webpage is the official source of truth for public information about fuel supply, with all updates to be published there as they become available. We encourage our community to stay informed by visiting the TasALERT website for the latest updates.

COG COACH-HEALTH TRIAL

Adults aged 65+ with mild cognitive changes are invited to join a 12-week online trial led by UNSW and Neuroscience Research Australia. Participants receive support across physical activity, nutrition, and cognitive and social engagement. Learn more or register: www.unsw.edu.au/research/cogcoach-health cogcoach.health@unsw.edu.au

SAFE DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD BATTERIES IN BREAK O'DAY

A quick reminder to our community that household batteries are not accepted at Break O'Day Council Waste Transfer Stations.

For safe and responsible disposal, you can drop off your household batteries at the following locations:

- St Helens – both IGA stores
- St Helens – Mitre 10
- Scamander – IGA
- St Marys – Hilly's IGA

These locations have dedicated battery recycling receptacles to ensure batteries are disposed of safely and kept out of landfill.

Thank you for helping protect our environment and keeping our waste facilities safe.

RATES REMINDER - FOURTH INSTALMENT DUE 30 APRIL

A reminder to ratepayers that fourth instalments are due by 30 April. Keep an eye on your mailbox or inbox over the coming weeks, as reminder notices will be sent out shortly. If you have any questions about your instalment or need assistance, please don't hesitate to contact Council.



**NOT YOUR CAT
DON'T FEED IT**

FEEDING A CAT THAT IS NOT YOURS:

- Will help it breed more cats, and more cats.
- Creating problems in your neighbourhood for people and cats, like diseases and parasites.
- More wildlife harmed, such as blue wrens.
- Drag you into more and more costly feeding.
- Can lead to your area being overrun by a 'cat colony'.

DID YOU KNOW?
By feeding a stray cat you could be held responsible as its owner under the [Cat Management Act](#)

Bay of Fires Master Plan - Have Your Say

The Bay of Fires Draft Master Plan is now on public exhibition, and Council is inviting the community to have its say.

This important project will help guide how the Bay of Fires is managed into the future — balancing environmental protection, community needs and sustainable tourism to ensure this iconic area can be enjoyed for generations to come.

During the exhibition period, a series of community information sessions will be held across the region along with online sessions, giving people the opportunity to learn more about the draft plan, ask questions and share their feedback:

For those unable to attend in person, online sessions will be held on:

- **Wednesday 22 April from 1:00–2:30pm**
- **Thursday 23 April from 12:00–12:45pm.**

RSVPs are required for all sessions and can be made by emailing chris.hughes@bodc.tas.gov.au

Community members, stakeholders and visitors are all encouraged to take part in the consultation process. Feedback can be provided by completing the online survey at www.bayoffiresmasterplan.org, where you can also view the full Draft Master Plan. Hard copies of the draft and printed surveys are available from the

WHAT'S ON

The Lighthouse - Every Wednesday

Serving the Break O'Day community, The Lighthouse is a safe place where you can enjoy a free cuppa, hot soup and roll, warm beanies and scarves or a friendly chat. Open every Wednesday, 11am-1pm at the Anglican Hall - 56 Cecilia Street, St Helens.

Break O'Day Chamber of Commerce - Monthly Calendar

The Break O'Day Chamber of Commerce has created a monthly calendar of local events and activities to help showcase what's happening across our region. The Chamber is encouraging local businesses, community groups, and organisations to print and display the calendar to help spread the word. If you'd like to receive future editions, please email the Chamber at sthelenscoc@gmail.com

Bay of Fires Youth Art Prize 2026 - Closes 8 May 2026

Entries are open to children and young people aged 4–18 years. The theme is “No Place Like Home”, inviting you to reflect on your connection to place and caring for Country. Entries close 5:00pm, Friday 8 May 2026. FREE ENTRY with over \$1,000 in prizes to be won! For more information, email buildingblocks@fvnh.org.au or contact Tanya on 0400 002 116.

Bay of Fires Winter Arts Festival - Sandstorm Events - Friday Saturday and Sunday 5-7 June from 9am.

Sand sculpture workshop and competition Spots are limited. Register your team early to take part in the workshops and competition. Great cash prizes. Head to this website for more information: bayoffireswinterartsfestival.com.au

LOCAL MARKETS

St Helens - Every Saturday

Location alternates between the Portland Hall and the Visitor Information Centre Carpark.

St Marys - First Saturday of the month

Held at the St Marys Hall.

Meeting Times:

- Binalong Bay on Tuesday 21 April from 5:30–7:00pm at the Binalong Bay Fire Station
- Ansons Bay on Wednesday 22 April from 5:30–7:00pm at the Ansons Bay Fire Station
- St Helens on Thursday 23 April from 5:30–7:30pm at the Portland Memorial Hall.



**“It takes courage to be kind”
- Maya Angelou**



Council Works Reports

- Sealing of reconstruction work undertaken on Mangana Road
- Asphalt works to continue across the municipality
- Mathinna Plains resheeting during April/May
- Town maintenance across all townships
- Line marking to be undertaken on resealed roads as required



The works Team undertaking Road Sealing.

WEED MANAGEMENT

- **Aerodrome:** Spanish heath.
- **Binalong Bay:** Water heath, Spanish heath, bonespeed, mirror bush, blue periwinkle.
- **St Helens:** Spanish heath, thistles, flat weeds.
- **St Marys:** Spanish heath, thistles, boneseed, gorse.
- **Stieglitz:** Petty spurge, blue butterfly bush, thistles.

DOG STATISTICS

JAN-FEB 2026

Urban Patrols = 14

Beach Patrols = 4

Infringements = 0

Unregistered Dog = 0

Impounded Dogs = 1

Weed of the Month - gorse

Gorse is one of the worst weeds in Australia and Tasmania. While Break O'Day has some badly infested areas, much of the municipality is gorse free or nearly so. Many landholders have embarked on control programs. Gorse seeds remain viable in the soil for up to 30 years so plan carefully and don't waste time and resources. Prevent seed production, start on isolated plants and patches; dig out smaller plants. Herbicides used safely and following the label are effective tools (cut-&-paint or spray). Gorse has some helpful biological control pests, and slashing, grazing, heaping and maybe fire can be useful methods to consider, but not without follow-up. Make a long-term control plan with a range of control methods. Diligent annual follow-up is critical.

And practice good hygiene to prevent gorse from spreading, EG. refuse dirty earthmoving machinery that might be carrying a 30-year headache. For more information on identification, treatment and control look up gorse on the 'declared-weeds-index' at www.nre.tas.gov.au/invasive-species/weeds



Concerned about Rabbits? Get the latest information.

We're reminding landholders and residents to stay up to date with information about rabbit control.

The Tasmanian calicivirus release program plays an important role in managing wild rabbit populations. Landholders can nominate sites for potential calicivirus releases via the Biosecurity Tasmania webpage.

Find out more and nominate a site here:

www.nre.tas.gov.au/invasive-species/invasive-animals/invasive-mammals/european-rabbits/tasmanian-calicivirus-release-sites

You can also learn more about rabbit management and control methods through:

www.nre.tas.gov.au and www.bodc.tas.gov.au/environment/land-management

management

Community reporting also makes a difference. You can help by recording rabbit sightings and any damage on the national RabbitScan map, supporting ongoing control efforts.

To access RabbitScan and find more information, visit www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan

With Easter approaching, it's a timely reminder that while bunnies are part of the season's fun, wild rabbits are a serious environmental and agricultural pest. They can cause significant damage to our townships, farms and bushland.

Working together helps protect our natural environment, farmland and local communities.



See a feral animal... Log it.

Feral deer, cats and rabbits are impacting our environment and farms — and you can help.

By logging sightings in the FeralScan App, you're helping State and Australian Government agencies target control efforts where they're needed most.

It only takes a minute, and every report counts.

Download the FeralScan App or visit www.feralscan.org.au to get started.