



# AIDA

December 2016 • [www.aireys-inlet.org](http://www.aireys-inlet.org)

Urquhart Bluff • Aireys Inlet • Fairhaven • Moggs Creek • Eastern View



## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Community Hall on 22 April 2017. A community forum will follow the AGM at 4.00 pm (speakers to be advised closer to the time). Members are encouraged to put the date in their diaries now!

## Reminder

Memberships are due on 1 January 2017 (see back page). Fees remain the same for 2017–18. AIDA's strength lies in its membership. Take the opportunity to talk to your friends and neighbours about AIDA's aims and objectives and encourage those who don't belong, to join.

## AIDA supports school solar

In early September AIDA's president, Charlotte Allen, presented a \$300 cheque to the Aireys Inlet School for its solar panel fund.

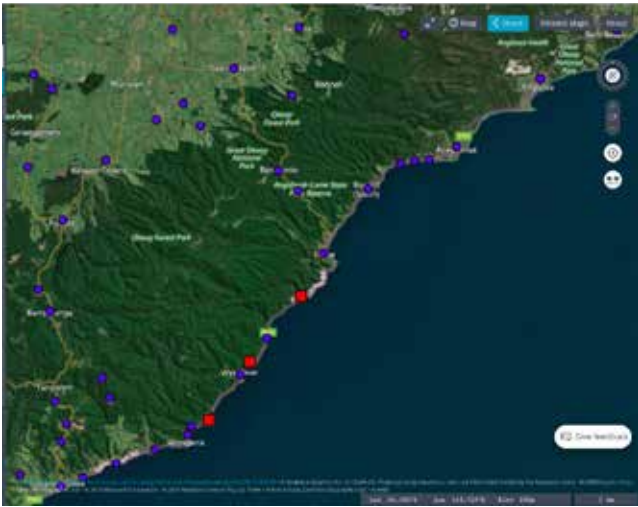
The cheque was received during the school's assembly by the school's Sustainability Ambassadors,

Jedi Switajewski, Mina Barley and Lily-Mei Jacob Mudford who thanked AIDA for its support.

Charlotte said information about the project had been included in recent AIDA newsletters and AIDA was pleased to be able to support solar panels for the school: 'The AIDA committee is enthusiastic about the solar panel project and the positive messages it gives to the community about sustainability and protecting the environment.'



## Aireys to Eastern View misses out on mobile phone black spot funding



The Aireys district has again missed out on funding for improved mobile phone coverage and capacity under Round Two of the Federal Government's Mobile Phone Black Spots program. The places to be funded were announced on 2 December and our area is not one of the four new mobile phone base stations to be built along the Great Ocean Road.

AIDA has been lobbying for better mobile phone services as the existing service is unreliable during the fire season when so many people are holidaying on the coast and would need to rely on the mobile phone service during a bush fire.

Federal MP Sarah Henderson nominated Aireys Inlet for funding and it is disappointing that our area has missed out. AIDA will write to the State Government's Emergency Services Minister to request a temporary base station over this fire season.

*Charlotte Allen*

## Painkalac valley application for subdivision

Members will be aware of the current subdivision application affecting a large part of the Painkalac Valley creek flats north of Butlers Bend, opposite Beach Road. AIDA sought legal advice on whether this subdivision would contravene the covenant over the land under council's long-standing section 173 Agreement with its owner, and whether council is obliged to advertise the application to permit submissions from interested parties.

As a result, AIDA has written to council objecting to the inconsistency of the proposed subdivision with

the covenant and the section 173 Agreement, and advising of the requirement for advertising under section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act.

## The Painkalac valley and recreation facilities

There has been some further publicity and comment about the concept of developing a recreational facility on the Painkalac Valley since September's difficult public meeting about the issue. In light of this the AIDA committee thought it was important to publicly state our position on the oval and support for the council policies. The following is an open letter that was sent to Sarah Henderson MP and our local papers.

### An open letter to Sarah Henderson, MP

I am writing to you following your recent comments about recreation facilities on the Painkalac Valley (*Surf Coast Times*, 27 October). We wrote to you in September, before the public meeting you convened about this issue, but have not yet received a response.

There are significant and deeply felt sensitivities about this issue which are once again creating divisions within our community. It is unfortunate that you have raised development on the valley without first familiarising yourself better with the background. Stereotyping those who see other uses for the valley has exacerbated these divisions.

There is a long history of proposals for developments in the valley which have resulted in numerous investigations by the shire that consistently conclude that the valley is an unsuitable site for an oval for a variety of environmental, financial and demographic reasons.

The Shire's recently adopted Open Spaces Strategy and the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan both explored the concept of additional recreation space in the area and both made recommendations against this.

Your argument for extra recreational facilities in the Aireys Inlet area seems to be based on the premise that the population in the Aireys Inlet district is growing and attracting greater numbers of families with small children.

While AIDA would wish this to be the case, unfortunately it is not. Increasing property prices in the coastal communities along the Great Ocean Road are resulting in fewer young people with children being able to afford to move into the area.

The area has a limited population and the

projections are for minimal population increases (Surf Coast Shire's Open Spaces Strategy 2016-2025, p. 42).

The 2015 Eastern View to Aireys Inlet Structure Plan provides further reasons why an oval on the valley does not make sense. It concludes that, while future demographic trends suggest the number of children in the area is likely to be stable or to fall, sports grounds and teams in Lorne and Anglesea rely on children from the Aireys area for their viability and would be threatened should Aireys have its own oval. In turn, the Aireys teams rely on children from elsewhere.

The plan also says the costs and risks of providing an active recreation space are not proportionate to the perceived benefits and anticipated use.

In addition, providing an oval in Aireys Inlet is not consistent with the AFL Barwon Regional Strategy (2015) to increase the quality and capacity of existing facilities and to plan and develop new facilities in the key growth areas. AIDA supports the plans for improvements to and greater community use of the small oval at the Aireys Inlet School.

There are other significant reasons in the structure plan why development in the valley is not supported:

- The Painkalac Valley is environmentally sensitive and in a designated floodplain with significant flora and fauna, Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, coastal acid sulfate soils and poor drainage.
- Any structures and infrastructure such as vehicle access and car parking that would be required would erode the highly valued open landscape character of the valley.
- Feedback from the community during the review of the Structure Plan indicated there is no clear mandate to proceed with an active recreation space.

It is also worth noting that AIDA has surveyed its members and, at times, the wider community since 1983. In last year's survey 75 per cent of respondents were opposed to public facilities in the valley.

It is unfortunate that we need to communicate in this way with you, but we have become very concerned about the effects of misinformed and negative commentary. We hope that the shire's priorities and processes continue to be based on a careful consideration of a whole range of factors, as at present.

*Charlotte Allen, President, AIDA*

## The retaining wall

Great Ocean Road: Painkalac Creek to Lialeeta Road



AIDA members felt the long expanse of retaining wall could be improved by some planting. Once the draft budget was released, AIDA applied for funds to plant species that would cascade down the wall and soften its appearance. Marg MacDonald from ANGAIR provided a list of suitable plants and the shire agreed to provide assistance and \$12,500 for plants.

So in the next planting season, you can expect to see both AIDA members and shire staff working together on this project.

*Gary Johnson*

## Surf Coast council elections

The two councillors who have represented the Anglesea Ward for the past four years were re-elected in the recent council elections. We offer our congratulations to Cr Margot Smith and Cr Libby Coker and look forward to continuing to work with them, and the other Surf Coast Shire councillors, to maintain and protect the values and qualities of our area and the Great Ocean Road.

The new mayor is Cr Brian McKiterick who is from the Torquay Ward. The remaining Torquay Ward councillors are Cr David Bell, Cr Martin Duke and Cr Rose Hodge. Moggs Creek is represented by Clive Goldsworthy who was re-elected to the Lorne Ward. Winchelsea Ward is represented by Cr Carol McGregor and Cr Heather Wellington. AIDA congratulates them all.



## Fairhaven underpass update



It is disappointing that the works to improve the appearance of the Fairhaven underpass were delayed largely due to the wet weather over the past few months. However, the trial painting of some new colours began at the beginning of December. At this stage VicRoads is planning to have a range of different colours on the underpass walls as indicated in the photo above.

The painting of the underpass walls will be finished once VicRoads has received feedback from AIDA and other members of the Underpass Reference Group. If you have any comments on the colour scheme trial please provide your feedback via the AIDA website [www.aireys-inlet.org](http://www.aireys-inlet.org)

Much of the planned landscaping went in during spring, some of the plants have struggled and there appears to have been little growth. The VicRoads contract for the landscaping includes two years' maintenance and if any plants die they will be replaced.

There are plans for some more mature plants but to make sure they are not damaged this planting won't be done until the underpass walls are re-painted and the improvements are made to the barriers and railings. VicRoads expect the bigger plants to go in in autumn 2017.

The improved lighting has been ordered and VicRoads is hopeful this work will be complete by the end of the year. The new lighting is coming from an overseas supplier and the arrival date is not confirmed. VicRoads has told AIDA they will update us when they have more exact timing.

VicRoads is still investigating how to improve the barriers and railings. We will continue to work with VicRoads, and the other members of the reference group, to see these agreed improvements completed.

## Planning Scheme 'Biodiversity' Amendments

In October AIDA met with the council planning department to re-visit our objections of 18 months ago regarding the shire's three so-called 'biodiversity' amendments to the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme.

In 2015 we summarised these important amendments in our August newsletter, which AIDA was concerned contained threats to our local environment, including the Painkalac Valley. In planning scheme jargon the amendments are AM C81 affecting the rural areas of the shire, AM C85 covering lower density settlement areas such as Aireys Inlet's larger bush blocks and the Painkalac valley, and AM C96 dealing with the shire's urban areas, including much of Aireys Inlet to Moggs Creek.

These amendments were suspended by the shire later in 2015 for further review, and, after council deciding this September to abandon AM C81 due to complications in its implementation, the remaining two amendments have only recently been re-activated, with the intention that council finalise them before the end of this year.

Ironically, although the main objective of the amendments was to more accurately identify and target those areas of the shire needing environmental protection, AIDA is concerned that they also weaken existing protections over a number of areas of our local environment. In addition to environmental protection, updated areas prone to flooding, new fire protection clauses and streetscape design provisions were also incorporated, as well as some 'tidying up' as the planning office might describe it, including the removal of the existing requirements for landscape plans when applying for a residential planning permit and also of environmental management plans required in sensitive natural areas.

The amendments are detailed, technically complex and their overall effects difficult to assess. They have a number of good points, such as improving the environmental protection of waterways and formally recognising that the highest bushfire risk along our coast coincides with the peak tourism season. But they also delete, based on a state government requirement, all previous references to possible conflicts between indigenous vegetated neighbourhood character such as that in Aireys Inlet, and bush fire risk, removing the potential for the planning scheme to address these important and problematic issues. More specific shortfalls in the amendments for our area include:

- removal of planning protection from the sand dune, beach, rock shelf and cliffs across the Painkalac estuary mouth from Fairhaven to Split Point;
- removal of environmental controls from the privately owned land in the Painkalac valley;

- introduction of streetscape and public landscaping policy and provisions which are incompatible with our agreed coastal character, as they reflect the suburban values of the shire's new urban growth areas, including, e.g., exotic street trees and suburban nature strips, but make no compensating provision for our informal indigenous local character;
- addition of a variety of types of buildings and works which are to be permitted without a planning permit within the flood-prone areas of estuaries, including the majority of the Painkalac Valley between the Beach Road and Old Coach Road, such as road works, open sports ground, agricultural shed, a mast, antenna, power pole, light pole, telecommunication tower or advertising sign;
- lack of consistency with the existing planning scheme, potentially leading to unintended and unadvertised clashes, following more recent amendments, such as the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan, introduced since AM C85 and AM C96;
- lack of consistency within the amendments, due to the abandonment of AM C81, where there were previously interrelated changes to the scope of environmental protection within and around Aireys Inlet to Eastern View.

While having the opportunity for lengthy discussions with the shire planning office regarding AIDA's concerns, and a degree of confidence that some of them may be addressed, we remain deeply worried about the results of many aspects of the amendments, largely due to the lack of community consultation on our concerns during their preparation.

*Ian Godfrey*

## Painkalac Reservoir – what to do with the extra water?

Painkalac Creek Environmental Flows Community and Agency Group (PCEFCAG) report

Painkalac reservoir provided drinking water for Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven from 1978 until May this year. Now the 160ML of water consumed per year is available for release into the creek. Since the dam will remain in place, the question is how to best release water to improve the environmental health of Painkalac Creek below the dam.

PCEFCAG, a community and agency group,\* was formed to make recommendations on water release. The group has met three times and there was lively discussion about best use of the water considering the health of the valley and the impact of climate change.

While the recommendations have not been finalised, there will be a constant water release all year. In dry periods this may not result in water flowing downstream, but some creek organisms need this. It is expected that intermittent larger water releases from December to April will provide low flow pulses down the creek. From May to July there will be even larger releases, linked with rainfall, resulting in a much greater flow. Ideally in winter there will be several high flows, when the water level rises significantly, but as the maximum volume of water that can be released from the dam is 11ML per day, this can only occur when water is going over the spillway – it is impossible to artificially release enough water to mimic recent events!

Deakin University's Centre for Integrative Ecology will be monitoring the impact of the flow changes. Water quality, fish, macroinvertebrates and vegetation may be monitored. Originally the project was only to consider the freshwater section of Painkalac Creek, but community members in the group recommended that Distillery Creek be included and that there be monitoring of the estuary as well – this should integrate with the work of Estuary Watch. There will be opportunities for community members to be part of the project.

When the recommendations are finalised, they will be posted on the AIDA website.

\* Barwon Water, Corangamite CMA, SCS, DEWLP, Parks Victoria, ANGAIR, AIDA, Estuary Watch and other interested community members

*Gretel Lamont*



## 6 Federal Street planning update



The Surf Coast Shire will challenge in VCAT the planning application for a two-storey dwelling at 6 Federal Street (near the Lighthouse). The proposed building is not in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings that, when viewed from public areas like the cliff walk, are all single-storey dwellings. Many are 'nestled in the trees', in keeping with the Neighbourhood Character Overlay.

The proposal is for a large building that will dominate the view from important public viewing points, especially to the east of the site. Furthermore, the building will unacceptably intrude on the views of the heritage-listed Split Point Lighthouse – the most recognisable structure in Aireys Inlet – and the subject of many protective clauses in the Planning Scheme.

AIDA was one of a number of objectors to the application, which does not respect the objectives

of the Planning Scheme and should not be accepted in its present form. The proposal fails to adhere to major components of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme, including the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan, the Neighbourhood Character Overlay and the Design and Development Overlay. These three components of the Planning Scheme state repeatedly that any development must be small scale, low rise and screened by vegetation, and the visual prominence of the Split Point Lighthouse should not be compromised.

As one of the original objectors, AIDA was entitled to submit a Statement of Grounds and/or become a party to the VCAT hearings. Although AIDA has lodged a 3.5 page Statement of Grounds that supports the Shire's action and documents where we consider the proposal fails to meet the guidelines, AIDA will not appear at VCAT.

*Gary Johnson and Ian Godfrey*



*Best wishes for a safe and happy  
holiday season  
from the AIDA committee*



# Aireys Inlet & District Association Inc.

Join or rejoin AIDA here or online – [www.aireys-inlet.org/aida-membership/](http://www.aireys-inlet.org/aida-membership/)

Renewal  New member (subject to ratification by AIDA Committee)

I/We agree to be bound by the Rules of the Association

Family (\$20).....Single (\$10).....Donation \$.....Total: \$.....

Cheque  Direct deposit: Aireys Inlet and District Association BSB no. 633-000 Acc: 1572 531 88  
(New bank details since May 2016) Reference: please add your initial and surname, e.g. ASmith

Name(s): Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr: .....

.....

Address (postal): .....

.....Postcode: .....

Address (local): .....

.....Postcode: .....

Telephone no.(s): .....

.....

*Email addresses for newsletters and updates*

Email 1: .....

Email 2: .....

Signature(s): .....

.....Date .....

NB Family membership entitles voting rights for two adult members as named on this form.

Please mail to AIDA Membership, 1702/1 William St, Melbourne, 3000

or scan and email to [aireysinletdistrict@gmail.com](mailto:aireysinletdistrict@gmail.com)