



GYM

Last weeks opening of the new Community Gym behind the Squash Courts marks the completion of a couple of years of planning and construction that offers residents an excellent facility that will only improve as the internal fit-out continues. With a fitness and exercise focus from any areas Council has attempted to keep this facility as a cost recovery venture only and while there may be some minor issues to iron out through the coming months it will be a great asset to our town. Through this process Council would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication that the group who ran the previous gym have given to the formation and implementation of this facility. Enter fees have been widely advertised and these can be paid, along with the entry fobs from the friendly staff at Council's Offices.

While on the subject of fitness the Walcha Parkrun leaves the whale at 8am every Saturday. This concept is worldwide and offers participants the chance to walk, run, take the dog for a walk or push a stroller over a 5km course in the name of fun and health. It's free and non-competitive but a great way to start the weekend amongst like minded people.

DINE AND DISCOVER

The State Government's release of the Dine and Discover Vouchers to help support eligible businesses that have been impacted by CVOID restrictions are up and running and allow eligible NSW citizens \$50 to dine and \$50 discover. If you have the Services NSW app there should be a like there to enroll in this simple scheme. A great concept to assist local businesses the registration process is simple and currently runs until 30 June.

BLAZE AID

Last weekend saw Greg "Kirky" Kirkman and his wife Gillian pack up the BlazeAid camp that repaired and replaced fences and restored dignity to farmers impacted by the 2019 bushfires. Whilst here they cleared 38kms by hand, erected 50kms of new fence and patched and repaired 23kms of damaged fence. On top of this they spent and contributed \$110,000 in the community plus had over 70 volunteers come through their camp that also spent with local businesses. I struck Greg as a no nonsense bloke who came here to do a tough job and he settled in and did just that. Hampered at times by wet weather and road closures he and Gillian led from the front and achieved what they came to do. Our community, and especially those farmers they helped owe a massive gratitude to all the volunteers that helped. Thank you from Walcha.

WINTERBOURNE WIND

The Vestas owned Winterbourne Wind project continues to move forward with the Community Consultative Committee having had its first meeting. The minutes of this meeting can be found at <https://winterbournewindfarm.com/downloads/>. There are seven community representatives on this Committee and it has an independently appointed Chair. This Committee does not have decision making or regulatory powers but acts in an advisory and consultative role. The guidelines can be found on the Department of



Planning & Environment website. This project is deemed to be a State Significant Development and therefore the approval sits with the Department, but this does not preclude community input from forming part of this approval. Currently Walcha Council has given "in principle" support to this project but any submission we make will be reflective of community views. I sit on this Committee with Clr Clint Lyon as the alternate representative. Any questions or concerns that residents have can be brought to us and will be presented at the meetings. This is obviously one of the largest projects that will ever come to Walcha and community input and as with any input helps to shape the future of this LGA. Our next meeting is 7 June 2021.

ANZAC DAY

Another crisp morning saw a large congregation gather at the Cenotaph to commemorate ANZAC Day Dawn Service. Always a solemn occasion, this, plus the 11am Service stand as a sombre reminder of the loss endure to make our country the safe place it is. To all those who have and are serving our country we thank you. Lest We Forget.

Clr Eric Noakes
Mayor of Walcha