

DECEMBER 2020

Maitland Matters



A NEWSLETTER FROM JENNY AITCHISON MP ■ YOUR LOCAL STATE MEMBER FOR MAITLAND

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Maitland hospital update



I was delighted to be part of the Topping Out Ceremony at the New Maitland Hospital site in Metford. The ceremony celebrated the fact that construction of the building had reached its highest point - in this case, the hospital's helipad.

The \$500 million hospital is on track to open in early 2022. It will include emergency care, chemotherapy chairs, surgical services, critical care, maternity services, paediatric care, cardiac catheterisation, inpatient beds, mental health, rehabilitation services and outpatient clinics.

This hospital is an achievement our entire community can be proud of. Many of you reading this stood side by side with me throughout the seven-year fight that ensured the hospital remained in public hands, thanks to the incredible 30,000 people who signed our petition.

The new hospital will be truly owned and operated by all of us, for all of us - as it should be.

Across the road from the New Maitland Hospital, the sod was recently turned on another health facility. Work has begun on a GenesisCare therapy centre, a private facility which will provide radiation and medical oncology services, and research.

I hope that having a private provider here will help persuade the NSW Government that there are people in our area in need of these services. As it stands, Lower Hunter residents requiring radiation therapy as part of their oncology treatment face an arduous daily journey. We now have Maitland people who face a two-hour commute to a Newcastle-area hospital each day to undertake a course of potentially lifesaving treatment.

The new facility is scheduled to throw open its doors to patients in mid 2021.

From Jenny's desk...

The year 2020 will be forever etched in our minds. It was the year that began with crippling drought and deadly firestorms and ended with the world in the grip of a global pandemic.

As this tumultuous year draws to a close, I want to give thanks.

Thanks to everyone who risked their lives to protect our homes, livelihoods and communities. Thanks to the firefighters and emergency services personnel who were there when drought gave way to fire then flood. Thanks to the legion of volunteers, and donors, who gave of their time and money to help those affected by disaster. Thanks to every person who has stayed home to save lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to those who reached out to neighbours or others in our community to ensure they were OK.

Finally - to the essential workers who have kept our community open throughout these challenging times, thank you. Whether you were ensuring that the chemist kept trading, or students continued their education, or hospitals wards were sanitised, or rubbish was collected, or any one of a plethora of often invisible and under-appreciated roles - please know how much we value you and what you do every day for our community.

I wish you and your loved ones a happy and safe holiday season. Like so many, I am eager to close the book on 2020, move to 2021 and represent you in the Parliament of NSW.

Jenny

MADE IN NSW

We know the best way to beat the economic downturn caused by COVID-19 is to force the NSW Government to buy locally made products instead of sending our money overseas.

For too long, this State Government has favoured foreign companies and suppliers for taxpayer-funded projects. Under the Liberals, NSW's trains have come from South Korea and China, ferries from Indonesia and China, buses from Malaysia, and trams from Spain and France.

There is a long list of transport projects that have been mired in delay because these imported products turned out to be unsuitable, unsafe or unreliable.

These overseas purchases are also a massive slap in the face to our local workers who could have built better products, right here in NSW.

It is clear this habitual offshoring of jobs and the export of taxpayers' funds must end.

Labor has therefore launched its 'NSW Made' policy, which will compel Government departments and agencies to spend taxpayer money on locally procured goods and services.

At a time when so many people are out of work or their rosters do not offer enough work, there is no excuse for our taxpayer dollars being sent overseas.

This money should stay here in NSW and keep people working.

BUILD TRAINS HERE IN NSW



NSW MADE BY NSW WORKERS

Scan the QR code



RAISING THE ROAD

Work to address a century of flooding at Testers Hollow has finally begun.

Prior to my election in 2015 I called upon the NSW Government to address this flood-prone stretch of road, which has become an important arterial route between Maitland and the \$1.7 billion Hunter Expressway, built by State and Federal Labor.

Just after my election in 2015 Maitland was hit by a devastating superstorm. This caused flooding that closed the road for 17 days, isolated the Gillieston Heights community for about a week, and claimed the life of a Maitland woman.

After this storm event the Federal Government allocated \$15 million and the NSW Government \$2 million to improve flood immunity at Testers Hollow.

Expected works under this joint funding will see the build of a new two-lane road that is 1.5 metres higher than the existing road.

To keep abreast of roadworks at Testers Hollow and any associated traffic changes, you can call 132 701, visit livetraffic.com or download the Live Traffic NSW app.



CRIME UPDATE - SIGN THE CCTV PETITION

Members of our community have, with my support, created an ePetition calling for the NSW Government to act against crime and antisocial behaviour, particularly in the Rutherford precinct, by funding closed-circuit television (CCTV).

The ePetition presents a new opportunity for the community of Maitland to push for the matter to be debated in the Legislative Assembly and thus shine a light on the continued concerns of Rutherford residents and businesspeople, and the urgent need for action.

In a recent landmark decision the Parliament of NSW chose to acknowledge online petitions that were created and hosted through its ePetition portal.

The new CCTV petition acknowledges the continued plea from Maitland residents and small business owners for the installation of CCTV. Their call has the support of the NSW Police Force.

I've asked the Attorney General a number of times about the Government's glacial rollout of a \$5 million CCTV Fund earmarked for projects in 10 Sydney LGAs, and pushed for Maitland and other regional and rural areas to be deemed eligible.



I've also met with Rutherford small businesspeople, residents and community groups; attended meetings with agency, services, council and police representatives; and applied pressure through parliamentary speeches, meetings and ministerial correspondence.

I will continue to push the Government to provide funding for much-needed CCTV, and to ensure our police, housing, health, education and service providers are adequately resourced to meet the needs of our growing community.

If you would like to sign the petition calling for the Government to fund CCTV in our electorate, please scan the QR code, or visit the ePetition website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/la/pages/epetitions-list.aspx. Your details will remain strictly private and confidential.

Scan the QR code



Calling all Maitland Seniors SAVE THE DATE!

NSW Seniors Festival 14-24 April 2021

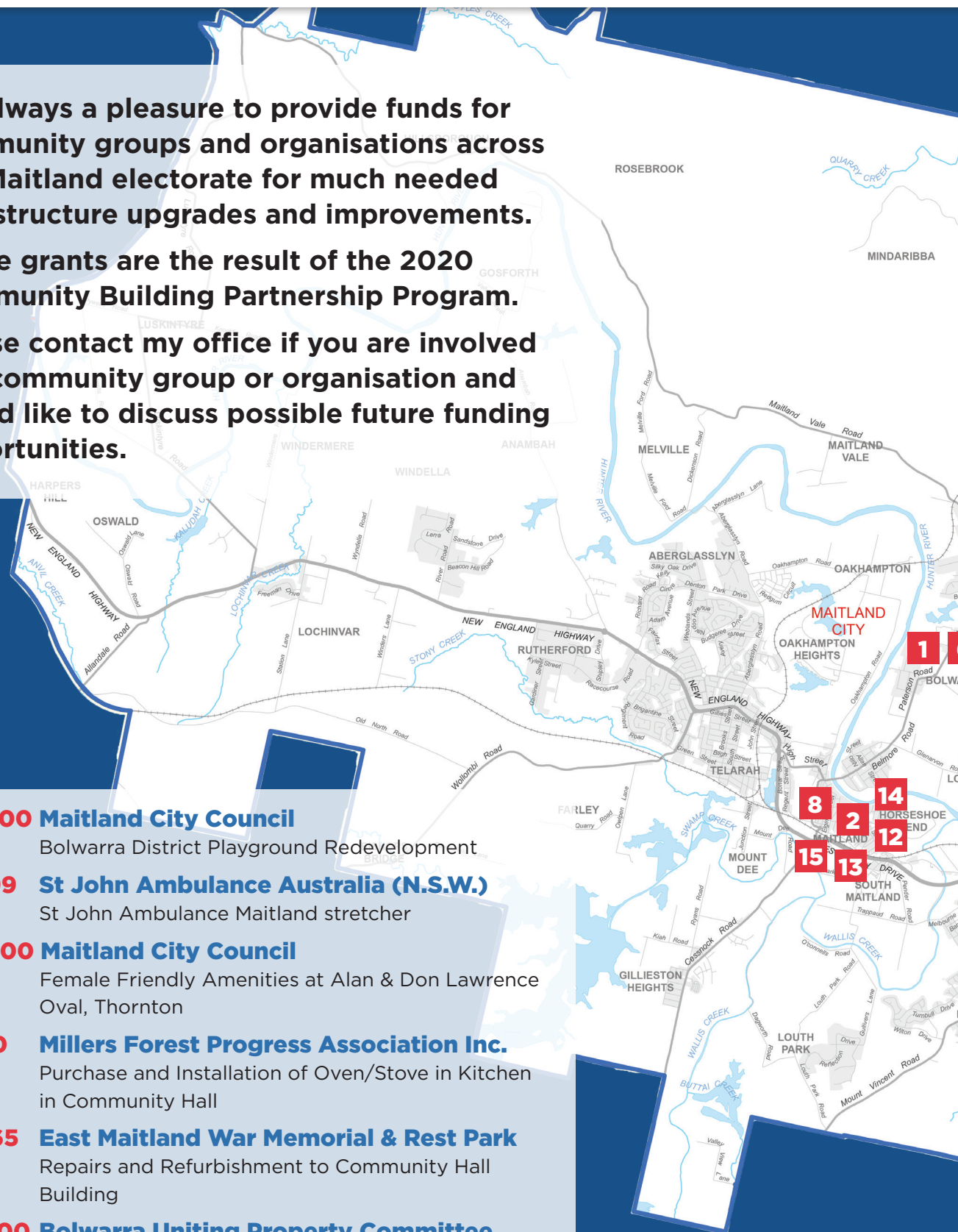
All 2021 festival events will be COVID safe, and some will have online options to participate.

Delivering For Our Community

It's always a pleasure to provide funds for community groups and organisations across the Maitland electorate for much needed infrastructure upgrades and improvements.

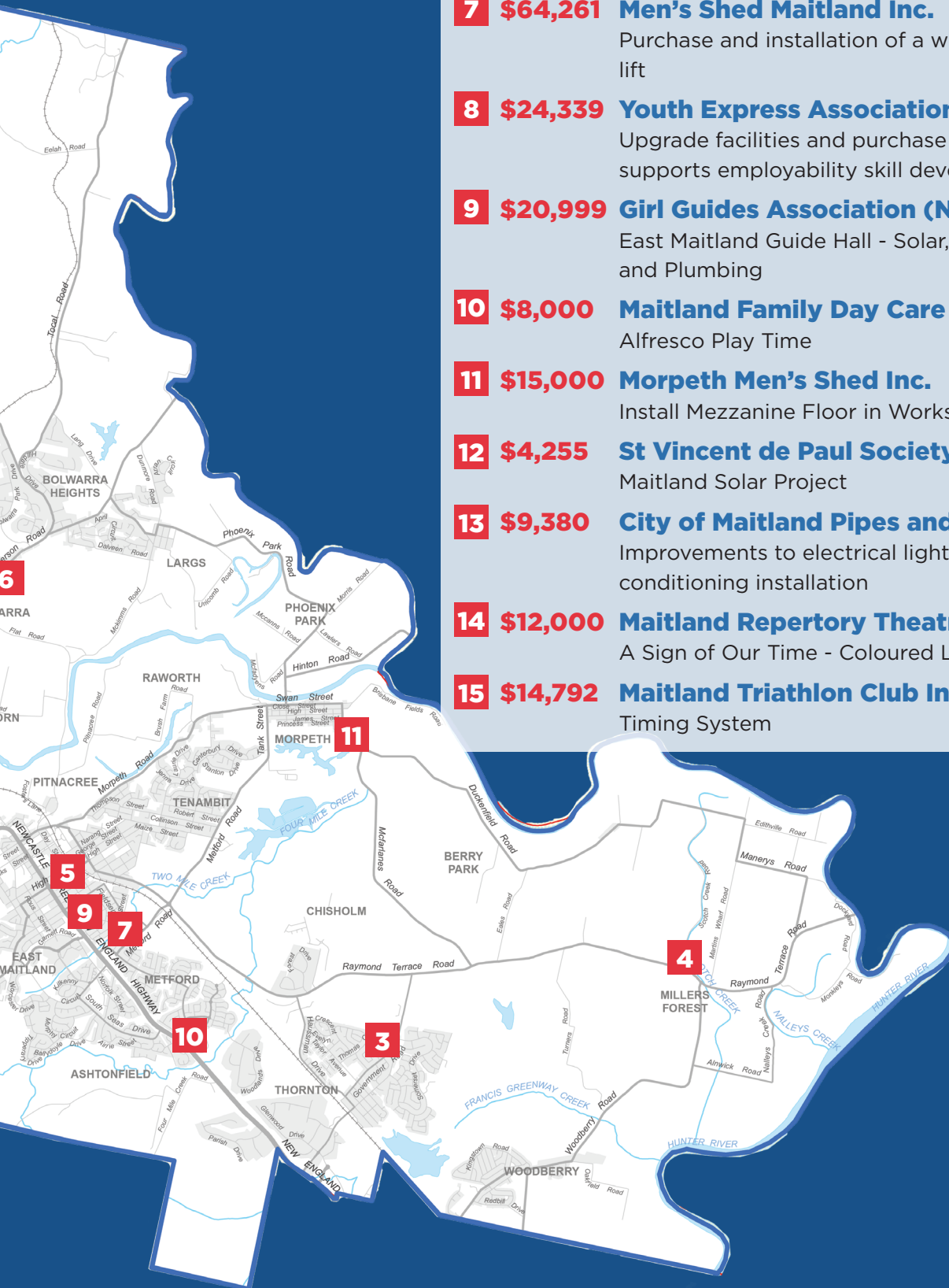
These grants are the result of the 2020 Community Building Partnership Program.

Please contact my office if you are involved in a community group or organisation and would like to discuss possible future funding opportunities.



- 1 \$20,000 Maitland City Council**
Bolwarra District Playground Redevelopment
- 2 \$11,499 St John Ambulance Australia (N.S.W.)**
St John Ambulance Maitland stretcher
- 3 \$40,000 Maitland City Council**
Female Friendly Amenities at Alan & Don Lawrence Oval, Thornton
- 4 \$4,710 Millers Forest Progress Association Inc.**
Purchase and Installation of Oven/Stove in Kitchen in Community Hall
- 5 \$15,765 East Maitland War Memorial & Rest Park**
Repairs and Refurbishment to Community Hall Building
- 6 \$35,000 Bolwarra Uniting Property Committee**
Let's Get Cooking (Food Preparation Area Fit-Out)

Community



- 7 \$64,261 Men's Shed Maitland Inc.**
Purchase and installation of a wheelchair accessible lift
- 8 \$24,339 Youth Express Association Inc.**
Upgrade facilities and purchase equipment that supports employability skill development
- 9 \$20,999 Girl Guides Association (New South Wales)**
East Maitland Guide Hall - Solar, Air Conditioning and Plumbing
- 10 \$8,000 Maitland Family Day Care Inc.**
Alfresco Play Time
- 11 \$15,000 Morpeth Men's Shed Inc.**
Install Mezzanine Floor in Workshop
- 12 \$4,255 St Vincent de Paul Society NSW**
Maitland Solar Project
- 13 \$9,380 City of Maitland Pipes and Drums Inc.**
Improvements to electrical lighting and air conditioning installation
- 14 \$12,000 Maitland Repertory Theatre**
A Sign of Our Time - Coloured LED sign
- 15 \$14,792 Maitland Triathlon Club Inc.**
Timing System

CHISHOLM TRAFFIC CHAOS

It is shameful that the NSW Government has failed to ensure that Maitland's transport network keeps pace with our city's population growth.

We have a city that is growing by five new families each week while being serviced by road, pedestrian and public transport infrastructure that was, in some cases, planned last century.

The NSW Government has failed to provide adequate state infrastructure for the more than 5,000 new homes planned for Thornton North and Chisholm.

This is particularly apparent around road and intersection upgrades, pedestrian access and crossings, and public transport infrastructure such as stations and commuter car parks.

Earlier this year I conducted a School Safety Survey that uncovered community concerns about traffic situations that are placing residents such as commuters and school students at risk.



I have been working closely with members of our community in the Thornton North and Chisholm areas and identified gaps in the provision of direct buses to and from schools.

This failure to provide safe, reliable and efficient travel options leaves far too many students, and their parents or carers, reliant on private transport – creating a myriad of traffic hazards at peak time.

I am also encouraging the NSW Government to explore options

that will provide car parking and pedestrian access from the northern side of Metford Train Station. This will reduce commuter times and greatly relieve local traffic congestion throughout Thornton.

My conversations also continue about the need for essential upgrades at all intersections to Raymond Terrace Road, where accidents and frequent near-misses are known to occur.

Of course I am always keen to hear about state roads issues in your area.

GO LOCAL FIRST



Small businesses are the lifeblood of our Maitland economy. Nationwide, small businesses contribute to a third of our economic activity, keep millions of Australians in jobs, and are responsible for paying wages to more than half of our workforce.

Now, more than ever, our small businesses need our support.

As a former award-winning business owner and the current Shadow Minister for Primary Industries, Investment and Tourism, and Medical Research, I have great appreciation of the role small business plays in our communities.

I also know just how tough times are for some of these great operators, through absolutely no fault of their own.

So whether it's buying your takeaway at a local restaurant or café, picking up a Christmas gift from a local shop, or leaving a positive review the next time you receive great local service, remember that there are plenty of ways you can help.

When you spend local, it stays local.

So #golocalfirst

TRUEGAIN, MAITLAND'S TICKING, TOXIC TIMEBOMB

It has been months since the Minister for the Environment visited the heavily contaminated site of the former Truegain oil refinery in Rutherford yet still it sits – decaying, a target for vandals, and potentially still leaking toxic material into our land and water.

For years the community and I have pushed the government to take action to clean up this site. It is renowned for flooding in heavy rain and is the identified source of heavy metals, hydrocarbons and PFAS – the infamous substance found in firefighting foam that has polluted communities around the globe, such as the Hunter's own Williamtown.

In August this year, the Minister placed a prohibition order on the site, which meant the owner was required to cease storing waste at the abandoned Kyle Street address. He failed to comply.

The Environmental Protection Authority has now launched legal action to try and force a clean-up and recoup more than a million dollars it has spent trying to manage the mess.

The Liberal government has had a decade to prevent this environmental disaster from unfolding yet still the saga goes on. The Newcastle Herald's Toxic Truth investigation has revealed that millions of litres of toxic material were pumped from Truegain, which



was also known as Australian Waste Oil Refineries, throughout the years. Even now, eggs, milk or meat from animals that can access Fishery, Wallis and Stony creeks cannot be eaten.

While I accept that the Minister did not have carriage of the Environment portfolio when this saga began, it was his Government that failed to act, despite all the evidence.

He is on the Parliamentary record stating that, if the Government finds that the director of Truegain and others have done the wrong thing, they will be held responsible and the Government will 'throw the book' at them.

He has made a commitment to my community and I will continue to push him to honour these words and force the EPA to do its job.

NSW PARLIAMENT ACCEPTS E-PETITIONS

In an historic first, NSW residents are now able to petition the NSW Parliament online using ePetitions.

New South Wales is the only jurisdiction in Australia where citizens have the chance to have their petition debated by parliamentarians.

The new ePetition platform allows ePetitions to be presented directly to the Parliament. The platform is simple, user-friendly and built with safety and security in mind.

You can only create ePetitions from the NSW Parliament website. Additionally, an ePetition needs

the support of at least five people and a Member of the Legislative Assembly, such as myself, before it's open for signatures.

The contact details of people who sign ePetitions are kept private, even from the members of parliament who table the petitions. Your information is safe - you won't wind up on a mailing list.

If there is an issue that you believe warrants debate in the Legislative Assembly, please contact my office to discuss whether an ePetition might be a good pathway for you to pursue. Email maitland@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

Congratulatory Messages

Did you know that I can arrange for Maitland residents celebrating special birthdays or wedding anniversaries to receive personal letters of congratulations from dignitaries including The Queen?

Upon request, the NSW Premier, Prime Minister of Australia, Governor of NSW, Governor-General and Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly will send a message of congratulations to couples celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. A message from the Queen can be obtained on a 60th wedding anniversary.

Birthday congratulations from the Premier of NSW and Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly can be arranged for people turning 80, and messages from the Governor-General and the Queen for those celebrating their 100th birthday.

I would be delighted to help you arrange these special congratulatory messages. Please ensure that you contact my office six weeks before the celebration, to ensure the messages arrive in time, and that you can provide supporting documents, such as a birth or marriage certificates, when you lodge your request.

You are welcome to arrange these over the counter at my electorate office.

Community Recognition Statements



Every Parliamentary sitting day I am given the opportunity to acknowledge exceptional service to our community.

These Community Recognition Statements, which are recorded in the Hansard of NSW Parliament, are short statements and a wonderful way to acknowledge or congratulate people or groups on their achievements or contributions.

If you know of anyone in the Maitland electorate who deserves recognition for work in our community, please contact my office so I can acknowledge their efforts in the Parliament of NSW.



Do you need a JP?

If you need your signature, affidavit or statutory declaration witnessed, or require the certification of documents, please remember that **there are NSW Justices of the Peace in my office every day**. No appointment is necessary; you can just call in any time between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Want to become a JP?

There is a four-step process for people who wish to become NSW Justices of the Peace.

- Step 1:** Confirm your eligibility and register for JP Online.
- Step 2:** Complete the JP Knowledge Test on JP Online.
- Step 3:** Complete the JP appointment application on JP Online.
- Step 4:** Take the Oaths of Office.

For more information, visit jp.nsw.gov.au

I'M ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO HELP

Jenny Aitchison MP
YOUR STATE MEMBER FOR MAITLAND

If I can help with any State Government matters please call my office on **4933 1617** or send an email to maitland@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Office: 2/12 Elgin Street Maitland NSW 2320

