

# Media release

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## Forrest wastewater project announced

Barwon Water and Colac Otway Shire Council will partner with the Forrest community to investigate opportunities for wastewater improvements in the township.

The partnership was confirmed at a meeting with representatives of the Forrest Wastewater Group last night, with Barwon Water and Council agreeing to allocate resources and funding for the investigation.

The commitment acknowledges the growing role tourism plays in Forrest and the regional economy, and the increasing stress this may place on existing wastewater systems in the town.

Over the coming months the parties will work together to begin investigations in the town. The first key activity will be an audit of all existing onsite wastewater systems to assess current performance.

The project presents a great opportunity to showcase a truly collaborative process between Barwon Water, Colac Otway Shire and the Forrest community to support the prosperity, health and liveability of the region, as well as allow for continued growth of tourism and associated activities that contribute important regional economic benefits.

It is anticipated the project will progress over the next 12 months and include many opportunities for community input, including information sessions and workshops as well as a website to share ideas.

Quotes attributable to Barwon Water Managing Director Tracey Slatter

*"Our region's liveability and prosperity is inextricably linked to the services we provide, so we need to be a major advocate for smarter, greener, cities and towns."*

*"The Forrest wastewater management project gives us the opportunity to work alongside our community and achieve a shared goal in the most collaborative way."*

Quotes attributable to Colac Otway Shire CEO Sue Wilkinson

*"The Colac Otway Shire Council is pleased to support the community's request to investigate wastewater management options for Forrest, and looks forward working with the groups involved to find the right solution to the community"*

Quotes attributable to Forrest Wastewater Group members

*"Forrest has experienced an amazing transformation over the past 10 years. As Forrest continued to grow, visitors continued to flow. Our community is very proactive and solutions oriented. Our Group was formed ten months ago responding to the community request to investigate the state of wastewater in our lovely town. We are delighted to be working on this project with Barwon Water and the Colac Otway Shire."*

**Ends...**