

# Oatlands Regional Community Forum

August 2008

## Premier's Message

I am determined to be a Premier who is connected to his public and I want Tasmanians to feel close to the political process. Tasmanians should have the opportunity to pitch their ideas directly to the senior decision makers within State Government, as, a democracy is all about having a voice and a government's job is to listen.

I feel it is extremely important for me and my Labor colleagues to personally hear the many current issues that face Tasmanian communities. Especially communities like the Midlands, who are struggling with climatic and social pressures, that on their own they will be unable to resolve.

I found myself very moved and touched by the overwhelming community spirit and resilience shown by the people of Oatlands. In the face of drought and all the social challenges this presents, the community's immense determination was inspiring.

I would like to thank all the people of Oatlands who took the time to attend the forum and to those who sought individual appointments with ministers.

Premier David Bartlett  
Premier of Tasmania

## Announcements

While the Government was in Oatlands several announcements were made including one by the Premier, David Bartlett and Minister for Primary Industries and Water, David Llewellyn for a \$145,000 grant for Rural Alive and Well Tasmania.

The grant will provide mental health support for rural men and their families and is a pilot project aimed at dealing with the emotional and physical trauma brought on by the pressures of drought and economic hardship.

"I know that there are farming communities in Tasmania who as a result of the current drought are doing it incredibly tough, and there comes a time when the strain can become too much to handle," Mr Bartlett said.



"I am confident this project will make a difference not just to individuals, but also to their families and communities."

The Minister for Health and Human Services, Lara Giddings also opened a new atrium at the Midlands Multi-Purpose Health Centre made possible from a \$25,000 bequest from the Palmer family of Woodsdale.

"The atrium enhances the quality of care provided at the MMPHC and provides residents with benefits of enjoying activities in the sun indoors," Ms Giddings said.

Health and Human Services Minister, Giddings also announced an \$8.3 million increase in funding for Tasmania's rural and regional health and community services to meet rising costs and increasing demand, as well as to allow improvements in staffing and clinical safety.

