



# THE TRANSFORMER

APRIL 2024

## Welcome to the 19th edition of The Transformer - an update from the Smart Transformation Project.

Smart Transformation works to future-proof the communities of Dysart and Moranbah, as we face rapid technological changes being experienced globally, and build the sustainability of our towns.

Smart Transformation operates independently, with support from BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), and is driven by the two towns' Smart Transformation Advisory Councils (STACs) and Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Council members capture feedback and advice from the communities they call home, to direct resources and effort into projects important to local residents.

## Lobbying State Govt for housing help

Greater funding support from the State Government to help the local housing market was the objective of Smart Transformation's recent discussions with Queensland Housing Minister Meaghan Scanlon.

Smart Transformation Advisory Council (STAC) Moranbah member Ash Dowd and Smart Transformation Facilitator Mitch Innes met with Ms Scanlon and Housing Department Acting Director-General Tess Pickering during Community Cabinet held in Mackay.

The Smart Transformation team presented the challenges faced in the housing markets in Dysart and Moranbah, and the broader Isaac Region, which Smart Transformation identified through studies as well as engagement with leading sector stakeholders.

"Housing and accommodation affordability and availability is at the heart of many of the challenges our communities face," Ash said.

"Whether it's childcare or services, retail or hospitality, every part of our community is impacted by the issue of limited accommodation for workers and their families.

"And our community has stepped up through Smart Transformation – identifying the solutions needed to resolve this problem."

Smart Transformation's forward action plan recommendations, developed through its consultation process, were discussed with the Minister along with a request for greater government support to assist in their implementation.

The Minister committed to reviewing the Smart Transformation work and providing a response.

"I felt like she and her team were really engaged in the discussion and heard what we were saying," Ash said.

"We need her support and the support of the Queensland Government to help this community deliver real and lasting outcomes.

"Everyone needs to come together – our community, local industry and all levels of government – to address this challenge."



*Smart Transformation's Ash Dowd and Queensland Housing Minister Meaghan Scanlon discuss housing and accommodation challenges in Isaac during the recent Community Cabinet in Mackay.*

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Barada Barna's Luarna Dynevor welcomes everyone to Country at Smart Transformation's Connectivity Collaboration Celebration.

## Connectivity collaboration celebrated

Community, local government and industry leaders have come together to celebrate their successful multi-million-dollar collaboration to improve digital connectivity in Dysart and Moranbah.

The completion of Smart Transformation's major Digital Connectivity Project has doubled mobile connectivity in Moranbah and tripled it in Dysart, after the two communities nominated poor mobile service as a major challenge.

Dysart Smart Transformation Advisory Council member and project lead Sandy Moffat gave a heartfelt speech at the project's launch event which brought together the many partners which helped deliver it.

"Everyone came together in the spirit of collaboration – BMA, Telstra, the Greater Whitsunday Alliance and Isaac Regional Council, to work on a resolution."

BMA Communities Manager Jasmine Cadd said better digital connectivity sets Moranbah and Dysart up for further success.

"Projects like this can only be delivered when people come together and work collaboratively and co-operatively, and BMA is proud to have played its role in the successful outcome," Jasmine said.

"There is still much work to do, to future-proof these communities. Through its support for and participation in Smart Transformation, BMA stands ready to support those who share the vision of a sustainable future for Dysart and Moranbah."

Greater Whitsunday Alliance CEO Kylie Porter agreed the collaboration was key.

"This project is an exemplar of both collaboration and endurance. It's become a model of best practice partnership around digital connectivity and one that GW3 has replicated and hopes to repeat again and again."

*There is still much work to do, to future-proof these communities.*



Partners and supporters celebrate an incredible collaboration at Smart Transformation's Connectivity Collaboration Celebration.



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## Volunteering Project takes to the screen

Smart Transformation's Volunteering Project has taken to the small screen, with Moranbah Community Workers Club joining the collaboration and funding a television advertising campaign.

Driving greater volunteering in our communities is the project's aim, and Smart Transformation – with funding support from BMA – has partnered with five local clubs including Moranbah Arts, Radio 4RFM, Moranbah Miners Junior Rugby League, Moranbah Highlanders Swimming Club and Moranbah Bulldogs AFL, declaring 2024 the Year of the Volunteer.



*Now Moranbah Community Workers Club has joined the Project, funding a six-month campaign on 7 Mackay to promote the value of volunteering in our community. //*

Moranbah STAC member and Moranbah Workers Club General Manager Ash Dowd said participating in the partnership was an extension of the support the Workers Club provides to local sporting groups and organisations which are the heart of the town.

"Moranbah Workers contributes hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to ensure our clubs can survive and thrive for the benefit of our community," Ash said.

"However, we know it takes more than money – it takes volunteers to umpire, to run the canteens, to man the phones.

"Our support for Smart Transformation's Volunteering Project is really an extension of our efforts to date, and will also extend the project's messages to as wide an audience as possible."

If you haven't seen the ads yet, stay tuned to 7 Mackay, or you can check them out here:



**And of course, the obvious next step – if you're not already – is to volunteer!**



## STAC Profile – Carley McDonnell

Building a strong future for Dysart is the reason local grazier and agricultural businesswoman, Carley McDonnell has joined the Dysart Smart Transformation Advisory Council.

“Smart Transformation is an excellent initiative. Being from an agricultural background, it’s encouraging to me that this council is working towards building our community in a way that’s about something more than just mining,” Carley said.

*Carley McDonnell is the newest member of the Dysart STAC.*



“*Dysart is a small town with a great sense of community. It’s welcoming and everyone here has a great attitude.*”

“I want to help build a better future for Dysart because we’ve got kids and we’ve got a farm that’s our livelihood. Our farm is our business, and we’re working towards having resources here for our community that everyone can enjoy.”

Carley says Smart Transformation’s work to date has chalked up many benefits, but more can be done to further ‘future-proof’ the community.

“There are definitely opportunities to grow our community in Dysart. It’s ‘what you make of it’ and there are always opportunities for people to be involved.

“There are some unique community events here that can really bring people together and make people feel like they belong.”

The provision of services to Dysart has always been a passion for Carley.

“Rurally, you need to fight for your services to stay there and that needs to have a voice. To bring people to the community, you need services like medical or education or certain skills,” she said.

“Rural and remote Australia matters! We’ve got to look at the future for the next generation – whether it be mining or farming or technology.”



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## Get involved in Smart Transformation

The Smart Transformation Project is a community initiative to shape our own future for ourselves. If you would like more information, please drop us a line at [smartransformation@outlook.com](mailto:smartransformation@outlook.com) or check us out at [www.smartransformation.com.au](http://www.smartransformation.com.au)

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