



Helen Dalton MP
MEMBER FOR MURRAY

Winter Newsletter



August 2021



Border communities need support and certainty

Our small towns cannot survive random, sudden state border closures.

Last year, I joined with minor party and independent MPs along the border in urging the federal government to:

1. Adopt uniform national rules on future border closures, with clear exemptions for border communities.
2. Provide ongoing financial support to border town businesses devastated by border closures and lockdowns.

Unfortunately, Government MPs like the Member for Farrer and Member for Albury refused to co-sign our letter. I hope they will soon put their community ahead of their party and fight for our border communities.

Since our campaign started, the NSW Government did announce some limited support for businesses impacted by lockdowns. Check out my website www.helendalton.com.au for details.

It's not nearly enough, and I'll keep pushing for ongoing support.

As your local MP for the Murray region, this newsletter provides an update of what I'm doing for you.

If you don't know me, I'm a lifelong farmer and former school teacher, raised in the small town of Rankins Springs. My family now lives on an irrigation farm near Griffith. We have four adult children and three grandchildren (the latest born in June).

Lately, I've been lobbying the NSW Government to improve our mental health services, address our teacher shortage, end water corruption and re-purpose unused buildings to combat our housing crisis.

We've had a few wins in the latest NSW Budget, but there's plenty still to do.

You can follow my work on my Facebook page Helen Dalton MP, or on Instagram at [helendalton.mp](https://www.instagram.com/helendalton.mp)

Feel free to get in touch with me by emailing my office at murray@parliament.nsw.gov.au

- Helen



■ Helen with new grandson Xander.

Vaccinations an antidote to border closures

I know a lot of you are reluctant about having a Covid-19 vaccination.

This is understandable. There have been a lot of scary stories in the media.

I've had a good look at the research and the risks are miniscule.

But the benefits are enormous.

Getting vaccinated reduces the chances the virus will spread.

Crucially, it also reduces the likelihood of future NSW-Victoria border closures.

I got my vaccination at Your Health Griffith in early June. They were friendly and professional. I will go back for a second shot in August.

Please consider getting your Covid-19 vaccine. For more information how to register for your vaccine, go to my website helendalton.com.au.

Fight for mental health services in Murray

Improving mental health support in our area is my top priority.

The Murrumbidgee region has a suicide rate more than double that of Sydney.

But we have the fewest mental health services in NSW.

Not one hospital in our Murray region has a mental health unit.

Goolgowi resident Marie Clarke has started a petition to urge the NSW Government to establish mental health services in our hospitals.

Please consider printing out, signing and sharing the petition.

You can find it online at helendalton.com.au; on my Facebook page Helen Dalton MP and in various shops across the electorate.

You can return copies to my offices in Griffith, Deniliquin or Wentworth.

Over the past few weeks, I've been meeting with young people, experts and residents across the region.

Thank you to all of you who have gotten in touch to share your experience of accessing mental health service or offer ideas and help to improve the situation. I will present your ideas to the NSW Government.



■ Helen Dalton and Goolgowi resident Marie Clarke who has started a petition to urge the NSW Government to establish mental health services in our hospitals.

Rural health inquiry visits Deniliquin

NSW Parliament is conducting an inquiry into the poor state of hospital and health care in regional NSW.

Many thanks to those of you participated in the Deniliquin hearing in April.

We will only see action for the NSW Government if we voice our concerns loud and clear.

While hospital staff are doing a fabulous job, many are overworked and underpaid. Patient care is suffering as a result.

Let's keep the pressure on to ensure our hospitals get the funding they deserve.

To follow the inquiry, or to share your ideas or experience, email me at murray@parliament.nsw.gov.au.



■ Helen with Griffith cancer advocates Denise and Grant Hearn.

New radiation therapy in our region – will treatment be free?

Private providers Riverina Cancer Care are building a new radiotherapy centre in Griffith.

This is fantastic news. It means cancer patient in our region won't have to travel for treatment.

I've been working with Riverina Cancer Care to try to give them all the help they can to provide a high quality, bulk-billed (free) cancer therapy.

At present, the Murrumbidgee is one of the few places in Australia where people have to pay for cancer treatment.

Due to lack of NSW Government support, patients are left \$480 out-of-pocket for a course of radiotherapy.

The NSW Government didn't want to build or fund a radiation therapy centre themselves.

Riverina Cancer Care wanted to access land on the site of the new Griffith Base Hospital to build their facility. The NSW Government rejected their request.

In order for cancer treatment to be free and sustainable, we need the NSW Government to support Riverina Cancer Care.

The Government must provide a subsidy to ensure treatment in both Griffith and Wagga is free for patients.

I'll be fighting for this support. Follow my Facebook page Helen Dalton MP for more details.



■ Helen supports Griffith nurse protest.

Help to secure a government grant

Do you or your organisation need government funding?

More than 1,000 grants are available to people in this area.

My website helendalton.grantguru.com.au can help you get the funding you need.

Please check out this website to search for grants, obtain tips on how to apply and to request my support.

You can also email my office at murray@parliament.nsw.gov.au if we can assist you further.



Floodplain harvesting inquiry

After a prolonged fight, the NSW Parliament have agreed to conduct an inquiry into Northern Basin floodplain harvesting.

Floodplain harvesting is when irrigators divert rainwater into their private dams.

This has a devastating impact on irrigators and towns in the Southern Basin. It stops water flowing down to our region, and is a key reason why Murray River farmers have had such low water allocations the past three years.

This inquiry will shed light on the government's dodgy modelling and behaviour, paving the way for fair rules across the Basin.

My Facebook page Helen Dalton MP has details on how to follow and contribute to this inquiry.

NSW Budget success in Yanco and Moama

Some good news emerged from the NSW Budget.


After our sustained campaign, the NSW Government will build a new girls' dorm at Yanco Agricultural High Schools. The female students there have been living in demountable shacks for 28 years, but at long last they will get proper accommodation.

We also secured money for a new Moama Police Station, which is something the Police have needed for 15 years.

Since becoming a marginal seat, this electorate has received more investment than ever.

After decades of neglect, there's still a long way to go, but I'll keep advocating for our fair share.

Follow Helen Dalton

 Helen Dalton MP or visit www.helendalton.com.au

FUN FACTS ABOUT YOUR LOCAL MP

Name: Helen Dalton
Age: 61
Occupation: Irrigation Farmer

Favourite TV show: Water Rats

Favourite film: The Waterboy

Favourite music group: Little River Band

Favourite actor: River Phoenix

Favourite holiday destination: Wet n' Wild

Hobbies: Swimming Water polo

Favourite food: Murray Cod

Drinks of Choice: Murray River Pale Ale

■ Since being labelled the Water Warrior, people have accused me of being one-dimensional and single issue focused. But I have a wide range of interests, as this infographic explains.



Helen Dalton MP

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