



# Hastings Special Charge Scheme

## WHAT IS THE HASTINGS SPECIAL CHARGE SCHEME?

The Hastings Special Charge Scheme is a promotional fund used to carry out a marketing program within the town, to encourage economic activity, support local businesses and promote the township.

The Westernport Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc. (WCCII) manages the promotional fund and carries out the marketing program.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHEME PAY FOR?

Funds collected as part of the Special Charge scheme are used by the WCCII to pay for promotional, marketing and business development activities within the town. These are implemented by a part-time Marketing Coordinator. Examples of the types of activities funded and undertaken in the last 12 months are:

**Promotion** – New Chamber website, New Facebook page, New on-line Business Directory.

**Events** – Carols on The Bay, Christmas Shop & Santa Photos, Christmas Window Competition, Hastings Community Open Day.

**Business Development** – Access to information sessions and training.

**Amenity & Infrastructure** – New and updated town signage, new side street signs.

**Representation** – The Chamber of Commerce works with all levels of government to proactively represent our members and influence decisions that affect our community. We are currently working with council to advise on any issues raised by our members in relation to the Hastings Streetscape Project, with several requested amendments already implemented.

## WHO PAYS THE SPECIAL CHARGE SCHEME?

The Special Charge is a charge on property, in the same way rates are. It applies to all rateable properties within the scheme boundary used for commercial purposes. Many landlords have leasing arrangements which allow the charge to be passed on to the tenant as part of all outgoings.

By paying the Special Charge, the payee (be it landlord or tenant) becomes a Member of the Westernport Chamber of Commerce, with one voting right per property, which can be exercised to have a say in the activities of the Chamber.

## WHO COLLECTS THE CHARGE?

The Mornington Peninsula Shire Council manages all Scheme payments and is responsible for issuing the invoices annually. Invoices are issued at the same time as General Rates notices.

100% of the funds are forwarded back to the Chamber to be used to carry out the Marketing program once financial and operational reports are produced.

## IS IT COMPULSORY?

Yes. As with non-payment of Council rates, non-payment of the Special Charge may accrue interest in accordance with Section 172 of the Local Government Act and standard Shire practice on non-payment of Rates and Charges.

For tenants with agreements whereby invoices are paid directly to the Shire, there is the option to pay in quarterly instalments. This can be done by contacting the Shire directly on 1300 850 600.

For tenants who are required to pay the Special Charge directly to their landlord or landlord's real estate agent, alternative payment arrangements would be a matter for discussion between those parties.

## ARE THERE EXEMPTIONS FROM PAYING?

There are some circumstances in which property owners/and or tenants in the Special Charge Scheme boundary area can apply for an exemption. These are if:

- A tenant is a charitable or not-for-profit organisation and provides a certificate of its charitable status
- A property is used solely for residential purposes

In the case where a single business, using the same Australian Business Number and trading name, is located in two or more adjoining rateable properties, then the business would only incur one charge.

If any of the above circumstances are relevant to you, please contact us at [info@hastings.org.au](mailto:info@hastings.org.au) and we will provide you with details on how to apply for an exemption.

## CURRENT CHARGE STRUCTURE

The current Special Charge Scheme has been in place since July 2013 under a 7-year agreement that ends in July 2020, at which time the scheme will be reassessed.

The Special Charge is assessed on the basis of a flat charge on land used for retail or commercial purposes, located within defined Scheme boundaries. There are 3 categories of charges shown in the table below, being:

- Businesses located in High Street
- Businesses located in other locations adjacent and close to High Street
- Major businesses (20 or more with land size of at least 1500sqm)

Charges for each category within the Scheme appear below, per year, with annual increases of 5% CPI to reflect increasing costs and consumer prices.

Location	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
High Street	\$330	\$346	\$363	\$381	\$400	\$420	\$441
Other Hastings Location	\$200	\$210	\$220	\$231	\$242	\$254	\$266
Major Business	\$420	\$441	\$463	\$486	\$510	\$535	\$561

For further information regarding the Westernport Chamber of Commerce & Industry's Special Charge Scheme, please contact us at [info@hastings.org.au](mailto:info@hastings.org.au).

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# SPECIAL CHARGE SCHEME BOUNDARY AREA

## Hastings Shopping Centre

□ Area for inclusion in Special Charge Scheme (Promotional Fund)



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