

# Omeo District Recovery Update

OCTOBER 2021



*Helen Sheil joins us as a Place Manager replacing Anthony Nelson who is on long-term leave.*

## Introducing Helen Sheil – new Place Manager for Omeo District

I live in Toorloo Arm on Bung Yarnda (Lake Tyers). I came to Gippsland as a visitor, then married, living in Orbost and Cabbage Tree working as TAFE outreach worker. I moved to Mirboo North when my children were growing up, teaching Community Development with Yallourn TAFE, then Monash University before coming back to Nowa Nowa where my partner and I owned a caravan park on the Boggy Creek Gorge.

I have worked on a number of regional community projects, including working with Yarra Ranges Neighbourhood Houses after the Black Saturday Bushfires, and more recently in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses on the East Gippsland Building Community Resilience project that

won State awards for community-led prevention and preparedness. I was also part of a coordinated response to natural disasters in the Northern Grampians Shire, with a focus on the social impact of flood, fire and landslips on business and community.

I have a strong interest in rural women and education, and creating partnerships between community, Government and agencies (public/private/community) to include local knowledge and perspective. I am looking forward to working with you all.

## New ORCRA website launched

The Omeo Region Community Recovery Association (ORCRA) has recently launched its new website.

ORCA is currently collecting feedback to understand your experiences during

and after the fires. You are also invited to complete a survey to provide feedback on a draft Community Resilience Plan. To complete the survey or for more information about ORCRA, visit [www.ourrecovery.com.au/omeo-region](http://www.ourrecovery.com.au/omeo-region)

Paper copies of the survey are also available at the Post Office.

## Energy Renewal Program

Omeo is one of two East Gippsland communities selected to be sites for the Energy Renewal Program, an joint project of AusNet Services and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The program aims to improve energy availability and consistency, explore low carbon options and better day-to-day supply as well as create emergency dependent supply of power. ORCRA recently hosted a presentation at one of its meetings by Matthew Charles-Jones from Mondo and Thomas Duck from DELWP.

Contact will be made with Omeo businesses, service providers and community members over the next 6 – 8 weeks regarding the program.

## Community Facilities Upgrade Project progresses

Council's work on the Community Resilience and Development Program continues to progress across the region. The program seeks to ensure the future resilience and capacity of community facilities and contains several elements. Contractors have completed Bushfire Attack Level assessment and reporting

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works, which has informed the scope of works now underway for ember protection upgrades.

The electrical switchboard and AV upgrade contracts have been also awarded and are underway in line with COVID-19 requirements.

For more information contact your Place Manager, or project lead Paul Oakes on (03) 5153 9500.

## Small business support

East Gippslanders who have a business, or are thinking about starting one, can access free, flexible, confidential and tailored support from Council's Business Concierge.

The service is highly tailored to your business, and our concierge will work alongside you to achieve your business goals and provide information that is relevant to you and your circumstances. For more information, contact Business Concierge Mali Bromley at **Economic.Development@egipps.vic.gov.au** or call (03) 5153 9500 and ask for Mali.

Further support can also be accessed through the Victorian Government's Business Recovery Advisory Service. The service is available to any business owner/operator in East Gippsland experiencing hardship, recovering from disaster, or needing special assistance. The free, ongoing program offers sessions with a Business Recovery Adviser for tailored support in all aspects of operations, recovery planning and resilience building strategies. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/3Adiv9u>

## Fencing waste stockpile sites

Temporary sites are available for people to dispose of fire damaged fencing waste.

Set up by Council and DELWP, this waste is collected and disposed of appropriately.

All sites are temporary, so you are encouraged to prioritise dropping off your fencing waste.

Local sites are:

**Ensay North:** Blowhard Gravel Pit, Little River Road

**Omeo:** Old Night Soil Dump site, 181 Depot Road Omeo

## Move your private overhead electric line underground

The Victorian Government's Private Overhead Electric Line (POEL) Scheme is accepting applications across all high-risk bushfire areas of East Gippsland.

The \$5 million POEL Scheme fully funds the replacement of eligible overhead uninsulated ('bare-wire') electric lines on private properties in areas that were most impacted by bushfires in the summer of 2019-20.

To learn more or to apply, visit the powerline replacement webpage at <https://bit.ly/3uDNVEP> or contact the POEL Scheme project team on (03) 9918 7315 or [safer.powerlines@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:safer.powerlines@delwp.vic.gov.au)

## Better communications and connectivity

Through Round 5A of the Australian Government's Mobile Black Spot Program, Telstra will build another five new small or macro cells in East Gippsland, including a small cell in Anglers Rest and a macro cell in Pheasant Hill.

A number of projects funded by previous funding programs are in progress, including the High Country Link project which will create the optical fibre link from Swifts Creek to Bruthen and some new or upgraded mobile towers.

A satellite connection was also installed at the Omeo Recreation Reserve under the Australian Government's STAND program which provides back up service in the event that other telecommunication fails.

To learn more about the Mobile Black Spot Program, future funding rounds, or to stay up to date on announced projects, visit the Mobile Black Spot Program website: <https://bit.ly/3mj8zGh>

## Rebuilding after bushfires

Our Rebuild Support Service (RSS) is available to support you with rebuilding after fires.

If you're thinking about rebuilding or have any questions, visit the Bushfire Rebuilding page on our website, or contact the RSS on [BRSS@egipps.vic.gov.au](mailto:BRSS@egipps.vic.gov.au) or (03) 5153 9500.

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*My Community*

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