

# Buchan District Recovery Update



MAY 2022

## \$1.2 million for reserve

We're getting the ball rolling on the much-needed upgrade of the Buchan Recreation Reserve.

On 5 April, Deputy Mayor Cr Arthur Allen announced a \$1.2m contribution toward the upgrading of the reserve following the recent unsuccessful application to the Black Summer Grants program.

We allocated the \$1.2m from a Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI) grant.

We have heard the importance of providing a new pavilion, tennis/netball courts and other facilities and bringing these facilities up to standard and to make a sporting and community hub that is resilient to flooding that occurs in the area.

The recreation reserve redevelopment is one of the priorities for bushfire recovery identified by the Buchan community through the Community Recovery Committee. We congratulate the committee on its tireless work to consult community and identify recovery priorities and in developing this project.

Buchan, Gelantipy and Districts Renewal Association Chairperson, Kate Hodge said the \$1.2m contribution from Council was a "great announcement".

"Our reserve is a multi-use facility, is used daily and has five user groups year-round. It is very much the pulse and lifeblood of our community. Our community comes here to celebrate, to remember people, and in any form of emergency the reserve plays a role. Our new design will also reduce the risk of flooding."

Federal Member for Gippsland Darren Chester has since announced \$3m in a bushfire recovery grant, taking the funding allocation to \$4.2m.



Community members Kate Hodge, Janice Coates, Greg Brick, Anne Brewer and Susie Edwards, Councillors Arthur Allen (Deputy Mayor), Mendy Urie, Trevor Stow, Jane Greacen and Tom Crook, and Council officers Anthony Basford (Chief Executive Officer), Stuart McConnell (General Manager Place and Community), Fiona Weigall (General Manager Assets and Environment) and Rebecca Steenholdt (Place Manager) welcome the announcement of \$1.2 million from East Gippsland Shire Council for the Buchan Recreation Reserve upgrade.

## Community Family Fun Day

The Buchan Community Family Fun Day and combined Annual General Meeting for the Buchan Gelantipy & Districts Renewal Association (BG&DRA) was held on 10 April at the Buchan Recreation Reserve.



The event began with the AGM where the BG&DRA acknowledged the hard work undertaken by committee members and the community to further advocate for their recovery priorities. The current officer bearers have all carried their positions over into the new year.

With perfect weather, fun and entertainment, the day was attended by community members young and old.

## Information session

A public presentation of the draft Tourism Opportunity Plan and the Buchan Main Street and Linkages Project was held in the Buchan Recreation Reserve pavilion on 30 March. About 20 community members participated in discussions regarding potential tourism opportunity projects and future streetscape plans.

### Top four tourism priorities:

- Destination branding and greater profile on Visit Gippsland and Visit East Gippsland websites
- Redevelopment of the Buchan Butter Factory
- Children's playground
- Pump track



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Each of the priority projects is aimed at increasing the length of visitor stay in the district, along with higher visitor spend levels. They also offer an immediate starting point and highlight a good mix of community-local operator driven initiatives along with some which require involvement of Council. We continue to work closely with Parks Victoria on the linkages project that connects the main street to the Caves Reserve.

The final tourism opportunity report will be available at the end of May. For further details contact your Place Manager.

## Cultural Awareness Training

Several of our team members attended the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) Cultural Awareness Training sessions in March and April. The training, provided using Federal bushfire recovery funds, will assist understanding about how to respectfully work with Aboriginal communities and organisations.

The training touched on how enduring trauma, directly caused by historical events, is still pertinent and complex in the Aboriginal community today.



Buchan Place Manager Rebecca Steenholdt participating in the Sarsfield training session.

### Rebecca Steenholdt

Place Manager -  
Buchan District

It also emphasised how lack of understanding about Aboriginal history and culture in the area, including significant sites and connection to the land, was emphasised in bushfire recovery.

Better understanding Aboriginal history and culture will support healing and working alongside Aboriginal communities with greater compassion and increased engagement and understanding.

## Severe weather

East Gippsland was impacted by severe weather and flooding over four days in April, with widespread rainfall of approximately 250-300mm and related flooding and damage.

East Gippsland recorded 31 road closures and more than 150 roads impacted by the event.

Some communities self-activated a Relief Facility to look after affected persons within their community. This allowed people to come together, have a cup of tea and coffee, and just connect with one another for support. Staff in the relief facility were able to call the Incident Control Centre (ICC) and share local impacts and receive critical emergency information.

Many communities found the Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) satellite communication systems to be an effective tool to keep in touch with the world.

Since September 2021, we have responded to five weather events, four of which were declared under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). Approximately 444 roads have been impacted and many multiple

times. The cost estimates for recent events sits at over \$3m.

Our Works department and contractors react swiftly to ensure public safety and to undertake restoration works. However, repeated natural disasters and their cumulative effects has seen the damage more severe to infrastructure and proving more complex to restore.

We are working to understand the repeat damage from these natural disasters and will need to seek additional funding to reconstruct public assets to be a more disaster resilient standard and to reduce the cost burden.

## Preparedness program

Our Emergency Management (EM) team has commenced training a group within the community to run a Community Led Relief Facility for the first 72 hours of an emergency. Training conversations have covered a variety of topics, identified challenges and provided solutions about suitable sites, power, signage, registration, operational procedures, pets, accommodation for displaced residents and managing a centre in a COVID environment.

The EM team has also participated in discussions with the SES and East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority about flood class levels for the Buchan River and what a major or minor flood looks like and what are the consequences.

A static water tank is to be installed in either W Tree or Murrindal.

For more information please contact your Place Manager, or project lead Tim Davidson on (03) 5153 9500.

## Contact Council

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