



A Christmas message from the Mayor

I love the festive season. It's a special time to catch up with friends, shop at local stores for treats, take the kids to carols and pageants and reunite with loved ones.

Most importantly, it provides us with a moment to pause and reflect on what we achieved this year, perhaps by taking a summer staycation here in Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel country - our own beautiful backyard.

It's also that time of year when, in the spirit of togetherness, we help someone who may be less fortunate than ourselves - the bereaved, those battling illness and those who may be lonely or vulnerable.

Looking back on 2022, I am incredibly proud of the accomplishments of our community, notably our collective responses to the pandemic and wild weather. I thank those who work to protect, support and care for us - including those who will work through the festive period: doctors and nurses, emergency services staff, police and firefighters, care providers, public transport staff, and even our many Council staff.

There are also many achievements by Council that I am honoured to be a part of, including an almost \$10 million investment in adventure tourism in Omeo; a revamp of Bairnsdale Airport; our work with Traditional Owners to improve the trail and Indigenous interpretation and cultural education on Raymond Island's Koala Trail and Discovery Experience; new community halls, sporting facilities and streetscape upgrades in a bunch of towns; the swashbuckling fun pirate playground in Marlo and our ongoing campaign to protect and support both sustainable native forest harvesting and timber workers.

We welcomed 91 new citizens to our shire through our citizenship ceremonies and recognised 117 hard-working volunteers as inductees on our new East Gippsland honour roll.

We can look forward to tourism getting a boost with the rollout of electric vehicle charging stations across the shire, the opening of Bullock Island Bridge in Lakes Entrance, and stages 1 and 2 of the impressive WORLD Sporting Precinct in Bairnsdale reaching completion.

On behalf of the Councillors and staff, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy and safe New Year.

Mayor Cr Mark Reeves, December 2022

Acknowledgement of Country

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel people as the Traditional Custodians of the land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in East Gippsland, their Elders past and present.



Hands up who wants to be Mayor!
On 29 November, we welcomed Grade 4 students and teachers from St Mary's Primary School to the Council Chamber in Bairnsdale. The students have been studying civics and citizenship this term and got an insight into elections, how decisions are made, and the role of local government. Activity books, a video and Q&A session with the Mayor made for a great morning in the chamber. Students are pictured with Mayor Cr Mark Reeves, Deputy Mayor Cr Arthur Allen and Crs Kirsten Van Diggele and Tom Crook.



Congratulations to Councillor Arthur Allen who was re-elected unopposed to the position of Deputy Mayor at the Council meeting held on 8 November.

Uniting to prevent violence

During the 16 Days of Activism - on now until December 10 - we're backing efforts to ensure everyone in East Gippsland is respected and to end violence.

Sadly, our shire has one of the highest family violence-related police call-out figures in Victoria, which means our community is not safe for everyone.

Violence against women and girls is widespread and rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms and stereotypes.

#respectis

#callitout

#16days

"Let's Chat Gippsland" is this year's regional campaign. It reminds people that social and attitude change starts with a simple conversation.

It reminds us also, to call out sexism, sexual harassment and disrespect. Visit the Let's Chat website www.16daysgippsland.com.au for more information, event details and bookings.

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing violence within your marriage or partnership, support is available:

Safe Steps: 1800 015 188

Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault:
1800 806 292.





2022 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Ann and Stan Barker



2022 YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Paris Davis



2022 COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR

East Gippsland Winter Festival



Join us at the

2023

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Newlands Arm Community Centre, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

**Saturday
21 January
2023**

**Book your free ticket at
<https://www.trybooking.com/CETUW>**

Program includes:

Citizen of the Year

Young Citizen of the Year

Community Event of the Year

Keynote speaker

Flag raising

Entertainment

Light refreshments

For enquiries call

5153 9500

or 1300 555 886

or email civicevents@egipps.vic.gov.au

*Limited tickets available.

We're all part of the story.



Australia Day

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.



13 December: Council meeting, Bairnsdale, 6.00 pm

23 December - 3 January: Offices closed

21 January: Australia Day Awards - Newlands Arm

26 January: Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony

7 February: Council meeting, Bairnsdale, 6.00 pm

Want to take part in a Council meeting?

The community are encouraged to ask questions or present to Council on an agenda item or other matters at a Council meeting. View our [website](#).



Youth leadership series

A partnership between philanthropic trust the East Gippsland Community Foundation and TAFE Gippsland will see an East Gippsland Youth Leadership Series delivered in 2023.

Designed for new and emerging youth leaders in the 16-24-year age group, this exciting series will provide young people with the opportunity to explore their leadership potential.

The program focuses on three aspects of leadership – ME, MY TEAM, and MY COMMUNITY.

Skills will be a focus within each of these themes, including building personal attributes and enhancing the technical skills needed to help achieve tasks.

Each participant will gain the tools needed to contribute to personal growth, to their role as a team member and ultimately to become a successful leader in their local community.

Applicants will be sourced from across East Gippsland, with priority given to the fire-impacted communities of the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires.

The series will run from February to October 2023 and will include three face-to-face sessions in Bairnsdale, 10 online workshops and a graduation ceremony in November.

For further information, visit **TAFE Gippsland's website**.



Tips to reduce food waste

For many people, Christmas involves food and presents.

With some forward planning, you can save money and cut down on the amount of waste you generate. Some handy tips for reducing food waste at home over Christmas are:

- Plan your meals. Reduce stress and waste by writing up a detailed plan of what you will need for your special meal and how much.
- Reuse your Christmas staples. Leftover turkey, ham, seafood and vegetables can be used in sandwiches, quiches, stir-fries and casseroles.
- Watch portion sizes. We all love to be generous during the festive season but remember to keep portions in mind when planning lunches or dinners.
- Store your food correctly and freeze what you can. Store your leftovers in airtight plastic containers to keep them fresh.

Reminder: there is no change to our kerbside bin collection schedule this Christmas.

Council meeting in brief

At the Council meetings on 8 and 29 November, Council:

- Reduced the cost of Goods on Footpath fees by \$37 for 2022-23. Permit holders will receive a credit adjustment. This is a stimulus to traders as they manage current economic circumstances.
- Noted quarterly reports for progress against the Council Plan, capital works and major projects, and Council's finances.
- Resolved to conduct a one-year trial of new operating hours for service centres and libraries, following a review into these services.
- Adopted a 10-year Economic Development Strategy, which will be supported by a 4-year action plan.
- Noted Council officers will write to the head petitioner following a report into a petition on stormwater drainage in the Cann River/Noorinbee area.
- Noted Council and Bushfire Recovery Victoria's third progress report on East Gippsland's bushfire recovery.
- Following a petition on the subject, Council noted a report on a shared path from Bairnsdale to Paynesville. Council officers will write to the head petitioner.
- Set the fees for Council's public electric vehicle charging stations, and also the Omeo Holiday Park.
- Set the Council meeting dates for 2023.

Watch the meetings 



Have your say on housing and rural land

East Gippsland will require an additional 5,600 dwellings by 2041, but we need to maintain the unique local character of places across our shire and carefully manage development in areas prone to natural hazards.

This means a long-term vision is needed for our rural areas, so we're preparing a Housing and Settlement Strategy to complement our Rural Land Use Strategy.

Right now, you can provide feedback on both of these strategies via online surveys at yoursay.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au or as a written submission.

Your views will help guide planning decisions on the future of development and subdivision of rural land in the shire.

Feedback closes Friday 3 February 2023.

Council Christmas opening hours

Our offices, including customer service centres, Corporate Centre, library and Forge Theatre and Arts Hub, will be closed on Friday 23 December and will re-open Tuesday 3 January.

Recreation centres, the Orbest Outdoor Pool, caravan parks, waste sites and visitor information centres are operating as normal on Friday 23 December and Saturday 24 December. All sites are closed on Christmas Day.

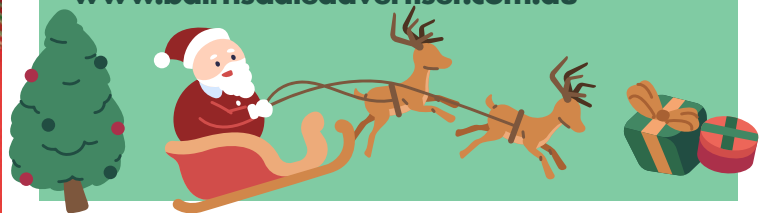
Recreation centres, outdoor pools (Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool season opens Monday 26 December), visitor information centres and waste sites operate over the holiday period, as do some of our service centres that offer banking and agency services.

You can still contact us on 5153 9500 for emergencies.

Full details of our service changes are available on our [website](#).

Bairnsdale Christmas Treasure Hunt

The Bairnsdale Library is a hive of Christmas activity and we are seeing lots of treasure seekers stopping by as part of the Bairnsdale Christmas Treasure Hunt. We are supporting this initiative of the local business operators, Bairnsdale Advertiser and the Bairnsdale Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The treasure hunt is on now until Monday 19 December. For more information visit: www.bairnsdaleadvertiser.com.au



Don't overstay in your sleigh

Christmas is coming, which means we're all shopping for gifts and treats.

That means we're asking everyone to ensure that they don't overstay in their space. A steady turnover of parking spots in the busy period gives us all a chance to stop and shop and supports our local traders.

Our rangers don't want to be Christmas Grinches, but they do need to ensure fair access to parking for all members of the community. They work to ensure that parking spaces are shared, drivers and pedestrians are not obstructed or inconvenienced, and danger caused by unsafe parking is minimised.

Be prepared to walk a short distance or adjust shopping times so you're driving into the main street outside of peak times (at key retailers this is usually before 11am and after 2pm).

In addition to checking and following time restrictions in the carparks, please take care to avoid parking in bus zones, no-parking areas and spaces set aside for people with an Accessible Parking Permit.

For more information on parking and road safety, visit our [website](#).



East Gippsland Shire Council
wishes all members of the community a
Merry Christmas and a safe and happy 2023



Pride Picnic a success

East Gippslanders aged 12-25 converged on Davison Oval, Bairnsdale for the first of two Pride Picnics - an afternoon of food, music and fun, including giant Jenga, giant Connect Four, craft activities and badge making.

The picnics, delivered in collaboration with Council, GippSport, HEY, headspace and Gippsland Youth, celebrate diversity and offer the opportunity to socialise and increase physical activity among LGBTQIA+ young people.

We are supporting these events to promote informal and social sport opportunities for young people, an objective of our Victorian Local Government Partnership Project.





When emergency crews pleaded for help with repair and recovery after Echuca was hit by a once-in-a-generation flood, Kath Smith our Manager Emergency Management answered the call. Kath, an experienced SES member (pictured third from left), drove more than 500km to the northern Victorian town to work as part of a flood-recovery crew.

"I was proud to be able to go over and help Campaspe Shire and the Bendigo Incident Control Centre transition to recovery," Kath said. "This photo shows how quickly a bond can form between people who don't know each other but have to pull together quickly and work together towards a common goal."

We thank Kath for her work to support a community in need.

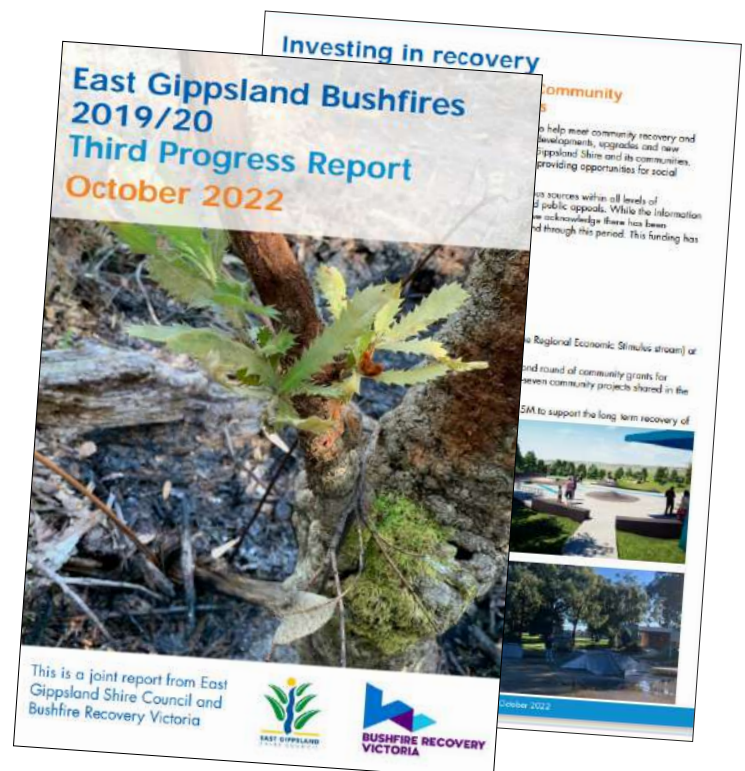
Recovery work snapshot

Together with Bushfire Recovery Victoria (now Emergency Management Victoria), we have prepared a third progress report on recovery actions following the 2019-20 Black Summer fires in East Gippsland.

The report highlights how much has been achieved while also recognising that recovery is a long journey and there is still much to be done and significant support required.

Highlights include a summary of work by community recovery committees, support for people to rebuild, investment in community infrastructure to improve resilience, the progress of the natural environment's recovery, and economic investment and programs.

You can read the plan on the **Bushfire Recovery Plans** page of our website.



It's our busy season

We're preparing and working to support our communities this spring and summer.

It is time to start getting ready.

We know the weather has been challenging, but we can all play our part this fire season.

What we are doing:

We have hired two Assistant Fire Prevention Officers.

These officers will inspect properties to help owners and property managers understand how to prepare their properties for fire season. Inspections will begin at the end of November so it is important to have your property ready.

We have started to slash roadsides one metre past the guideposts (some exceptions will see full-width slashing). The program will continue to be rolled out as the grass dries off.



We ask you to do some simple jobs around home to reduce the fuel load:

- Clear the roof and gutters,
- Trim branches near your home,
- Remove leaf litter and twigs,
- Keep grass short,
- On rural properties, create a ten-metre firebreak inside boundaries.

Did you know?

We offer free green waste drop off at most of our landfills and transfer stations.

See our website for the sites accepting green waste.



We value your feedback, appreciate your understanding and thank you for showing our staff respect.

Accommodation expo draws a crowd

Hosting an event for accommodation hosts is a tough gig, but the inaugural STAY Expo was deemed a resounding success, with some 150 attendees giving the accommodation expo their tick of approval.

Regional accommodation providers and would-be providers headed to Buchan community hall for the expo on 16 November. The event provided an opportunity for anyone with an interest in regional accommodation to get up to speed with the latest knowledge this industry has to offer - in particular, those in agriculture with an eye on diversifying their income streams by engaging in agritourism.

Owners and managers of hotels, motels, resorts, serviced apartments and other accommodation properties heard from experts on enhancing the guest experience, planning and development rules, and innovative product and service solutions, and how to market and present an accommodation concept.

Speakers included Richard Hoxley from town planners Crowther & Sadler; Ian Riley from prefab accommodation company Big Tiny homes, and Jen Clark from the Hosting with Heart podcast.

Award-winning high-end tourism business Wander, which specialises in luxury, eco-friendly experiences, also presented.

A lively networking dinner at the Buchan Caves Hotel gave accommodation providers and people who are looking to invest in the region a chance to exchange ideas and business cards.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for the next STAY Expo.



The inaugural STAY Expo was held on 16 November at the Buchan community hall, with 150 attendees giving the accommodation expo their tick of approval.



Australia Day

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

Thursday 26 January

Free activities and entertainment in
East Gippsland

For more information visit our
website.



Make a splash!

It's hard to believe it's summer, which means we are getting ready to open the Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool. The pool will be open from Monday 26 December through to Friday 10 February. Opening hours may vary depending on the forecast temperature, but in a nutshell, if it's above 24C we're open.

Kickstart summer with a swim membership with unrestricted access to indoor and outdoor pools, spa and sauna or aquatic group fitness classes.

Check our new website.



East Gippsland Shire Council Mayor Cr Mark Reeves (second row, centre) with Councillors, Council staff and project partners and participants at a recent Future Proof: Young People, Disaster Recovery and (Re)building Communities event.

Young people future-proofing the region

Young East Gippslanders from areas hit by the Black Summer bushfires are leading recovery and preparedness efforts in their communities thanks to a \$10 million, multi-council project.

Project partners recently met in Lakes Entrance for a three-day community of practice.

The Future Proof: Young People, Disaster Recovery and (Re)building Communities project is led by the Youth Affairs Council Victoria and funded via a Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants Program, of which we are a key partner.

Our Mayor Cr Mark Reeves attended

the recent gathering of the Future Proof project team, including all 14 partners, at a dinner and meeting held as part of the Community of Practice.

The ambitious project brings together youth aged 12 to 25, two Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, three Local Learning and Employment Networks and Victoria University over two years, to drive recovery outcomes for fire-affected young people and communities.

The project has employed three young peer workers across Council, Moogji Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation and Gippsland East

LLEN (GELLEN), with another to be employed with Council soon.

A minimum 354 young people across East Gippsland will be engaged by the project. Council and Moogji will be facilitating youth advisory groups which will engage up to 10 young people to lead disaster resilience and prevention projects. They will also help 15 young people kickstart careers in emergency management, youth work, community services, mental health, community development or mental health work.

The Future Proof project will run until 31 June 2024.



Bullock Island Bridge is on track to be open by Christmas. The final concrete pours of the sub-structure and bridge approaches were completed in late November. The footpath and railings were installed at the start of December. Asphalt will be laid by the third week of December.

Final cleanup will occur after the Christmas break.

Share your arts vision

If you have some spare time this holiday period, we'd like your feedback on the Draft Culture and Creativity Strategy.

This strategy will be our guide to fostering a thriving cultural life across the shire.

To read the draft strategy and provide your feedback, visit our **Your Say East Gippsland engagement portal.**

Consultation closes Friday 27 January.



We joined the Omeo Historical Society and community on Thursday 27 October to celebrate the 150th year since the proclamation of the Shire of Omeo at the Omeo Justice Precinct. The Omeo Historical Society has preserved the history of the area that encompasses the former Shire of Omeo and the buildings were restored (led by Council) in time for the celebrations.

Something to float your boat

Mallacoota Ocean Access Boat Ramp, used by recreational fishers, divers, government agency boats and craft servicing Gabo Island, provides safe boat launching access.

A recently released Independent Compliance Audit of the Environmental Management Plan for the Bastion Point ramp finds that the ramp and surrounding area are being well managed.

The report reveals a continual improvement on previous years, with over 90% of audit criteria assessed as either 'fully compliant' or 'compliant but improvements required'. The report listed many positive outcomes at Bastion Point including:

- Successful operation of our Catfish dredge vessel.
- A strong working relationship between Council staff and contractors.

You can read the full audit by visiting our [website](#).

Making a link

If you're visiting Bastion Point, you might be interested to know that the chain used for the bollards is recycled. It had a previous life hauling the Raymond Island Ferry across the channel from Paynesville to the island.

The ferry chains are changed every few years to ensure they don't fail, which means lots of old chain. We think it looks great at Bastion Point, and we're keen to find other places where you'd like to see the chains used.



A recent audit report listed many positive outcomes at Bastion Point.

It's a win!

Congratulations to the Sarsfield and Ensay communities after receiving confirmation last month that Commonwealth Government funding has been secured for bushfire recovery projects.

The heavily bushfire-impacted communities endured setbacks in their push for a new development to upgrade the recreation reserves that were central to their bushfire response and recovery.

Watch this space for updates on the projects.





Detox your Home is coming to Bairnsdale

Saturday 10 December 2022 | 9.00am to 12.00pm

**East Gippsland Livestock Exchange
11 Saleyard Road, Bairnsdale**

Household chemicals such as bleach, pesticides, weed killers, cleaning products, cosmetics, cooking oil and fuels should never be put in your rubbish bins or poured down the drain.

Safely dispose of unwanted household chemicals at Sustainability Victoria's free Detox your Home event, without harming your health or the environment.

For a full list of chemicals accepted, visit **[sustainability.vic.gov.au/accepted items](https://sustainability.vic.gov.au/accepted-items)**

Detox your Home events are drive-through and contactless.



To register to attend simply scan the QR code or visit **sustainability.vic.gov.au/detoxyourhome**

Project planning sets up '23 and beyond

We're gearing up for a busy 2023, with a large and diverse list of capital projects on our books already.

You'll see our teams and contractors busy on the ground with building and delivering new infrastructure,

however, there's also plenty of work happening behind the scenes to prepare for the next swag of projects to support our communities in 2023 and beyond.

Below are some of our projects that are in the design, review, quoting or

tendering stages.

The list is in addition to those already occurring in many other localities across the shire, including road renewal, infrastructure upgrades and new projects.

Shire-wide

- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Stormwater improvements and renewal programs
- Footpath renewal program
- Community Facilities Emergency Power Project
- Rural road improvement program
- Sealed road renewal program
- Road and drainage (forward design)
- Seawalls (forward design)

Bairnsdale district

- Bairnsdale Peppercorn Park upgrade
- Bairnsdale Airport runway extension and lighting upgrade
- Eastwood playground
- WORLD lighting
- Bairnsdale Composting Facility
- Bairnsdale Recycling Centre
- Bairnsdale City Oval lighting and scoreboard upgrade
- Lindenow footpath connections

Buchan

- Buchan Recreation Reserve upgrade
- Buchan streetscape

Far East

- Club Terrace Community Facility
- Cann River Waste Transfer Station
- Bemm River footpath connections
- Mick Baum Park (Cann River) Skatepark redevelopment
- Cann River on-street parking
- Sydenham Inlet, Bemm River (Black Spot)
- Greer Street Mallacoota Hall carpark
- Mallacoota Mudbrick Pavilion
- Bastion Point (Mallacoota) investigative works
- Mallacoota seawalls

Lakes Entrance and Metung

- Tambo Boulevard (Metung) drainage upgrade
- Nungurner Road (Black Spot)
- Lakes Entrance Waste Transfer Station upgrade
- Krauatungalung Walk, Lakes Entrance
- Kalimna Loop Walk
- Lake Tyers Beach Hall upgrade
- Lakes Entrance Historical Slipway
- Metung Shaving Point car park
- Lakes Entrance parking upgrade
- Lakes Entrance Aquadome redevelopment

- Lakes Entrance Changing Places development
- Marine Parade Lakes Entrance upgrade
- Bruce Road (Kalimna) safety upgrades

Omeo region

- Omeo Streetscape Revitalisation
- Hinnomunjie Bridge restoration

Orbost and Marlo

- Newmerella Rest Area upgrade
- Marlo town drainage upgrade
- Orbost Forest Park upgrade
- Marlo Foreshore Management Plan implementation
- Lochiel Park (Orbost) lighting upgrade
- Lake Road (Corringle) landslip

Paynesville and Raymond Island

- Paynesville Progress Jetty precinct upgrade
- Paynesville AJ Freeman Reserve netball/tennis changerooms
- Raymond Island Community Hall upgrade
- Raymond Island Koala Experience
- Slip Road Maritime Precinct

Recycled materials in our roads

DID YOU KNOW?



Industrial and household waste is being used in road bases to make our roads more sustainable.

Last month, our contractors undertook resealing works in Nungurner. The bitumen binder used there includes recycled crumbed rubber.

You may also see our contractors using forward-spreader trucks, which is now the recommended practice to support safer road maintenance practices.

Orbost kids dive in for swim lessons



It was all smiles at Orbost Outdoor Pool for the launch of its Learn to Swim program in November.

Families have jumped at the chance to get into the swim this spring, with a record number of students heading to Orbost Outdoor Pool for this season's swimming lessons.

More than 100 swimmers now enrolled, the highest number recorded for the Orbost pool.

Our instructors are on hand to ensure the Learn to Swim lessons go swimmingly and provide much-

needed aquatic safety training for the young participants. The classes run for five weeks.

This year, Orbost Outdoor Pool opened at the earlier date of Tuesday, 1 November.

Life Saving Victoria research has found that many kids have missed important aquatic education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council used this research in deciding to extend the operating period of the pool.

The popular pool will offer two five-week (two lessons per week) Learn to Swim programs – with the next starting in February. The pool will also hold a one-week VICSWIM program in January.

Aquatic Group Fitness classes, summer fun activities and Free Swim Fridays (from 3.00 pm until close each week) will also be available.

Swim-pressive new aquatic websites go live

Are you ready to dive into the summer swimming season?

We've pooled our resources to launch new and exciting websites for Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Lakes Entrance Aquadome.

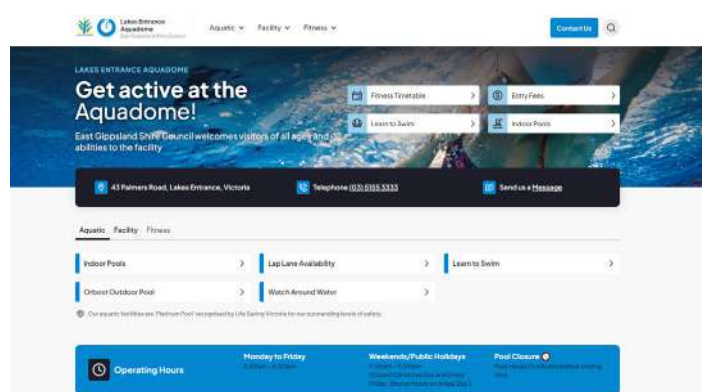
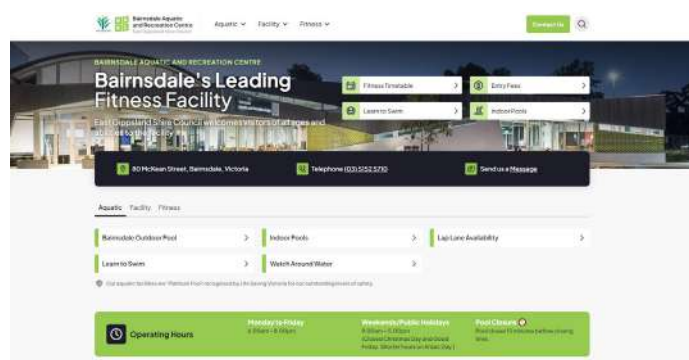
The new websites, www.barcleisure.com.au and www.lakesaquadome.com.au, also feature the Bairnsdale and Orbost outdoor swimming pools.

All four pools and fitness centres offer something for people of all ages and abilities, from beginners to competitive athletes, and the two sites include including member news and notices, group fitness times, Learn to Swim programs, membership, personal training and feedback forms and lap lane availability.

Opening hours for our outdoor pools are based on a temperature trigger. Daily opening hours can be found on the websites.

Looking for a deeper dive? You'll even find profiles of the staff who lead fitness and swim classes.

For more information and to sign up to have a splashing good time, contact your nearest swim centre or visit the new websites at www.barcleisure.com.au and www.lakesaquadome.com.au.



Getting to know... Kyra Collins, Statutory Planning Officer in Council's Land Use Planning Team

Kyra Collins joined Council as a graduate planning officer in November of 2021, amid Covid pandemic, floods and ongoing bushfire recovery. In was a tough time to start, yet just 11 months into the role she scooped Victoria's top accolade for a young planning professional - Young Planner of the Year - at Victoria's Planning Institute of Australia Awards for Excellence.

We spoke to Kyra about her role, her reasons for moving to East Gippsland and a most untimely twisted ankle. You started here at Council and quickly started achieving results, even winning the state's Young Planner of the Year award within a year. What does the award mean to you and what does it say about our Land Use Planning Team?

Robert Pringle, who is the co-ordinator for Statutory Planning, nominated me because there's not a lot of recognition for statutory planning within our profession. But I was surprised to win. We were up against some strong competitors, so for me it's fantastic that the PIA recognised statutory planning and the regions.

You landed here when Covid was rampant, the region was being hit by floods and rebuilding after the 2019/20 bushfires was happening. It was a busy time to start. How did it impact your role?

The learning curve has been steep and there has been so much information to take in because



Kyra Collins with Manager Planning Martin Richardson; Statutory Planning Officer Jim Spencer; and Statutory Planning Coordinator Robert Pringle at the Planning Institute of Australia (Victorian Division) Awards for Excellence.

East Gippsland is so varied in its topography – one area floods, another area catches on fire. One of my first planning applications was a bushfire rebuild, and I have peers in other councils who have never touched one of those. That brought forth how much I've learnt in the past 12 months.

What drew you here?

I applied during lockdown and being anywhere other than Melbourne seemed like a really good idea. I was sick of being stuck in my apartment – and the thing that has kept me here has been my wonderful colleagues.

You must have had some tough situations to deal with on arriving here.

It's particularly hard when people come to us wanting information and we have to give them answers that they don't necessarily want. It's about managing expectations and having frank conversations, but in a way that allows people to at least take something from it.

What does your average day look like?

The main scope of our job is

assessing planning applications and writing reports. But we also have what's called a duty line – each of us is rostered on the duty line phone one day a week to answer people's questions about planning.

Do you live locally?

Yes, in Bairnsdale. I grew up in Seaford, near the Mornington Peninsula, and then for the last nine years I lived in Brunswick. I did my undergrad at RMIT and my Masters at Melbourne Uni.

Now that you've been here a while, what's your favourite pub or eatery in East Gippsland?

Cinnamon Thai in Bairnsdale is delicious and also I'm a fan of Big Bear's Donuts in Lakes Entrance.

The queue is long but worth it.

How do you unwind at the end of the day?

Cycling and running. Another thing I love about East Gippsland is all the running trails you can go on.

Kyra is now up for consideration for the PIA National Young Planner of the Year award, to be held concurrently with the PIA National Congress in May 2023 in Adelaide. Good luck Kyra!



Kath Smith (ORCRA committee member and Council's Manager of Emergency Management) and Helen Sheil (Council Place Manager for the Omeo Region) handing out ORCRA resilience plans at the Omeo Show. Credit Kate Nixon, ERV.

Omeo Region Resilience Plan nearing implementation

A process that began back in 2020, when the Omeo Regional Community Recovery Association (ORCRA) conducted community surveys to gather feedback after the Black Summer bushfire is coming to fruition with the release of consultation findings and a review prior to actions being implemented by agencies.

The 2020 community surveys resulted in seven major priorities as defined by residents:

1. Fuel management
2. Road access during emergencies
3. Mental health
4. Reliable power supply
5. Reliable telecommunications supply
6. More funding for the region's facilities
7. A Resilience and Recovery Plan for the region with localised emergency plans reflecting the diversity of the region

The ORCRA committee has been working on these priorities and reports of the ongoing work on the ORCRA website ourrecovery.com.au/omeo-region.

In 2022, consultations headed up by Liza Gelt of Collaborative Consulting Co were held with communities in the Omeo region, to discuss and share what should be in the Resilience Plan and local emergency plans and those consultations are now complete.

The Omeo Region Resilience Plan and community emergency plans for seven centres in the district - Benambra, Omeo, Anglers Rest, Swifts Creek, Cobungra, Ensay and Tambo Crossing - are now being distributed through ORCRA-organised events, drop-offs at key points throughout the Omeo region and at events such as a visit by Inspector-General for Emergency Management Tony Pearce in Omeo and Ensay in early December.

The Omeo Region Resilience Plan is now being reviewed by appropriate agencies for action.

For more information, email admin@orcra.org.au.

Mozzie season

As the days get warmer, we are embracing the great outdoors.

And with the rainfall soaking the region, mosquito numbers are on the rise.

We encourage everyone to be mosquito aware and take precautions against mosquitos, as hatchings occur more regularly.

Although we are monitoring the mosquito breeding sites, there were plenty residents could do around their homes to help. The most effective protection from mosquito bites is to use insect repellent and cover-up. Some simple tips include:

- Mosquitoes can bite through tight clothing. Cover up and wear long, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use mosquito repellents.
- Limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about.
- Remove stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed around your home.
- Make sure your home is fitted with mosquito netting or screens.
- Use fly spray, surface spray, mosquito coils or plug-in repellent where you gather to sit or eat outdoors.
- Don't forget the kids – always check the insect repellent label. On babies, you might need to spray or rub repellent on their clothes instead of their skin. Avoid applying repellent to the hands of babies or young children.

Youth Art Prize winners

Some top young artistic talent was recently on display at the Forge Theatre and Arts Hub as part of the 2022 East Gippsland Youth Art Prize.

Now in its fifth year, the Youth Art Prize was open to anyone aged 12-25 years who lives, works or studies in East Gippsland. It encourages young people to be creative and acknowledges young artists and their talents.

The works were unveiled, and winners announced, at the official opening on Thursday 27 October.

This year saw 33 pieces entered. Works could include any artistic medium, including filmography, photography, 3D visuals, as well as more traditional styles such as painting and drawing.

Entries were divided into three age categories: 12-15 years, 16-20 years and 20-25 years. Category winners received gifts cards valued at \$300, \$200 or \$100.

The winner of the **12-15 years category** was: Danielle Moss of Lakes Entrance with her drawing called 'Innocence'.

"I sketched out the basic head shape and features in graphite pencil then did the darkest areas using willow charcoal. I used a smudge stick to blend out the lighter tones. For the highlights of the water I used a white paint pen," Danielle explained.

Second place went to Katarin Weaver of Bindi with a piece titled 'Harry Styles Vogue Dress'. Ava Aly-Mehlert of Granite Rock was awarded third place

with 'Girl With Sunflowers'. The winner of the **16-20 years category** was: Imrahn Canary of Bairnsdale with her winning photograph called 'Dreams'.

"This picture has been taken on a DSLR camera on Phillip Island. After waiting and experimenting with different exposures and levels of light over several days I finally captured this awesome shot. It depicts the bay looking towards Melbourne from Ventnor Beach," Imrahn said.

Second place went to Jayde Philpotts of Ellaswood with 'Hanse (Musician)'. Third place was awarded to Ashley Brunswick of Clifton Creek for 'Mandela Moon'. The winner of the **20-25 years category** was: Chris Lanyon from Combienbar with 'Escape to the Arty Loft'.

"The 3D sculpture project is a miniature high-rise apartment, made in a small, old bookshelf. Decorated with balsa wood, Nana's offcuts of fabric, foam, buttons, cardboard, paper and found objects. Plus so much glue!" Chris said.

Second place went to Rheanna Williams of Bairnsdale with a piece named 'Mask', while third place went to Harley Kewish of Sale (employed in Bairnsdale) for 'The City in The Sea'.

This year's judges were Linden Dean of Linden Dean Art Studio, and Juliette Hart from East Gippsland FReeZA group. Well done to everyone who entered the competition – we look forward to next year's entries.



Winner of the 16-20 years category at the Youth Art Prize was Imrahn Canary of Bairnsdale with 'Dreams', a photograph taken at Phillip Island.



Danielle Moss of Lakes Entrance won the 12-15 years category with her drawing 'Innocence'.



Chris Lanyon of Combienbar won the 20-25 years category with this sculpture 'Escape to the Arty Loft'.

It's our busy season

We're working to support our communities

We're targeting long grass

Wet and warm conditions mean plenty of lush greenery – but right now we have way too much of a good thing. So we're stepping up the battle against long grass.

We prioritise gardens and reserves, and work with local sporting clubs to ensure their playing surfaces are cut every one to two weeks.

Did you know?

In spring, we mow the equivalent of 175 MCGs every one to two weeks, five times more than normal.



Did you know?

Not only does mowing ramp up in spring, our team tackles increased weed and vegetation growth, tree maintenance, and coastal and garden management.



We've updated our mowing schedule, taken on more workers and equipment, and we're heading out to tackle grass growth head on.

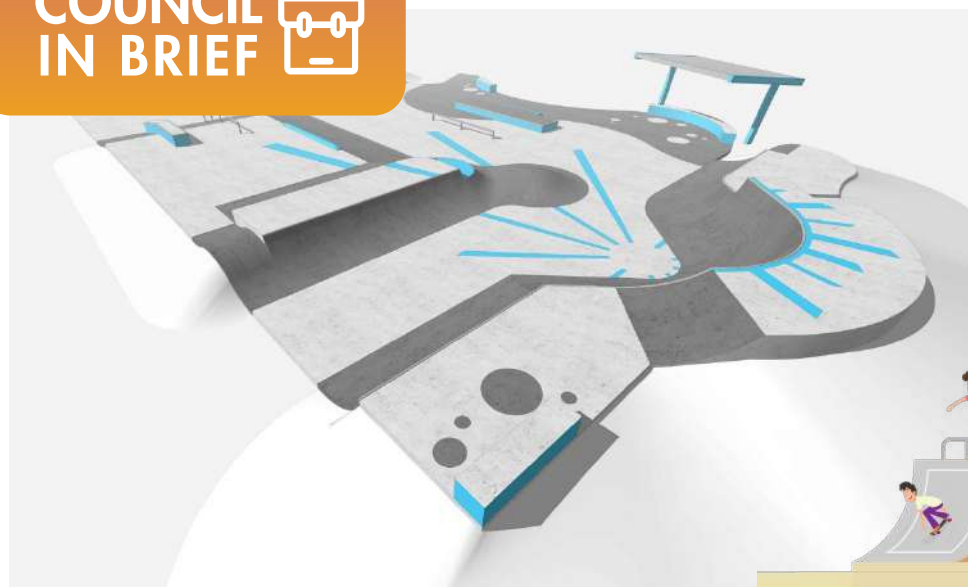
It's a big job. Rain and wet ground mean less time to mow, and areas that can't be mowed or have to be mowed slowly. There will be times when some locations will have high growth – so we ask for your patience.

We value your feedback, appreciate your understanding and thank you for showing our staff respect



Hold onto those skates

The Mallacoota Skatepark redevelopment project has been delayed due to recent rainfall, with works expected to commence in February. The Skatepark is expected to be open for public use by the end of April.



New footpaths a boost for school students



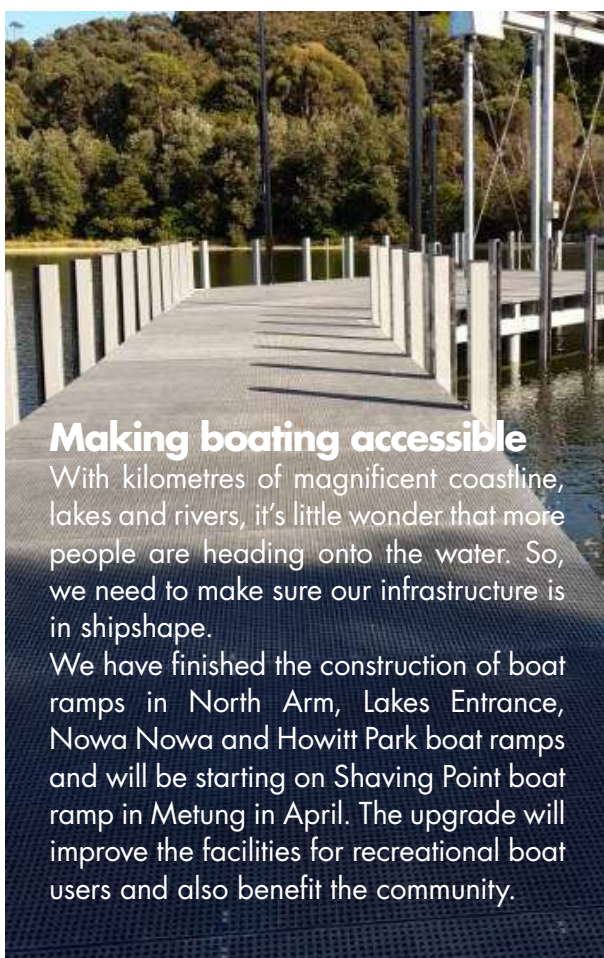
Getting to school will be a little easier for students attending Lindenow South Primary School thanks to new footpath and bus shelter upgrades scheduled for construction.

As part of the project, there will be a 2.1-2.5m-wide footpath/boardwalk connection along Lindenow-Glenaladale Road, starting from Upland Street (opposite Lindenow Primary School) to the Lindenow South Recreation Reserve, and an upgrade to the existing bus stops. This will provide safe pedestrian access along a busy stretch of road and increase safety around the two bus stops.

Making boating accessible

With kilometres of magnificent coastline, lakes and rivers, it's little wonder that more people are heading onto the water. So, we need to make sure our infrastructure is in shipshape.

We have finished the construction of boat ramps in North Arm, Lakes Entrance, Nowa Nowa and Howitt Park boat ramps and will be starting on Shaving Point boat ramp in Metung in April. The upgrade will improve the facilities for recreational boat users and also benefit the community.



Omeo MTB underway

Rain hasn't stopped construction on the Omeo Mountain Trails with stage one ride expected to be ready for Easter. Stage one includes the easy/beginner trails commencing in Livingstone Park and an easy loop connecting to the Oriental Claims.





Gymnastics pavilion on track

Construction on the new purpose-built gymnastics facility at the Lucknow Recreation Reserve is progressing. If you drive past the development regularly you would have seen a lot of activity on site during the past couple of months. Now that the roof is installed, we can really see the inside of the building starting to take shape. Crews are working on the flooring, sunken pits for the trampolines, framing and closing the walls and partitions between the community spaces, amenities and office area.



New bridges

We have 203 road bridges and are undertaking replacement work on several. We are increasing capacity and improving safety at Tabberabbera Bridge, Wombargo Creek Bridge, Bullock Island and Bills Creek, Wairewa.

At Bills Creek, Wairewa we will be installing two large box culverts and raising the level of the road. The plan is to close Wairewa Road at Bills Creek for three days in early February 2023 to enable our contractor to work day and night to complete the works and reopen the road to traffic.

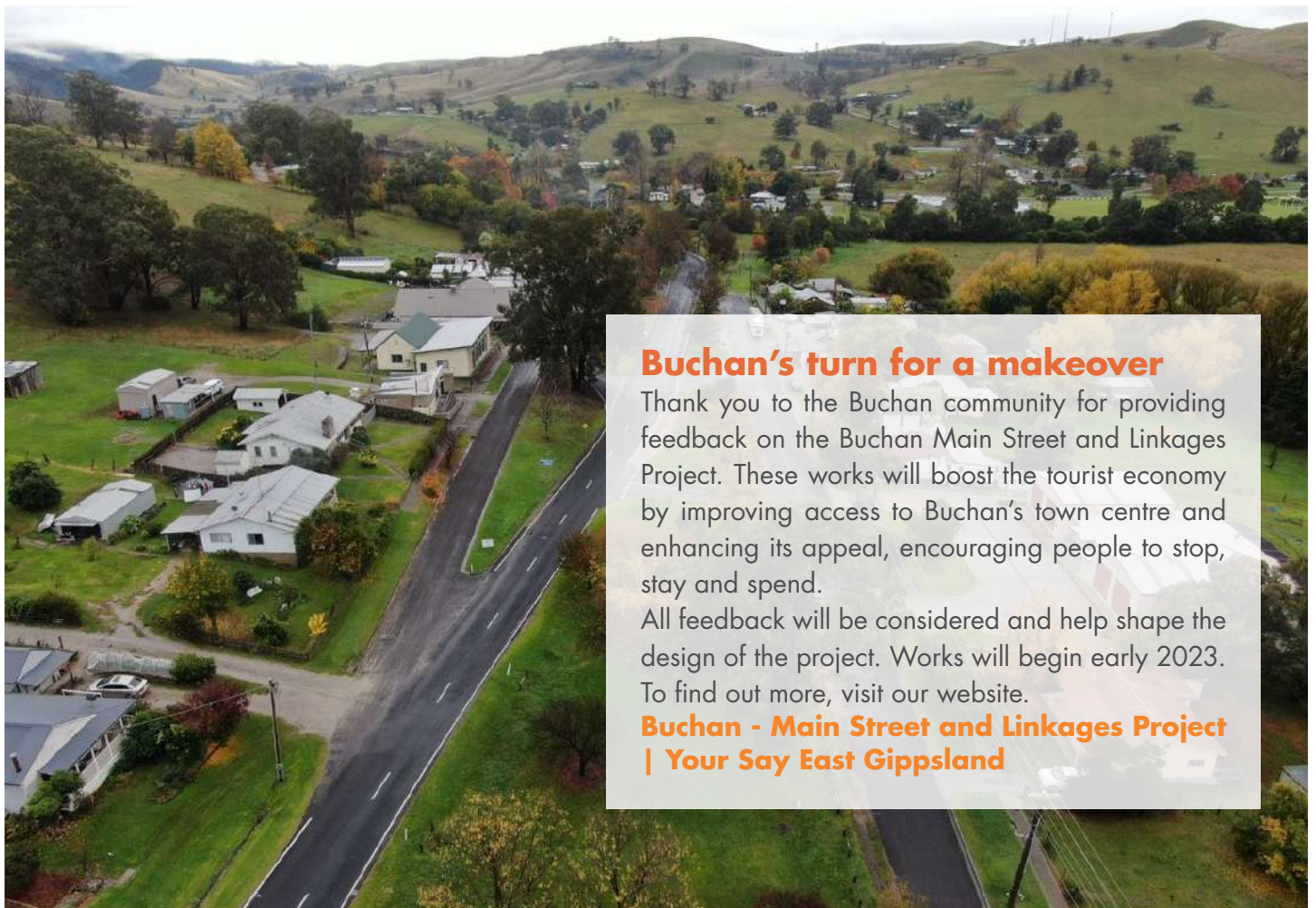
The previous option of staging the works and keeping one lane open to traffic proved to be extremely difficult, due to limitations in work space, saturated ground conditions and utility service locations. This option would have seen the road reduced to one lane for ten days and have caused long delays for road users. Signage will be installed on Wairewa Road, 10 days prior to the road closure and we have commenced advising the local community and service providers.



Embedding resilience in community fire response

Our Static Water Supply project is now complete, which included the construction of 16 high-volume concrete water tanks of approximately 47,000 litres, around remote or isolated communities. The tanks will increase the capabilities of emergency services to respond to bushfire events. The project involved consultation with the County Fire Authority, Forest Fire Management, Vic Roads and local communities.





Buchan's turn for a makeover

Thank you to the Buchan community for providing feedback on the Buchan Main Street and Linkages Project. These works will boost the tourist economy by improving access to Buchan's town centre and enhancing its appeal, encouraging people to stop, stay and spend.

All feedback will be considered and help shape the design of the project. Works will begin early 2023. To find out more, visit our website.

Buchan - Main Street and Linkages Project
| **Your Say East Gippsland**

A win for Mallacoota Airport

We are pleased that the Terminal Instrument Flight Procedures have now been reinstated at Mallacoota Airport.

The procedures went live for pilots on Thursday 3 November, in association with the airport's newly reinstated Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) certification status. Council would like to acknowledge the CASA and Airservices Australia for their assistance helping Council achieve this milestone.



Chinaman's Creek toilet block upgrade



The toilet block at Chinaman's Creek in Metung is getting a major refurbishment. The toilet block was showing its age and with an increase in usage was no longer fit for purpose.

Construction is complete and includes two unisex, accessible toilets with baby change tables. A third party needs to connect electricity to the site before the toilets can open to the public.



What's on

We are proud to support many major arts, sporting, cultural and community events each year. Here are some events hitting our region over the next couple of months.



Lakes Entrance Summer Carnival

The carnival will be back from late December to late January, including Australia Day.

The carnival is opening from 6.00 pm daily and offers rides to suit all tastes and ages. There are also sideshows, a Ferris wheel, dodgem cars and much more. The carnival is being set up now on the foreshore. Pack up will begin on Friday 28 January and be completed on Sunday 6 February 2022.

26 December – 22 January

Lakes Entrance

[More information>>>](#)



NYE Fireworks Festival

Bring the whole family for fun and festivities on the foreshore, with a fireworks display scheduled for 9.30pm and midnight!

31 December

Lakes Entrance

[More information>>>](#)

Alpine Rally

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the rally earlier this month. The flag has dropped at the 100th Lock and Load Alpine Rally of East Gippsland, supported by Council. We can't wait to see the competitors back next year!



Christmas events

The festive season is underway and there's definitely a buzz in the air! The community is brimming with fun events in the lead-up to Christmas, so pop these community led events into your calendar.

- 10 December - St John the Baptist Anglican Church Christmas Fair, Bairnsdale
- 10 December - Bairnsdale Christmas Parade, Market and Laneway Pop Up
- 11 December - Metung Lions Christmas Carols
- 17 December - Paynesville Christmas Carols
- 17 December - Lakes Entrance Christmas Market
- 18 December - Christmas Messy Church, Lakes Entrance Foreshore
- 18 December - Bairnsdale Christmas Carols
- 18 December - Bruthen Community Christmas Carols
- 18 December - Cann River Community Christmas Party
- 23 December - Lakes Entrance Christmas Market
- 24 December - Orbost Christmas Eve Festival



What's On at Forge Theatre and Arts Hub

The Forge Theatre and Arts Hub offers a range of shows to suit everyone. Some of our upcoming shows include:



Queen Forever – Break Free Tour

Friday 9 December, 7.30 pm

Queen Forever look and sound like Queen and will take you back to the glory days of the 1970s and '80s when Queen rocked the world with their classic rock anthems. With authentic costumes, a lavish production that features video clips and a superb band of musicians, this very popular show generates an audience atmosphere that has to be seen to be believed. You will feel like you're at a real Queen concert.



Dansical the Musical

Saturday 10 December, 2.30 pm

Dansical the Musical will showcase a collection of dance styles from classical ballet, jazz, tap, hip hop, demi character and national. Students will be dancing to songs from various musicals from around the world - from years gone by to current.

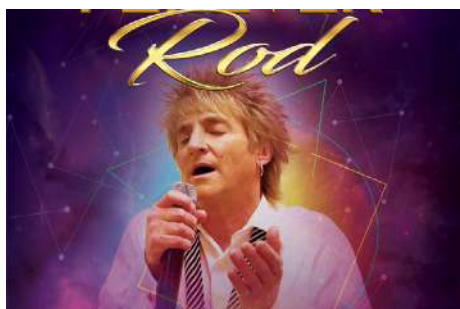


In Tails

Friday 16 December, 7.30 pm

A comedian and an opera singer's worlds collide.

David Hobson and Colin Lane have been friends for 25 years. From vastly different backgrounds, they have observed one another's worlds and always thought, 'Gee, wouldn't it be nice to have a go at what that other guy does?' So here's their chance to see whether the grass is a little greener. It's a unique and hilarious experiment that promises to enthrall and entertain.



Forever Rod

Thursday 19 January, 7.30 pm

People stop Rob Caudill in airports for autographs. They stare at him in restaurants. And when he struts on stage, women scream themselves hoarse. Why?

Because Caudill is a dead-on Rod Stewart impersonator.

He's got the high-definition jawline, the shock of spiky blond hair, but most importantly, he has the nose. Vocally, his distinctive, naturally raspy voice sounds like the legendary Stewart, and his range easily nails every high note from Stewart's younger days.



Sapprows of Kabul

Thursday 9 February, 7.30 pm

Fred Smith and band will be presenting this extraordinary song cycle on Australia's involvement in Afghanistan, culminating in the dramatic evacuation from Kabul in August 2021. Fred was there at the beginning in Uruzgan Province and returned at the end working from Kabul International Airport on the difficult evacuation



Rewind 80's Mixtape Tour

Saturday 18 March, 7.30 pm

The siren call of the 1980s - spandex and all - is beckoning crowds in all areas of Australia. Rewind '80s promises to pull out all the stops from the decade of big hair and even bigger tunes. The multi-piece live show is set to bring out two live party sets, asking guests to prepare to be immersed in a huge celebration of nostalgia.

For the most up-to-date information on shows or to book tickets, visit the Forge Theatre page on our website.



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Note: When emailing a Councillor, type "Att Cr (their last name)" in the subject line.

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