

## COVID-19 Update

The following statement is from South Gippsland Shire Council's CEO, Kerry Ellis:

Normally, at this time of year, my message to the community would be about staying safe over Easter. I would be encouraging people to take advantage of rest stops, to enjoy the time spent with loved ones and to attend local events. But this is not a normal year.

This year, I would like to reiterate the directives of Federal and State Government and ask people – respectfully – to please stay at home. Easter this year is not a time for travelling. It is a time to acknowledge and accept the stage three restrictions which are currently in place; not just for our own health but for the health of others, and particularly the vulnerable people within our community.

As country people who live in a popular tourist destination, it feels strange to be actively asking people to stay home. But our concerns are justified. We want our medical services to be able to function without extra pressure and our hospitals simply do not have the beds, staff or equipment if a spike in COVID-19 were to occur locally.

In simple terms, we want everyone to remain healthy - and the curve to flatten - so that we can welcome visitors back with open arms.... as soon as social distancing measures allow it.

### Council Services

COVID-19 has had a big impact on Council but, at the same time, our services remain available. Our reception desk is closed, and many of our staff are now working remotely, but our phones and networks are connected which means we can still action requests from our community. If you need to get in touch with Council our friendly Customer Service team are only a phone call away.

From a works perspective, our building and construction projects are proceeding and our Parks and Gardens and maintenance teams are still out working; just with increased social distancing measures in place. Our aim is that despite the unusual environment we are facing right now, Council services and projects should still be delivered without disruption.

There is also significant work being done to provide direct support to our community and the businesses that have been impacted by COVID-19, and our economic development and community support teams are working hard to ensure these supports are in place.

Planning is also happening to ensure that whenever this challenging period is over we can return to a full program of service and project delivery, right across all functions of Council.

One area that we do ask for assistance with from our community, however, is transfer stations. Due to a number of people doing work around home, our transfer stations are experiencing heavier than usual traffic. Please remember that in line with government directives, non-essential trips to the transfer station should be avoided and social distancing practiced if you do need to visit.

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