



We've had some wild weather yet again over the past week, with trees down and electricity cut off to some residents across our region. Over 77 roads were affected with trees down during the storm and as such, Council staff worked into the night and over the weekend to keep roads free of hazards.

The SES, as always, provided incredible support to the community by clearing trees and supporting people who had property damage due to the high winds we experienced.

Council staff worked collaboratively with the YMCA in Leongatha to provide 'power and showers' to impacted members of the community. Once again, our community houses became a focal point for supports to the community providing hot drinks, charging and relief supports.

AusNet worked to reinstate power across the Shire, with most locations being back on supply by last Thursday.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to every organisation and individual who has been involved in the response to this event. We can achieve so much when we all work together to support our community.

Any services that are currently available will be posted to the South Gippsland Shire Council Facebook page.

We welcomed the announcement this week from the Federal Government that a task force will be established to look into regional bank closures. We look forward to briefing our new Council on this matter so we can work with the community to ensure we can have a say on this important issue on behalf of South Gippsland.

To assist our community in getting properties cleared before the peak fire season begins, the annual Green Waste Amnesty has begun. Community members can dispose of green waste for free at Council transfer stations until 31 December 2021.

To improve the quality of the mulch produced, there are several species that cannot be accepted as part of the amnesty. These include Blackberry, Ragwort, Broom, Mirror Bush, Kikuyu Grass, Hawthorn, Cape Weed, Gorse, Blue Butterfly Bush and Pampas Grass. Species that are difficult to mulch properly are also not included in the amnesty, such as palm fronds, Yuccas, Cordylines and other related species. If any of these species are taken to a transfer

station they must be disposed of as general waste with applicable disposal fees applying. Alternatively, any of these species can be disposed of through the kerbside green waste collection service as this material is subjected to a different composting process.

For more information on transfer stations and their operating hours, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/tips

This week, the Minister confirmed the appointment of the Municipal Monitor, who will work with our new Councillors over the first twelve months of their term. We welcome the appointment of Prue Digby to this important role. Ms. Digby has extensive experience in local governance, and has previously served as a Monitor at Frankston City Council.

While we are on the topic of the new Council, we've received advice from the VEC that, following the earlier issues with ballot distribution, the election is back on track and very high percentages of ballots have been returned. We look forward to the final count and the announcement of our new Councillors, and of course, welcoming them to South Gippsland Shire Council later this week.

South Gippsland has featured prominently in an email newsletter from Visit Gippsland this week. Some of our smaller towns such as Koonwarra and Loch have been featured as part of a road trip segment in the newsletter. It is fantastic to see the recognition our region receives when it comes to its natural beauty and friendly residents and businesses.

You can sign up to receive updates from Visit Gippsland at www.visitgippsland.com.au

Keep supporting local where possible South Gippsland!

Kerryn Ellis – Chief Executive Officer