

Mayor's Message



I'm sure you have all heard lots about International Women's Day over the past week. To recognise the importance of the day, I attended two events to celebrate the fabulous women in South Gippsland. I feel extremely humbled to participate in these events. The speakers at the first brunch event in Korumburra – A Brunch to Break the Bias hosted by the Southern Business Women's Network – namely Kate Adkins, our CEO Kerryn Ellis, Kylie Homes and Chris Trotman were very powerful and inspirational, especially our CEO.

Louisa Vale, Jo McKenzie, Marge Arnup and Jen Young spoke at a celebration lunch sponsored by Manna Gum Community House in Foster. As with the brunch, I felt privileged to be invited and attend.

I am very lucky to have powerful and inspirational women around me every day working at Council and in my every day life. The theme this year, 'Break the Bias', aims to encourage a conversation where everyone is treated equally. This isn't just about females and males being treated equally. It's also about those with disability, people who are part of the LGBTIQA+ community, and anyone else who brings along with them a different perspective. These perspectives and life experiences help us make better decisions. Everyone deserves to be heard and we need people with different experiences to be part of more conversations. This starts with breaking the biases that we hold and listening, learning and doing better. Women have so much to offer. People with a disability or someone who identifies as part of the LGBTIQA+ community have so much to offer and teach us about how we can better support and represent them.

It was also great to see men coming along to these events, lending their voice to this important issue.

On Sunday 13 March, Councillor Schelling spoke at the Corner Inlet Pony Club 60th Anniversary celebrations. The Pony Club was started by a father and daughter who wanted to get people together with the same interests as them. After an advertisement was printed in the Foster Mirror calling for people to come along with or without horses and a picnic lunch, 100 children and 25 horses attended. Originally, they held some space at the Foster Showgrounds until moving to an overgrown and swampy Bennison Rec Reserve. Now, it is an 18-acre, State-level facility created by passionate and involved volunteers.

This is a great local story, and I congratulate everyone who has been involved in this Club to make it so successful. It is a fabulous achievement.

Last week, a new section of the Great Southern Rail Trail opened. Peddlers and walkers alike can now travel to (or from) Korumburra. This is a great milestone for this project that, once completed, will span 107 kilometres from Nyora to Port Welshpool. There are also plans to extend it further from Welshpool to Alberton which will increase the trail to 135 kilometres, making it one of the longest rail trails in Australia. And the best part? It is in our backyard! We have committed to working with Wellington Shire Council to get this stretch of the trail linked with the current trail. A great example of organisations working together.

To keep up to date with the developments on the Great Southern Rail Trail, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/gstrt

This Wednesday is our second Council Meeting for the year. If you don't get a chance to make it to be part of the public gallery, you can watch the meeting whenever you like or read the meeting minutes at www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings

Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor