

Mayor's Message



This week, Councillors and senior staff had the opportunity to visit the beautiful Wilsons Promontory to meet with senior representatives of Parks Victoria. It was a whirlwind day that included meeting with Parks Victoria Board Chair John Pandazopoulos, Chief Executive Officer Matthew Jackson and senior staff about Parks Victoria's plans for significant revitalisation of this terrific South Gippsland community asset. Council is working closely with Parks Victoria on this project, and it was a great opportunity to share information about this key tourism location for South Gippsland. We also enjoyed a lovely tour of Tidal River and met with Pennicott Wilderness Journeys who operate from the Prom and recently won 'Gold' in the Qantas Australian Tourism Award category for New Tourism Business.

Days like these are invaluable to us as Councillors as they help us to understand the unique challenges in pockets of our region and the projects that are being undertaken to push our Shire forward. Getting out and meeting people is important to all of us and something we hope to include more as our term progresses.

I would like to thank Parks Victoria and all Council staff who were involved in organising and running the day. It was fabulous and could not have happened without your hard work.

Last Monday, Councillor Rae, Councillor Gilligan and myself – along with Council staff including Chief Executive Officer Kerryn Ellis – attended the Venus Bay Community Energy Resilience Project launch. The Venus Bay Community Centre worked tirelessly to attract funding from a number of sources and used their own funds to extend their existing solar array by installing eight 3.3kw lithium batteries creating a microgrid at the Centre. It was a great event that acknowledged this level of hard work by the community and illustrated the positive change that can come from working together. Thank you to Alyson Skinner, Manager of the Venus Bay Community Centre for extending the invitation for us to attend.

This week, a new opportunity to have your say was released. The Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan is ready for feedback. An online survey is open now until 9.00am Monday 4 April to capture your thoughts on the Plan so far. This is a key project part of the Visitor Economy Strategy and will allow Council to create a marketing campaign to increase visitation all year round.

To have your say before the survey closes, please visit yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/gsrt-

[plan](#)

On 31 March, the second round of the Community Grants program closes to applications. If you haven't already, please consider applying for funding for your not-for-profit or volunteer organisation. The Community Grants program aims to support community initiatives that enhance the quality of life, heritage, recreation and cultural opportunities for South Gippsland residents. We want to support organisations and community groups to provide services and amenities to the people of South Gippsland, and this is just one way we can do so.

If you need a hand or have a question, you can call the Grants team on 5662 9200. For more information and to apply, please visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants

Congratulations to the Hallston Hall and Carinya Lodge in Korumburra, who were successful in receiving funding from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's Strengthening Rural Communities program. Securing this funding will help both organisations to complete projects that will benefit our community.

I would also like to congratulate Destination Gippsland and Pennicott Wilderness Journeys for their respective wins at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards last week. You have both done our region proud by representing us at the awards ceremony on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. It is always amazing to see our businesses recognised for the work they do.

Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor