

# Mayor's Message



Councillors have been busy this week attending engagement events across the Shire. It has been great to see the community face-to-face and talk about what we are excited about the detail in all of our Draft Integrated Plans. Councillors have been encouraged by the number of residents who have provided feedback and let us know the things that matter most to them.

As I have said before, this feedback is invaluable and so too are the honest and respectful conversations we are having with our community. It helps us to better understand and represent your needs.

There are still events running this week that we encourage you all to attend if you haven't already been able to provide your feedback. Alternatively, there is a survey and written submission form on the Your Say South Gippsland website that you can complete. The survey is a great way to provide feedback and you can complete as much as you like.

To complete the survey, provide a written submission, download the draft plans or summary pages, please visit [yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/provide-plan-feedback](https://yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/provide-plan-feedback)

On Wednesday, Councillors met with our colleagues from Wellington Shire Council at the Port Welshpool Old Ferry Terminal. It was a great opportunity to discuss shared issues and solutions.

I also had the pleasure of attending a celebratory mass at Korumburra's St Vincent De Paul. It was attended by Bishop Greg Bennett and was a great opportunity to reflect on the marvellous work St Vincent De Paul have done to support people in our community. After that event, I attended the rededication mass of the Fish Creek Church after its renovation alongside Councillor Schelling. This mass was also presided over by Bishop Greg Bennett and was a joyous celebration of the church being restored so lovingly. The church is looking beautiful and is a testament to the hard work of the Fish Creek community, the volunteers and the builders who have worked so hard to achieve this result.

On Sunday 1 May Stockyard Gallery in Foster celebrated its 30-year anniversary. I got there a little later than I had planned, but it was great to have a chat to everyone, hear about the history of the gallery and reconnect.

There have been lots of significant anniversaries of local volunteer-run organisations, which is a testament to our local volunteers who passionately and selflessly serve their community. Thank

you to all of our volunteers for the work that you do.

In remembrance of those who have lost their lives due to family violence, the South Gippsland Shire Council main office building was lit up purple on Wednesday 4 May. This was run across Gippsland and organised by Gippsland Women's Health. As part of the event, some horrific statistics were shared about the rate of family violence in South Gippsland.

For me, one of the statistics that stood out the most was, in 2020/21, 56.4 per cent of family violence incidents had children present. Being a former early years educator, this was a particularly sobering thing to read and made me realise just how important it is to support our young people and provide safe spaces for them to come to. As with any age group, we never know what is going on at home, but we can change how we act towards others. Always be kind, no matter what.

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, please know it is not okay and there is help available. Organisations such as 1800 RESPECT, Lifeline, and Beyond Blue are all available (as well as others) to listen and help. If immediate danger is present, you can also call 000 and ask for Police or Ambulance, whichever you need.

Be kind South Gippsland.

**Cr Mohya Davies – Mayor**