

# Mayor's Message



When I am asked 'what's so great about South Gippsland?' I often share about my admiration for the people who live in South Gippsland. We live in a place of natural beauty, with highly productive agricultural land and an incredible coastline, but what stands out for me is the way our community is a welcoming place, where people get together, give back, work hard, volunteer often and make our region a fantastic place to be.

Although I was born and raised in Gippsland, South Gippsland has been my permanent home for a relatively short time. The warm welcome, acceptance and inclusion into the community by locals is one of the main reasons my wife and I chose to relocate to South Gippsland.

Council is working to support our community groups and locals who give back to others, whilst also taking active steps to ensure that South Gippsland has the essential services we all need and rely on in our local area.

## **August Council Meeting**

This month's Council Meeting was a terrific example of the progress made on some key strategies and plans for our region.

Council's team have been hard at work progressing actions in the following:

- Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031 – 95 per cent of actions commenced or completed.
- Visitor Economy Strategy 2021-2031 – 80 per cent of actions commenced or completed.
- Great Southern Rail Trail Visitation and Marketing Plan – 36 per cent of actions commenced or completed.
- Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Strategy 2022-2026 – 76 per cent of actions commenced or completed.

Some of the actions completed include the rollout of the ArtCubes, establishment of the new South Gippsland Arts Advisory Committee, completed construction of Great Southern Rail Trail extension, finalised the South Gippsland place brand, launched the Tourism Ambassador Program, and hosted a number of business events including the inaugural Stakeholder Breakfast and Business Associations/ Presidents Lunch.

For more information on what was discussed at this month's meeting, please visit:

[www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings)

You can also watch the meeting by visiting: [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/live](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/live)

## **Community Grants**

The first round of the 2023/24 Community Grants Program closes on Thursday 31 August.

If you are part of a not-for-profit or volunteer organisation that needs some financial support, I encourage you to look at the criteria online and submit your application at: [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants)

For tailored advice, please get in contact with Sophie Bolding by calling 5662 9200 or emailing [grants@southgippsland.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@southgippsland.vic.gov.au)

## **Thank you**

To the community members who came along to the Strzelecki Ward Councillor Catch Ups and the Meet the Mayor and Deputy Mayor sessions this week. It is always a pleasure having discussions with our community and helping restore trust in Council. If you weren't able to make it to these sessions, more will be announced in the coming weeks.

Councillor details are on the website and are more than happy to chat.

## **Shrine of Remembrance Exhibition**

A touring exhibition by the Shrine of Remembrance, *Change Forever: Legacies of Conflict*, tells the stories of migrants who have resettled in Australia from war-torn countries alongside those of recent veterans of overseas service in the Australian Defence Force.

An official opening will be held on Thursday 31 August from 6.00pm and the exhibition will be at Coal Creek until 4 December 2023. For more information on the exhibition, please visit:

[www.shrine.org.au/changed-forever-legacies-of-conflict-exhibition](http://www.shrine.org.au/changed-forever-legacies-of-conflict-exhibition)

## **Cr Nathan Hersey – Mayor**