

Mayor's Message



Hello South Gippsland.

I love hearing about the fantastic people that make our community tick.

Every year, Council runs the South Gippsland Australia Day Awards where we hear about some of the amazing people who contribute really meaningfully to our community. As a result, they are recognised through an awards nomination.

This year's nominees are:

- **Citizen of the Year:** Avis Tilley, Heather Butler, Kathryn Smith, Noel Laing and Perry Neil.
- **Young Citizen of the Year:** Laila Witeveen.
- **Community Event of the Year:** Art Connect South Gippsland Open Studio Art Trail, Biketoberfest, Meeniyan Community Plan, Southern Lights Festival and Vietnam Veteran's Day.

I would like to warmly congratulate all the nominees in their respective categories, and thank them for their contribution to South Gippsland.

An Awards Ceremony is being held to celebrate these nominees on Wednesday 17 January from 6.30pm at the Meeniyan Mechanics Institute Hall. All community members are welcome to attend.

Flooding Update

Council has continued to support residents and businesses impacted by the flooding on Boxing Day. Staff have working with the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund (GERF) to provide financial support to aid the recovery of South Gippsland residents impacted by over floorboard flooding to their house or business.

The Fund has been supporting Gippsland residents impacted by natural disaster since 1978, and is run completely by volunteers. Donations to the GERF can be easily made via their website: www.gerf.org.au

Council staff are available to provide advice in relation to flood recovery by calling 5662 9200.

Events

Whether you are a music, arts or fresh produce lover, there is so much to do in South Gippsland.

We are a community of people with diverse talents and interests, and there is no better place to appreciate their creative work than in an exhibition. The Leongatha Art and Photography Show is happening from 13 January to 3 February, and is always of an incredibly high standard. I really encourage you to pop in and check out the amazing displays.

As school holidays continue, you might be thinking 'I need to get my kids out of the house'. If you are, a South Gippsland event may be exactly what you need! Find them by visiting

<https://visitsouthgippsland.com.au>

If you are an event organiser, you can also pop in a request to add your event to that page – a great option if you would like to expand those who come along to your event.

Community Engagement

Thank you to everyone who read the changes and provided their feedback on the second **Draft General Local Law**. Submissions on this have now closed, with feedback being considered now before coming to Council for adoption before the current Local Law sunsets in April.

Starting on Monday 22 January, our community will have the opportunity to provide their feedback on a new direction for **Coal Creek Community Park and Museum**. To help start the conversation, Council has created a Discussion Paper that highlights the Park's rich history, purpose and three potential pathways for the future – a revitalisation approach, transformation into a new sustainable tourist attraction, or ceasing current operations.

This is an extremely important conversation for our entire community to have so we can truly understand how everyone feels about the Park. I encourage you to get involved by sharing your thoughts and insights. There will be online and face-to-face opportunities available, which I'll tell you all about in a future message.

To view any current or past engagement run by Council, please visit:

<https://yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au>

Cr Clare Williams – Mayor