

Healthy and Engaged Communities

Supporting volunteers and community Groups in South Gippsland

South Gippsland has long, rich history, of volunteerism within our local communities. This is supported by Census data which shows that the proportion of the population who volunteer is higher in South Gippsland than both the regional or state-wide average.

In Victoria 14 per cent of people volunteer, but in South Gippsland that figure is an impressive 22 per cent.

However, similar to other areas, our volunteer figures are declining.

Since COVID 19 the incidence of volunteering in South Gippsland has fallen, while our region's reliance on volunteers has never been stronger.

In regional areas volunteers are relied upon to perform a variety of key functions such as emergency response, community support and event facilitation, but the pool of volunteers is shrinking and older volunteers are not being replaced.

In time, this is likely to create shortfalls in our communities that could impact our most vulnerable residents.

In many towns, community groups have fallen into a hiatus due to lack of numbers and in those that are still operating, many of the many of the volunteers are aging and are drowning in increased costs, regulation and red tape.



Our Request

South Gippsland Shire Council is calling on the Victorian Government to:

- Review and reduce the governance requirements for volunteer groups to help cut through the red tape which is onerous for existing volunteers and a deterrent to attracting new volunteers.
- Provide funding support to volunteer groups to cover core overheads such as insurance. The recent increase to \$20M public liability coverage has proved expensive for many community organisations.
- Undertake a sustained state-wide volunteer recruitment campaign that highlights the benefits of volunteering.