

## 2024 Candlelight Vigil

On Wednesday, South Gippsland Shire Council held a Candlelight Vigil to remember and honour those who have lost their lives to domestic and family violence.

The Vigil coincided with the annual Domestic Violence Remembrance Day which is held on the first Wednesday of May.

Council's main office was gently lit in purple as Councillors, Council staff and community members, stood outside in solidarity for the victims of domestic and family violence.

Mayor Clare Williams and Chief Executive Officer Kerry Ellis spoke to the crowd and called for the veil of silence that surrounds domestic and family violence to be lifted, highlighting the uncomfortable statistics that exist on a local level. They also noted that domestic and family violence affects people from all walks of life and it includes many forms of abuse and violence that are not always physical.

The current picture across Australia is a sombre one, with one woman killed every four days on average at the hands of an intimate partner. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has labelled violence against women and children a national crisis.

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence, please speak up and call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit [1800RESPECT.org.au](https://www.1800respect.org.au).

### **Quote attributable to Cr Clare Williams, Mayor South Gippsland Shire Council:**

*"Violence against women and children is shocking, sad and unacceptable. The unnecessary loss of any life due to domestic violence is truly tragic.*

*My heart aches and is with the families of the women and children who have fallen victim to these crimes. The statistics both locally and nationally are absolutely gut wrenching.*

*I hope that the Candlelight Vigil encouraged everyone to keep the conversation going and challenge disrespectful attitudes in society."*

PR2887 – 2/5/23