

# Cr Finlay Message



*South Gippsland  
Shire Council*

Welcome to this week's Councillor Message. This week, Mayor Schelling is giving me the opportunity to have a chat to you. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a few words about being on Council and how things are going, but first I would like to share this week's updates.

## **\$4.7 million funding for South Gippsland**

First up, some great news for our region. South Gippsland Shire Council, in partnership with Wellington Shire Council, has been successful in securing \$4.7 million in funding through the Australian Government's Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program. This funding will help us get land and infrastructure ready for renewable energy projects. It's a big step, change is coming and we need to be ready – but always with our community front and centre.

## **Community Grants**

Last week I attended our Community Grants Presentation night. It was a great evening where we awarded over \$130,000 to local community groups. This funding will support projects with a combined value of \$464,032.60 – a huge investment into South Gippsland. If you're part of a volunteer, community or not-for-profit group and need funding, please apply for the next round of grants. They're open until Sunday 31 August. You can apply here: [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants)

## **Arts and culture**

Over the weekend, Council supported an all-ages musical comedy called ARTEMIS: UTTER MESS at the Meeniyah Town Hall. Shows like this are just one of the ways we support our arts and culture in South Gippsland. To stay in the loop with upcoming events, please check out: [visitsouthgippsland.com.au/events](http://visitsouthgippsland.com.au/events)

## **Youth Mental Health First Aid**

Also, a quick note for those with a Youth Mental Health First Aid certificate due to expire, Council is running an in-person refresher course. It'll renew your certificate for another three years and refresh your skills in supporting young people through mental health challenges. For more information and to register, please visit: [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/YMHFA](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/YMHFA)



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If you've made it this far – thank you.

Before I sign off, I want to share a bit about my time at Council thus far. Since being elected, I've been busy learning the ropes and how things work. Your councillors come from all walks of life and backgrounds and represent the diversity of South Gippsland. The Councillor group comes together with a broad range of interests, yet we all want what is best for South Gippsland. But change takes time... aaaargghhhh.

One area I think we're making progress in is how we communicate and connect with our community. Councillors have been re-imagining the way meetings and briefings are conducted, and while we're making headway, we also acknowledge that some trial and error is part of the process.

I want to emphasise that my fellow councillors and I are here to represent you and act on behalf of our region. If you have concerns or constructive feedback, please get in touch – send us an email. We want to hear from you.

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

Thanks again for reading.

**Councillor Steve Finlay**