

# Mayor Message



*South Gippsland  
Shire Council*

South Gippsland is a great place to live, work and enjoy.

I know that for some locals, the impacts of fuel and other increasing costs meant that the long weekend may have been spent closer to home than perhaps previously imagined.

I do believe we are extremely lucky to have such an incredible place to call home, with natural wonder, plenty to see, and great local businesses - meaning that remaining near to home can feel like we are exploring a holiday destination that others could only dream of.

I encourage you to continue to shop local and to support our local businesses and economy during this time.

## **Local Government Awards**

South Gippsland Shire Council Council is a finalist in the Community Assets and Infrastructure (Projects \$5 Million and under) category at this year's LGPro Awards for Excellence. Council has been nominated for the *Leongatha Rail Precinct Reimagined* project. This project has taken many years and a great deal of persistence and imagination to complete, with the end result showing how well-planned projects can change the way that towns function and how previously neglected spaces can be reinvigorated.

The submission highlighted how the new precinct provides a welcoming connection between the Great Southern Rail Trail and the Leongatha CBD, activating and beautifying a previously disused area.

## **Advocacy Meetings in Spring Street**

One Gippsland members met with Ministers, Members and key advisers to advocate on behalf of Gippsland for key priorities and policy changes that would benefit our region.

It was a pleasure to meet with the Victorian Treasurer the Hon Jaclyn Symes, the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Local Government the Hon Nick Staikos, the Shadow Minister for Planning, Housing & Building and Tourism and Major Events David Southwick, local MP and leader of the Victorian National Party Danny O'Brien, and Member for Gippsland East the Hon Tim Bull, Member for Morwell Martin Cameron, and upper house members Melina Bath, Renee Heath and Tom McIntosh.



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One Gippsland is an advocacy group that brings together representatives from all six Gippsland local governments and a range of regional organisations to lobby for Gippsland's interests. The member partners are Destination Gippsland, Federation University, Food and Fibre Gippsland, the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, and TAFE Gippsland.

One Gippsland's identified four key areas where government investment and intentional policy change can help our region to thrive and succeed. These include the Energy Transition; Freight Connectivity and Roads; Tourism; and Housing and Liveability.

### **Westpac Regional Service Centre Open for Business**

This week I officially opened the new Westpac Regional Service Centre. Council has been very aware that the closure of regional bank branches has a significant impact on our residents and businesses. For this reason, we have been very active in advocating for increased face-to-face banking services in South Gippsland, which made the opening of the new service centre particularly pleasing.

The centre will have between six and nine staff on site at any given time to offer in-person support to customers, something that residents have missed since the Bair Street branch closed in 2022.

### **Branch Weaving Workshop at Coal Creek.**

If you're looking for a crafty way to keep your kids busy over the next couple of weeks I can recommend the Branch Weaving Workshop at Coal Creek on 13 April.

Join the Coal Creek Spinners for this free school holiday workshop to create a woven piece of art. Learn skills that you will be able to apply to projects at home to create functional and beautiful weaving. Suitable for children aged 5-12 years old. All materials provided.

<https://visitsouthgippsland.com.au/event/branch-weaving-workshop/>

For other events, please visit [www.visitsouthgippsland.com.au](http://www.visitsouthgippsland.com.au)