Mayor Message

South Gippsland Shire Council

It is an honour and a privilege to serve the South Gippsland community as Mayor for another year.

Over the past year, this Council has remained focused on delivering for our community and making decisions that help South Gippsland reach its full potential. I look forward to building on that momentum over the next 12 months and continuing the work that matters most to our residents.

I would like to thank all Councillors for their dedication, the progress we have made together, and the work still ahead of us. While we may not always agree on every issue, we all share a commitment to representing our communities and achieving the best possible outcomes for South Gippsland. Through respectful debate, the testing of ideas and a strong focus on delivery, I am confident we will continue to make sound decisions. That is the strength of local democracy and the value of bringing the views and aspirations of our community to the Council table.

To the community of South Gippsland, thank you for the opportunity to represent you and for the support you continue to show your Councillors. I know that every Councillor takes the responsibility of service our community seriously and works hard to make a positive difference.

As we look to the year ahead, I want you to know we are here for you. We are accessible, committed and ready to listen. Together, we will continue working to make South Gippsland an even better place to live, work and enjoy.

I encourage you to connect with your Councillors by phone or email to share ideas, raise concerns or discuss matters important to you. The more you engage with your elected representatives, the more you will see their genuine commitment to serving our Shire and supporting the communities they represent.

This Park's Alive! Opening Events

Last weekend, Councillors attended the official opening events for the *This Park's Alive!* project.

Despite less-than-perfect weather, many community members came along to learn more about this exciting initiative.

This Park's Alive! is an immersive outdoor experience for children across four South Gippsland parks: Nyora RSL Park, Koonwarra Nature Reserve, Sagasser Park in Toora and Jupiter Park in Venus Bay.

The experiences were co-created by local primary school students alongside artists Jessica Wilson, Beth Arnold and Katie Stackhouse. Each park offers its own unique adventure, and I have no doubt these attractions will become well-loved by our community and visitors alike.

It was a pleasure to attend the opening event in Nyora. Thank you also to Councillors Sarah Gilligan, Scott Rae and Clare Williams, who attended events in Venus Bay, Toora and Koonwarra respectively.

Supporting South Gippsland Women

Last week, I attended a Respect Is Workshop alongside community members and artist Beatrice Imbert, helping to create a collaborative artwork exploring the theme *Planting Seeds of Hope*.

The workshop forms part of Council's *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence* campaign. The completed artwork will be displayed during the campaign, which runs from 25 November to 10 December. It was a rewarding experience, and I look forward to seeing the finished piece exhibited at the Coal Creek Art Space.

Alongside Cr Sarah Gilligan and Cr John Schelling, I also attended the Go Girls South Gippsland Celebratory Luncheon, where we recognised the graduates of the 2026 Go Girls Program.

The Program helps women build confidence, better understand their strengths and values, and identify what they want to achieve in life. Congratulations to all graduates on this important achievement and thank you for allowing us to share in your celebration.

~ Mayor Nathan Hersey