


Shaping South Gippsland



South Gippsland
Shire Council



Engagement Report

June 2025

Thank you

Council would like to acknowledge and thank the South Gippsland community for providing valuable feedback during recent community engagement processes. Your input has played an important role in shaping the development of key strategic documents for the region.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.





Background

To inform the development of key documents that will support and guide the direction of South Gippsland, Council embarked on a significant community engagement, branded *Shaping South Gippsland*.

The engagement comprised 22 in-person events held across South Gippsland and an online survey that was widely promoted. The engagement commenced late January and ended at the end of February.

Feedback collected during this period informed development of the:

- *Council Plan 2025 – 2029*
- *Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35*
- *Revenue and Rating Plan 2025 – 2029*
- *Budget 2025/26 – 2028/29*
- *Asset Plan 2025 – 2035*
- *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029*

These documents were then placed on public exhibition for a second round of community engagement from 17 April to 7 May.

The engagement also provided an opportunity to check that the *2040 Community Vision* still reflect our community's aspirations for the future of South Gippsland.

This report provides an overview of the key feedback received during both engagement phases, along with responses to the most commonly raised issues.

Engagement Overview

Engagement #1: Shaping South Gippsland

- 22 engagement events:
 - 9 events
 - 9 Councillor 'pop-ups'
 - 3 stakeholder events
 - 1 Stakeholder Breakfast Deliberative Engagement
- 17 townships visited
- 946 survey responses provided
- 1241 suggestions for the Council Plan were provided.

Engagement #2: Key Plans for South Gippsland

- 48 survey responses provided including:
 - 29 Budget submissions
 - 1 Asset Plan submission
 - 10 Council Plan submissions
 - 6 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan submissions
 - 2 submissions provided feedback on the complete integrated planning suite.

Engagement 1: Shaping South Gippsland Most requested



Top Engagement Themes

As outlined in the engagement summary, Council received a substantial amount of feedback—particularly regarding what the community would like to see included in the 2025–2029 Council Plan. The most frequently raised topics included:

- Roads, footpaths and drainage
- Weed management
- Waste and rubbish
- Advocacy
- Performing arts space
- Rates
- Animal management
- Tourism
- Business support
- Asset improvement
- Environment
- Volunteer support

Additional information is provided for each engagement theme, including an overview of the actions Council is taking to support them. In the second section, key feedback from each town is presented alongside Council’s response.

Roads, Footpaths and Drainage

Perhaps unsurprisingly, roads were the most frequently raised topic during community engagement for the development of the *2025–2029 Council Plan*.

Key issues included:

- Increased funding for road maintenance
- Road safety improvements
- Requests for sealing roads in urban areas
- General road quality concerns
- More frequent grading
- Pothole repairs
- Applying hard surfaces to high-use unsealed roads

Specific requests highlighted:

- Dust reduction measures for roads in Venus Bay
- Road widening (e.g. Grundy Avenue, Nyora; Juno Road, Venus Bay)
- Road sealing (e.g. Clancys Road, Korumburra; various urban townships)
- Intersection upgrades

Drainage was another significant concern, with many community members calling for improved maintenance and more regular clearing of drains.

Footpaths also featured prominently in feedback, with numerous requests for additional footpaths in various townships to improve connectivity.

Specific requests were received for:

- Nyora Road, Poowong (pool to Bryson Street)
- Bent Street, Leongatha (Yarragon Road to Turner Street)
- Keane Street & Albert Streets, Port Welshpool
- Brown Street to Joel Court and the Cemetery in Leongatha
- Loch Lap: create footpath from Roy Street to Speight Street
- Old Waratah Road, Fish Creek
- Trails in Venus Bay and Sandy Point.



Deliberative Engagement Leongatha

Roads, Footpaths and Drainage

Council response:

Council acknowledges the community's concerns about the condition of the road network and is actively advocating for additional funding support from both the Australian and Victorian Governments. In fact, *Increasing Funding for Rural Roads* is one of Council's top ten advocacy priorities.

Maintaining a vast road network is one of the most significant challenges facing regional councils. Compared to metropolitan councils, South Gippsland has a relatively small population (30,680 people) spread across a large geographic area (3,296 km²). To illustrate the scale of the task, the length of our sealed road network is comparable to the distance from Melbourne to Sydney, while our unsealed road network stretches the equivalent of a journey from Melbourne to the Flinders Ranges.

With a smaller population comes a smaller ratepayer base, which limits the funding available for road maintenance and upgrades. In South Gippsland, 36 cents of every dollar paid in rates is allocated to roads, footpaths, and drainage.

Council receives numerous requests each year to seal unsealed roads. However, the cost of doing so is significant—approximately \$1 million to seal one kilometre of road, compared to around \$120,000 to maintain a similar stretch of unsealed road.

Given these financial constraints, Council must carefully prioritise where road funding is directed to ensure the most effective use of available resources.

Footpath and drainage requests must also be carefully assessed and prioritised, as adding new infrastructure increases the demand on Council's already substantial maintenance schedule. The cost to install a footpath is approximately \$250,000 per kilometre.

In the 2025/26 budget, capital expenditure on roads is projected at \$11.962 million, with an additional \$10 million allocated for the ongoing maintenance of roads and related infrastructure. Together, these represent a significant investment—particularly when compared to the projected total revenue from general rates, which stands at \$48.264 million.



Weed Management

Weed management was a key theme in the community feedback, with concerns raised across several areas, including:

- The need for increased weed control along Council-managed roads
- Concerns about weed growth on roads managed by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).
- Calls for the eradication of both environment and noxious weeds
- Questions around enforcement of noxious weed control on private property and what actions are available
- Requests for increased funding to support weed control efforts.

Specific locations highlighted in the feedback included:

- Inverloch–Venus Bay Road
- Dollar
- Wild Dog Valley Road
- Hamanns Bush Reserve
- Patersons Road, Nyora
- Silcocks Hill Road, Toora

There was also some commentary regarding Council's weed-spraying practices, with a few respondents encouraging a reduction in chemical use and the exploration of alternative control methods.

Council response:

Closely linked to road management, Council is actively advocating for improved roadside weed control as part of its broader advocacy priorities.

Council acknowledges that roadside weeds continue to pose significant challenges to both environmental sustainability and local agriculture. To help address this growing issue, \$50,000 has been allocated in the 2025/26 budget to support weed management initiatives, with a particular focus on education and support programs for the agricultural sector.

Waste and rubbish

Community responses in the waste and rubbish category were broad and varied, with suggestions focused on improving waste management and reducing environmental impact. Key requests included:

- Greater efforts by Council to reduce overall waste
- Provision of free tip vouchers for ratepayers
- Placement of volunteers at waste facilities to provide guidance on waste disposal
- Installation of a rubbish bin on Doyles Road, Venus Bay
- Implementation of a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service
- Review and improvement of hard rubbish collection services
- More efficient bottle and can recycling systems
- Incentive programs to encourage the collection and delivery of rubbish to centralised depots.

Council response:

The *Waste and Resource Recovery Plan 2024–2034* outlines Council's long-term approach to waste management in South Gippsland. As part of this plan, a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service will be introduced across the region by the end of 2026, in line with Victorian Government requirements.

The full strategy is available for download at: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/strategies

Advocacy

While many of the community's requests were not explicitly framed as advocacy issues, a significant number fall within this category. Key areas where advocacy was requested include:

Governance and Boundaries

- Inclusion of Inverloch within South Gippsland Shire

Roads and Transport (Department of Transport and Planning):

- Roadside weed control on Department of Transport and Planning managed roads
- Improvements to major roads, including the South Gippsland Highway
- Traffic safety and control measures, such as:
 - Intersection upgrades in Leongatha and Meeniyen
 - A bypass for Korumburra
 - A roundabout near Leongatha Primary and Secondary Schools
 - Speed limit reviews on Department-managed roads
 - Increased public transport services
 - Allowing bicycles on V/Line buses to and from South Gippsland
 - Community Infrastructure (DEECA and Other Agencies).

Upgrades at Recreation Reserves under Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) control, including:

- Toilets at Tarwin Lower Recreation Reserve
- Sealing the access road at Meeniyen Recreation Reserve
- Tennis court improvements at Meeniyen Recreation Reserve
- Upgrades at Nyora Recreation Reserve and Mirboo North.

Community Services and Wellbeing

- Kindergarten and childcare services for Nyora
- Expansion of day care options
- Improved access to medical services, including more doctors
- School crossing upgrades (Leongatha)
- Support for volunteers (e.g. reducing red tape, addressing insurance issues)

Upgrades for assets under VicTrack or Parks Vic control:

- Renovation of Leongatha and Nyora Railway Stations
- Funding for the Korumburra Railway Precinct to complete outstanding item
- Improved car parking at beaches
- Improved signage for dogs on beaches (Parks Victoria).

Environment and Land Use

- Opposition to wind farms in specific areas
- Shade infrastructure for livestock
- Improved dog signage at beaches (Parks Victoria responsibility).

These items reflect a wide range of community priorities, of which many fall outside Council's direct responsibility but remain important areas for ongoing advocacy and partnership with other levels of government and relevant agencies.

Council response:

Each year, Council identifies its key advocacy priorities—the issues it will actively pursue with both the Australian and Victorian governments. These priorities reflect the most pressing needs of the South Gippsland community and guide Council's advocacy efforts.

Council's current advocacy priorities include:

- Increased road funding for rural councils Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route
- Disaster recovery infrastructure funding and community energy hubs
- Renewable energy investment, including the Barry Beach Marine Terminal and Port Anthony
- Early years infrastructure
- Sporting facility upgrades, including the Leongatha Grandstand
- Building resilient coastal communities
- Improving connectivity and community transport
- Supporting volunteers and community groups

In addition to these core priorities, Council also responds to emerging advocacy issues throughout the year by engaging directly with relevant government agencies.

Performing Art Space

A significant number of responses were received for a new performing art space for South Gippsland, with many respondents requesting a Leongatha location and refurbishment of Memorial Hall.

Council response:

Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study for Memorial Hall. This study will explore future uses of the heritage facility, including the potential for a performance space and the co-location of other community services within the precinct. It will also assess how a multi-use Memorial Hall could function and **provide a concept design** to inform indicative costings.

Rates

A number of responses called for Council to:

- Reduce rates
- Restructure rates (support for farmers, sliding scale for rates)
- Budget without borrowing
- Cut costs
- Distribute rates more equitably between townships, with some respondents believing their town does not receive its fair share.

Council response:

Council is not currently in a financial position to reduce overall rates, as a short-term decline in revenue would impact Council's long-term financial sustainability.

South Gippsland is a geographically large Shire with a relatively small population, which presents unique challenges not typically faced by metropolitan councils. As outlined in our response regarding roads, a significant portion of Council's budget is dedicated to maintaining an extensive and costly road network. In addition, the Shire's size means that many services—such as pools, recreation reserves, and parks—must be replicated across multiple townships to ensure equitable access.

That said, Council recognises the impact current drought conditions are having on our farming community. In an effort to provide some relief, Council is reducing the farm differential from 70% to 65% for the 2025/26 financial year, resulting in a modest reduction in agricultural rates.

Animal Management

Responses under this theme were diverse, covering topics such as compliance, animal welfare, and recreational spaces for pets. Key community requests included:

- Greater focus on animal re-homing initiatives
- Off-leash dog parks with seating
- Consideration of an off-leash dog park at the former Leongatha Primary School site, identified as an underutilised space
- Improved beach access for dogs
- Better enforcement of signage regarding dogs on beaches
- Increased limits on the number of animals permitted.
- Strengthened local laws to address roaming cats and dogs
- Conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Development of wildlife corridors.

Council response:

Council is about to commence the process of updating its Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP), which will review several of the matters listed above. Based on previous community engagement—where strong support was shown for additional regulations in urban areas—a dog leash order is expected to be introduced as part of the updated plan. As part of this, designated off-leash areas are also likely to be identified.

Tourism

A number of tourism-related responses were received during the engagement process, although many were broad in nature. Specific suggestions included calls for Council to:

- Enhance and grow the tourism sector
- Expand free camping options
- Increase investment in tourism marketing and promotion
- Improve signage for local attractions
- Strengthen the connection between local businesses and the Great Southern Rail Trail
- Attract and support more events within the Shire
- Collaborate with businesses promoting a strong Gippsland brand beyond the Shire
- Explore new initiatives at Coal Creek, such as school camps, a platypus enclosure, postcards, live music, and animal attractions
- Support the development of suitable motel-style accommodation
- Facilitate more community events, including festivals and markets
- Encourage additional tourism accommodation options, with a preference for alternatives to short-stay rentals such as Airbnb

These suggestions reflect the community's interest in growing South Gippsland's tourism appeal while maintaining a balanced approach that supports local businesses and communities.

Council response:

Council continues to support tourism in South Gippsland through the implementation of actions outlined in the *Visitor Economy Strategy*, which addresses several of the themes raised in community feedback. The Strategy can be viewed at: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/strategies

In relation to Coal Creek, Council completed a strategic review in 2024 to help determine the site's future direction. A detailed business case is now underway.

Business Support

Council received a number of responses encouraging increased support for local businesses. Suggestions focused on reducing barriers, promoting growth, and strengthening partnerships. Key requests included:

- Making it easier for existing businesses to operate
- Supporting businesses that host private events
- Promoting economic growth in smaller towns through initiatives such as start-up grants
- Attracting new businesses to the region
- Taking a more balanced, partnership-based approach to retail business compliance in Loch
- Hosting business conferences and networking events
- Reviewing internal resource allocation to better support local business needs
- Assisting business growth in Tarwin Lower
- Attracting businesses to South Gippsland from neighbouring areas, including Wonthaggi.

These suggestions reflect a strong community interest in fostering a thriving local economy and creating more opportunities for business development across the Shire.

Council response:

Council's Economic Development Strategy guides how Council supports businesses to establish, grow, and thrive in South Gippsland. To further assist, Council offers a dedicated Business Concierge service, providing tailored support to new businesses setting up in the region. A range of business development resources are also available, including a monthly newsletter, regular workshops, and a mentoring program. The Strategy can be viewed at: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/strategies

Asset Improvement

As part of the Shaping South Gippsland engagement process, Council received numerous requests for new or upgraded community assets—ranging from large-scale infrastructure such as buildings and public toilets to smaller items like bins, benches, and shade sails. Notably, over 70 per cent of community suggestions related to the acquisition or improvement of community assets.

Council response:

Community requests for additional or improved assets present a significant challenge, as Council already manages an extensive asset portfolio of over 440 structures, many of which are rapidly deteriorating or have reached the end of their useful life.

To address this, the 2025–2029 Council Plan includes a key initiative:

“Implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections.”

This initiative will enable Council to develop a clearer understanding of its future asset maintenance and funding requirements.

Volunteer Support

There were several responses calling for greater support and recognition of volunteers. Some community members suggested this support could include assistance with insurance costs or access to maintenance grants to help sustain volunteer-led initiatives.

Council response:

Support for volunteers and community groups is one of Council’s top 10 advocacy priorities. Council recognises the growing challenges faced by volunteer groups, particularly the increasing administrative burden, which can hinder volunteer recruitment and retention.

In addition to advocacy efforts, Council provides direct support to community groups through its Community Grants Program, helping to strengthen local initiatives and foster community participation.

Environment

Environmental issues were a recurring theme in community responses, with suggestions spanning sustainability, conservation, land management, and climate resilience. Specific suggestions included:

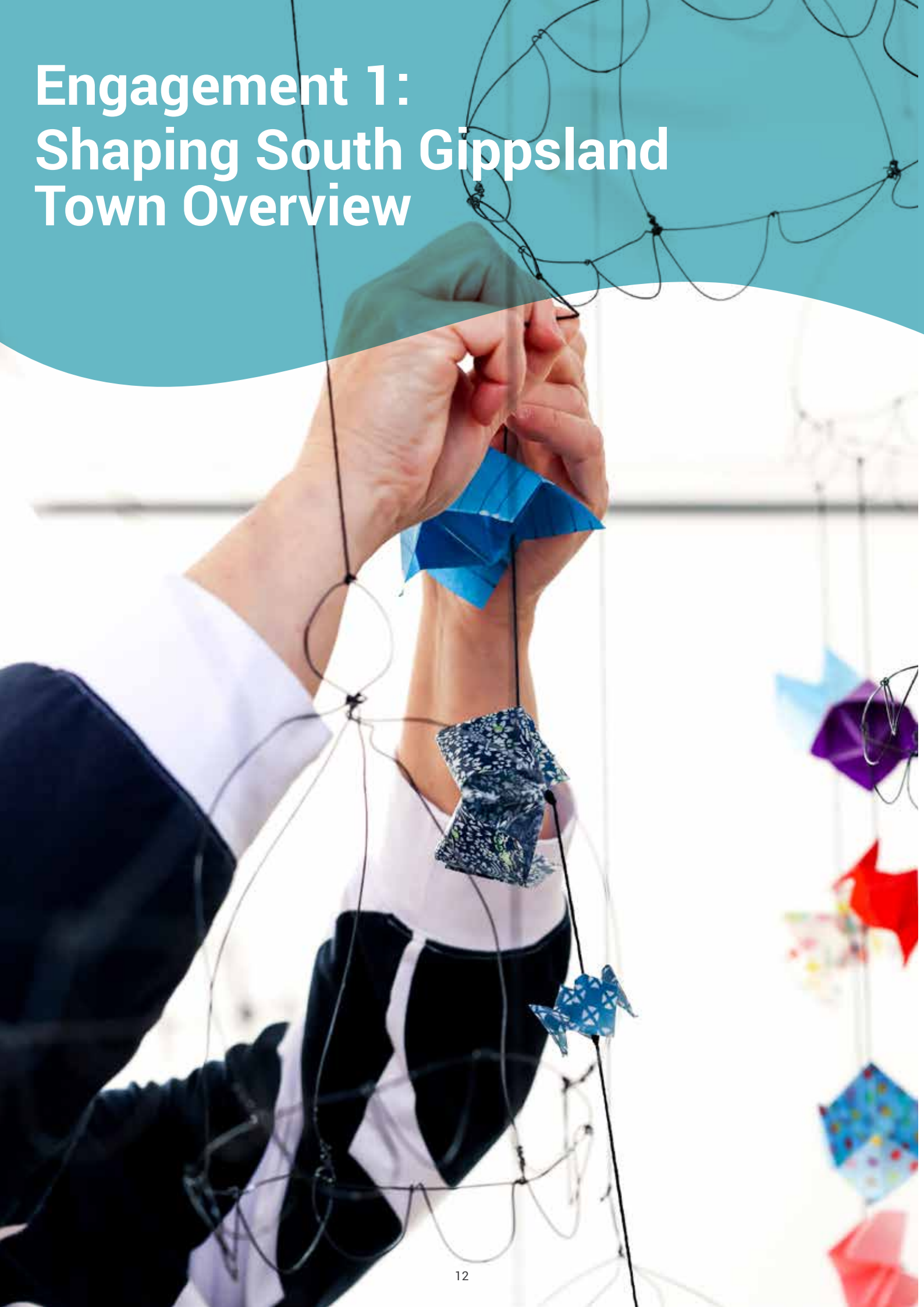
- Increase biodiversity
- Conserve wildlife and natural habitats
- Develop wildlife corridors
- Implement broader environmental protection measures
- Plant more trees, including food-producing species in Council-managed areas
- Use more recyclable materials in Council operations and infrastructure
- Invest in coastal and climate activation/resilience initiatives
- Provide assistance to farmers managing seawalls on their properties.

Council response:

Council is demonstrating its commitment to the environment through key initiatives outlined in the Council Plan, supported by targeted actions:

- Preserve, protect, and enhance the natural environment across South Gippsland.
- Develop an integrated land management approach, including improved weed control on Council-managed roads and the exploration of non-chemical treatment alternatives.
- Support community-led initiatives that focus on the protection of native wildlife.

Engagement 1: Shaping South Gippsland Town Overview





Nyora Engagement

Nyora - What we heard

Road and Footpaths

- Better footpaths and upgraded driveway crossovers in Nyora.
- Connect the new housing estate to the township in Nyora.
- Grundy Avenue needs to be widened, sides sealed and drain filled in.
- Mitchell Street drainage need attention. Water from laneway drains into properties. This has also impacted footpath.
- More footpaths and underground drains for Nyora.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads and footpaths in South Gippsland. Please note that the responsibility for driveway crossovers rests with the property owner.

Connection of the new housing estate with the Nyora township is currently being considered as part of Council's strategic planning for the area. Recognising Nyora as a designated growth area, Council acknowledges the need for additional planning to support future community needs. To initiate this process, \$150,000 has been allocated in the annual budget to begin implementing a Developer Contribution Plan overlay, which will require developers to contribute toward the township's long-term infrastructure needs.

Children and Family Services

- Additional kindergarten and childcare required.

Council response:

Council recognises the need for additional early years services in Nyora. While the responsibility for these services lies with the Department of Education, Council is actively advocating for Nyora to be considered in future planning. Early Years Infrastructure is one of Council's top ten advocacy priorities.

Nyora Station Repairs

Station is neglected and needs urgent repairs.

Council response:

Council has been actively advocating to the Victorian Government and VicTrack—the owners of the building—for station improvements and increased maintenance. Correspondence received late last year indicates that VicTrack is actively seeking a tenant for the building; however, these efforts have so far been unsuccessful. Council will continue to advocate for the proper maintenance of this important community asset.



Nyora

Nyora - What we heard continued

Planning

- Create a town centre in Nyora

Council response:

The *Nyora Development Strategy* outlines how a town centre can be developed in Nyora. The strategy can be viewed on [Council's website](#).

Town centre works are aligned with Nyora growth planning strategies.

Recreation

- Female facilities (change rooms) needed at the Nyora Recreation Reserve.

Council response:

Council recognises the need for change room upgrades at the Nyora Recreation Reserve and is actively advocating for funding to support these improvements. Upgrading sporting facilities is a top ten advocacy priority for Council. The Nyora Recreation Reserve is located on Crown Land and is managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Assets

- Formal signage need at the beginning of Rail Trail.

Council response:

This has recently been installed.

Vegetation

- Hawson and Walters Road needs tidy up.
- Weeds in area.

Council response:

Please see page seven for information on weed control.

The site in question on Hawson and Walters Road is managed by Parks Victoria. Council has lodged a request with Parks Victoria.

Community Development

- Seeking support for new town committee to help represent the needs and future ambitions Nyora.

Council response:

Council's Community Development team can support the Nyora community through this process. The team can be contacted on 5662 9200.



Poowong Engagement

Poowong - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Footpath required on north side of Nyora Road from swimming pool to at least Bryson street.
- Footpaths needed in residential areas in Poowong.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads and footpaths in South Gippsland.

Recreation

- Exercise stations along the walking track or between the two estates.
- Need more activities for kids (bike / pump track).
- Better maintenance of Poowong Rec Centre.

Council response:

Council is facing increasing challenges in maintaining its existing asset portfolio, with a significant proportion of infrastructure approaching end-of-life. Before committing to new infrastructure, Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of its current assets. A key strategy in the *Council Plan 2025–29* is to “implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections”.

Vegetation

- Need nicer gardens in Poowong.

Council response:

A customer request for this has been entered and will be reviewed by the Open Space and Environment team.

Community Development

- Implement priorities from the Poowong Community Plan.

Council response:

Council values the significant effort involved in developing town and community plans and is committed to working with relevant groups to progress these initiatives where possible. However, due to current financial constraints, the level of direct funding support Council can provide is limited. As noted in the recreation response, a comprehensive review of all existing Council infrastructure is also underway.

Business

- Shopfronts/facades require improvement to increase street appeal. A program to work with shop owners to improve facades would be beneficial.

Council response:

Council does not currently offer a program of this type but is aware of similar grant-funded initiatives in other Shires. This feedback has been referred to Council’s Economic Development team for consideration during the development of the next Economic Development Strategy.



Loch Engagement

Loch - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Advocate for South Gippsland Highway improvements at Loch.
- Implement traffic safety improvements coming out of the traffic safety study.
- Seal unmade roads
- Finish drainage on Naylor Lane
- Seal up open drains on Victoria Street (inc Sunnyside Park)
- Improve pedestrian crossing

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Council has advocated to the Department of Transport and Planning for improvements to the South Gippsland Highway and will continue to lobby for further upgrades.

Council is currently seeking funding opportunities to implement improvements from the recent traffic study.

Parks and Playgrounds

- Shade sails for park in Loch

Council response:

Shade for playgrounds was a recurring theme throughout the engagement period and will be considered in future open space planning. A key strategy in the 2025–2029 Council Plan is to “sustainably plan and design our open spaces to enable healthy lifestyles.”

Vegetation

- Trees on Smith Street would benefit from pollarding.

Council response:

Customer request submitted.

Business

- Seeking a more balanced ‘partnership’ approach when ensuring business compliance in Loch.

Council response:

Council appreciates this feedback and will explore opportunities for proactive education to ensure businesses have the information they need to support compliance.

Recreation

- Seeking horse corral for horse riders who use the rail trail.
- Complete Loch Lap

Council response:

Please refer to page 11 regarding asset management.

The Loch Lap is listed in Council's *Parks and Trails Strategy* but is currently unfunded.

Building/Assets

- Empty site on Roy Street needs attention.
- Damaged heritage lamp post at tunnel entry.
- Rail Trail signage - seeking update.

Council response:

Customer requests submitted.

Rail Trail signage has now been installed.



Kongwak

Kongwak - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Advocate to Department of Transport and Planning to fix pothole in intersection. Keeps failing after it rains.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Council continues advocate to the Department of Transport and Planning for improvements to arterial roads in South Gippsland.

Building and Vegetation

- Additional support sought for the Kongwak Hall including mowing, upgrades and car park maintenance.

Council response:

Council recognises the valuable work of the Kongwak Hall Committee and supports the hall – which is not owned or operated by Council – through a small annual halls grant. Additional funding opportunities are available through Council's Community Grants Program. However, further financial support cannot be considered at this time while a review of Council's asset portfolio is pending.

Community Safety

- Concern that air ambulance access to Kongwak obstructed by trees.

Council response:

Enquiry lodged with Ambulance Victoria.

Outtrim - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Outtrim - Inverloch Road intersection with Outtrim - Leongatha Road needs widening due to poor visibility and other concerns.

Council response:

For more information on road-related matters, please refer to page six. Please note that this work is not currently included in Council's capital works budget.



Korumburra

Korumburra - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Seal Korumburra South Road.
- Seal and widen the remainder of Clancy's Road.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Recreation

- Repair the Korumburra Pool.
- Provide additional investment in Korumburra Showgrounds.

Council response:

Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of its current assets. A key strategy in the *Council Plan 2025–29* is to “implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections”. This will help to determine asset priorities, including upgrades, moving forward.

Council recently supported a successful grant application for new netball changerooms and upgraded football changerooms at the Korumburra Showgrounds. This support included preparing the grant application, coordinating the project, and contributing \$400,000 in funding.

The Korumburra Showgrounds is not owned or managed by Council.

Korumburra Supermarket

- Please provide an update on the status of the new supermarket.

Council response:

Council has issued permits for the supermarket development. Please seek further updates directly from the developer, IGA Korumburra.

Korumburra Senior Citizens

- Restore the old building and give it to the Korumburra Seniors for their use.

Council response:

Following a lengthy and considered discussion at the April 2024 Council Meeting, a recommendation to proceed with the land sale at 14 Radovick Street was endorsed. Co-locating different service groups is a key priority of Council when it comes to cost-effective asset management and the need for a centralised community hub was identified in the *Korumburra Town Centre Framework Plan*.

Accommodation

- Need for additional accommodation in town.

Council response:

Council recognises the need for additional accommodation in South Gippsland and encourages and advocates for private investment in this area.



Korumburra - What we heard continued

Coal Creek

- More live music and events.
- Postcards and improved visitor information.
- Wildlife displays (platypus).
- Train restoration.
- Additional photo displays and information on coal mining days.
- Improved signage from highway.
- Cafe.

Council response:

Council completed a strategy in 2024 to help determine a future direction for Coal Creek. A business case for the site is currently underway.



Leongatha Engagement

Leongatha - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Improve main intersection in Leongatha. Suggestions included traffic lights, roundabout, under/overpass.
- Better traffic control at the intersection of Bruce Street and Church Street
- Fix parking in Bair Street
- Footpath needed on Brown Street to Joel Court and cemetery.
- Safe crossing needed on corner of Young and McCartin streets.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

The Leongatha Alternative Route is one of Council's top ten advocacy priorities. Council is actively seeking funding from the Victorian Government to advance planning for the project.

Leongatha offers a range of parking options. In addition to Bair and McCartin Streets, the recently revitalised Leongatha Railway Precinct has added 50 new parking spaces, including all-day and long-vehicle parking.

Events

- Bring back the Leongatha Show.

Council response:

The Show was not a Council-run event.

Buildings

- Develop a performance space for Leongatha.
- Repair the Leongatha station and protect from vandalism. Lease for business ventures (e.g. cafe).

Council response:

Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study for Memorial Hall. This study will explore future uses of the heritage facility, including the potential for a performance space and the co-location of other community services within the precinct. It will also assess how a multi-use Memorial Hall could function and provide a concept design to inform indicative costings.

The Leongatha Station is owned and maintained by VicTrack, which is responsible for the building's upkeep and leasing. Council is aware of recent vandalism at the site, has reported these concerns to VicTrack and advocated for additional repairs. Council also appreciates the support of Melina Bath MP, Member for Eastern Victoria Region, who is also advocating for improved security measures at the station.

Art

- Complete the Koonwarra end of the mural in the Leongatha Railway Precinct.

Council response:

Council has no plans to expand or change the existing mural from what is there currently.

Leongatha - What we heard continued

Toilets

- Additional toilets needed in Aldi/IGA area.

Council response:

Before committing to new infrastructure, Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of its current assets. A key strategy in the *Council Plan 2025–29* is to “implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections”.

Business

- Increase weekend trade in Leongatha.

Council response:

Council’s redevelopment of Bair Street has contributed to increased activity in the Leongatha shopping precinct. While Council cannot influence the opening hours of private businesses, it acknowledges that trading decisions may be affected by a range of economic or personal factors. That said, Council recognises the value of weekend trade for the vibrancy and economic health of local townships.

Community Safety

- Extra school crossings outside Leongatha Primary School and Tafe.
- Parking enforcement near medical hub.
- Fenced (off leash) dog area needed.

Council response:

School crossings in this location would be a responsibility of the Education Department and the Department of Transport and Planning.

Council conducts spot checks in identified problem areas; however, limited resources restrict the ability to carry out regular parking enforcement. A customer request for this location has been logged.

Fenced off-leash dog areas will be considered during the development of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Vegetation

- GSRT Parr Street to Simons Road - vegetation blocking drains to when it rains it overflows.
- Blackberries on Wild Dog Road and Ragwort around Hammons Reserve.

Council response:

Please see page seven for information on weed control. A customer request has been logged for the issue identified in Parr Street.

Customer Service

- Increase opening hours / days at main Council Office.

Council response:

Following a review of Council’s customer service operations, changes were made to improve community access to Council services across multiple locations. Customer service staff now rotate between the main office in Leongatha and a second service counter at the Korumburra Community Hub. Council will continue to review and monitor its customer service offerings.

Parks and Playgrounds

- Shade sails for parks
- A partially waterproof, undercover, play area in Leongatha (or Korumburra), This could be a bike/scooter track/fenced area.

Council response:

Shade and covered play areas will be considered in future open space planning for Council’s playgrounds. A key strategy in the 2025–2029 Council Plan is to “sustainably plan and design our open spaces to enable healthy lifestyles.”



Koonwarra Engagement

Koonwarra - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- No parking sign needed for footpath in Koonwarra near toilets on GSRT. People keep parking in the space needed to access toilet facilities.

Council response:

Customer request logged.

Buildings and Assets

- Rotunda needed near the Koonwarra toilets to house display and to provide shelter for Park Run participants.

Council response:

Council has been supporting community efforts to install a rotunda at this location, and planning is well advanced.



Dumbalk Engagement

Dumbalk - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Advocacy for arterial road into Dumbalk (signage, line marking).
- Cross roads could be safe via speed reduction.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Council is advocating for increased support for regional roads, including the arterial roads referenced. Responsibility for the arterial and cross roads mentioned during the engagement lies with the Department of Transport and Planning.

Recreation

- Exercise stations would be good at the Dumbalk Recreation Reserve.

Council response:

Council is facing increasing challenges in maintaining its existing asset portfolio, with a significant proportion of infrastructure approaching end-of-life. Before committing to new infrastructure, Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of its current assets. A key strategy in the *Council Plan 2025–29* is to “implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections”.

Buildings and Assets

- Dumbalk Community Centre would like to investigate taking over the entire lease of the L shaped land on the next renewal.
- Back of hall gets very muddy and corrugated when wet, repair needed.
- Drinking fountain needed near rotunda.

Council response:

Requests related to the Hall and Community Centre will be considered as part of the upcoming Building Asset Management review.

Installing a drinking fountain at this location is considered a low priority at this time. Due to their surprisingly high cost, drinking fountains are installed selectively across the Shire.

Vegetation

- Gum tree near Dumbalk Hall needs to be trimmed back.

Council response:

Customer request logged.

Community Development

- Dumbalk Hall Committee is keen to remain and continue operating. Keen for update on progress of hall and hall committee.

Council response:

Customer request logged. Community Development to provide update.



Mirboo North

Mirboo North / Mirboo / Mt Eccles - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Mirboo roads require additional maintenance.
- Barriers needed in dangerous sections of road between Mirboo to Dumbalk.
- A white line is needed in the middle of the road on Mount Eccles Roads and near Hamann's Bush Reserve on Wild Dog Valley Road. Guard rail would also be helpful on some corners on hilly roads.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Council is advocating for increased support for arterial roads across South Gippsland.

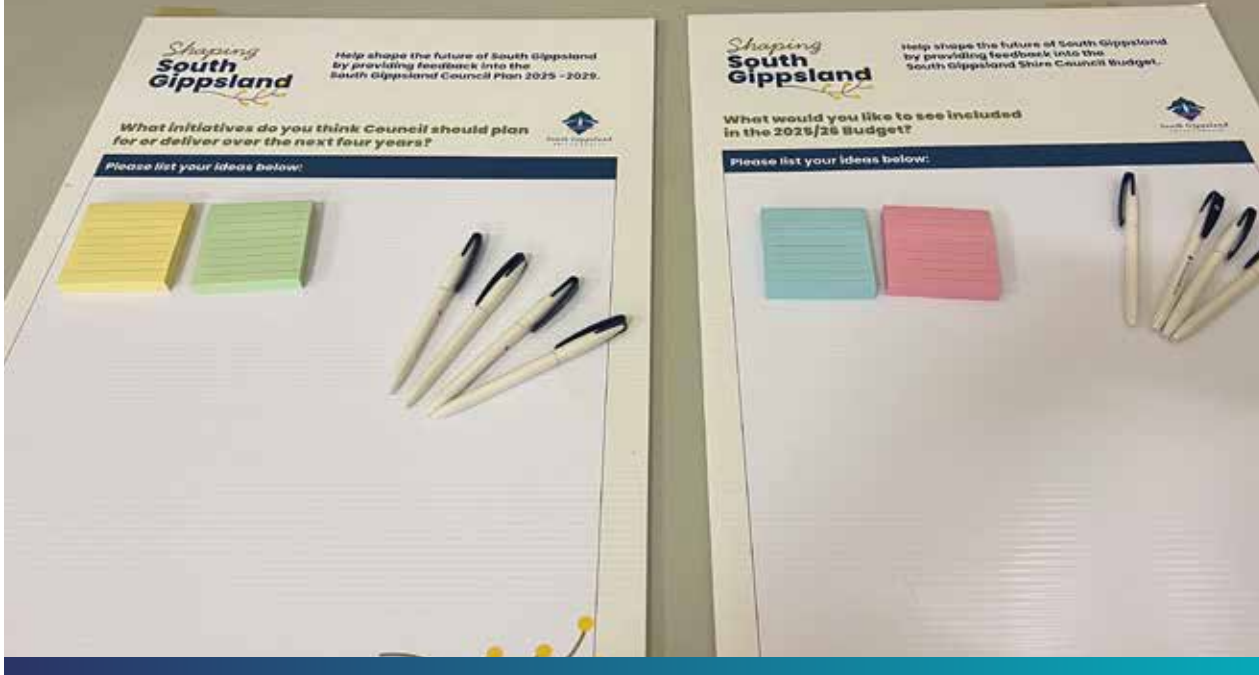
A customer request has been logged for the team to investigate the need for line marking.

Community Development

- Increase support for bands to perform (i.e. Mossvale Park music).

Council response:

Council's Community Grants Program provides funding support to event organisers and community groups. The program runs two rounds each year, with approximately \$80,000 in funding distributed to a variety of community organisation in each round.



Meeniyan - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Roundabout at the Mahob's intersection.
- Increased accessible parking required.
- Install reverse parking in Meeniyan.
- Angle parking not 90 degree parking.

Council response:

Please see page six for information regarding roads, footpaths and drainage in South Gippsland.

Council is advocating for increased support for regional roads, including the arterial roads referenced. There are no plans to alter parking arrangements in Meeniyan at this time.

Recreation

- New tennis courts for Meeniyan.
- Sealing of road around Meeniyan Recreation Reserve.

Council response:

Upgrading sporting facilities is a top ten advocacy priority for Council. The Meeniyan Recreation Reserve is located on Crown Land and is managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Buildings and Assets

- Bins for Blokes for Meeniyan Hub.
- Buy old CFA building for community use.
- Additional seating outside Meeniyan Hub.
- Improve stair visibility in new Hub.
- Streetlights for Ross Street.
- Place Australian Flag in town.

Council response:

Requests for minor improvements to the Meeniyan Hub will be considered as part of the upcoming review of the project and its ongoing use over the coming months.

Council is currently working to consolidate its building portfolio (see page 11 for more details). As a result, the acquisition of new assets is unlikely to be considered while the asset review is underway.

Street lighting on Ross Street is not supported at this time, as the area is classified as semi-rural.

The installation and maintenance of township flags is not currently a service provided by Council.



Fish Creek

Fish Creek - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- More details on Fish Creek Streetscape would be good for those who don't attend town meetings.
- Traffic calming measures in lieu of footpaths on Old Waratah Road.

Council response:

For information on roads, footpaths, and drainage in South Gippsland, please refer to page six.

Council will be creating a dedicated page on its website to share more details about streetscape plans and to provide regular updates.

Traffic calming measures are currently in place on Old Waratah Road, and at this stage, no additional measures are planned. Council will continue to monitor the area.

Recreation

- Change some of the tennis court area into a basketball (shoot hoops) area for older kids.

Council response:

Council's Recreation team will investigate the tennis courts to determine whether they should be included in Council's Recreation Blueprint.

Assets

- Sewerage for Fish Creek.

Council response:

Council is not the responsible authority for water services; town sewerage falls under the jurisdiction of South Gippsland Water.



Sandy Point Engagement

Sandy Point - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- 40kph limit needed on Beach Parade.
- Electronic signage (VMS board) needed to help slow traffic during Christmas holidays.

Council response:

For information on roads, footpaths, and drainage in South Gippsland, please refer to page six.

A 40km/h speed limit has recently been implemented along Beach Parade. The use of a Variable Message Sign (VMS) board may be possible, subject to availability, and will be reviewed closer to the Christmas period.

Assets

- A toilet block is needed at Ned Neales car park at Sandy Point.
- A walking trail is needed on Sandy Point Road.
- Support the Waratah Way project.
- Dog signage needs review in Sandy Point (some respondents seek more lenient dog hours and others more restrictive).

Council response:

Council is currently working to consolidate its building portfolio (see page 11 for more details). As a result, the acquisition of new assets is unlikely to be considered while the asset review is underway.

An action in the *Council Plan 2025 - 29* is to "commence a review of the Paths and Trails Strategy list and Footpath Programs list." These connecting paths will be considered as part of that review.

Striking the right balance regarding when dogs should or shouldn't be allowed on beaches is challenging. This is reflected in the feedback received by Council, which shows that while some community members support increased access for dogs, others prefer more restrictions. Any proposed changes to dog access will need to be referred to the Sandy Point Foreshore Committee for consideration.



Tarwin Lower Engagement

Tarwin Lower - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Path from Tarwin Lower jetty through Tarwin Lower township need to be made and linked.
- Parking along Tarwin Lower river bank needs barriers/posts installed to prevent parking on riverbank.

Council response:

For information on roads, footpaths, and drainage in South Gippsland, please refer to page six.

A customer request has been logged to a investigate parking concerns at this location and to explore remediation options if the concerns are confirmed.

Recreation

- New toilet block at Recreation Reserve.

Council response:

Upgrading sporting facilities is one of Council's top ten advocacy priorities, and the provision of toilets at Tarwin Lower is included within this priority. The Tarwin Lower Recreation Reserve is situated on Crown Land and is managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Buildings / Assets

- Defibrillator needed for Middle Tarwin Hall.

Council response:

Council's Community Grants Program may provide an opportunity to support the installation of a defibrillator at the hall.

Vegetation

- Roadside vegetation clearing between Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay is needed.

Council response:

The section of road in question falls under the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Planning. Council is actively advocating for improved roadside weed control as part of its advocacy priorities. Council recognises that roadside weeds remain a persistent issue, presenting significant challenges to environmental sustainability and local agriculture. To support efforts in addressing this growing concern, Council has allocated \$50,000 in the 2025/26 budget for weed management initiatives, with a focus on education and support programs for the agricultural sector.

Business

- Help businesses to grow in Tarwin Lower.

Council response:

Council offers a range of resources to support businesses looking to establish in South Gippsland, including a dedicated Business Concierge service to assist operators through the permit process. In addition, Council provides business training, mentoring opportunities, and a monthly Business Newsletter, which is a valuable source of information and updates.



Venus Bay Engagement

Venus Bay - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Seal roads in Venus Bay.
- Keep roads unsealed in Venus Bay.
- Widen roads like Juno Road.

Council response:

For information on roads, footpaths, and drainage in South Gippsland, please refer to page six.

Community feedback on roads in Venus Bay was mixed, with some residents expressing a preference for sealed roads, while others favoured keeping them unsealed.

Vegetation

- Clear weeds on Inverloch - Venus Bay Road.

Council response:

Please refer to response on previous page.

Planning

- No new or big developments in Venus Bay Estates.

Council response:

Council's Coastal Strategy seeks to *"explore the strategic justification for Council to restrict or discourage the development of more than one dwelling per lot and the subdivision of land which increases dwelling development potential"*. This work covers Venus Bay and remains an ongoing advocacy priority of Council.

Assets

- Bike paths needed in Venus Bay (bitumen from Lees Road to Tarwin Lower).
- Need track to connect the second estate to the shopping precinct.
- Shared bike and pedestrian paths needed.
- Build a bridge from Inverloch to Venus Bay.
- EV charging station in Venus Bay.

Council response:

An action in the *Council Plan 2025 - 29* is to *"commence a review of the Paths and Trails Strategy list and Footpath Programs list."* These connecting paths will be considered as part of that review.

A bridge between Inverloch and Venus Bay has been assessed as financially unfeasible.

Council has installed six electric vehicle (EV) chargers across South Gippsland, supported by funding from Victorian and Australian Government grant programs. In addition, several privately operated chargers are available in various townships. The grant programs that previously supported this infrastructure are now closed.

Community Safety

- Dog on beach hours need to be changed and more enforcement is required.

Council response:

The beaches in Venus Bay are managed by Parks Victoria and do not fall under Council's direct responsibility.



Toora Engagement

Walkerville and Toora - What we heard

Assets

- Have a walkway alongside the road from Prom Views estate to Walkerville North beach.
- Bus stop needed outside Toora Deli.

Council response:

An action in the *Council Plan 2025 - 29* is to “commence a review of the Paths and Trails Strategy list and Footpath Programs list.” Walking trails will be considered at this time.

A request for a bus stop in this location would be best addressed to Department of Transport and Planning.

Planning

- Prohibit people living in main street shopfronts in Toora.

Council response:

Some residential uses in main street shopfronts were established historically. Current planning controls prioritise commercial uses in commercial zones, with residential ‘shop-top’ living considered a secondary use.

Environment

- The creek in Toora is full of rubbish.

Council response:

The creek in question is managed by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and is not under Council’s direct responsibility. A request has been forwarded.

Recreation

- Legal fire pits needed for Walkerville Caravan Park during holidays.

Council response:

The Walkerville Caravan Park is operated by the Walkerville Foreshore Committee.

Vegetation

- Action on weed management required on Silcocks Hill Road.

Council response:

Council is actively advocating for improved roadside weed control as part of its advocacy priorities. Council recognises that roadside weeds remain a persistent issue, presenting significant challenges to environmental sustainability and local agriculture. To support efforts in addressing this growing concern, Council has allocated \$50,000 in the 2025/26 budget for weed management initiatives, with a focus on education and support programs for the agricultural sector.



Foster Engagement

Foster - What we heard

Roads / Footpaths

- Asphalt up to Camp Rumbug to help visitors and stop the road being destroyed.
- Repair Powell's Road.
- Harmon Road turn off requires attention.

Council response:

For information on roads, footpaths, and drainage in South Gippsland, please refer to page six.

Recreation

- The power infrastructure upgrade at Foster Showgrounds may be need for all reserves.

Council response:

Upgrading sporting facilities is one of Council's top ten advocacy priorities. However, at this time, there is a stronger focus on the renewal of existing facilities, which is considered a more immediate need to support community access.

Community Safety

- There are general safety and security concerns in Foster at present.

Council response:

Council acknowledges that anti-social behaviour is a growing concern for many residents. While these issues are primarily the responsibility of Victoria Police, Council is taking steps to help reduce their impact by incorporating design features that discourage vandalism and by installing infrastructure in areas with natural passive surveillance, where appropriate.

Buildings and Assets

- Fund strategic plan for Foster War Memorial Arts Centre, including fixed tier seating.
- Provide recycling bins in town.
- Extend Foster pool hours and keep hours consistent.

Council response:

Council has scheduled some minor internal joinery works at the Foster War Memorial Arts Centre for the 2025/26 financial year. While the Centre includes theatre capabilities, adapting it exclusively for this purpose may limit its flexibility and accessibility for a broader range of community uses.

Council is currently reviewing the operation of pools across South Gippsland, including opening hours, as part of the development of a comprehensive *Aquatic Strategy*.



Port Welshpool Engagement

Welshpool and Port Welshpool - What we heard

Roads

- Lower speed limit on the approach to the Long Jetty Caravan Park
- Clean up junk pile on Port Welshpool Road.
- Drainage issues.

Council response:

A customer request has been logged regarding the drainage issues and the rubbish on Port Welshpool Road.

Speed limits fall under the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Planning.

Vegetation

- Access from Stratton Street to the boat ramp has become overgrown.
- Steps and path to beach need clearing.
- Gully trap in Slade Street needs clearing.

Council response:

Customer requests have been logged for these issues.

Buildings and Assets

- Better signage in car parks in Port Welshpool near boat ramp.
- New streetlight needed in Lewis Street at cross section to Kean.
- No cross over for people with mobility issues from the jetty
- Toilets for the long jetty.
- Pontoon upgrades required and visitor access to fishing tables at boat ramp.
- More shade and better fishing facilities needed.
- Free BBQ in Welshpool.

Council response:

Council is currently working on **upgrading the pontoon** and fishing tables at the boat ramp. A customer request has also been received for a streetlight to be considered at the site.

While Council is committed to improving community infrastructure, the addition of new assets can be challenging due to the demands of managing an increasingly large and ageing asset portfolio. This is acknowledged in the *2025–2029 Council Plan*, which includes the initiative to: *“Implement strategic reviews of Council’s asset portfolio to strengthen community connections.”*

For more information on Council’s asset management approach, please refer to page 11.