



PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

ADVERTISER

YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

\$2.00 Incl. GST

Extraordinary \$250,000 boost for new Community Hospital

HEALTH

The Cowes, San Remo and Grantville Bendigo Community Banks have donated \$250,000 to the new Phillip Island Community Hospital, for vital oncology equipment.

Former Chair and current Director, Peter Paul said the donation was on behalf of its shareholders and 8997 customers, and had been put together over five years.

"We have been saving \$50,000 per year waiting patiently for the Community Hospital, to be in a position to purchase the oncology equipment, in readiness for its official opening early 2026.

"The Bank's Directors' unanimous decision to support oncology needs was driven by the overwhelming need for local radiology services," he said.

"The benefits of being treated locally, saving time and travel costs cannot be overestimated.

"The Community Bank also acknowledges the investment of the many groups and individuals who have made commitments to the Community Hospital.

"The buy ins are substantial and reflect the long overdue need for our own community hospital facility, which will be very welcome and very impressive."

Peter said the bank greatly appreciated their liaison with Bass Coast Health interim CEO Simone Alexander, and her staff.

Ms Alexander said BCH was "so grateful" for the generous support. "These funds will directly benefit our local community, helping us establish new oncology treatment services."

Peter also encouraged the community to attend the Community Open Day at the hospital on December 13, which he described will be "a day of celebration".

Since the three Community Bank Branches opened in the area, Peter said the banks have been able to contribute over \$6 million back into their local communities.

"Our donation to the Community Hospital is our largest individual contribution to date."

The Community Banks are also a major sponsor, in part-



Presenting the \$250,000 donation for the Phillip Island Community Hospital (from left): Kelvin Simpson (Chair/Director, Bendigo Community Bank), Peter Paul (Past Chair/Director), Simone Alexander (Interim CEO BCH), John Matthews (Deputy Chair), Kristen Yates-Matthews (Director Partnerships & Engagement, BCH).

nership with the Phillip Island RSL, of the annual Carols by the Bay event, to be held on Thurs-

day December 9.

Peter said there would be a collection at the carols night,

endorsed by Island Voice, for the Community Hospital, as "every coin counts".

Isle of Wight will soon "come to life": developers

MAJOR PROJECTS

After months of silence, the developers of the new Isle of Wight say they will soon announce a construction start date.

Currently there is a planning permit amendment before Bass Coast Shire Council, but a spokesperson for developers Moda said there had been no substantial changes to the \$130 million development, with some minor internal changes.

In September 2023 councillors unanimously approved the seven-storey (27.5 metres) development, the biggest in the island's history, with construction at that time set to start later in 2023, with an initial opening expected in 2025.

Now, according to Moda's website, construction will start

this year with the development to open in 2027.

Last year the Victorian Planning Minister intervened to approve the development, in the face of delays at VCAT.

Following this, in January this year dozers began pre-construction digging at 2-8 Bass Avenue and 9-10 The Esplanade.

Last week a Moda spokesperson Tim Richardson acknowledged "there haven't been any announcements or updates from us recently".

"We will have exciting public announcements about the long-awaited Isle of Wight coming to life," Mr Richardson said.

"We've been working behind the scenes with authorities to ensure that infrastructure upgrades and relocations are designed and completely ready to enable con-

struction to commence, as well as discussions with other stakeholders in the region to explore partnership opportunities."

He confirmed there had been "no material changes to the scale or aspirations of the development".

"We have made some changes to the internal configuration to improve things operationally."

In August, the State Government announced the Isle of Wight had received funding from the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund, with the amount "commercial in confidence".

The government said there would be accommodation for over 100 workers, across the "healthcare, food and beverage, retail and tourism industries", with the plans for the hotel including a separate three storey tourist/worker hostel (14.5 me-

tres) with 49 one-bedroom units and a manager's apartment.

Hotel

The development will be a mixed-use hotel to the north with: 163 hotel rooms; four food and beverage premises (pub, bistro, hotel dining, signature restaurant); three retail spaces (including a yoga studio, gym, and wellness centre); two function rooms; outdoor pool terrace with a bar; outdoor beer garden on the corner of Bass Avenue and The Esplanade.

There will also be rooftop basketball and tennis court, and retail premises on the north-eastern corner with a 259sqm retail space along the northern frontage.

Moda bought the site in 2021 for \$10 million.

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Wed/Oct8	Thu/Oct9	Fri/Oct10	Sat/Oct11	Sun/Oct12	Mon/Oct13	Tue/Oct14
SHOWER OR TWO	SHOWER OR TWO	SHOWERS	SHOWERS	SHOWER OR TWO	POSSIBLE SHOWER	MOSTLY SUNNY
11 19	11 18	12 18	11 17	11 19	10 13	10 15



Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL) plans to replicate the success of last year's annual Christmas hamper appeal and needs your help.

COMMUNITY

Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL) has launched its annual Christmas hamper appeal.

The 2025 Christmas hamper project aims to provide festive food hampers to local households in need.

"The hampers will offer a taste of Christmas to those in our community who may otherwise go without," explains David Rooks, Centre Manager, PICAL.

"Every day, our Emergency Food Relief Pantry sup-

ports 25 local households. This December, we want to make the season a little more special for these households that are doing it tough.

"We're calling on our generous community to donate Christmas-specific food items for these hampers.

"These hampers will go to individuals and families who are already connected with PICAL – the people we see, support and stand beside all year long."

To give households in need a taste of Christmas, PICAL is calling out to the community for donations

of Christmas-specific food items that are non-perishable, such as tin ham; Christmas cake and pudding; UHT custard; mince pies; shortbread; chocolates and lollies; and bon bons (Christmas crackers).

Gluten-free Christmas options are also welcome.

Non-Christmas items will be redirected to PICAL's Emergency Food Pantry to support everyday needs.

Donations of non-perishable, Christmas-specific food items can be dropped off at PICAL's reception (16 Warley Avenue, Cowes), 9am to 3pm,

Monday to Friday.

PICAL is accepting donations from now until Friday December 5. Financial donations are also welcome.

The community is invited to organise food drives through schools, businesses or groups and to spread the word with friends and neighbours.

"Our Christmas hamper project is about more than food," David said.

"It's about community, dignity and connection. Every item donated will help make the season brighter for a family right here on our is-

POLICE BRIEFS

Back Beach Road accident

Around 5pm on October 1, emergency services were called to a collision on Back Beach Road Cowes. Police said a White Hyundai travelling eastbound on Back Beach Road slowed to turn right into Pyramid Rocks Road, then a Grey Kia collided with the rear of the Hyundai.

The collision forced the Hyundai off the road and into a fence causing moderate damage to the fence and extensive damage to both vehicles.

The drivers of both vehicles, a 24 year-old male and a 51 year old female, the only occupants in the vehicles, received minor injuries and were taken to hospital.

Back Beach Road was closed in both directions for two hours with all traffic diverted along Gap Road and Pyramid Rock Road. Police investigations into the cause of the collision are continuing.

San Remo arrest

At approximately 2pm on October 1, police allege a 42 year old male at the San Remo IGA concealed several bottles of alcohol, fresh meat and other condiments inside his jacket and backpack. The male then left the store without paying for the items valued in excess of \$200.

The alleged offender became aggressive when he was confronted by the store manager as he attempted to leave the store. Police were called and located the man in Back Beach Road in San Remo in possession of the stolen items.

When police told the man he was under arrest for theft, he attempted to run but was arrested by police, who were ably assisted by a passer-by. The male was later charged with theft and resisting police and bailed to attend Korumburra Court in February next year.

Don't hesitate to contact me, I am here to help.

Cr Ronnie Bauer
for the Island Ward,
Bass Coast Shire

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Rainfall updates now monthly Bridge work update

DROUGHT

Year-to-date rainfall continues to be well below average, despite a wet week last week.

In the wake of the continuing 18-month drought, Westernport Water is now releasing monthly water updates, which last week showed Candowie Reservoir was 48 per cent full, compared to 68 per cent at the same time last year.

January to September rainfall in the Candowie catchment was 489mm, which is significantly lower than the five-year average of 722mm.

It is also lower than last year's low rainfall tally of 587mm, recorded over the same period last year.

While last week's rainfall (32mm) was higher than the same week in 2024 (13mm), both September's total (66.5mm vs 87 mm) and the overall year-to-date figure "highlight the drier conditions".

In addition, water demand has increased slightly compared to the previous year, with customer consumption to the end of September 1924 million litres (ML), compared to 1859 ML in 2024.

A spokesperson for Westernport Water said they continued to monitor water resources "carefully".

"If we feel that water restrictions are necessary, we will make the decision prior to summer guided by expert advice and data, and only enacted when necessary," they said.

Westernport Water's overall water supply is more than what's stored in Candowie Reservoir, with connection to Victoria's water grid making us "less



In the wake of the continuing 18-month drought, Westernport Water is now releasing monthly water updates, with January to September rainfall in the Candowie catchment 489mm, which is significantly lower than the five-year average of 722mm.

vulnerable to dry conditions", including ongoing delivery of 50 billion litres of desalinated water this year from Wonthaggi's Victorian Desalination Plant via the grid.

"The Victorian Desalination Plant plays a role, not only providing water security for Greater Melbourne, but also for connected communities in regional areas like the Bass Coast.

"With more than two years of water supply available, we are well placed to meet customer demand for the year ahead."

Permanent Water Saving Rules are in place across Victoria.

These include:

- A residential or commercial

garden or lawn can be watered with a handheld hose at any time, or by means of a watering system between the hours of 6pm and 10am on any day.

- Water cannot be used to clean hard surfaces (including driveways, paths, concrete, tiles, timber decking) except where cleaning is required as a result of a hazard or accident, or in the course of construction/renovation.

- A handheld hose must be fitted with a trigger nozzle and be leak free. It can be used to wash your car and water your gardens and lawns at any time.

Details: westernportwater.com.au/pws-rules

INFRASTRUCTURE

The final phase of inspections on the Phillip Island bridge are about to start, with sensors to be installed on the bridge.

In response to last week's story about the stalled timeline for bridge repairs, Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale said the work was scheduled to begin after the upcoming MotoGP.

"The level-3 inspections on the San Remo Bridge took place late last year," Ms Crugnale said.

"We are returning to install sensors as the final part of these works.

"Works will take place at night to minimise traffic disruption. There may be some lane closures during the day, but they will not take place during peak times."

She said because of the high interest from the community about the planned maintenance for the bridge, a separate webpage for the project will be created.

"A separate webpage for the Big Build Roads' rehabilitation works on the bridge has been approved and will go live next week after VIDA Roads has briefed Bass Coast Shire Council," Ms Crugnale said.

"The two bridge pages will then be linked."

Project

In May the government announced a \$50.4 million rehabilitation project would ensure the bridge "remained safe for generations".

The project is part of the 2025/26 budget, and will include replacement of beams, pier legs,

piles and handrails.

In recent years, the Phillip Island bridge has been subject to consistent and progressively more thorough inspections by Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).

This included DTP inspections over six days in 2021, and installing sensors to monitor the bridge's structural condition and performance in February this year.

DTP also engaged a consultant for a three-month level-3 investigation, which "collected and analysed optical imagery, lidar, acoustic and thermal data which provided digital insights and accurate defect quantification" of the bridge.

In 2024, some residents speculated the bridge was well past its original use by date and was showing signs of deterioration, stating several cracks in each pylon are visible at low tide, and there have been reports of 'spalling' – where fragments of concrete break off a larger body – of which concrete cancer is a cause.

Last week, another resident echoed the concerns saying there were three or four pylons with cracks "and a couple where the concrete has fallen off".

"It's getting pretty bad. It shouldn't be cracking like that."

He said the maintenance work needed to start urgently, and suggested a load limit for trucks.

A DTP spokesperson told the Advertiser earlier this month based on "our investigations to date, the bridge continues to be safe to use while the project delivers repairs".

Jordan Crugnale not recontesting

ELECTION

The current member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale has announced she will not recontest the seat in next year's state election.

In 2022, Ms Crugnale retained the seat of Bass for Labor, in one of the tightest contests in the state. She defeated Liberal candidate Aaron Brown by 202 votes after preferences.

Bass was the last seat to be called in the election, with the result giving Labor 56 seats – one more than the 55 seats it won in 2018's "Danslide" election.

Announcing her decision, Ms Crugnale reflected on her two terms in Parliament.

"Serving, working for and walking beside the people of Bass has been more than a privilege – it is an experience that has shaped me profoundly and in ways I will carry with each step forward forever," she said.

"Representing our wonderful, growing, and proud community has been a journey imbued with highs and lows, fierce advocacy and hard-won outcomes, treasured friendships and beautiful connections.

"To the extraordinary people and organisations across our electorate – from

schools and kinders to health services, sporting clubs, arts and cultural organisations, neighbourhood houses, local businesses, emergency services, community and environmental groups – thank you for welcoming me into your spaces, sharing your aspirations, innovations and challenges, and working with fierce determination to make our community stronger, fairer and more connected."

During her time as an MP, Ms Crugnale said, thanks to the community support and drive, many improvements had been delivered: new and upgraded schools, expanded hospitals, road reconfiguring and duplications, new sporting pavilions, oval lights, nets and courts, boat ramps, inter-town trails, community hubs, more gigs in pubs, early parenting centres, new and upgraded emergency services brigades, units and stations, more social housing and support for vulnerable people, improved planning outcomes and protections for the environment.

On Phillip Island, notable projects delivered during Ms Crugnale's eight years included:

- Phillip Island Health Hub and Community Hospital
- Upgrades to San Remo Primary School
- Upgrade to the Cowes Jetty



After two terms in office, Jordan Crugnale MP has announced she will not recontest the seat of Bass in the 2026 state election.

- Bass Coast College Secondary Campus in San Remo
- The Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL)
- Rhyll Boat Ramp upgrade
- New CFA station in Cowes
- Cowes Primary School gym and additional facilities

Ms Crugnale acknowledged there was more to do, to address the needs of the growing

community.

"There is always more to do – I know our community's energy and drive will continue, and I am so proud of what we have been able to achieve together and the ways that we have changed the world around us in so many wonderful and enduring ways," Ms Crugnale said.

She thanked the team in her electorate office, describing them as "compassionate, professional and relentlessly dedicated", and acknowledged the support of her colleagues in the Parliament, including Premier Jacinta Allan and former Premier Daniel Andrews.

Ms Crugnale thanked her two "beautiful, funny, kind, wise and curious" sons, promising to delve into new adventures with them.

She also thanked the local branch of the Labor party its support through every campaign and challenge.

"I am grateful beyond measure for the friendships we've built and our shared belief in the Labor movement's capacity to change lives for the better.

"To the people of Bass, thank you for trusting me with this extraordinary responsibility. Serving you as your local member has been an honour and a joy.

"It has been a privilege to contribute to this community – first in local government, and then through two terms in the Victorian Parliament, and I will give everything I have between now and November next year.

"There is still a lot on our Bass 'to do and must have' lists, and so for now at least, the work goes on."

Run challenge for Free 3D Hands

FUNDRAISER

Another long distance running challenge is raising money for Phillip Island based charity Free 3D Hands.

Chris Dixon, an ultra-distance runner from Stratford is running 300km in 36 hours around Lake Guthridge and Lake Guyatt in Sale.

The Helping Hands Charity Run, starting on October 17, will raise funds for Free 3D Hands, which creates life-changing, affordable assistive devices for people with limb differences, including advanced bionic arms.

The run is the second running event in the past few months dedicated to raising funds for Free 3D Hands. In July Phillip Islander Jack Montgomery raised over \$26,000 for the charity, running 110km around the island in a day.

Chris Dixon's run has been praised by local politician Darren Chester, who said Chris' motivation was deeply personal.

"Chris' daughter, Gracie, was born with a limb deficiency, and his passion for supporting Free 3D Hands comes from wanting to help develop technology that can transform lives," Mr Chester said.

"His determination, along with the incredible community spirit behind this event, is inspiring."

The challenge begins on Friday, October 17, with more than 50 local runners expected to join Chris for sections of the course. Chris has set a fundraising goal of \$50,000.

"This event is about more than just one man running 300 kilometres – it's about a community coming together to support a Gippsland-based charity that is having a global impact," Mr Chester said.

"I encourage everyone who can to get behind Chris and help him reach his fundraising goal."

Free 3D Hands has provided assistive devices to thousands of people in 56 countries so far.



Federal Member for Gippsland Darren Chester joined ultra-distance runner Chris Dixon for a run around Lake Guthridge in Sale ahead of the upcoming Helping Hands Charity Run.

Through sharing their designs under open-source licenses, there are over 10,000 volunteers and organisations around the world now making their designs to create an exponential impact.

The charity relies entirely on donations to fund the design and development of open-source assistive devices without any government funding.

All donations go directly towards the research, design and development of open-source assistive devices which are provided free to those in need.

To find out more about Free 3D Hands or to make a donation, go to: free3d-hands.org/

To support Chris Dixon's run, go to: donorbox.org/helpinghandsrun-chris



The Stroke Support Group meets fortnightly at PICAL in Cowes. Seat front (from left): Eric and Sheila, Keith Chaplin. Standing back: Melissa Gough (Stroke Association), John and Janine Hayden, Tony Zoanetti, Stephen Fullarton, Colin Scott (Stroke Association) and Kaye Chaplin.

Support for stroke survivors

HEALTH

A fortnightly meeting is providing valuable emotional and practical support for local stroke survivors.

The Stroke Support Group meets fortnightly at PICAL. The group is the initiative of the Stroke Association of Victoria and is for survivors and carers to meet to discuss topics around stroke recovery, from NDIS to mobility aids.

The last meeting was attended by eight people, including local stroke survivors and their partners, as well as Colin Scott, a Director of the Stroke Association of Victoria, and board member (and stroke survivor) Melissa Gough.

Sharing updates on their own personal progress, the group also talked about the way hospitals could better provide for stroke patients, and the importance of rapid response to strokes.

Most were extremely impressed with the immediate medical response they received, and praised the stroke unit at Wonthaggi Hospital, but said it was difficult after they returned home.

Many had to learn how to walk and even talk again.

They all agreed this was where support groups played a vital role.

"When you have a stroke, you live it for 15 or 20 years or more," said Colin.

"People need support during that time. We need to encourage people to get that support."

The stroke is done after

six weeks, Colin said, but "care goes on for the rest of their lifetime".

The support group was a way of talking about shared experiences, and to recognise and support carers.

"Carers don't get the recognition they deserve," Colin said.

"We need to get carers along here, to feel that their voices are heard."

As well as being able to share their own experiences of rehabilitation and treatments, and explore ways to navigate the system and get the right care plan in place, the support group provides emotional support.

Members described the "heartwarming" support they've received through the group saying they'd formed friendships, and regularly meet for lunch.

Resources

The meetings are "an opportunity for people to find ways to get attention where it is needed", said Colin, noting there was a considerable difference between the services and resources available in regional areas compared to the city.

Board member Melissa Gough drove down from Melbourne for the meeting, her first visit to the area. As a stroke survivor herself, with a career in education, she says an important thing was getting information into the right hands, and ensuring the right language is being used.

"Stroke recovery isn't linear, and it's important to see the patient as a whole person," she said.

She hosts a podcast, "The Brain Game Changer", where she explores how "heartfelt stories, awareness and education can change the game".

By sharing stories via her podcast, she hopes to create this awareness, and to share her knowledge, resources and experiences.

"Overall, the aim of the podcast is to provide hope after adversity, hearing the triumphs after tragedies," she said.

"Winning the little and huge victories, achieving those milestones."

Colin said he hopes the local group continues to grow, becoming a community-based stroke recovery centre.

"It's not just a meeting. It's about organising activities that are suitable for people here," he explained.

"In other areas, the groups have organised walks, and learning to cook."

"It's about sharing experiences, engaging with people and overcoming isolation."

The Stroke Support Group meets every second Wednesday at PICAL, 16 Warley Avenue in Cowes between 10.30am and 12pm.

Colin said anyone wanting more information about the PICAL meetings could email info@strokeassociation.com.au.

"The Brain Game Changer" podcast is available on all leading platforms.

For more information about strokes and resources, visit: www.strokeassociation.com.au



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Summerland Peninsula Master Plan update

CONSULTATION

A new building at the Nobbies, sensitively designed to consider the environment, is one of the key community requests from consultation on a master plan for the Summerland Peninsula.

Since July, the Nature Parks has been working with the local community and key stakeholders to explore ideas to shape a precinct-wide vision for the Summerland Peninsula Master Plan.

General Manager for Infrastructure and Planning at the Nature Parks, Jarvis Weston told the Advertiser people attending the consultation sessions had expressed a range of views, thoughts, and ideas.

"It is so valuable to hear from locals and communities to ensure we find the right balance between ecotourism and protecting the significant environmental and cultural values of the Summerland Peninsula.

"The shared respect and responsibility for the conservation values of the peninsula was evident throughout the consultation process."

With the first phase of consultation now completed, the Nature Parks thanked all those that participated, saying the results of the consultation "will truly guide the devel-



Nature Parks is now working on a design development process for a draft vision, principles, and scenarios for the Summerland Peninsula, with further consultation on the concepts before a draft master plan is developed and released for comment.

opment of the Draft Master Plan".

Some of the key findings from the consultation process include:

- The Summerland Peninsula is a very special place that is loved by many and is cherished for its wild coastal environment and conservation stories.
- Enhance the sense of arrival, provide better directional signage and wayfinding, and deliver more cohesive and engaging storytelling across the Peninsula.
- Redesign traffic management across the Peninsula to enable different users to access sites at different times depending on demand – surfers, residents, self-drive visitors and coaches.
- Activate the Summerland Farm.
- Centre the visitor arrival hub and visitor experiences through the

Penguin Parade.

- Replace the current Nobbies building with one sensitively designed within its landscape.

The Nobbies

The Nobbies building was constructed in the 1990s (originally as the Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre), with the State Government overriding strong community opposition to the private consortium project.

The centre is currently closed indefinitely due to structural issues.

"That building is only 30 years old and it's falling down," Jarvis said, noting it would take at least \$5 million for repairs and maintenance of the current building, or almost twice that for a major overhaul.

"We've done the financial analysis, we've tried different attractions in there throughout the years, and it's never worked as

an attraction per se.

"Really, the hero of the site is the views and the boardwalks, the seals and the natural environment."

The community agreed, with one attendee at a consultation session at the Penguin parade on July 29 saying there was almost universal agreement the current Nobbies building was not suitable for the location.

Design

The Nature Parks said it was now conducting an iterative design development process where it will develop a draft vision, principles, and scenarios and test these with a Community Reference Group.

"Further consultation will then be conducted more broadly on Master Plan concepts, before a Draft Master Plan is developed and released publicly for comment," a Nature Parks spokesperson said.

The Summerland Peninsula is home to the world's largest little penguin colony, migratory short-tailed shearwaters, and the Endangered Eastern-barred bandicoot, as well as welcoming over a million visitors annually. The peninsula is a special place for Bunurong, the local community, and all those that visit.

If you have any questions or thoughts, please email community@penguins.org.au



The CWA Twilight Branch is hosting a High Tea to raise funds for ovarian cancer research on Sunday October 26, from 2pm to 4.30pm at the Phillip Island Bowling Club. Photo: Anita Austvika, Unsplash.

High Tea for important cause

FUNDRAISER

Brenda Jongen was a much-loved friend and CWA member who despite the best of care survived only 18 months after her ovarian cancer diagnosis.

In her honour, the CWA Twilight Branch is hosting a High Tea fundraiser on Sunday October 26, from 2pm to 4.30pm at the Phillip Island Bowling Club.

"It was her wish for us to fundraise for research," said CWA Twilight president Sally Ann Matthews.

"Ovarian cancer is underfunded compared to breast cancer. Research is crucial, and our hope is to improve survival rates of this cancer."

Sally Ann encourages everyone to embrace the

opportunity to get together, while supporting this important cause.

"This is a fun day, an opportunity to frock up and enjoy friendship in our community. It's not just for the ladies; please bring the men in your life too."

Local businesses have generously donated for spot prizes (including best dressed), raffles and silent auctions.

Enjoy a High Tea of delicious CWA favourites with tea and coffee.

The Bowling Club team will be behind the bar all afternoon if you fancy a bubbles or beer.

Tickets are \$40 per person, at Trybooking.com/DFI, or scan the barcode to book.



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Phillip Island Nature Parks staff have been preparing for avian flu in Australia since last year, with shearwaters particularly at risk. Photo: Ian Prain.

Mass mortality of birds, mammals expected

WILDLIFE

Wildlife lovers should prepare themselves for the emotional toll of the mass mortality of birds and mammals, with bird flu's arrival in Australia a matter of "when not if".

An online Birds Australia forum last week outlined how communities can prepare for the expected arrival of the H5 bird flu, with Australia the only continent currently free of the disease.

The forum comes ahead of a Western Port bird flu meeting this Friday (October 10), at Hastings, looking at the risk for the bay's migratory birds, and it comes as wild migratory birds return here from August to November, the highest risk period for a viral incursion.

Birds Australia Kate Millar told the online forum around the planet the disease had "decimated millions of birds and tens of thousands of mammals" and "it's not if, it's when" H5 bird flu would arrive here.

Avian influenza response coordinator Tanya Loos said it was important wildlife carers were able to deal with the emotional toll of working with potentially high wildlife casualties.

She said the strain of bird flu was first detected in Europe in 2020 and had, for example, killed 21,000 Peruvian pelicans, 17,000 elephant seals and pups in South Africa, and a mass

mortality event of gannets in Scotland had reduced their population by 30 per cent.

In the USA there have been 70 people confirmed to have had H5N1 and one death, with most of those impacted working with cattle or poultry farms.

H5N1 hasn't yet gained the ability to spread directly between people, but causes severe illness and death in poultry, avian birds, and mammals such as dogs and cats, as well as wild populations.

Ms Loos said the lag time in the virus coming to Australia meant more time to prepare, including what to look for, and how to safely report suspected cases of H5 bird flu in local birds via the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline.

The public is being urged to:

- Avoid contact with sick or dead wildlife and their environment, and do not allow pets to touch or eat sick or dead wildlife;
- Record what you see, the location the animal was found, and take a photo or video; and
- Report any unusual sickness or mass mortality events in wildlife via the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Along with death, other signs of H5 are: Lack of coordination, tremors, swimming in circles, twisted neck or other unusual posture; difficulty breathing, coughing or

sneezing and an inability to stand or fly.

Nature Parks

Last year Phillip Island Nature Parks (PINP) issued alerts for the community to remain on the lookout for signs of avian flu in birds across the island, especially in the migratory short-tailed shearwaters, saying "surveillance and reporting will be key to early detection" of the flu.

PINP has placed A3 signs around the island – at Swan Lake, Observation Point and Fishers Wetland – with information about HPAI H5N1, symptoms and how to report sick or dead birds or wildlife.

Disease screening results of up to 250 short-tailed shearwaters were analysed as part of the National Avian Influenza Wild Bird Surveillance Program.

A study last year found an Australia outbreak would put the black swan in "significant peril", with the species "incredibly susceptible" to the H5N1 virus. H5 is different to the H7N3 virus that spread in Victoria in 2024 and impacted chicken farms.

A Western Port – Migratory Birds & Avian Flu Community Forum will be held on October 10, 10am-1pm, at Hastings.

This a free, ticketed event: events.humanitix.com/avian-flu-in-western-port-community-forum

More information: agriculture.gov.au/campaigns/birdflu



Phillip Island Football Netball Club appreciated the use of the Newhaven College oval and facilities during the renovation of Cowes oval in 2024 and again in 2025.

Newhaven College: built by community, serving community

EDUCATION

Since its founding in 1979, by the Phillip Island community, Newhaven College has been shaped by a spirit of collaboration and inclusion.

One of the most tangible ways this commitment is seen is in how the College's facilities are shared with their broader community.

The school has become a vibrant hub, supporting local clubs and organisations across sport, arts, culture and science.

Currently, the College's state of the art gymnasium is home to the Phillip Island Rips Basketball Club; while the Phillip Island Football Netball Club makes use of the oval year-round for training.

A wide variety of other groups also find a home at the College, including the Bass Coast Astronomy and Cosmology Club, Offshore Theatre, Arts Society Phillip Island, AFL Victoria's School Holiday Program, Hockey Victoria, Narre Warren Calisthenics Club, Gippsland United Big V Basketball, Westernport Steelers Basketball Club, Phillip Island Soccer Club, Oakleigh AFL and Koo Wee Rup Netball Club.

When the Cowes oval was undergoing renovations in 2024, and closed and off limits to the community for five months, Newhaven College offered the Phillip Island Football Netball Club the use of its oval for training in the lead up to the football season.

"Without the assistance given to our club by Newhaven College, I am not sure what we would have done," Club President Chris Ross said of the offer.

"They gave us access to both their oval and school gymnasium for player training sessions, because our Cowes ground was pretty much unusable. I want to thank Newhaven College sincerely."

The College said its commitment to community is reflected not only in sharing their facilities, but also in nurturing relationships.

Active communication and collaboration between the College and its broader communities are central to the College's values.

At its heart, Newhaven College remains what it has always been – a place created by the community, for the community.

Provide your feedback on water services

WATER

Westernport Water is committed to putting the interests of customers first.

From October 1, 2025, customers will have the opportunity to provide feedback via the Annual Westernport Water Customer Satisfaction Survey.

By taking part in the survey, customers will enter the draw to win \$100 off

their next bill. Westernport Water is giving 10 bill credits away to say thank you for sharing feedback.

The survey forms part of a larger customer satisfaction study across seven participating water corporations, including South Gippsland, Gippsland, East Gippsland, Goulburn Valley, Central Highlands and Coliban Water.

Westernport Water's Managing Director, Dona Tantirimudalige said customer feedback is invaluable and helps them to continually enhance the water and sewerage services it provides to the community.

"For over a decade, we've partnered with fellow regional water corporations to conduct an annual survey to understand customer thoughts on our products and services.

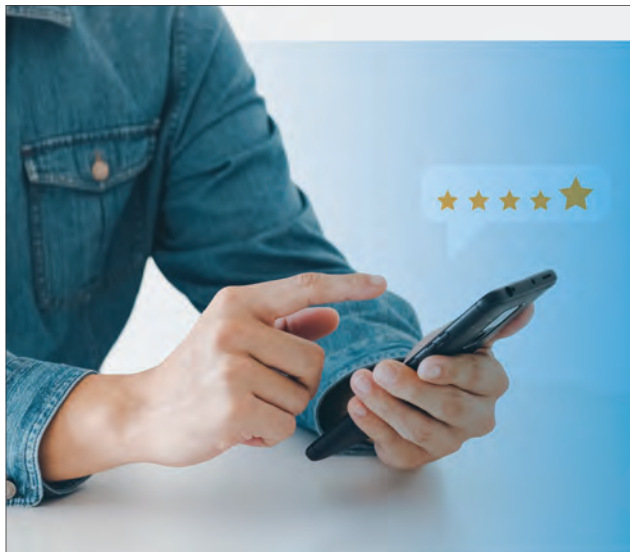
"By joining forces, we can undertake customer research services more efficiently and deliver better outcomes for our customers and communities," she said.

"Your feedback helps guide decisions on water services, planning, and investment to meet community needs now and into the future."

A random sample of customers will receive an email and be asked to complete a short survey. If you didn't receive an email, the survey is also available on our website until October 22.

www.westernportwater.com.au/customer-satisfaction-survey/

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GET FIRE READY OCTOBER 11, 2025



Open Day at new fire station

The community is invited to visit the new Phillip Island fire station, as part of the first open day since the station was officially opened in December 2023.

The open day coincides with a statewide Get Fire Ready campaign, helping the public prepare for the upcoming fire season.

Tim Anderson, the Community Safety Coordinator with the Phillip Island Fire Brigade said they were excited to welcome the community into the station.

"We really want to thank the community for their support over the last couple of years, getting set up in the new station," he said.

Local fundraising has helped purchase extra equipment for the new facility, while donations from Phillip Island RSL and Bendigo Bank funded an extension of the station's carparks.

The Open Day is a way to acknowledge all that support, as well as providing important information on how to prepare your property and fire plans, ahead of the upcoming fire season.

"The CFA and the Bureau of Meteorology have predicted it will be a challenging season," Tim said.

"There will be information on what you can do to minimise the impact of fire on your property, how to understand fire danger ratings, preparing your fire plan and the best course of action if you are impacted by a bushfire."

There will be a sausage sizzle happening all day – provided by the Phillip Island and San Remo Rotary Club, as well as a coffee cart and muffins.

And for younger members, there'll be face painting, photo opportunities with the various vehicles and appliances, as well as the chance to wrangle a fire hose.

Across the day, there will be a series of presentations by local members, including burn tables which recreate a mini environment of local fuels.

"This gives people an idea of how fire would behave with the fuel types and loads in some of our significant areas," Tim explained.

There are also sessions on



Presentations will include burn tables, which recreate a mini environment of local fuels, giving people an idea of how fire would behave in local areas.

fire extinguishers and a CFA briefing about fire management.

Visitors can pick up a tote bag on the day, which will contain Get Fire Ready information.

Medical response

Tim said the day would also include an explanation of the new Fire Medical Response, which sees the CFA support Ambulance Victoria and the community in severe medical incidents.

This means that select medical Triple Zero (000) calls will see the local CFA brigade and Ambulance Victoria dispatched simultaneously to cardiac arrests.

The Phillip Island Brigade is the 26th brigade to "go live" with the new life-saving program, that aims to ensure treatment arrives within 10 minutes for anyone suffering a cardiac arrest.

Twenty-three volunteers from the brigade signed up for the training, with members confident of the benefits it will provide the local community.

"By joining this program, we're able to provide vital care in those first critical moments," said brigade captain Lino Drazzi.

"Our members live and work in the community – we're close by and ready to respond."

Emergency Services

Other local emergency services will also be at the station, including Ambulance Victoria, SES and Bass Coast Shire Council.

Ambulance Victoria is holding a Call, Push, Shock session at 10am, giving people the chance to learn lifesaving skills such as CPR and operating a defibrillator.

Volunteers from the SES are also part of the day, displaying rescue tools with information about emergency preparedness, as well as fun activities for the kids.

Members of Victoria police are also attending, as well as representatives from Phillip Island Nature Parks and Bass Coast Shire Council.

Tim said he hopes the community will take the opportunity to visit the station, meet the volunteers and get any information they need to prepare for the upcoming fire season.

"Come and have a coffee and a chat with us; there will be people here to answer any questions you may have about any aspect you are interested in."

Open Day: Saturday October 11. Phillip Island Fire Station, 110 Ventnor Road, Cowes from 10am.



As part of the Get Fire Ready Open Day at the Phillip Island fire station on October 11, Ambulance Victoria is holding a Call, Push, Shock session at 10am, teaching vital life-saving skills.

Sign up to save a life this Shocktober

With more cardiac arrests in Victoria than ever before, Ambulance Victoria (AV) is encouraging Gippsland residents to learn or refresh their cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills and sign up to be a GoodSAM responder.

Local paramedics are holding Call, Push, Shock sessions this month, providing the perfect opportunity to learn these life-saving skills.

They will be holding a session at the Get Fire Ready Open Day at the Phillip Island Fire Station on Saturday October 11 at 10am.

A session will also be held at the Corinella Community Market that day, at 8am.

Campaign

A cardiac arrest occurs when a person's heart suddenly stops pumping blood effectively around the body.

This October marks the sixth year of AV's state-wide Shocktober campaign, which is dedicated to improving cardiac arrest survival rates.

Ambulance Victoria Regional Director for Gippsland Ross Salathiel encouraged locals to learn CPR, how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED) and know where their closest defibrillator is located.

"Shocktober is about giving Victorians who have a cardiac arrest a better chance of returning to their loved ones," he said.

"CPR and defibrillation are critical. Every day, around 21 Victorians suffer the medical

emergency but only one in 10 survive. For every minute CPR is delayed, survival decreases by 10 per cent.

"Cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere, at any age, health or fitness level, and often without symptoms."

"Our message is simple – you don't need to be a paramedic to save a life, just remember to Call (Triple Zero 000), Push (Perform CPR) and Shock (use an AED)."

Ross also encouraged locals to sign up to be a GoodSAM responder.

GoodSAM is a mobile app that connects patients in cardiac arrest with a nearby volunteer who is willing to start hands-only CPR while paramedics are on their way. There are currently more than 17,300 GoodSAM responders across Victoria – but we need more.

Last year, AV paramedics and first responders were called to 7545 cardiac arrest patients. Victoria has the best cardiac survival rates in Australia and the third best anywhere in the world.

AV is holding the following Call, Push, Shock sessions during Shocktober and locals are encouraged to attend.

- Saturday October 11, 10am Phillip Island CFA
- Saturday October 11, 8am Corinella Community Market

For information about Shocktober, the GoodSAM app and how to learn CPR and use an AED (defib), visit ambulance.vic.gov.au/shocktober

SES at Fire Ready open day

Members of the Phillip Island SES are part of the open day on October 11 at the Phillip Island Fire Station.

Volunteers from the unit will be on site, along with the rescue truck, displaying rescue tools and equipment.

There will also be a stand display of emergency preparedness material, with members ready to answer any questions.

The kids will love the SES giveaways (stickers, kids paper SES truck), interactive activities and games, so there's a little something for everyone.

Although there is a specific focus on Fire Ready preparations, the day is great chance to learn about the many emergency services the SES provides, including flood and storm, land search and rescue, marine search and rescue and road crash

Don't miss this opportunity to show your support for the local



Members of the Phillip Island SES are part of the open day on October 11 at the Phillip Island Fire Station.

volunteers, and get some great tips on how to prepare yourself and your household for an emergency.

Our local SES unit is always

looking for new volunteers, so if you've ever considered joining VICSES please email phillipisland@ses.vic.gov.au to find out how you can get involved.

New emergency dashboard

Bass Coast Shire Council officers will be at the Get Fire Ready open day promoting the new Bass Coast Emergency Dashboard.

The dashboard has been designed to be a one stop shop for local emergency information.

It includes information from the VicEmergency app, weather warnings, road closures, power outages and the Surf Life Saving Beachsafe app.

It also shows public health alerts, rainfall and river information and the weather radar,

as well as CFA and fire danger information and a local tide and flood guide.

Other information includes how to prepare for an emergency, what to do, and recovery advice.

There's also a guide to local health services and bushfire information.

The Bass Coast Emergency Services Dashboard provides residents and agencies with reliable information and planning resources during emergencies.

emergency.basscoast.vic.gov.au/

Fundraising launch for Cowes group fighting species extinction

ENVIRONMENT

In a little office overlooking Cowes' main street, Abi Smith is helping save the planet.

And so far, with her team of eight staff and volunteer board of 10, she's doing a pretty good job.

In 2018 Abi started the Threatened Species Conservancy (TSC), near Cowes Aldi, with programs to recover two species in Victoria (both plants: the black gum and southern shepherd's purse).

Now there are 46 programs spread across Australia, including Norfolk Island's green parrot, as well as work on Phillip Island and San Remo.

In those seven years TSC experts have discovered – and are currently saving – a critically endangered tiny blue butterfly in central Victoria not seen for 30 years.

The team is working with frogs, snails and various tails (including the pink tailed worm lizard, one of Abi's favourites), "from the overlooked to the iconic", each with its own tailored plan to fight for its survival.

Last month the TSC – an independent, not-for-profit and registered charity – launched its new website (www.tsconservancy.org) and a fundraising appeal, with "every dollar going directly to saving Australia's plants and animals from extinction".

Abi estimates it will take \$1.6 billion over five years to implement a nationwide threatened species recovery program.

"We can do it, but we just need to find the money," says the 45-year-old mum of two girls Harvey Jane (8) and Mabel (9) who attend the Village School.

"We don't have it yet but we're starting anyway and we need everyone's help."

She agrees \$1.6 billion sounds like a huge amount but not in the context of state and federal government budgets,



Abi Smith, founder and CEO of the Threatened Species Conservancy, which is based in Cowes but operates across Australia. Abi with a Norfolk Island green parrot, one of the species at risk of extinction the organisation is working to recover.

with \$1.6 billion currently budgeted for a single road upgrade in western Sydney.

"And all we get is a wider road that only benefits a few. I know what I would prioritise if I was in charge of the federal budget," she said.

"Research shows it costs less to maintain the environment, than fix it when it's too late.

"These species have an intrinsic right to live.

"When we lose species we don't know what we're losing. Each plays a vital role in healthy ecosystems. Our foods, medicines, even some cures for cancer come from the environment, but not if that species is extinct already."

Loss

Abi – who is a member of the Australian Island Alliance, sits on several scientific advisory groups, and is deputy operations chair Landcare Victoria – admits their work is just scratching the surface.

Australia has one of the most diverse collections of plants and animals in the world, yet has one of the highest loss of species anywhere on the planet, currently num-

bering about 100.

We claim the highest loss of mammal species anywhere in the world.

However, the real figures are likely to "be a lot worse than we even know", as many species have become extinct without being officially recorded, and not including those thousands of species currently facing extinction across the nation.

Abi moved to Phillip Island in 2017 with her partner Ben Thomas, who is reserves manager at Phillip Island Nature Parks.

Through TSC, Abi is working on two projects locally.

The first is a contract for Nature Parks, researching the best methods to manage land to protect little penguins from heatwaves at Summerland, with bower spinach planted around burrows so far found to be the best, reducing heat by about 7C.

The second project, which is seeking funding, is working to protect the Commonwealth-listed marine community off San Remo.

"It's a rock shelf area you can see across the water as you drive over the bridge leav-

ing Phillip Island," Abi says.

"There's a very specific community of plants and animals there not found anywhere else, including threatened species."

TSC currently relies on state and federal grants, consultancy work and private philanthropy.

The organisation welcomes volunteers to connect with their environmental projects, also has an internship and is building a graduate program, as well as primary school education programs because "it's important to give kids something to action so they don't feel powerless and they can contribute and help".

"No I don't feel like we have bitten off more than we can chew. The work has got to be done. It's not being done and someone has got to do it.

"We have the right group of experts in the team so we are on the right path.

"We have the skills to do this, but it's a matter of funds. Do we value threatened species more than a new road widening? They are the decisions that have to be made all the time."

www.tsconservancy.org



Artist's impression of the proposed view from The Isle of Wight hotel lobby balcony, overlooking the beer garden, which features the hoop pine and historic Moreton Bay fig.

Isle of Wight will soon "come to life": developers

From page 1

History

The development ends a three-decade chequered history for the site.

Phillip Island's first hotel, the Isle of Wight, opened in 1870 before being destroyed by a fire in 1925, then rebuilt.

The modern Isle of Wight was first given a planning permit for redevelopment by the former Phillip Island Shire, which was followed by a series of failed proposals, meeting with community opposition.

In 1989 the former Administrative Appeals Tribunal considered an appeal against the then shire decision to approve a seven-storey hotel.

However, this permit was not acted upon.

Following a series of on-again, off-again permits, in 2005 a permit was granted which allowed a seven-storey hotel with 255 units, night club and bottle shop, restaurants and cocktail lounges, a public/sports bar, gambling lounge and cafe/bistro as well as shop and a gymnasium/health club.

The permit was later amended in 2010 and one month after the amendment the hotel was destroyed by fire.

The site remained vacant and in 2014 was put on the market for sale.

In 2019 a two-day Planning Panels Victoria hearing in Cowes detailed planning requirements for the Isle of Wight land, including seeking community consultation on designs, and requiring any future development remain seven storeys at the front half of the site along The Esplanade, increasing the rear half from four to five storeys.

The Planning Panel said any redevelopment must design around and make a feature of the significant Moreton Bay fig tree on the corner of the land.

French Island faces koala overpopulation

WILDLIFE

Parks Victoria has acknowledged French Island's koala population is "unsustainable", but says translocation and fertility control is still the best solution.

The comments come after media reports stated French Island's koala heaven is now a hell.

The Herald Sun last month reported the island was now a "paradise lost for koalas", with overpopulation seeing them eat themselves out of food, with the island "littered with carcasses and dead trees".

French Island – which has Australia's only disease-free koala population – is home to up to 12,000 koalas when it is understood it can only support 5000.

A Parks Victoria spokesperson told the Advertiser the 2025/26 Victorian budget allocated \$600,000 over two years for koala management in Victoria, including at French Island.

"Koala monitoring on French Island has been underway since 2008, including ongoing fertility control and translocation to deliver the best outcomes for the koala population," the spokesperson said.

They said since the start of the program more than 3000 female koalas had received fertility control implants and nearly 2000 had been translocated.

The spokesperson said a large part of the northern half of French Island, about 11,000ha, was national park and contained large parcels of "excellent koala habitat".

However, the lack of disease, predators and other pressures on the island had allowed the koala population to grow to an "unsustainable" level.

A spokesperson for French Island Landcare said certain species of eucalyptus had been "heavily impacted by koala browsing".

"We are now hesitant to plant eucalypts that ought to be in the landscape, but won't survive beyond adolescence," the spokesperson said.

Residents say koalas were last relocated nearly a decade ago, and when they were last sterilised only 250 females were treated, which was not sufficient.

"I'm from French Island, the koalas are eating themselves out of house and home, a lot of trees are dying because of the drought too," Melissa said on Facebook.

"All you need to do is drive down the main road and see all the dead trees."

Mikaela added: "Ah yes. Save the wildlife ... oh forgot to save some habitat for them too."

The Koala Conservation Reserve on Phillip Island houses just under 20 koalas, while the wild population has plummeted to a few individuals.



The lack of disease, predators and other pressures on French Island has seen the koala population grow to an "unsustainable" level.

• FINANCIAL LITERACY MADE SIMPLE

First Home Guarantee: Help or Hype?

By David Caporale, Chief Investment Officer of RELIcapital

For many Australians, owning a home is still seen as the great dream. Yet with house prices rising faster than wages, it has become harder for younger generations to take their first step onto the property ladder.

To make things easier, the Federal Government offers a scheme called the First Home Guarantee. It allows eligible first-home buyers to purchase a property with as little as a 5% deposit, without having to pay lenders' mortgage insurance. The government effectively "guarantees" part of the loan, making it possible for banks to lend more easily to those with smaller deposits.

On the surface, this sounds like a real win. Saving for a 20% deposit can take years, especially in capital cities where property prices continue to climb. For younger Australians, the scheme can shave years off the time it takes to buy a home.

First Home Guarantee at a Glance

Feature	Details
Minimum deposit	5% (no mortgage insurance)
Price caps (Victoria)	Up to \$900,000 in Melbourne; \$700,000 in regional centres; \$600,000 elsewhere
Eligible buyers	First-home buyers earning up to \$125,000 (single) or \$200,000 (couple)
Availability	35,000 places per financial year

Who Benefits Most?

The First Home Guarantee is capped by price limits, which means it's more helpful in regional towns and outer suburbs than in inner-city areas where housing prices far exceed the thresholds. For families in country Victoria or along the coast, the scheme may genuinely make the difference between renting and owning.

It also helps reduce one of the biggest upfront costs of buying a home - mortgage

insurance - which otherwise adds thousands to an already heavy financial burden.

The Other Side of the Debate

But there's another side to the story. Critics argue that while the scheme helps individual buyers, it can also add fuel to the broader housing market. By increasing the number of people who can buy today - rather than waiting years to save a bigger deposit - the scheme boosts demand.

And when demand rises but the supply of houses stays the same, prices tend to go up. This is especially true at a time when housing construction is slowing, building costs are higher, and fewer new homes are coming onto the market.

Why Retirees Should Pay Attention

For semi-retired and retired Australians, the First Home Guarantee may feel like a policy aimed at someone else's generation. But it does have flow-on effects worth noting.

For parents and grandparents, the scheme might help adult children or grandchildren get into the market sooner.

For property owners, particularly those considering selling in the coming years, demand-side schemes like this can help keep prices buoyant in regional and suburban areas.

For the broader economy, housing affordability remains one of the biggest long-term challenges, and what happens in the housing market eventually affects everyone

The bottom line

The First Home Guarantee is not a silver bullet. It helps some buyers, particularly in regional and coastal communities, but it doesn't solve the bigger challenge of housing supply. Without more homes being built where people want to live, prices will remain high, no matter how many schemes are put in place.

For now, the scheme offers a leg-up to a select group of Australians. But the question remains: is it a stepping stone to greater affordability, or just another stimulus that keeps house prices climbing?

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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The wombats of San Remo

Dog owners walk their dogs in the leash-free area of San Remo Back Beach. Owners who do not have voice control of their dogs are unable (or don't want) to prevent dog invasion of wombat burrows. Subsequently, the wombats are under continual stress trying to survive in their environment. Stress renders wombats more susceptible to mange - a debilitating disease which leads to eventual death of the host animal if left untreated.

The volunteers of the Friends of San Remo Wombats regularly find and treat mange-affected wombats. The foreshore vegetation is off limits to dogs whether on leash or not. Despite recent temporary signage, the small number of dog owners who refuse, or are unable to control their dogs, continue to flaunt the rules.

Bass Coast Shire Council has an opportunity to show leadership in acknowledging and managing this situation. The work of Nature Parks on Phillip Island in caring for native wildlife, managing the environment and introducing threatened species to successfully survive, provides an exemplar for wildlife preservation. Council has the means within its scope to initiate a management plan for these wombats, that reflects best practice in wildlife management.

There are existing volunteer groups who would work with the shire to embellish existing vegetation and help create new wildlife corridors. Using existing expertise from Nature Parks, Parks Victoria, DEECA, the Friends of San Remo Wombats, and with permission from the relevant Land Managers, the problem could be assessed and appropriate strategies formed and implemented. The formation of a Working Group consisting of representatives from these groups and other interested parties would indicate to the residents that this situation is being taken seriously.

The erection of large, permanent signs and regular patrols by shire officers of the area in contention would show residents that the council can address this situation and enable an area for wildlife habitat and resident recreational use.

Out of control off-leash dogs are no joy to anyone, except their recalcitrant owners. Does the council support these dog owners? It would seem so.

Madeleine Pitt, San Remo

Special charge figures questioned

In the September BCSC meeting when introducing the motion for the Special Charge Scheme (SCS) on The Esplanade from Sunderland Bay Road to Batman Street, Cr Bell stated that "94 per cent of the street support this."

This assertion runs contrary to council's own published data. The figures supplied by BCSC Engage page state 53 per cent voted Yes, 12 per cent voted No, and 35 per cent failed to vote at all.

In reality this means that out of 17 homes, nine supported the SCS, two objected and six did not vote.

Hardly the almost unanimous 94 per cent support claimed by Cr Bell.

So why did Cr Bell make this inaccurate claim? Was she poorly prepared and quite simply ignorant of the genuine voting figures? Perhaps she was ill-advised.

Whatever the reason, it has to be questioned whether this representation of facts is acceptable. Is this an adequate and satisfactory degree of knowledge, understanding and preparation being demonstrated by a councillor when moving a motion for a scheme which will cost ratepayers multi-millions of dollars?

Or is it simply not good enough?

However, as the Say No group can sadly suggest through experience, this is consistent and commensurate with the level of accuracy, openness and clarity that BCSC demonstrated from Day 1 and throughout the entire failed Sunderland Bay/Surf Beach SCS saga.

Ross Bencraft, Surf Beach

Editor's note: Under the rules of the special charge scheme, which are set out in legislation, for a scheme not to proceed, more than 50 per cent of property owners have to object. In the case of The Esplanade from Sunderland Bay Road to Batman Street, only 12 per cent of property owners objected. Even adding in the 35 per cent that did not vote, it still does not represent the required 50 per cent to stop the scheme. Which means the scheme can legally proceed, regardless of whether Cr Bell quoted figures accurately or not.

Paving paradise?

Bass Coast Shire Council would do well to remember Joni Mitchell and take a deep breath before seeking to pave paradise.

Recently the majority

of folks in the Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach estates voted no to council's ratepayer funded road plans and it is particularly disappointing to see this now being reintroduced in a piecemeal fashion across our patch.

We made our views on roads and drains clear in the wider iteration of the council's road and drainage project. This decision should be respected instead of being ignored in favour of the current divisive and non-transparent approach which is inconsistent with holistic and best practise planning approaches.

The Surf Beach/Sunderland Bay estates have been inaccurately characterised by council as an "urban" residential area. However, unlike standard urban residential areas, our region has very high natural and cultural values and a unique, precious and loved character and environment.

Many of us value the non-urban/suburban feel of the area and want these values acknowledged and retained.

Also many in our community are currently experiencing financial hardship and elevated cost of living pressures and are having to modify lifestyle choices and expenditures.

Given this, it is particularly disappointing council continues to advance a project with significant economic consequences to affected property owners without genuine, open and inclusive consultation.

Along with directly impacted properties there are further considerations for the wider community around disruption, increased heavy vehicle traffic, access restrictions and dust and disturbance that would be associated with any future works.

There have been no public meetings or open events, opportunities for real engagement and rigorous questioning have been minimised and the clear sense is of a pre-determined council decision being advanced through a highly curated and managed process.

It is simply not credible to maintain that amid the range of competing infrastructure needs in the entire Bass Coast Shire Council region the most pressing is a special charge scheme for small, non-connected pieces of roadwork in a coastal enclave that has recently rejected such moves.

Time to pause, breath and review - not bulldoze on.

Dave Sweeney, Sunderland Bay



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Advertising Feature

Island
HOME

YOUR PHILLIP ISLAND AND
SAN REMO PROPERTY GUIDE



Come and explore the clubhouse, homes and other facilities at Lifestyle Phillip Island, Settlement Road, Cowes, during the statewide Lifestyle Communities Open Day on October 18, from 10am until 2pm.

Look into a Lifestyle

OPEN DAY

In a world of endless to-do lists, unfamiliar neighbours, and days that we rush through, the search for community feels more important than ever.

For some, connection means staying active through sport, a book club, or a shared hobby. For others, it's about more me time, slowing down, finding time for yourself, or enjoying a chat over coffee with a close friend. No matter what it means to you, the essence of community living is choice and the freedom to live in a way that feels right just for you.

That's the idea behind Lifestyle Communities, neighbourhoods designed with people, connection, and wellbeing in mind. It's about finding your way to live, without needing to fit a mould.

This October, Lifestyle Communities

is inviting the public to experience the joy of community first-hand.

On Saturday October 18, from 10am –2pm, all 25 Lifestyle Communities across Victoria – including Lifestyle Phillip Island – will open their doors for one day only.

You are welcome to explore the clubhouse, our homes, meet homeowners, and experience what life could look like at Lifestyle Communities.

Because at the end of the day, it's not just about where you live but about how you live, and who you share it with.

Don't miss the free family open day at Lifestyle Phillip Island, 498 Settlement Road, Cowes. Saturday October 18 from 10am – 2pm.

Learn more at www.lifestylecommunities.com.au/all-lifestyle-open-day

/ Sponsored article /

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*T&Cs apply, see <https://www.thewinningmove.com.au> Must be 18+ & own property in AU (excl ACT res & ACT property owners). Ends: 11:59pm AEDT 31/10/25. Limit 1 entry p/property w/appraisal & 1 bonus entry p/property listed for sale. Entries divided into 5 groups, depending on location of property: NSW, VIC/NTAS, QLD, SA/NT & WA. All draws at L 3/162 Collins St, Melbourne VIC 3000 at 11am AEDT on 25/11/25. Prizes (1 p/group): 5x \$2K Visa Gift Cards. Winners published at <https://firstnational.com.au/pages/real-estate/the-winning-move/> from 01/12/25. Permits: SA 125/1521.



New homes from
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Find your Way to *live* at our Open Day

Curious about downsizing? Visit our Open Day to tour Lifestyle Communities®, explore Clubhouses, and discover low-maintenance homes for your next chapter.



Saturday 18 October 2025
10am to 2pm



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[lifestylecommunities](http://lifestylecommunities.com.au)

*Indicative purchase price based on a 2 bedroom home before customisations, and is variable based on location, lot size and home designs. Prices correct at the time of publishing, and are subject to change, and do not include service fees. See lifestylecommunities.com.au for more details.



Winner of the Best In Show at the Landcare Art Prize in 2024, Susan Hall receives her award from judge Herman Pekel. Entries to this year's award are open until October 31.

Calling all artists and collectors

ART

Get ready for the Landcare Prize 2025 at the Kernot Community Hall.

Entries for this year's award are now open and can be submitted online up until October 31.

The community is invited to the Gala Champagne Opening on Friday November 14 at 7pm, where the winning artists will be announced.

The art show will be open to the public on Saturday November 15 and Sunday November 16 from 10am to 4pm. A gold coin donation will get you in over the weekend.

This event supports the Bass Coast Landcare Network Public Fund, a non-profit dedicated to conserving biodiversity within Bass Coast. Expect an incredible array of art from both experienced and emerging artists of all ages and de-

light in knowing your purchase will help the planet.

Entries are now open and close on October 31. Submit your entry online at www.trybooking.com/DEXCM.

Opening night tickets are \$20 and exhibiting artists are free. Secure your tickets at www.trybooking.com/DEXRN.

All subjects, mediums, and styles are welcome, including paintings, sculpture, and photography on any theme. For an entry form, email landcareartprize@gmail.com

Artists of all ages and abilities are invited to compete for a total prize pool of \$2650.

For enquiries, call the coordinator Janice Orchard at 0419 301 363.

This incredible event is sponsored by Bass Coast Shire Council and the Bendigo Community Bank.

/ Sponsored article /

Support Growing Cambodia online

FUNDRAISER

The annual Growing Cambodia Trivia Night fundraiser is on again this year at Berninnet, this Saturday, October 11, from 6pm until 10.30pm.

This year the Growing Cambodia Silent Auction is also online.

A regular part of this annual trivia night fundraiser, the Silent Auction always includes a raft of fantastic items, donated by supporters.

This year, even if you aren't able to attend the trivia night, you can still be part of the Silent Auction.

You can place a bid or 'buy now' through the following link: www.32auctions.com/organizations/132445/auctions/188008?r=1&t=all

It will take you to a GC Auctions page, where the items are displayed. If you click on an item, you can see more information about it.

The rules are simple:

- Each item has a starting bid and a buy now price.
- If you place a bid, you need to have the highest bid to get the item – this includes all bids, whether made online or on the night. The site will show you the highest online bid.
- If you pay the 'buy now' price, the item is yours

and will not be subject to any further bids. You will be able to pay for it right away through the auction site and we will contact you to make arrangements for collection.

The Growing Cambodia Team has thanked all participants and auction item donors.

"We can't fund our Cambodian programs without you."

Growing Cambodia's purpose is to offer rural Cambodians an opportunity to improve their quality of life through education and health and wellbeing support.

Over 900 students are attending free English lessons at the schools established by Growing Cambodia in four rural villages. Lessons are conducted by local Cambodian teachers with help from volunteers.

Growing Cambodia also provides scholarships for students to attend public school if their families are unable to afford the mandatory uniforms to attend.

If you would like to make a donation, Growing Cambodia's bank details are BSB: 633 000 A/C: 150 148 583, or donate at: www.growingcambodia.org.au/donate/



If you can't attend the Growing Cambodia trivia night on October 11, you can take part in the Silent Auction online.



The Bass Coast Landcare Network
Public Fund
ART PRIZE 2025
Kernot Community Hall
Opening Night
Friday 14th November 7pm
\$20 pp
15 & 16 November 10 - 4
Entry by gold coin donation



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VIEW club tackles poverty

COMMUNITY

Members of the Phillip Island VIEW Club are calling on the community to give generously this Anti-Poverty Week, October 12-18 and sponsor a child or donate to the national children's education charity The Smith Family.

The focus of this Anti-Poverty Week is to end child poverty in Australia.

Phillip Island VIEW Club helps eight children through The Smith Family's Learning for Life education support program, which provides families with long term educational, financial, and personal assistance so that children have all the essentials needed to make the most of their education.

The President of Phillip Island

VIEW Club, Selby, said with one in six children in Australia growing up in poverty, there has never been a more important time to support a child with their education.

"Families are having to make impossible choices about how to spend limited resources, this could be prioritising rent over sending their child on a school excursion, being able to afford schoolbooks or essential digital learning tools," said Selby.

"A laptop and reliable internet access at home are now vital for any child's education.

"No child should have to miss out on the essentials for their education, and this is why VIEW is so passionate about supporting the work of The Smith Family.

"Its evidence-based approach helps children experiencing dis-

advantage to overcome the educational inequality they face. They support students for the duration of their education, and this helps them build the confidence and skills needed to create better futures for themselves."

VIEW Clubs raised more than \$1.5 million nationally last year to support The Smith Family's important work, and they currently sponsor over 1800 students on the Learning for Life scholarship program.

VIEW Clubs in 2025 also raised over \$182,000 for The Smith Family's Digital Learning Essentials program, that aims to close the digital divide and allow students to fully participate in their schooling.

While fundraising plays a vital role in helping children in need, Selby is also encouraging women

of all ages to donate their time and skills by joining a VIEW Club.

Each year, VIEW members collectively volunteer over 70,000 hours of their time to help young people through homework, reading and mentoring programs run by the charity – but there's still a need for more helping hands.

"Our VIEW members have a unique opportunity to provide hands-on support to children experiencing disadvantage, while also forming meaningful

and lasting community relationships," Selby said.

Recently, local members have been participating in fundraising activities and special events, including a Mystery Box or Parcel Auction, hosted by Phillip Island VIEW Club, on September 22.

To find out more about joining VIEW, visit view.org.au or call 1800 805 366.

To sponsor a child or donate to The Smith Family, visit thesmithfamily.com.au or call 1800 633 622.



Rosalie's Mystery Box at the recent VIEW fundraiser contained some lovely household items.



Lorraine, Auctioneer for a Mystery Box and Parcel Auction raising \$752 to support Phillip Island VIEW Club's Learning for Life Scholarships. A huge



Marilyn, Learning for Life Coordinator, was thrilled with her gift card Mystery Box at the VIEW fundraiser.



The Lions Club of Phillip Island is having a fundraising barbeque for Kids With Cancer outside Mitre 10 in Cowes from 8am – 1pm on Friday October 17.

Kids with Cancer barbeque

FUNDRAISER

The Lions Club of Phillip Island is having a fundraising barbeque for the Kids With Cancer initiative sponsored by Lions nationally.

The barbeque will be outside Mitre 10 in Cowes from 8am –

1pm on Friday October 17 of the MotoGP weekend.

Come along and support this worthwhile cause and meet some of our members. If anyone is considering joining the Lions Club, please speak to one of the local members at the barbeque. They'd love to talk with you.

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7pm ANZAC Room, Phillip Island RSL
\$10 per person

All proceeds raised go towards children's activities at Carols by the Bay.

Contact Peter McMahon • 0418 533 256

Explore, connect and engage! Join our Social Support Group



Our Social Support Group is the perfect way to make new friends and enjoy enriching experiences, including:

- lunches
- local activities, such as galleries and indoor sports
- scenic walks
- cultural events
- a monthly Big Day Out further afield.

For more details, phone 5671 9225 or basscoasthealth.org.au/social-support-groups

Social Support Group office, 5671 9225
Wonthaggi Hospital, 5671 3333

**BCH**
Bass Coast Health

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SENIORS FESTIVAL 2025

Advertising Feature

CONNECT
CREATE
CELEBRATE



Members of the Bass Coast Health Social Support Group enjoy an outing to the Phillip Island Circuit's History of Motorsport Display. From left, Don Riegel, Allison Braden from BCH, Richard Casbolt and David Rankine.

Social adventures for seniors with Bass Coast Health

If you're feeling isolated, you're invited to join the Bass Coast Health Social Support Group.

The group brings people together for activities, outings and social events to help combat the negative impacts of loneliness.

BCH Interim CEO Simone Alexander said the group is ideal for people who do not have the support of family and friends, especially nearby.

"Through our Social Support Group, people get to meet new friends, often with similar backgrounds and interests, all while enjoying the excitement of new experiences and visiting new places," she said.

Regular outings include trips to artists' studios and galleries, eateries, walks and cultural discoveries, plus a monthly Big Day Out to locations further afield. Recent excursions have been to McClelland Sculpture Park at Langwarrin, an aviation museum at Moorabbin and a Christmas in July lunch at Sassafras.

Other activities include arts and crafts and indoor sports in local venues. There is also a group especially for men. Activities are based on the interests of group attendees.

Social Support Group is funded under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). To be eligible you must be aged 65 years or older (50 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people).

Staff support group members and transport is available to and from your home across Bass Coast.

To join or just enquire, phone Bass Coast Health on 03 5671 9225 or visit basscoasthealth.org.au/social-support-groups

Victorian Seniors Festival 2025

CONNECT
CREATE
CELEBRATE

1-31 October



**BASS COAST**

For Bass Coast events scan the QR code or visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/victorianseniorsfestival

www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/festival

**VICTORIA**
State Government

Connect, create and celebrate

The Victorian Seniors Festival returns to Bass Coast this month.

Bass Coast Shire Council is proud to be hosting and working with local community groups to hold events across the region – there's something for everyone!

With the theme Connect, Create, Celebrate, it's a fitting invitation for older Victorians to reconnect with hobbies, explore new interests, and come together with others to share joy.

From social competitions at sporting clubs including tennis, pickleball and tai chi) and card games to band and vocal performances, art and craft events, history tours and lunches, there will be something to suit all tastes and interests in this year's festival.

A highlight of this year's festival is the free art workshops in Coronet Bay.

Council has partnered there with Luminous Galleries to provide free

workshops followed by a stunning exhibition on the foreshore.

These workshops are all about trying something new – no experience required, just curiosity and a willingness to get creative. Each session is capped at 20 people, so bookings are essential.

The workshops kicked off with a Garden Plywood Workshop on October 5, followed by:

Saturday, 11 October – Fluid Art and Murals Workshop: Explore the magic of bold paint, colour movement and creative play with unexpected tools like hairdryers.

Saturday, 18 October – Aluminium Art Workshop: Learn how to create textured, shimmering metallic artworks using glue, foil and imagination.

The program culminates in an exhibition showcasing the creativity on the Coronet Bay Foreshore from October 26 – November 30, with an opening celebration on Sunday November 2

at 4pm. Everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the artists.

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead, said the festival is all about community connection and celebration.

"We're so proud to support the many local groups who have organised events or applied for festival grants this year. These groups are opening their doors to welcome you, so don't be shy! Lean into the spirit of the festival and Connect, Create and Celebrate!"

As an added bonus, Victorian Seniors Card holders can enjoy free public transport from Sunday October 5 to Sunday October 12 to participate in the Statewide events.

To view the full Bass Coast Seniors Festival program, book tickets to the Luminous Gallery workshops, or learn more about Healthy Ageing in Bass Coast, visit bass-coast.vic.gov.au/healthy-ageing



Bass Coast Shire Council is proud to be hosting and working with local community groups to hold events across the region.



A sold out performance by the Victorian State Concert Orchestra is one of the many live events happening this month, as part of the Seniors Festival.



Try Your Hand at Bridge!

Beginners Welcome

Wednesday 22nd October

12 pm to 2.30 pm

At 23 Cleeland St, Newhaven

Afternoon Tea Included

Victorian
Seniors
Festival
2025

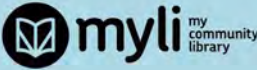
Contact Caroline 0418 369 557

1800 44 6954
myli.org.au

SENIORS FESTIVAL— AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

Celebrate Victorian Seniors Festival with free creative workshops, device advice and special guest talks at your local Myli library.

Book your spot: myli.au/vsf25



Cheers to our Seniors
celebrate, dine & enjoy this October!!

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Celebrate Victorian Seniors Festival with Myli

Celebrate the Victorian Seniors Festival at your local Myli library with free creative workshops, device advice, and special guest talks.

This annual state-wide celebration runs from October 1 to 31 and our libraries are proud to be part of it.

Join the Phillip Island Library team for creative events such as Create a Garden Journal on Monday October 20 from 2pm – 3.30pm. Or head on over to the Wonthaggi Library for their Crafty Cinema event on Thursday October 30 at 2pm.

We are also welcoming a number of special guests to the Phillip Island Library. On Friday October 24 at 2pm, come and hear author Christine Dineen for her French Island Talk. Christine will discuss her French Island visitors guide, as well as history and interesting stories about the island.

At Wonthaggi Library, the

ever-popular Living at Home for Longer seminars return in partnership with Latrobe Community Health Service. This free information session on Thursday October 23 helps adults aged 65+ maintain independence at home by learning how to access government-funded programs and subsidies for in-home care and support services.

Take full advantage of the Myli eResources with Phillip Island Library's 'Learn to use eBooks and audiobooks' event on Tuesday October 14 at 2pm. Bring your device, library card number and password to get set up with BorrowBox in this welcoming group session. If you can't attend, remember that help is always available through our ongoing Tech Talks program. These sessions are designed to boost your confidence with computers and mobile technology, covering everything from

using email and social media to exploring our eResources.

All sessions are free and open to everyone in the commu-

nity. To browse all upcoming Seniors Festival events, visit myli.au/vsf25

For more information about

Myli, contact our Support Team on 1800 44 6954, available Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.



This month, as part of Victorian Seniors Festival, your local Myli library is offering free creative workshops, tech advice and special guest talks.

Eat out this month

All seniors, not just those who are RSL members, can enjoy 10 per cent off seniors meals at the RSL throughout October.

Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a delicious meal in modern comfortable and friendly surroundings.

The seniors menu has en-

trees, mains and desserts, including soup, seafood, chicken, vegetarian options and roast or curry of the day.

Get some friends together and book a table soon, and come celebrate the Seniors Festival at the Phillip Island RSL.

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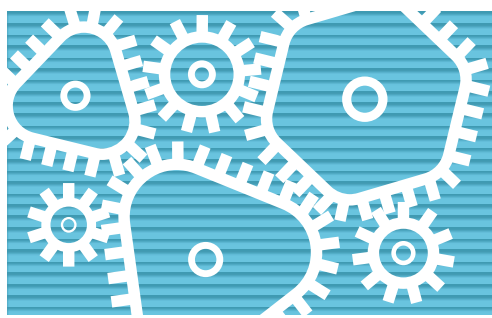
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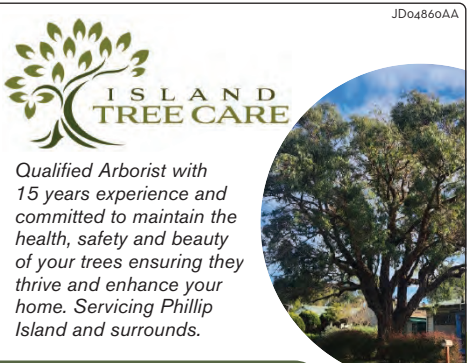
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Phillip Island Soccer club awards: Daren Dempsey Senior Men League Champions Coach, Joss Geronimo U12 Girls League Champions Coach, Benita Russell Senior Women League Champions Coach, Callum Golightly reserves League Champions Coach, Liam Jury U12 A League Champions Coach along with Gareth Kennedy President of the club.



Women's soccer team photo with league champions award and the flag for winning the grand final cup in 2025. Kellie Cox, Kelly Wall, Pauleen Boulton, Benita Russell, Yarlini Baum, Luka Alford, Helen Masters, Annie Dempsey, Michaela Marr, Tine Hicks and Andrea Blair-Dempsey.

Gippsland Soccer League senior presentation night

SOCCER

On Friday, September 12 the Gippsland Soccer League held their annual Senior Presentation Night at The Wonthaggi Club House.

Representatives from all nine clubs as well as the GSL life members, FV referees and the GSL

Board and staff were there with over 130 attendees who celebrated the 2025 season. Congratulations to the Phillip Island Soccer club for the following awards:

2025 League Champions: Under 12A Mixed, Under 12 Girls, Men's Reserves, Senior Women's, Senior Men's.

2025 Golden Boot (Leading Goal

Scorer): Men's Reserves – Angus Reed. Senior Women's – Kelly Wall.

2025 Best and Fairest: Senior Men's – Joris Kerstens.

2025 Runners up Best and Fairest: Senior Women's – Annie Dempsey and Angus Reed came third in the Reserves League Best and Fairest.



Joris Kerstens was awarded the Senior Men League Best and Fairest.



Angus Reed (Reserves) and Kelly Wall (Senior Women) Golden Boot award winners.



Reserves soccer players with their league champion trophy. Angus Reed, Harvey Jacobs, Nathaniel Cassells, Jacob Gwynne, Callum Golightly, Andrew Dean and Jay Sunderland.



Kelly Wall winner of the Senior Women's Golden Boot with 38 goals.

On the green

GOLF

Tuesday, September 30

Men's 18H Comp Stableford

Overall winner: Collin Morris (24) 41.

A Grade winner: A-1 Paul Ledwith (14) 38 c/b.

A-2 winner: Ian Smith (11) 38.

B Grade winner: B-1 Mario Amato (16) 39.

B-2 winner: Robert Dean (19) 38 c/b.

C Grade winner: C-1 Collin Morris (24) 41.

C-2 winner: Ugo Mascitelli (25) 37 c/b.

BDL to 36 c/b.

NTP: 5th Ian Smith, 7th Gary Skelton, 10th Brett Pascoe and 17th Peter Gray.

Great shot: Anthony Shannon Eagle Hole 8.

Men's 9H Stableford

Overall winner: Robert Leak (33) 21 pts from Brian Carvell (30) 18 pts c/b.

BDL to 18 pts c/b.

Wednesday, October 6

Finals of Ladies Match play

A Grade: Lesley Meadowcroft def Ada Anglin (3 and 1).

B Grade: Rhonda Boyd def Jo Disher (19th Hole).

C Grade: Marilyn Jamieson def Trish Jamieson (19th Hole).

D Grade: Joan Nicholson def Sara Gordon (20th hole).

Ladies Stableford

Overall winner: Stacey Meder 41 points.

Runner up Jennifer Fitzgerald 39 points.

BDL 33 points.

NTP: 7th Stacey Meder, 10th

Jeanette Diss and 17th Lesley Meadowcroft.

Women's 9H Stableford

Winners: Marg Frith, Helen Pirouet, Roz Wells, Gill Scrace with 17 points each.

Thursday, October 2

Open 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Warren Hahnel (17) 36 pts c/b.

A Grade winner: A-1 Alf Micallef (13) 34 pts c/b.

A-2 winner: Tony Gay (13) 34 pts.

B Grade winner: B-1 Warren Hahnel (17) 36 pts c/b.

B-2 winner: Fred Panozzo (15) 36 pts c/b.

C Grade winner: C-1 Phil Nicholson (25) 36 pts.

C-2 winner: Don Stewart-Udon (30) 34 pts.

BDL to 32 pts c/b.

NTP: 5th Tim Duff, 7th and 17th Alf Micallef, 10th Alan Airey.

Men's 9H Stableford

Overall winner: Graham Rob-

inson (11) 16 pts from Basil Moloney (7) 15 pts.

Friday, October 3

Women's 18H Comp Mary Broadbent Bowl Stableford

Overall winners: Sarah Gordon, Jeanette Diss and Jo Disher with 98 points.

A Grade winner: Helen Coghlan (16) 36 pts.

B Grade winner: Jillian Chandler (33) 36 pts.

C Grade winner: Sarah Gordon (42) 40 pts.

BDL to 32 pts c/b.

Saturday, October 4

Men's 18H Comp Stroke Monthly Medal 18H

Overall winner: James Bain (10) 64 nett.

A Grade winner: A-1 James Bain (10) 64 nett.

A-2 winner: Paul Russo (10) 70 nett c/b.

B Grade winner: B-1 Jett Dodge (18) 66 nett.

B-2 winner: Heath Grace (13)

69 nett c/b.

C Grade winner: C-1 Carl Russo (27) 70 nett.

C-2 winner: Stewart Crawford (22) 71 nett.

BDL to 74 c/b.

NTP: 5th Brent Scott, 7th Gregory Stewart, 10th Gino Manfredi and 17th Mark Jamieson.

Women's 18H Comp Stableford

Overall winner: Joanne Disher (23) 41 pts from Vicki Ramage (18) 39 pts.

BDL to 34 pts c/b.

NTP: 7th Vicki Ramage and 18th Karen Green.

Open 9H Comp

Overall winner: Basil Moloney (14) 15 c/b from Harold Jackson (36) 15 pts.

BDL to 14 pts c/b.

Sunday, October 5

Open 18H Comp Stableford

Overall winner: Hugo Thompson (18) 38 pts from Andrew Walton (16) 34 pts c/b.

BDL: to 32 pts c/b.



A huge congratulations to the U17 boys and U17 girls South Gippsland Volleyball teams both bringing home Gold in the 2025 Volleyball Victoria Country Championships in Horsham.



Christian Ringer, Ethan Findlay, Natalie Churchill and Yasmin Gloria, were named in the All-Star Sevens, with Natalie Churchill also taking home the coveted MVP award at the Volleyball Victoria Country Championships.

Golden weekend for South Gippsland

VOLLEYBALL

It was celebration time for South Gippsland Volleyball after both the U17 boys and U17 girls struck gold at the 2025 Volleyball Victoria Country Championships in Horsham over the long weekend.

The results prove once again that Gippsland kids bring a serious force to the court.

Girls go back-to-back

The U17 girls team showed why they are the reigning champions, storming

through their pool matches with wins over Geelong (3-0), Warrnambool (3-2), Horsham (3-1) and more, before lining up against Geelong in the gold medal match. In a thrilling contest, the girls held their nerve and sealed a 3-1 win (28-26, 25-20, 19-25, 25-12) to claim back-to-back titles.

Guided by head coach Tamara Miller, assistant coach Jessica Sanders, manager Emmy-Lou Mills, and with nutrition and hydration overseen by Anna Gloria (yes, straw-

berries really were the secret weapon), the girls proved unstoppable.

Local Phillip Island talent Georgia Mills played her part in the championship-winning side, bringing pride back home.

Boys shine in debut campaign

The U17 boys entered their first tournament as a squad and left with the championship trophy — a remarkable feat.

After battling through a five-set opening match against Sunraysia, they

went from strength to strength, securing wins against Horsham and Sunraysia before meeting Sunraysia again in the grand final.

On finals day they were at their absolute best, sweeping the match in straight sets: 3-0 (25-14, 25-14, 25-17).

The boys were coached by Mark De Guzman, with support from assistant coach Jeffrin Matthew and manager Jonamae Kindom, while first referee Dave Fuller was given special thanks for his con-

sistency on the whistle.

Phillip Island's own Ethan Findlay stood tall as part of the victorious boys' squad.

Recognition also went to Natalie Churchill, Yasmin Gloria, Christian Ringer and Ethan Findlay, who were named in the All-Star Sevens, with Natalie Churchill also taking home the coveted MVP award.

The South Gippsland cheer squad, complete with bongo drums, air horns, shakers and tambourines kept spirits high

and energy electric.

Parents, friends and supporters were front and centre, while friendships with other regional clubs were rekindled and new ones forged.

Horsham's warm hospitality made the weekend even more memorable, capping off what was a golden celebration of junior volleyball.

Two teams. Two trophies. One club.

South Gippsland Volleyball, golden in Horsham. Bring on 2026. Yeah Souths!



Winners of Midweek bowls played at Loch were Mick Sheers (S), Cheryl Floyd (3) and John Kappler (L).



Best One Game bowlers were Tony Heppleston (3), Jaye A-D (S), Maggie Prosser (L) and Ron Felton (2).

Midweek heads to Loch

BOWLS

Thirty bowlers turned up to Loch and District Bowls club to once again fight it out for team(s) of the week.

The weather was a wonderful spring day with temperatures just slightly above zero and winds making it feel somewhat colder.

With the cold temperature aside, the on again and off again rain made all feel so happy.

Sanity (or insanity) aside, all the bowlers seemed to have a fantastic day.

Lots of laughter. Lots of friendly banter and most of all, lots of great bowls.

A big thank you to all the Loch members who prepared everything for the Phillip Island members. Thank you Sue, Trevor, Alex and anyone not mentioned.

Also, a big thank you again to Bev, Aggie and John who signed everyone in and prepared the teams.

Winners on a score of 36 were: Mick Sheers (S), Cheryl Floyd (3) and John Kappler (L).

Runners up on a very close

score of 35 were: Peter Taylor (2), David Prosser (L), Trevor Loughridge (3) and Phil Nielsen (S).

Best One game on a score of 18 was won by: Tony Heppleston (3), Jaye A-D (S), Maggie Prosser (L) and Ron Felton (2).

This week the Midweek bowlers will be meeting at Corinella to once again fight it out for team of the week.

Please be on site by 10am to allow time to prepare the teams.

As always with numbers generally reaching capacity there will be a strict 10am cut off time.

Results from the table

BRIDGE

Monday's Duplicate Bridge session featured a strong turnout, with five and a half tables in play.

The contest proved to be exceptionally close, as Greg Nicholson and Jean Barbour clinched victory with a score of 64.58 per cent.

Hot on their heels were Neville Chapman and Lorrie Read, who finished a mere fraction behind on 64.35 per cent.

Wednesday brought a Nationwide event to the club, attracting six tables of eager players.

For the second consecutive week, Caroline Shaw and Janusz Wolnik dominated the field, securing first place with an impressive 66 per cent.

Janusz, a newcomer to the club this year, continues to impress, guided by the experienced hand of Caroline Shaw.

In celebration of Seniors Week, the PI Bridge Club is extending an open invitation for newcomers to discover the joys of bridge.

The event, scheduled for Wednesday October 22, offers the perfect introduction to the game, with experienced players on hand to supervise and assist beginners.

Attendees can also look forward to the club's famed afternoon tea.

Those interested in participating are encouraged to contact Caroline on 0418 369 557 for further details.

Euchre results

Ladies winner: Faye 6 wins.

Men's winner: John O'B 7 wins.

Encouragement award: Lorraine.

For an enjoyable night of euchre new players are welcome to join every Thursday night.

Games start at 7.30pm and for further information contact Bob on 0428 173 388.

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K. LANE 18
N. REICHMAN 14

NERENA

1/102

ARCHIE WILLIAMS
1/7/2

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TIDE GUIDE

Tidal predictions for Stony Point, Cowes -0.09 Newhaven -0.31 | HIGH TIDE IS MARKED IN BLACK. LOW TIDE IS MARKED IN RED.

WED 8 OCT	THU 9 OCT	FRI 10 OCT	SAT 11 OCT	SUN 12 OCT	MON 13 OCT	TUE 14 OCT
HIGH 1:52 am 2.74 m	HIGH 2:56 am 2.98 m	HIGH 3:52 am 3.16 m	HIGH 4:44 am 3.25 m	HIGH 5:32 am 3.25 m	HIGH 6:20 am 3.18 m	HIGH 7:06 am 3.05 m
LOW 7:35 am 0.96 m	LOW 8:37 am 0.91 m	LOW 9:30 am 0.87 m	LOW 10:19 am 0.86 m	LOW 11:06 am 0.87 m	LOW 11:52 am 0.90 m	LOW 12:36 pm 0.96 m
HIGH 2:07 pm 2.66 m	HIGH 2:58 pm 2.74 m	HIGH 3:44 pm 2.79 m	HIGH 4:28 pm 2.82 m	HIGH 5:11 pm 2.83 m	HIGH 5:54 pm 2.80 m	HIGH 6:39 pm 2.72 m
LOW 8:00 pm 0.62 m	LOW 8:51 pm 0.39 m	LOW 9:40 pm 0.23 m	LOW 10:27 pm 0.14 m	LOW 11:13 pm 0.14 m	LOW 11:58 pm 0.21 m	

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Ava Hollands from the Mornington Peninsula won the U18 Girls division of the 2025 Rip Curl GromSearch held at Smiths Beach on the weekend. Photo: Jacques Kelly, Surfing Victoria.

GromSearch wraps on weekend

SURFING

Conditions at Smiths Beach did a complete 180 for Finals Day of the 2025 Rip Curl GromSearch Phillip Island on Saturday with warm weather and light winds.

Most successful local competitors were U14's Scarlett Rennie and Lennox Archibald, who both made it through to round two.

In the U18 divisions Mitchell Peterson (Noosa, QLD) and Ava Holland (Mornington Peninsula, VIC) claimed victory after a day of standout performances.

Locana Cullen (Avalon Beach, NSW) and Eliza Richardson (Gold Coast, QLD) took out the U16 Boys and Girls divisions.

In the youngest division, Navah Holmes (Gold Coast, QLD)



Mitchell Peterson from Noosa won the U18 Boys category, with Darcy Dwyer, also from Noosa, in second place. Photo: Jacques Kelly, Surfing Victoria.

and Ffeon Clifford (Mount Maunganui NZ) took top honours in the U14 divisions.

A replay of Finals Day can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yCenorsmTE

Full results available at surfingvic.com/ripcurlgromsearch-

Nippers program returns this summer

SURF LIFESAVING

The Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club is excited to welcome back its much-loved Nippers program for the 2025/26 season, with registrations now open.

Running from December 28 to January 4 (excluding New Year's Day), the program offers children aged six to 13 the chance to gain essential surf lifesaving and water safety skills in a fun, supportive environment.

Sessions will again be held at Cleeland Bight (U6-U11) and Smiths Beach (U12-U13), giving participants a chance to experience both sheltered and surf conditions.

Kids will build confidence and learn skills including ocean swimming, board paddling, beach running, rescue techniques and surf awareness.

More than just surf training, Nippers encourages teamwork, leadership and personal growth, while giving families the opportunity to connect with the local beach community.

As a fully volunteer run pro-



Places fill quickly, so don't miss out. Register now for the Woolamai Beach Surf Life Saving Club's Nippers program, which runs from December 28 to January 4 this summer.

gram, the support of parents and guardians ensure the program runs smoothly. Children of all swimming abilities are welcome, with activities designed to support every participant at their own pace.

Don't miss this opportunity

for your child to gain lifesaving skills, make friends and enjoy the beach this summer.

To register or find out more about the Woolamai Beach Nippers 2025/26 program, visit www.woolamaibeach.org.au/nippers



Gemma Cook showing her medal at the Nationals short course.

SGB at Nationals short course

SWIMMING

MSAC was a buzz last week for the Australian 2025 National Short Course Championships.

The six swimmers from South Gippsland Bass held their own against fierce competition.

Rubbing shoulders with their idols and getting selfies were amongst the highlights of the week.

Representing the club at the Australian 2025 National Short Course Championships at MSAC last week were Miah Roberts, Claudia Croatto, Emily Croatto, Sophie McKenzie, Levi Jarrett and Gemma Cook.

Dylan Muir was in attendance, coaching the team and was really pleased with how the swimmers went.

"It was a huge step for most of them to compete for their first time at an Open Nationals event.

"They got to see how the Dolphins warm up, prepare to race and how they deal with the outcome.

"It was a huge learning experience for them, and they will have gained a lot from it. I was really proud of their efforts."

Levi Jarrett had a great time

and met his idol Cam McEvoy.

"I like racing at night in the finals; everyone was cheering for us. I got a few selfies with some of my idols which was pretty good."

Gemma Cook said "it was a really good experience".

"When I got my medal, I was really excited, and it was very unexpected. Mum was cheering loudly. One of the other highlights was I got to warm up with Ahmed Kelly who is a Paralympian and it felt special."

Results:

Claudia Croatto: 31st 200m Breaststroke, 52nd 100IM, 37th 100 Breaststroke.

Emily Croatto: 34th 200m Breaststroke.

Miah Roberts: 34th 50m Backstroke, 32nd 200m Backstroke, 28th 100m Backstroke.

Levi Jarrett: 12th open, 3rd 12-17 age group 100m IM MC, B Finalist, 18th, 5th 12-17 age groups, 50m Freestyle.

Gemma Cook: B Finalist, 13th, 50m Freestyle, 4th overall, 2nd in 12-17 age group, 200m Freestyle MC.

Sophie McKenzie: 30th 50m Breaststroke.

Stretching out in the 50m pool

SWIMMING

Traralgon hosted the first Long Course GSI meet of the 25/26 season on Sunday, with 55 swimmers competing to see how much they have progressed since last summer.

There was a lot of excitement as a number of new swimmers competed in their first event in a 50m pool, with a great sense of relief as they finally touched the other end.

With only 25m pools to train in, it takes a few weeks for the swimmers to adjust to the longer distance.

Some of the older swimmers were excited to swim qualifying times for the upcoming State Sprints and Age Championships.

It wasn't just the little kids swimming, with a number of parents joining in the fun and showing the kids that age is no barrier.



Phillip Island Boardriders Club were victorious at the weekend's Australian Boardriders Battle event, securing their place in the Australian Grand Final in March 2026, to be held at Burleigh Heads in Queensland. Photo: Noah Clifford, Surfing Victoria.

Island claims Boardriders victory

SURFING

Phillip Island Boardriders Club (PIBC) won Event 2 of the Australian Boardriders Battle Series, taking top honours on home turf, during the weekend competition at Cape Woolamai.

A playful left-hand rip bowl provided the ideal bank for competitors throughout the day. Despite gusty winds, the warm conditions and lively crowd made for an electric atmosphere as nine clubs from across Victoria battled it out for a place in the Australian Boardriders Battle Grand Final.

After a series of highly contested early rounds, only Torquay Boardriders Club, Jan Juc Boardriders Club, Peninsula Surfriders, and Phillip Island Boardriders Club remained as the final got underway.

With the swell easing, teams were forced to be selective with their wave choices while keeping a close eye on the clock to avoid time penalties for failing to return to the box.

As the final unfolded, Peninsula and Phillip Island pulled ahead thanks to some standout rides.

Phillip Island's Carl Wright went huge on a backhand snap out the back to lock in a 7.00-point ride, putting the home team in prime position. Peninsula's Lucas Hickson kept the pressure on with a 6.33-point ride for a series of sharp backhand turns on a running left.



PIBC's Lillian Bassed was awarded Wave of the Day. Photo: Noah Clifford, Surfing Victoria.

In the closing stages, consistency and timing proved key. Wright rounded out Phillip Island's campaign with a solid 5.80-point ride, sealing the win for the locals in front of a roaring home crowd.

The celebrations continued on the sand, with Phillip Island's Lillian Bassed taking home the Boost Mobile Wave of the Day Award for her earlier performance.

"It was really fun today," Lillian said. "I was a bit nervous but excited to be a part of the team and get a good wave."



PIBC's power surfer Carl Wright won the award for Overall performance of the contest. Photo: Noah Clifford, Surfing Victoria.

Carl Wright was named Celsius Overall Performer. "The surf got pretty tough in the afternoon, but it's always a good day to get club surfing up and going," he said.

"We finished fourth last year in the final, so we didn't get to go to the national final, which cut us deep.

"Personally, I had a bit of an average performance that day, so I was fired up to fly the flag today and happy with how it went."

PIBC Club President Club

President Jake Eisen praised the team's effort.

"We've been training, so that's why it's been so sick. We've actually put a bit of effort in this year and just gone back to basics – we haven't overcomplicated it."

Phillip Island Boardriders team consisted of Walter Hiatt (captain), Carl Wright (power surfer), Joe Van Dijk, Jarrah Cicero and Lillian Bassed, along with back up surfers Scarlett Rennie, Angus Kennedy and Dylan James, and managers Jake Eisen and Ash Easton.

"It was a massive achievement for our club, being recognised as the best in the state," said Jake.

"Huge thanks to all our members and families who came down to support – your energy made all the difference."

The Jim Beam Team Spirit Award went to 13th Beach Boardriders, who were praised for their energy and sportsmanship throughout the day.

Phillip Island, Peninsula, and Jan Juc Boardriders secured their place at the Australian Boardriders Battle Grand Final Presented by NRMA Insurance, to be held at Burleigh Heads, QLD on March 7-8, 2026.

Final Results:

Phillip Island Boardriders – 28.70 pts
Peninsula Surfriders – 26.10 pts
Jan Juc Boardriders – 22.49 pts
Torquay Boardriders – 10.84 pts

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