

Mayor Message



Hello South Gippsland.

It's great to be back with you all after my trip to Queanbeyan, New South Wales last week for the South East Australian Transport Strategy meeting.

These opportunities to connect with people who are passionate about transport and their area are invaluable, allowing us to network and share our priorities. Local government can feel lonely at times, but these networking opportunities remind us that we aren't alone, and our challenges are shared.

Shaping South Gippsland Engagement

The Shaping South Gippsland engagement finished up over the weekend. Over 500 people participated across the region at either an in-person event and the online survey.

Councillors and Council staff attended 22 events as part of the engagement, made up of nine events, nine pop-ups and three stakeholder events held across the Shire to hear from our community about their hopes for the future. These opportunities are extremely important to help us understand the expectations of the community and balance that with what we can do.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Shaping South Gippsland engagement over the last three weeks. In particular, I would like to shout-out to young Oscar McGrath from Foster.

Oscar is 11 years-old and spent time with me chatting about what he wants to see in South Gippsland. He even waited patiently for his opportunity when I was talking to another community member. Oscar's passion for South Gippsland was palpable and really refreshing from someone so young. I really enjoyed my chat with him, and I would like to say just how much that chat meant to me. Thank you, Oscar, for being such a champ – and to your parents who brought you along to see me.

Without people like Oscar who are willing to talk openly and respectfully with Council, we can't possibly know everything and represent this fabulous community. So, if you didn't stand up this time and share your thoughts, be like Oscar next time there is an opportunity on any topic. Tell us your thoughts respectfully and help us make decisions that truly reflect the opinion of our entire community.

If there are no opportunities coming up, but you have something you would like to share, you can contact any Councillor. Our contact details are on Council's website.

Community Training and Grants

Developing and supporting our community to do great things is an extremely important role of Council.

Round Two of the Community Grants Program closes at the end of March. I love these programs that provide our hard-working community and volunteer groups with the financial support they need to do great things for South Gippsland. You can find out more about the Community Grants Program at www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants

If you would like to discover new skills, enhance your knowledge and network with other community-focused people, the **Community Training Program** is a great thing to take advantage of.

With a mix of training opportunities available, you'll be sure to find something for you.

To check out the upcoming sessions, please visit: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/communitytraining

Business Corner

Businesses are the lifeblood of our community, employing local people and providing high quality products and service to us all.

At Council, we believe in supporting both new and established businesses to achieve great things. To do this, the Economic Development team are here for you.

They will be popping around the region to introduce themselves and let you know how Council can help, so keep an eye out for them and make sure you say g'day.

The team are also in charge of delivering the **South Gippsland Jobs Expo** – a free event where prospective employees can meet with employers looking for new talent. The Expo is taking place on Thursday 20 March 2025 from 9.30am to 1.30pm at Memorial Hall, Leongatha.

For more information on the Expo, please visit: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/jobsexpo

Take care,

Cr John Schelling – Mayor