



From the Mayor



Golden Plains is a beautiful place to live all year round but there's something extra special about our Shire in Spring. As the days get warmer, the native flora is blooming and we see more of our unique Australian wildlife enjoying the new season, too.

Council is excited to launch the return of Spring in the Shire, our community photography competition held every two years. I encourage residents of all ages to grab their camera and enjoy exploring our Shire and capturing those special images. Reviewing the entries is a great honour and I look forward to seeing the Shire through the eyes of our participants again this year. For information on entering the competition, see page 3.

As I write this message, regional Victoria has just emerged from another lockdown and we are hoping these new freedoms will last as our vaccination rates climb and Christmas approaches. Over the past 18 months, Council has established more options to deliver our many operations and services and continue to find new ways to stayed connected with residents and businesses. Last month, Councillors held another online Conversation

Post to chat with residents and we returned to virtual Council Meetings this past month, livestreamed into homes across the Shire.

We believe that keeping our community informed and connected is more important now than ever. Council has committed to a range of communication and engagement options for all residents and if you haven't discovered them yet, we hope you'll consider taking a read.

All our Council and Golden Plains' news is published on Council's website: goldenplains.vic.gov.au, and all residents are welcome to follow Council's social media pages on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This year, Council introduced two new enewsletters: *Engage*, the monthly community engagement publication and the *eGazette*, a digital community magazine published every second month. All you need to sign up for these publications is an email address and every copy will be sent straight to your inbox. Full details are on page 10.

For those who prefer printed news, Council continues to publish the Gazette magazine and deliver it to local mailboxes. We also publish a Council News page in the *Golden Plains Times* every week and send our Council News to every community newsletter in the Shire.

And now, grab a cuppa and enjoy reading the latest issue of the *Gazette*.

Cr Helena Kirby – Mayor of Golden Plains Shire Council

COUNCIL DECLARES A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Climate Change threatens the livelihoods, homes and environment of our community.

That's why Council declared a Climate Emergency at its July Council Meeting, joining 34 councils throughout Victoria, including neighbouring City of Ballarat, Surf Coast Shire and Borough of Queenscliffe. A declaration of a Climate Emergency is a resolution for immediate and urgent action to reverse global warming and adapt to changes that society cannot avoid.

The motion was carried unanimously, with Councillors speaking to the impact climate change is having on the Golden Plains community and environment and the urgency for tackling the climate crisis.



Council has committed to preparing a Climate Emergency Plan to put the declaration's words into action. The Climate Emergency Plan will develop a comprehensive list of actions and address the resources required to implement these recommendations.

To stay informed on the Climate Emergency work at Council, read Council's website, social media, Gazette and eGazette, Council News in the Golden Plains Times and the Engage e-newsletter.

Spring returns to the Shire

Golden Plains Shire Council's Spring in the Shire photography competition is back in 2021 and entries are now open.

Spring in the Shire

Photography Competition

Following its success in 2017 and 2019, the Spring in the Shire photography competition returns this year with the theme of 'What we share'. Photographers of all skill levels are encouraged to capture this theme with images of any thing, place or person (with appropriate permissions) that represents the Shire's unique surrounds.

In 2021, there are 3 categories, with 30 photographs to be selected for an exhibition and go in the running to win a major cash prize. This year's categories are:

- Major Prize (18 years and older)
- Young Adult Prize (13 to 17 years)
- Junior Prize (Up to 12 years)

The winners of the Major and Young Adult Prizes will each receive \$300, with the Junior Prize winner to take home \$200, thanks to competition partners, Stockdale & Leggo Bannockburn and Healthwise Pharmacy Bannockburn.

Three judges including Mayor Cr Helena Kirby will select the winner of each category, with the announcement of winners to take place in November. Should COVID-19 restrictions allow, the exhibition of the short-listed works will be displayed at venues across the Shire from November 2021.

Images must be no greater than 10MB, be submitted with a title and short caption, and have been taken in Golden Plains Shire within the last 12 months. Entries close at 11.59pm, Sunday 31 October, 2021 and only one image per artist is allowed.

To enter, photographers can fill out a simple webform and upload their photo at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/springintheshire



Lyn Steele, 'Living the Dream' - Winner of 2019 Major Prize category



Elizabeth Allen, 'Firewood Collecting' - Highly Commended in 2019 Young Adult category



Jai Bennion, 'Yellow Melon' - Highly Commended in 2019 Junior category

Delivering upgraded recreation facilities



NETBALL COURTS OFFICIALLY OPENED

While works on the Inverleigh Netball Courts Upgrade were completed in 2020, the pandemic delayed the official celebration until July this year.

With restrictions on public gatherings then limited to 10 people, Parliamentary Secretary for Sport Danielle Green MP, Mayor Cr Helena Kirby and David Haste, President of the Inverleigh Football Netball Club, were joined by Cr Clayton Whitfield, Cr Les Rowe and Federal Member for Corangamite Libby Coker, to open the project in a small ceremony following the end of the Inverleigh Hawks' final home game of the season. To watch a recording of the speeches on Council's website, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/inverleighnetball

The \$448,700 upgrade was a partnership project, with \$250,000 from the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund and \$198,700 from Golden Plains Shire Council. The project included the construction of two new fully compliant local netball courts with court lighting, all to competition standard.

New funding secured

In August, Golden Plains Shire Council welcomed the news that it had secured more funding from the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund to deliver two recreation projects for the community.



LEIGHDALE EQUESTRIAN CENTRE UPGRADE

The Leighdale Equestrian Centre Upgrade project will see a new 70 x 24 metre undercover equestrian arena with spectator seating, water tanks and minimum 150 lux lighting constructed, as well as an upgrade of the area surface. The project will allow greater use of the facility outside peak times and improve safety at the site, which is one of two equestrian centres in Golden Plains.

The \$537,000 project in Teesdale has received \$318,296 from the fund's Female Friendly Facilities category. In addition, Council will contribute \$199,000 to the project, with \$10,000 from the Leighdale Equestrian Centre Committee and \$10,000 from the Inverleigh Riding Club completing the funding for this partnership project.



VICTORIA PARK OVALS SAFETY NETTING PROJECT

The \$50,000 Victoria Park Ovals Safety Netting project includes the installation of two 10 x 25 metre protector range netting bays behind the southern goals on both ovals in Bannockburn. The netting will improve spectator and participant safety, as well as prevent damage and loss of balls into the netball courts and parked vehicles.

Council has secured \$21,000 from the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund's Scoreboards and Fixed Equipment category, which will be complemented by \$19,000 from Council and \$6,000 from the Bannockburn Football Netball Club and Bannockburn Cricket Club.

Lethbridge Reserve Better Than Ever

On 7 July, the Lethbridge community gathered to celebrate the new lights and irrigation upgrade project at the Recreation Reserve and were pleasantly surprised with the announcement of funding for new cricket nets.



LETHBRIDGE LIGHTING AND IRRIGATION PROJECT

An excited crowd of locals were on hand to mark the official completion of the Lethbridge Lighting and Irrigation project as the sun set on the cool winter's evening.

Following a Lethbridge Rosellas Junior Football Club training session, the \$450,000 project was officially opened by Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle MP, Senator for Victoria Sarah Henderson, Golden Plains Shire Mayor Cr Helena Kirby and Secretary of the Lethbridge Reserve Committee of Management and Lethbridge Junior Football Club, Sharon Boyd.

The Lethbridge Lighting and Irrigation project involved the installation of four new lighting towers at Lethbridge Recreation Reserve and a subsurface irrigation system to enable the increased use of the facility. The \$450,000 project was a partnership project between all three tiers of government, with \$250,000 from the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund, \$100,000 from the Australian Government's Community Development Grants Program, and \$100,000 from Council.



LETHBRIDGE CRICKET NET UPGRADE PROJECT

During the opening of the Reserve's upgrade, Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle MP announced that the Victorian Government will contribute \$100,000 from its Community Cricket Program towards the Lethbridge Cricket Net Upgrade project.

This is great news for avid cricketers in Lethbridge, and Council welcomes this funding support for the relocation and construction of an outdoor cricket training net facility consisting of three synthetic pitches at the Lethbridge Recreation Reserve.

A \$170,000 partnership project, Council will contribute \$50,000 and the Lethbridge Cricket Club will put in \$20,000 to build a better cricket facility for the Lethbridge players and community.

GOLDEN PLAINS Community Bus

The Golden Plains Community Bus trial will be extended to Thursday 23 December, 2021.

Launched in July, the bus trial was intended to end on 8 October, however COVID-19 restrictions meant the service was unable to operate for several weeks. To ensure a full trial and greater understanding of the need for transport in the Shire, the service will run until Thursday 23 December, 2021.

The Golden Plains Community Bus is free for all passengers during the trial period. A project of Council, the bus trial is funded by the Victorian Government and a sponsorship from Buninyong & District Community Bank.

In the south of the Shire, the Golden Plains Community Bus service will continue to stop in Teesdale, Inverleigh, Shelford, Bannockburn and Batesford, travelling to and from Geelong Waterfront every Tuesday. In the north, the bus service stops in Linton, Scarsdale and Smythesdale, travelling to and from Delacombe Town Centre and Stockland Wendouree in Ballarat every Thursday.

The full bus timetable is available at Council's website: goldenplains.vic.gov.au; or pick up a copy at the following locations:

- Council's Customer Service Centres, 2 Pope Street, Bannockburn and 19 Heales Street, Smythesdale
- Linton Takeaway
- Scarsdale General Store
- Smythesdale Post Office
- Ross Creek General Store
- Inverleigh General Store
- Teesdale General Store and Post Office
- Bannockburn Post Office
- Cape Clear Store

To make a booking for the Community Bus, call 5220 7151. Bookings are essential and only passengers with a booking can ride. The service operates under COVID-19 guidelines and all passengers must wear face masks.

Skate Park Upgrade Underway

Local young people will soon enjoy the improved skate park in Bannockburn, with works underway on the Bannockburn Skate Park Upgrade Project.

The existing park is being expanded, with new skate elements including quarter pipes, ramps, boxes and rails. Other works include the installation of a shade shelter, drinking fountain, bike racks, lockers, lighting, safety signage and seating. Landscaping, electrical works and repairs to the existing concrete slab are also included in the project.

Construction began on 15 September and the skate park is expected to reopen in early November.

There will then be rolling short-term closures until the end of the year to complete the lighting and artwork components of the project.

The Bannockburn Skate Park Upgrade is a partnership project with funding from the Victorian and Australian Governments. The \$450,000 project is funded by a \$250,000 Community Safety Infrastructure grant



from the Victorian Government's Community Crime Prevention Program and \$199,900 from the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

In 2019, Smythesdale Skate Park in the north of the Shire was upgraded and this year, funding was also announced for the upgrade of the Meredith Skate Park.

digitalhub

Golden Plains Shire's first co-working space is now open at The Well in Smythesdale.



The Digital Hub was officially opened by Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas on 12 August, joined by Golden Plains Shire Mayor Cr Helena Kirby and local businesspeople Jason Masterton, Terri Pryse-Smith and Alan Smith from Smythesdale.

The new Digital Hub provides a modern and accessible co-working space for residents in the north of Golden Plains Shire. With fast and reliable NBN internet and strong mobile coverage, the Digital Hub will improve access to digital technology for residents and offers a comfortable and contemporary alternative to working from home.

Located at The Well in the north of Golden Plains Shire, the Hub was funded by the Victorian Government with a grant from the Regional Digital Fund. The co-working space provides bookable hot desks, a privacy pod and an adaptable meeting room space, with casual and regular bookings available.

With easy parking and open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, the Digital Hub is a viable workplace option for home-based business operators, employees working from home or community members wanting to stay connected online.

As part of Council's COVID-19 Business Support Program, residents and businesses have free access to the Digital Hub for the first 12 months of operation.



Bookings are now available for the Digital Hub, with by the hour, half day and full day options. To book a desk, office or meeting room, visit goldenplains.vic.gov/DigitalHub or contact Council's Community Facilities Officer at 5220 7231 or digitalhub@gplains.vic.gov.au



Road and Bridge Projects in Golden Plains

Council's extensive road and bridge upgrade program continued in winter.

SHELFORD-MT MERCER ROAD UPGRADED

Drivers through Mount Mercer are benefiting from a safer drive following the completion of an upgrade to Shelford-Mt Mercer Road.

A total of 3.5 kilometres of Shelford-Mt Mercer Road was improved, with the road's shoulder widened and sealed between Grahams Road and Rices Road. Works also included installing guard fencing on the east side of the road, improvements to delineation and the replacement of damaged signs.

The \$1.1 million safety upgrade was fully funded by the Australian Government's 2020-21 Black Spot Program. Works began in January 2021 and were completed at the end of June 2021.

Works are continuing on a number of other road and bridge projects in Golden Plains Shire, including the replacement of Slate Quarry Road Bridge, Russells Bridge Road upgrade, Meredith-Shelford Road Stage 2, and guardrail replacements in 12 localities.

BLACK SPOT FUNDING FOR SMYTHESDALE ROAD

Craddocks Road in Smythesdale is set for a safety upgrade following a recent announcement from the Australian Government.

Part of a nationwide program to improve road safety, Council will receive \$360,000 from the Government's 2021-22 Black Spot Program to fully fund a 1.4km safety upgrade of the road.

This road safety project includes installing safety barriers on the road's curves between Short Road and Whites Road, and a barrier line along the road's entire length with no overtaking. Additionally, upgraded and new signage will be installed along the road, including an advisory speed limit of 60 km/h on the road's three curves. The intersection with Turnbull Court will also be enhanced with Give Way signs and lines.

With funding secured, the upgrade is expected to be completed by June 2022.

The Black Spot Program is a valuable source of funding that allows Council to deliver additional road safety projects on top of its regular capital program.



A NEW BRIDGE FOR PADDYS GULLY ROAD

Construction is well underway on replacing an ageing bridge in the centre of the Shire.

Paddys Gully Road Bridge in Rokewood Junction is currently closed while the single span timber bridge is replaced. The bridge over Mount Misery Creek is being replaced with a new two-lane reinforced concrete structure that will allow light and heavy vehicles full access. The existing bridge was limited to 10 tonnes and was in poor condition.

The new Paddys Gully Road Bridge is jointly funded by Council and the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program. At its July 2021 meeting, Council awarded the \$579,856.11 construction contract for the new bridge to Golden Plains-based, Begbies Contracting.

The new bridge is set to open in late December 2021, and until then, drivers through the area are advised to allow extra travel time.

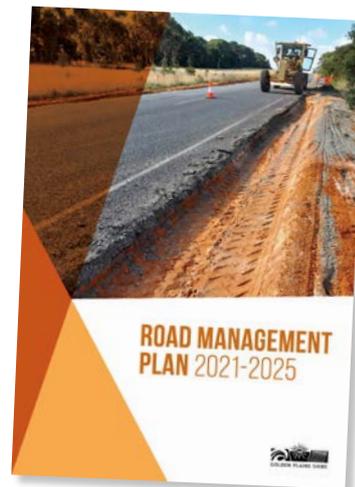
This is the third bridge replaced in the Rokewood area this year, following the construction of the Geggies Road and Reserve Road Bridges.

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN ADOPTED

At its July Meeting, Council adopted its plan to manage the Shire's local roads.

The Road Management Plan 2021-2025 (the Plan) is a key technical document that sets clear standards and details Council's commitment to managing local roads. The Plan identifies responsibilities, maintenance standards and inspection regimes for all road assets within Council's control.

Following a comprehensive review, a draft version of the Plan was developed including changes from Council's existing plan regarding inspection regimes and intervention levels. The draft document was open for community feedback from 26 May to 7 June, 2021 and adopted by Council in July.



The Road Management Plan 2021-2025 is available at Council's Customer Service Centres; 2 Pope Street, Bannockburn and 19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, and on Council's website: goldenplains.vic.gov.au/strategies.

DID YOU KNOW?

Not all roads in Golden Plains Shire are managed by Council. Highways and Main Roads are fully managed by the Victorian Government, who is responsible for their maintenance.

This includes:

- Midland Highway
- Hamilton Highway
- Glenelg Highway
- Colac-Ballarat Road
- Bannockburn-Shelford Road

To report a defect or fault on a Victorian Government-managed road, contact Regional Roads Victoria at 133 778 or visit regionalroads.vic.gov.au/contact

- Lismore-Scarsdale Road
- Fyansford-Gheringhap Road
- Inverleigh-Shelford Road
- Rokewood-Skipton Road
- Pitfield-Scarsdale Road
- Rokewood-Shelford Road
- Steiglitz Road
- Geelong-Ballan Road
- Inverleigh-Winchelsea Road
- Ballarat-Carngham Road
- Ceres Road
- Merrawarp Road

New support for Golden Plains community events

Council has secured a \$30,000 grant to support local events return following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The grant from the Victorian Government's Regional Recovery Fund will see Council provide assistance to community-led events including COVID-safe event planning.

Council has invested the grant in 10 event marquees, event and COVID-safe signage, and COVID-safe apparel and resources to aid the delivery of favourite local events in the COVID environment, with local events including the Shelford Duck Race, Inverleigh Dachshund Derby, Turtle Bend Live and the Teesdale Twilight Carols and Market set to benefit.

The Geelong & District Carriage Drivers group will also be supported as local members prepare to host the Victorian Carriage Driving Championships at the Leighdale Equestrian Centre in Teesdale in March 2022. In addition, three of the marquees will be held by Council and available for loan to other local events across the Shire.



SIGN-UP TO RECEIVE COUNCIL'S eGAZETTE



Sign-up to receive Council's *eGazette* email newsletter, published in between editions of the *Gazette* community magazine.

To receive the next edition of the *eGazette* in November:

-  Complete the simple web form at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/egazette
-  Email communityengagement@gplains.vic.gov.au

JOIN THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REGISTER



Join the Community Engagement Register to receive *Engage*, Council's monthly engagement e-newsletter.

-  Complete the simple web form at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/community-engagement-register
-  Email communityengagement@gplains.vic.gov.au

 For information or answers to your questions regarding *Engage* and the *eGazette*, call 5220 7199 and speak with Council's Communications and Engagement team.

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY AWARDS 2021



RECOGNISING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHIRE RESIDENTS

The Golden Plains Shire Council Community Awards will return in 2021, providing an opportunity to formally acknowledge extraordinary individuals and community groups who make an outstanding contribution to Golden Plains Shire.

The 2021 Awards will be presented to three individuals: Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year, and Young Citizen of the Year. In addition, the Community Impact Award recognises the valuable contribution of a community event, project, group or team.

Nominee achievements are welcome in fields including community service, arts and culture, environment, business, economic development and sport.

Nominations will open in October, with nomination forms available online at goldenplains.vic.gov.au, or in hard copy at Council's Customer Service Centres in Bannockburn and Smythesdale.

A ceremony will be held in January to recognise nominees and announce the Community Award winners.

Local history is heading online

The rich history of Golden Plains Shire is set to be preserved and recorded for current and future generations through the creation of a digital museum as part of the Golden Plains Stories: Community History Interactive Web Exhibitions project.

Council has partnered with RMIT University's Department of Visual Media to deliver the project, with Senior Lecturer of Visual Media and Golden Plains resident Dr Li Ping Thong as the chief researcher.

Council will work with local historians on the development of the digital museum, which will digitally preserve and present local, social and community historical artefacts through stories, photographs, videos, e-publications, and three-dimensional visualisations.

The project, which is funded by a \$14,822 from the Victorian Government's Local History Grants Program, \$13,000 from Council and an in-kind contribution of \$36,950 from RMIT University, will establish a valuable, sustainable digital asset to ensure the community history of Golden Plains Shire is accessible now and into the future.



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



Customer Service

BANNOCKBURN

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
2 Pope Street, Bannockburn
Victoria, 3331.

SMYTHESDALE

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale
Victoria, 3351.

PHONE

P: 5220 7111
F: 5220 7100

POSTAL ADDRESS

Golden Plains Shire Council
PO Box 111, Bannockburn,
Victoria 3331.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

P: 1300 363 036
P: 5220 7111 (24 Hours)

To receive a copy of the *Gazette*
in large print, call 5220 7111.

COVER: Lethbridge Rosellas Georgia Smith, Zoe Boyd and Jaydan Corbett were excited to train under the new lights at Lethbridge Recreation Reserve on opening night.

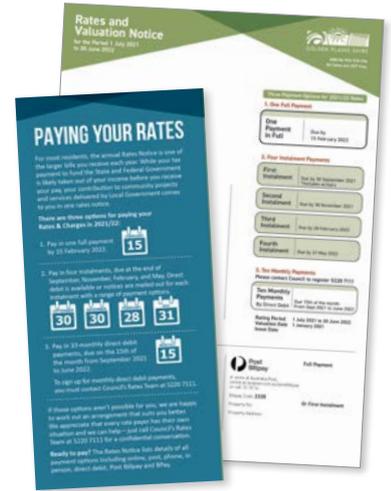
RATES PAYMENT

All Golden Plains Shire ratepayers received their 2021-22 Rates Notices in the mail in August.

Thank you to all the ratepayers who have signed up to the monthly payment programs, with those payments due on the 15th of the month through to June 2022.

For residents who signed up to pay their rates by instalments, the second payment is due on 30 November 2021. Full payment of the Rates Notice is due on 15 February 2022.

At its meeting on 28 July, Council extended its COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy with additional support for 2021/22 rates payments. To apply for Council's COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy or discuss your rates payment, please call our Rates team for a confidential conversation at 5220 7111.



INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY?

Council is currently hiring Community Care Workers to join its committed Active Ageing & Inclusion team.

There are vacancies for casual positions available and Council is looking for interested applicants to bring their experience and skills to assist Golden Plains Shire community members to live independently at home for longer.

If you're a Community Care professional, this is an exciting opportunity to bring your passion to an enthusiastic and committed team and work around your current commitments in these casual roles.

For more information on these vacancies, including how to apply, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/vacancies

COUNCIL MEETING LOCATIONS

The next two Council Meetings will be held in Bannockburn on:

- Tuesday 26 October
- Tuesday 16 November (Mayoral Election)

Bannockburn meetings are held at the Golden Plains Civic Centre, 2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, if possible under COVID-19 restrictions. Any meetings that occur during a lockdown will be held virtually over Zoom. At the time of publication in mid-September, Council was planning to hold its first meeting at The Well in Smythesdale following upgrades to the centre.

The location of the 23 November and 21 December meetings, as well as the meeting schedule for 2022, will be determined at the Council meeting on 16 November 2021 to elect the Mayor for 2022.

All meetings will be livestreamed on Council's website and YouTube page, and public attendance will be allowed with registrations where possible in line with COVID-19 restrictions. For more information, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/meetings

CONNECT WITH GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

@GPSCouncilNews

GoldenPlainsShire

goldenplains.vic.gov.au

GoldenPlainsMayor

[lovegoldenplains](https://www.instagram.com/lovegoldenplains)