

GANNAWARRA *CONNECT*



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

January-March 2025

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FROM THE MAYOR

My fellow Councillors and I are looking forward to working with all communities during 2025 on various initiatives and to address local issues.

This has been evident during the engagement process for the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan*, which has seen Councillors and Council staff meet with residents across numerous pop-up sessions and meetings held during the past two months.

I look forward to seeing this collaborative approach to developing important Council-related projects and strategies grow throughout this Councillor term.

Regards,

Mayor Garner Smith



SANDRA, RORY OUR TOP CITIZENS

Council congratulates the winners of its Australia Day Awards, announced during a Civic Reception on 22 January.

The 2025 Gannawarra Shire Council Citizen of the Year, Sandra Bennett (top right) was recognised for her volunteer efforts within the Quambatook community, which have included the town's former school parents' club, angling, tennis, netball and golf clubs. Sandra also organises the town's Biggest Morning Tea, which raises funds for cancer research. Held in memory of her friend, Cheryl Hind, this event has run for the past 22 years, with the 2024 event raising more than \$14,000.

Eight other local residents were nominated for this honour - June Bagg, Tim Betson, Adrian Dee, Claire Fry, Adam Gardiner, Ron McKerrow, Greg Murphy and Tiarna Shepard.

The 2025 Gannawarra Shire Council Young Citizen of the Year, Rory Martin (bottom right) was recognised for his artistic efforts. Zarne Thamm was also nominated for this award.

To learn more about all of the 2025 Citizen and Young Person of the Year nominees, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/Australia_Day_Awards



COMMUNITY NEWS

WHAT'S ON

16 FEBRUARY

From Flood to Flourishing,
Kerang

22 FEBRUARY

Kerang Community Market

22 FEBRUARY

Psychic Market, Kerang

23 FEBRUARY

Cohuna Farmers & Makers
Market

23 FEBRUARY

2025 Lake Meran Festival

1 MARCH

Murrabit Country Market

2 MARCH

Cohuna Bridge to Bridge

14-15 MARCH

The 2025 Cohuna Show

22 MARCH

Kerang Community Market

23 MARCH

Cohuna Farmers & Makers
Market

EVERY SATURDAY

parkrun, Cohuna and Kerang

EVERY SATURDAY

Grow Collective Garden, Kerang

EVERY MONDAY

Cohuna Pram Brigade Social
Group

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Waters Edge Walkers, Cohuna

EVERY THURSDAY

Soup and a Sandwich, Kerang

EVERY FRIDAY

Morning Mates - Men's BBQ
Breakfast, Kerang

1ST & 3RD TUESDAYS OF THE
MONTH

Chatty Café, Kerang

For details or to add your event to
Council's calendar of events, visit
www.gsc.vic.gov.au/events

LET US KNOW HOW WE ARE PERFORMING

Independent market research agency, National Field Services is currently conducting the final stage of the annual Community Satisfaction Survey from 31 October.

One hundred residents over the age of 18 will be contacted by telephone to assess Council's overall performance. This includes how Council engages with the community, services provided and the condition of locally -managed roads.

Anyone who has any queries about the Community Satisfaction Survey is encouraged to contact Council on (03) 5450 9333.



IMMUNISATION SESSIONS BY APPOINTMENT FEBRUARY 2025

Wednesday, 5 February
Kerang
(10.30am - 12 noon)

Wednesday, 19 February
Cohuna
(10.30am - 12 noon)
Kerang
(4pm - 5.30pm)

MARCH 2025

Wednesday, 5 March
Kerang
(10.30am - 12 noon)

Wednesday, 19 March
Cohuna
(10.30am - 12 noon)
Kerang
(4pm - 5.30pm)

APRIL 2025

Wednesday, 2 April
Kerang
(10.30am - 12 noon)

Wednesday, 16 April
Cohuna
(10.30am - 12 noon)
Kerang
(4pm - 5.30pm)

NOTE: Bookings must be made prior to attending any of Council's immunisation sessions, which can be done by phoning (03) 5450 9333.

For more details, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/immunisation

NOTE: All information that features in this edition of Gannawarra Connect was correct at the time of publishing.

Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba people as the traditional Owners of the land now known as Gannawarra.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country.



2025-2029 GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN

Council has spent the past two months working with residents to develop what will become the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan*.

Developed every four years, the latest edition of the Council Plan will reflect what communities across the Gannawarra want Council to achieve between July 2025 and June 2029.

The document will also include the latest version of Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the municipality's Community Vision for the next 10 years.

As part of the engagement process, residents are able to complete a five-question survey regarding what people like most about where they live, their community's current challenges, what Council can do create healthier and safer communities, what priorities Council should achieve during the next 10 years, and whether the current Community Vision and goals still represent their community's aspirations.

Various community pop-up sessions have also occurred, enabling Councillors and staff to discuss local matters with residents.

For more information regarding the 2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan engagement process, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/CouncilPlan



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD ENDS?

All feedback provided during the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan* community engagement period will be used by Council to develop the *Draft 2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan*, which will include the updated Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Community Vision.

This draft document will be presented to Council in the coming months, with residents able to provide their feedback during a secondary engagement period. Details regarding this document and how you can have your say will be promoted via *Gannawarra News*, Council's website and Facebook page.

Feedback received during the secondary engagement period will assist with the development of the final version of the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan*, which must be adopted by Council by 31 October 2025.

HOW YOU CAN HAVE YOUR SAY

There are many ways you can contribute to the development of the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan* if you are yet to do so. Options include:

- Completing a five-question survey online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/CouncilPlan before 5pm Friday, 14 February.
- Collect a copy of the five-question survey from Council's Customer Service Centres at Cohuna and Kerang, and returning your completed copy before 5pm Friday, 14 February.
- Adding your feedback to conversation boards located at Gannawarra Library Service branches, neighbourhood houses, Northern District Community Health offices, Mallee District Aboriginal Service's Kerang office and the Gannawarra Shire Children's Centre.
- Attending your local community pop-up session. Featuring Councillors and Council staff, these sessions enable you to learn more about the *2025-2029 Gannawarra Shire Council Plan* and raise any other matters. Details regarding sessions are online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/CouncilPlan

NOTE: Details regarding pop-up sessions were correct at the time of printing. For up to date details, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/CouncilPlan

COMMUNITY NEWS

COHUNA, KERANG COMMUNITY PLANS BEING DEVELOPED

Council is currently working with Cohuna and Kerang residents to develop community plans that reflect each town's uniqueness and priorities.

Following on from the success of the Connecting Gannawarra program that led to the creation of community plans for six of the Gannawarra's smaller communities, a similar process will be used to build on community planning work undertaken since 2008 to develop community plans for the municipality's two largest towns.

As part of the first stage of developing the two community plans, residents who have called into *Gannawarra Shire Council 2025-2029 Council Plan* pop-up sessions have been able to complete a survey outlining their views of their home town. All responses received will assist with developing priorities for each community. Meetings will be held at Cohuna and Kerang in mid-2025 to determine if these priorities are accurate.



SAVE THE DATE

SPORTS DINNER

KOONDROOK RECREATION RESERVE
Tuesday 25 March, 2025
6:00 PM FOR 6.45PM START

- Hear “The Grants Guy” provide practical and proactive advice for grant success
- Mark the launch of the Gannawarra Fair Access Policy

Dinner provided
Drinks at bar prices

KEEP RECYCLING YOUR GLASS BOTTLES

Residents are encouraged to continue taking their household glass bottles to any of Council's transfer stations at Cohuna, Kerang, Lalbert and Quambatook, or the Koondrook depot, for recycling.



Not only are all bottles and jars handed in for recycling turned into new products such as roads and construction material, this process reduces instances where contents from yellow household recycling bins are redirected to landfill due to broken glass materials.

For more information regarding Council's waste services, including transfer station locations and how to sign up for green waste services for households in Cohuna, Kerang and Koondrook, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/waste



Supported by Gannawarra Shire Flood Recovery Funding through the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee



HELP SHAPE COUNCIL'S SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

Residents are encouraged to help Council update its Social Inclusion Strategy - a document that helps Council work with the community to ensure all residents feel valued, accepted and included.

Work is currently occurring to develop what will become Council's *2025-2029 Social Inclusion Strategy*, which is Council's commitment to reducing barriers for groups most at risk of being excluded from our community. These people include those with disability, who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), who are Indigenous, who identify as LGBTQIA+, young people, older people and community members facing socioeconomic disadvantage.

Residents can assist with the development of this document by completing a survey online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/yoursay. All information provided before 5pm Friday, 14 February will assist with developing a draft version of the Gannawarra Shire Council 2025-2029 Social Inclusion Strategy, which Council will seek your views on in mid-2025.

FIVE WEEKS LEFT TO ENJOY THE OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL SEASON

Residents have less than five weeks to experience the Cohuna and Kerang swimming pools before both facilities close for the autumn/winter break.

Both outdoor pools are open 10am-8pm weekends and 3pm-8pm weekdays during February.

Opening hours will be reduced to 3pm-7pm daily from 1-9

March, with both sites open 12 noon-7pm on the Labour Day public holiday (10 March), which marks the final day of the season.

People looking to keep active once the outdoor swimming pool season is over will be able to do so at the Kerang Exercise Pool. Located in Kerang's Patchell Plaza, the pool is open 7am-2pm Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and 11am-2pm Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For more details on Council's pools, as well as community managed swimming pools at Koondrook, Leitchville and Quambatook, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/pools



REPAIRS TO FLOOD-DAMAGED ROADS CONTINUE

Work continues to repair Council-managed roads damaged by the 2022 floods.

As of mid-January, repairs were occurring on Council-managed sealed roads, as well as on various roads damaged by flooding of the Avoca River, Loddon River and Pyramid Creek.

Council is working with contractors to ensure these works, which have received State Government approval to proceed, are completed in a timely manner.

The repair to Council-managed roads damaged by the 2022 floods is made possible thanks to joint Commonwealth and State Government-funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

PROJECTS *UPDATE*



BRIDGE REPLACEMENT WORKS CONTINUE

Visitors to Apex Park, Reedy Lake are benefiting from the replacement of the Apex Park Road bridge (above).

Work occurred throughout late 2024 to install a new concrete bridge spanning Washpen Creek after the original structure collapsed in mid-2023, limiting access to the popular Apex Park facilities and campsite.

Meanwhile, work will soon begin to replace the Kervins Road bridge, located east of Cohuna, with a new concrete structure after inspections found the current structure was suffering from defects.

Changes to road access whilst these works are occurring will be promoted via Council's website, Gannawarra News and Council's Facebook page.

Both projects, which form part of Council's 2024/25 capital works program are supported by the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

GLASSHOUSE @ THE GANNAWARRA TAKING SHAPE

The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra - the municipality's newest community meeting and Gannawarra Library Service activity space - is taking shape.



Work occurred throughout January to pour the building's slab, with the installation of steelwork and roofing to occur throughout February. This work will also connect the building to the adjoining Sir John Gorton Library.

Once completed, the site will allow the Gannawarra Library Service to plan and deliver youth programs including movie making, sound and music recording, whilst the flexible and scalable meeting space will have the technology necessary for modern meetings, conferences and training sessions.

The \$3.07 million *Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra* project is supported by the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, the State Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program and Council's 2024/25 capital works program.

For more information, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/Glasshouse

MURRAY PARADE, KOONDROOK UPGRADE

Efforts are currently occurring to upgrade Murray Parade, Koondrook between Forest Street and Grigg Road.

Occurring as part of Council's 2024/25 capital works program, the project involves realigning Murray Parade to ensure the road is located within the road reserve, ensuring it complies with infrastructure standards.

The project also includes sealing the road surface and installing new stormwater drainage systems. If necessary, existing powerlines may need to be realigned to accommodate the new road layout to ensure all infrastructure meets safety standards.

The improvements will enable all-weather access to this section of the town, which will benefit current and future residents, as well as visitors to the area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FREE RANGE POULTRY PROJECT NEARING COMPLETION

Kinross Farms' large-scale free-range egg project at Kerang East is on track to be operational by June.

The site will create 25 jobs, with the team to oversee the housing of 400,000 birds across the site's four laying barns.

During late 2024, work occurred to construct the four 300-metre long sheds that will house the birds, with the site critical in maintaining egg production in Victoria in light of the bird flu outbreaks that have impacted major supply chains.

Kinross Farm is committed to long term, sustainable growth in regional Victoria, and will continue to invest and fulfill the highest standard of welfare and husbandry.



TOP: Council Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson (left), Mayor Garner Smith and construction manager, Craig Lord tour one of the sheds at the Kinross Farms Kerang East site. ABOVE: Construction of the Kinross Farms' large-scale free-range egg project at Kerang East is on track to be operational by June.

WHO ARE KINROSS FARMS?

One of Victoria's largest egg producers, Kinross Farms started as a family business in the mid-1960s when post-World War Two migrants, Mike and Kathleen Szepe, and Judy Fadgyjas set up a farm with a small flock of 2,500 hens in Kinglake West.

Now owned and operated by Judy Fadgyjas' grandson, Philip Szepe and his wife, Jane, Kinross' main operations are located in the foothills of Victoria's Great Dividing Range.

Philip and Jane's sons are also involved in the business, which employs more than 200 staff in a variety of farming roles and support functions.

DIVERSIFYING OUR LOCAL AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Kinross Farms' Kerang East project is another example of investment in the Gannawarra that is diversifying our local agricultural sector.

With the reduction in the amount of water available for traditional agricultural practices, such as irrigation, due to changing weather patterns and the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, Council has advocated for private investment in diverse agricultural practices.

This work has resulted in various agricultural projects currently operating or proposed for the municipality, including medicinal cannabis, dairy feed barns, beef feed lotting, organic egg production, intensive irrigated cropping, dairy feed lotting, mining and renewable energy.

GANNAWARRA-PRODUCED EGGS TO YOUR PLATE

Residents will be able to buy locally-produced Kinross Farms eggs under the Sunny Queen Farms brand, which is stocked in local supermarkets right across Australia.

Like many major egg producers, Kinross Farms utilises all of the eggs produced and supplies a range of high quality liquid egg products to the food service and manufacturing industry.

Kinross Farms uses a high-tech, triple-tube pasteurising and homogenising technique to deliver a range of convenient and specialised liquid egg products that are used for cakes, pasta, ice-cream and mayonnaise.

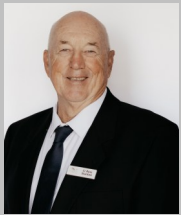
The range of liquid eggs are available chilled or frozen and can accommodate large and small manufacturers. Most of the large hotel chains use liquid eggs in their menus, whilst scrambled egg mixes are used extensively in large and small enterprises.

COUNCIL INFORMATION

YOUR COUNCILLORS



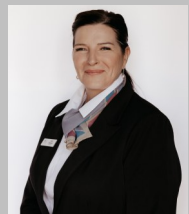
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Cr Ross Stanton
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Cr Daniel Bolitho
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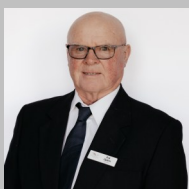
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Cr Pat Quinn
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COUNCIL MEETING DETAILS

The **February 2025 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 19 February**, starting at 6pm.

The **March 2025 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 19 March**, starting at 6pm.

The **April 2025 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 16 April**, starting at 6pm.

All meetings are held at the Kerang Senior Citizens Centre (169 Boundary Street).

Changes to meeting details and times will be promoted via *Gannawarra News* and Council's Facebook page.

Agendas for Meetings of Council are available online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings two days prior to each meeting. All Council Meetings are recorded, with a recording available to view 24 hours after the meeting at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings.

Residents can submit up to two questions per person per meeting for consideration, which can be done by completing a form available online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/questiontime or from the Cohuna and Kerang Customer Service Centres by 5pm the day prior to the Council Meeting.

CONTACTING COUNCIL

IN PERSON

Cohuna Customer Service Centre
21-23 King Edward Street
Kerang Customer Service Centre
47 Victoria Street

BY PHONE

(03) 5450 9333 during business hours

BY EMAIL

council@gsc.vic.gov.au

BY MAIL

PO Box 287
Kerang VIC 3579

ONLINE

Lodge a request at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/request

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook – www.facebook.com/gannawarra
X (Twitter) – www.twitter.com/GannawarraShire