



PHILLIP ISLAND & SAN REMO

# ADVERTISER

YOUR COMMUNITY VOICE!

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

\$2.00 Incl. GST



## World first at Newhaven hatchery

A Newhaven company is cultivating sea sponges to help restore the seafloor, in a world-first. While sponges are cultivated in other parts of the world for medical purposes, as well as for bath sponges, Dr Chris Gillies - from Cape Woolamai - is growing them to help the environment. Chris, CEO of Offshore Biotechnologies, operates from the Newhaven hatchery, between the Phillip Island bridge and Saltwater restaurant, where he has successfully cultivated 100 different species of sea sponges for a trial project 12 miles offshore in 80 metres of water. He said the sea sponges were an Australian first for underwater habitat rehabilitation. "On land we have plant nurseries to restore forest, but so far there isn't the equivalent for the marine environment," Chris said. See page 10 for the full story.

## Is enough being done to protect residents from "party houses"?

### TOURISM

Local laws should be strengthened to protect residents against antisocial short stay rental accommodation visitors, according to a Bass Coast Shire councillor.

While councillors at the March meeting voted on a petition calling for an accommodation business to have its shire registration

cancelled, on social media the community shared their own experiences.

A mother-of-four said her rental home was surrounded by short stay accommodation and "I literally hate the holiday periods".

"It's just a lot to deal with. I was in tears last night again," said the mother, of the impact of late night noise on her children.

Other residents also shared their experiences, with one saying security and noise issues were not "fair on permanent residents" and another saying "drunken adults and kids were running riot unsupervised" (see separate story).

At council, the petition, signed by 82 neighbours, stated a short-term rental accommodation in

Corinella should be cancelled because there had been "serious breaches of road safety", as well as "antisocial behaviour, repeated disturbances of the peace, environmental health issues" and impacts on resident mental health. The petition was lodged with council in February and shire officers' solution to the problem rental was to recommend council

advocate to the Victorian Government and short stay rental accommodation platforms, such as Airbnb, to strengthen support for regulations.

Officers also recommended the shire's local law on short stay rental accommodation - created in 2022 - "be implemented" at the offending Corinella property.

Continued page 6

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## POLICE BRIEFS

### Anderson fire

A fire in a makeshift incinerator escaped on March 22 and spread to farmland on the Bass Highway at Anderson. At around 3:45pm local police and CFA responded to the grass and scrub fire on a private property.

It is alleged that a 56-year-old male from Anderson was burning items including household waste in a makeshift incinerator and is now due to appear in Korumburra Magistrate's Court.

The fire destroyed about 1 hectare of rural land, and burnt multiple internal fences, before it crossed into the roadside reserve of Phillip Island Road, and embers started to cross onto the other side of the road.

The fire was brought under control after about 30 minutes, with Phillip Island Road closed between the Bass Highway and Phillip Island Link Road for over an hour.

The speed that the fire was moving at and the dry conditions made it extremely dangerous.

"They got (the fire) under control pretty quickly. It was going up the hill a fair bit, and had it got into the vegetation on the other side of the road it would've gone down the hill with a bit of speed, and also open to the coastal winds coming in from San Remo," police said.

Police reminded community members to please drive under 40km/h past emergency vehicles with flashing lights.

The community is reminded the Fire Danger Period still applies and will remain until possibly as late as May.

### Dirt bike impounded

A 32-year-old male from Newhaven will be charged with riding while un-

licenced and refusal to accompany police for an evidentiary breath test after evading police last week.

The man will also be charged in the Korumburra Magistrate's Court with other offences including use of an unregistered motorcycle.

On March 18 Cowes Police officers at the Newhaven Boat Ramp saw a dirt bike allegedly unregistered with no licence plates.

The driver of the bike drove through the car park at speed before exiting onto Seaview Street, in what police said appeared to be an attempt to avoid them.

Police then found the suspect sitting in his front yard, and the rider refused to accompany officers to the station to undergo a breath test for alcohol.

The dirt bike was impounded for 30 days at a cost of \$1,445.

### Spate of break ins

Anerie General and Penny Lane Cafe in Cowes were both broken into between 3pm and 7am on the night of March 17 and 18.

The suspected burglaries are currently under investigation with the Criminal Investigation Unit, who are treating the two incidents as connected.

Currently no arrests have been made.

Since December, nine different cafes and restaurants in Phillip Island and San Remo have been broken into, with detectives investigating whether the thefts are related.

Police say there has been an increase in cafes and restaurants being targeted, and remind business owners to stay vigilant.

Anyone with information should contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



Another barrel of toxic waste has washed up on Phillip Island's south coast, following a similar incident in January.

## Mystery over toxic waste

### CRIME

More toxic containers have washed up on Phillip Island's south coast, the second incident in as many months.

Last Monday CFA responded to a HAZMAT incident at Surf Beach about 3pm, where crews located three drums that had washed up on shore.

A CFA spokesperson said the incident was declared under control at 3.29pm and safe at 4.14pm and then handed over to Phillip Island Nature Parks.

A PINP spokesperson confirmed three drums from unknown sources had washed up on beaches recently, and were found by members of the public.

"The CFA was contacted, and the drums collected for safe disposal," the PINP spokesperson said.

"It is not known what is in the drums or where they came from.

"If anyone comes across beach debris like this, we advise them not to touch the object and contact triple zero."

A local resident who witnessed the incident said a blue barrel was marked with the wording: "toxic 6 corrosive 8", adding they suspected the drums were dumped from boats offshore.

"Such a huge waste of SES and fire resources," the resident said.

In January, CFA responded to reports

of a container washed up at Surf Beach, where crews found a static 20-litre acid container in the water.

At that incident CFA volunteers entered the water wearing splash suits and breathing apparatus to remove the container.

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# Phillip Island's town boundaries locked in? Plan divulges on DAL

## PLANNING

After waiting six years for the release of the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) by the state government, San Remo's draft structure plan has spilled the beans on the likely outcome.

Buried in the detail of the massive document, the draft - which is open for community comment until April 28 - states San Remo is the only town that will see its town boundary expanded.

That means that all other areas, including Newhaven West, Ventnor West, Smiths Beach, the Cape Woolamai airport land, and the waterline area around Corinella - which were earmarked for potential expansion - will instead remain unchanged.

"Of all the settlement boundaries proposed, San Remo is the only township proposed to have a protected settlement boundary that extends beyond its existing settlement boundary to include a growth front," the San Remo structure plan states.

It says land between the existing settlement boundary along Potters Hill Road at San Remo will be extended to the expected future boundary to "either Punch Bowl Road or a point west of that depending on the outcomes" of the state government's DAL.

The state government has been under increasing pressure to approve the DAL, which was first proposed in 2019.

As reported in January, the Phillip Island airport land - listed for sale as "residential" - will not be rezoned to allow housing development, according to the

government.

The government at the time also gave the strongest indication yet of what Phillip Island can expect in the DAL, expected to be released about April.

MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale in January responded to concerns by local groups, who have been critical of the Victorian Planning Minister delaying the DAL announcement four times, and also "alarmed" at the airport land sale's promotion as residential land.

Ms Crugnale released a statement that guaranteed the airport land would not be rezoned, while also hinting while San Remo's town boundary is likely to be expanded to Punch Bowl Road, other areas will likely be free from expansion including Smiths Beach, Newhaven West, and Ventnor West - although here there's potential for small changes.

## Plan

The draft San Remo structure plan is open for public consultation through a survey, written submissions, in person appointments or meetings: tonight (March 26) at Silverwater Resort, 6pm-7.30pm, or April 2, Marine Parade, 2pm-6pm.

The plan proposes a major overhaul to San Remo, including a new "convenience centre" or commercial area east of Potters Hill Road including medical and child-care centres and a new park.

There will be a new east-west connector road to continue Shetland Heights Road from Potters Hill Road to Punch Bowl Road or the eastern settlement boundary, as well as a new north-south connector road to run south from Phillip



The state government has been under increasing pressure to approve the DAL, which was first proposed in 2019. But the draft San Remo structure plan states San Remo is the only town that will see its town boundary expanded.

Island Road, (at or around 425 Phillip Island Road).

Marine Parade will be expanded and redeveloped, including building heights up to five storeys, while it is proposed the Recreation Reserve be redesigned.

Traffic will grow by more than 60 per cent to 2041, worsening if no interventions are made. It is recommended speeds reduce to 30km/h on all local streets.

Traffic lights will be installed at the intersection of Potters Hill Road and Phillip Island Road.

The draft plan is based on community consultation over the past two years and - with hundreds of pages of reading.

## Feedback

On social media there were strident views about the draft San Remo structure plan.

Eve commented it would impact the

"poor wildlife and environment".

"It's very sad for the area," she said. Peter agreed.

"The place will be destroyed, probably the island too. Develop = destroy, plain and simple," he wrote.

Bruce commented there would be more runoff into the bay from less farmland and more concrete, impacting the Ramsar-listed waterway.

Lisa urged levels of government to "stop".

"You are destroying a beautiful place."

Glenn said "we will have to get rid of the bridge", while another resident commented the traffic "is already at bedlam levels".

Jarryd wrote San Remo would be "Cranbourne by the sea", while Karen said the area was "already overdeveloped".

<https://engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/sanremoplan>

## Candlelight Vigil returns

### COMMUNITY

Change for Sam, the organisation formed in the wake of Samantha Fraser's death in 2018, is hosting a Candlelight Vigil on Wednesday May 7, at the Jetty Triangle in Cowes, from 6.30pm - 8pm.

The event, in conjunction with Bass Coast Shire Council, will see the trees and buildings in the Jetty Triangle bathed in purple light, while along Thompson Avenue, and throughout the shire, buildings and businesses will be lit up in purple.

This is the third Candlelight Vigil organised by Change for Sam, part of a nationwide initiative from Safe Steps

Family Violence Response Centre, to remember and honour those who have been killed by domestic and family violence.

The vigil has a crucial role in raising awareness of family and domestic violence, and provides a platform to come together, share stories, spark hope and inspire change.

More details of the event coming soon, but the evening will include a sausage sizzle hosted by Rotary, music, and special guest speakers.

Mark the date in your calendar and please come and join in, as Bass Coast says no to family and domestic violence.

[www.changeforsam.com.au/safesteps.org.au/candlelight-vigil/](http://www.changeforsam.com.au/safesteps.org.au/candlelight-vigil/)



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# Road rage at proposed bitumen removal

**COUNCIL**

Residents wanting to fight Bass Coast Shire's plans to remove bitumen on residential streets in Cowes west and return them to gravel have been urged to create a petition.

Many residents recently received notification from the shire detailing that their streets were going to have the bitumen ripped up, and streets "rehabilitated" to a gravel surface.

Impacted resident Darren Murphy, who lives in the Koala Estate around Park Lane, said the letter he received explained residents' options regarding dust suppressant and drainage as part of a special charge scheme "that is well known to many locals".

"The letter is clear: the road will be "rehabilitated" then any other actions will be considered after the fact," Darren said, in a letter to the editor in today's paper.

"My opinion is, let's explore those options prior to "rehabilitation".

"The current condition of the bitumen streets, potholes etc, may be better to endure than the dust created by gravel roads servicing up to 500 residents."

Darren said he texted Island Ward councillor Ron Bauer asking for help in dealing with council and objecting to the proposed works.

"I would appreciate an onsite meeting with you if possible," Darren wrote to Cr Bauer.

He said Cr Bauer replied: "I already have. I am sure there will be a petition going round. Sign it."

Darren questioned whether "this was the best" Cr Bauer could do to represent "residents who may have recently voted for you?".

"You already have", what, had a meeting? Inspection? Helped? With who? When?," Darren said.

"Your reply is flippant, shows no concern for this local issue, does not even start to hear or address my questions or those of my neighbours."

Cr Bauer told the Advertiser this week he had logged Darren's concerns with shire officers, who "should reply to him on the issue".

He said given the issue was large and impacted many residents, households should create a petition to lodge with council.



After 2023's Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay Special Charge Scheme was abandoned following a bruising two-year campaign, councillors approved a policy that allows large road upgrade projects to be broken into smaller ones and community-initiated road projects to be made easier to achieve. Cowes west residents, though, are not buying it.

"I can advocate as best I can, and we are here to represent the community, but I urge residents, if they have a problem with this, the best way to get it in front of councillors is by a petition," Cr Bauer said.

**Accessibility**

Mother of a young family Rachael said despite her home on Scenic Drive being a sealed road for 20 years, council were not considering accessibility, with the works to convert back to gravel limiting her ability to get out of the house with her baby, due to a hip injury.

"They are clearly sealed, despite being considered unsealed on council documents," Rachael said.

"This information was never communicated to us in the 6 years we've owned our home, despite council communicating with us on other matters.

"Your decision to unseal our road will make my own neighbourhood inaccessible for me."

Rachael said their road wasn't due to be upgraded until 2065, "so for the next 40 years we will be putting up with this inaccessibility, unless we sell".

"If we do sell you've reduced our house price, and means as a young family we're in a poorer financial position."

**Support**

For decades, Bass Coast Shire's

special charge scheme was largely unpopular with residents on dirt roads, who have been reluctant to fork out large sums to add bitumen.

But now yet more residents are putting up their hand for a road upgrade.

At last week's council meeting, residents of Pall Mall in Ventnor lodged a petition signed by 23 residents, calling for a road and drainage upgrade.

"We understand that the project would be jointly funded by council and property owners adjacent to the road and are willing to financially contribute towards the project," the petition said.

Councillors voted to work with property owners on a preferred treatment option and potential costs, in line with the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement policy (URDI).

It's thanks to URDI the shire has now had so many requests from residents for road upgrades.

After 2023's Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay Special Charge Scheme for 1000 properties was abandoned following a bruising two-year campaign, councillors last year approved a revised URDI, which allows large road upgrade projects to be broken into smaller ones and community-initiated road projects to be made easier to achieve.



Infrastructure Victoria (IV) has recommended the government examine expanding the Wonthaggi desalination plant to meet water demand until 2035. By 2070 it is projected Greater Melbourne will need nearly double the water required in 2020, 62 per cent of which will come from manufactured sources such as desalinated water.

# Proposal to expand desal

**WATER**

Wonthaggi's desalination plant could be expanded to meet water demand until 2035, with an Infrastructure Victoria (IV) recommending the government complete a business case for future works.

In a draft 30-year strategy report released this month, IV recognises the state's strained financial position, adding the government "can get more out of existing infrastructure without building large new projects".

This includes expanding the desalination plant, which was designed to allow for a 50-gigalitre expansion.

The report does not call for an immediate expansion, but rather for the government to plan and "start preparing now".

Across the seven-year period between 2016 and 2023, the plant contributed to 24 per cent of Greater Melbourne's water storages and remains a backstop against future droughts and climate uncertainty.

At current full capacity, the plant is able to supply 150-gigalitres of water - around one third of Melbourne's annual water use.

However, according to a 2022 DELWP report, modelling shows that even with the plant operating at full capacity the state "could experience water shortages this decade if we experience a severe drought."

**Future growth**

The IV report projects by 2070

Greater Melbourne will need nearly 1000 gigalitres of water - 62 per cent of which will be made up by future manufactured water sources - and twice as much water which was needed in 2020.

An additional 88 gigalitres may be required by 2030 compared to 2020, which could come from the desalination plant if there isn't a severe drought or other unforeseen crisis.

Throughout the report, the future need for consistent and more diverse water sources is a strong recurring theme.

**On the agenda**

The push to plan for the expansion of the Wonthaggi Desalination plant largely comes from the Central and Gippsland Regional Sustainable Water Strategy Report, released in 2022.

"Moving to climate-independent water sources over time - including desalinated water - is critical to meeting the region's future water needs and avoiding severe water restrictions," the report states.

"Any increase to supplies from desalination requires significant lead and implementation time, that's why we need to progress planning activities for desalination options now so we can meet critical urban supply issues when needed and avoid rushed execution during a crisis."

The report is open for feedback until April 28 on: [engage.vic.gov.au](http://engage.vic.gov.au)

Details: [infrastructurevictoria.com.au](http://infrastructurevictoria.com.au)

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Rozalyn Fishlock, a member of Bass Coast Shire's access and inclusion advisory committee, recently tested the new chair at Smiths Beach. She is pictured with Harriet Nunan, the shire's access and equity planner.

## Beaches more accessible thanks to floating wheelchairs

### INCLUSION

Two new mobi-water floating beach wheelchairs will be launched by Bass Coast Shire from March 21, making it easier for people with additional support needs to enjoy a day at the beach.

Designed for easy movement over sand and into the water, the amphibious wheelchairs move from car parks and boardwalks to the water, with its large armrests and wheels acting as flotation devices, to keep the chair buoyant.

The wheelchairs will be available free for hire at Phillip Island Visitor Information Centre and Berninnet, Cowes.

To further improve accessibility, 5m of wheelchair mats will be available at each site, which can be hired independently or with wheelchairs. These mats, made from recycled plastic bottles, create a stable pathway for wheelchair users and those who require smoother access to the beach.

Bass Coast Shire Council's access and inclusion advisory committee includes four community members with lived experience of disability and representatives from disability-focused organisations across Gippsland.

Committee member Rozalyn Fishlock recently "beach-tested" the new chairs at Smiths Beach.

"It's important because we have a lot of disabled people in our shire, and a lot of visitors with disabilities come here for holidays," Rozalyn said.

"This is my first experience in 30 years of getting onto the beach and into the water."

Bass Coast also has seven fully accessible public toilets with extra features, such as push-button entry, height adjustable adult-sized change tables, ceiling hosts, peninsula toilets and showers, available at Smiths Beach, the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre, Cowes Transit Centre, and Wonthaggi's Apex Park and Guide Park.

# Survey gauging support for new zoo

### TOURISM

Plans for a potential new zoo on Phillip Island are slowly progressing, with a public survey this month gauging support for the proposed attraction.

As reported last August, Reptile Encounters received a \$113,742 state government grant to create a masterplan, feasibility studies, and business plan for a zoo on the island.

Reptile Encounters director Josh Cox last week said the masterplan was in the early stages, due to be finished in March 2026, with the survey aiming to pinpoint the target market.

Josh said the zoo was a long-term, five-year plan, with the next phase after the masterplan to find a 100-acre site and raise sufficient capital which would be "north of \$50 million".

"To put it in perspective, Zoos Victoria just built an elephant enclosure that had years of planning and it cost \$88 million," said the 43-year-old.

Josh said if it was successful, the Phillip Island zoo would have a mix of native and exotic animals, even giraffes, with animals from "comparable habitats".

He said Phillip Island was the ideal location because it was a leading destination in Victoria and "where people go for eco-tourism".

"We can see a gap in the market for a zoo. The west has Werribee Open Range Zoo, the city has Melbourne Zoo, there's Healesville Sanctuary in the east and a gap in the south-east."

Reptile Encounters is based in Burwood with more than 40 staff and about 500 animals - including birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

It operates as a mobile zoo, visiting schools and parties, but also has onsite tours and acts as a NDIS-program provider.

"In the future we want to move to be a more traditional zoo," Josh said.

### Survey

The online survey explained they were "exploring the possibility of a new zoo on Phillip Island" and "we are looking for insights from area residents and



Reptile Encounters director Josh Cox is in the early stages of planning a proposed new zoo on Phillip Island, with an online survey this month gauging support.


tourists from around Australia and beyond".

Questions included: Have you ever visited, live near, or are considering a trip to Australia's Melbourne, Victoria area?; Have you visited a zoo, aquarium, museum, nature park or theme park in the last 5 years?; Have you visited a zoo in the last five years?; and Have you ever visited Phillip Island?

On social media, one local resident replied: "We have a zoo every long weekend and school holidays."

With family members that have lived on and run businesses on the island, Josh said he was well acquainted with the area.


<https://tinyurl.com/yx8ed77k>



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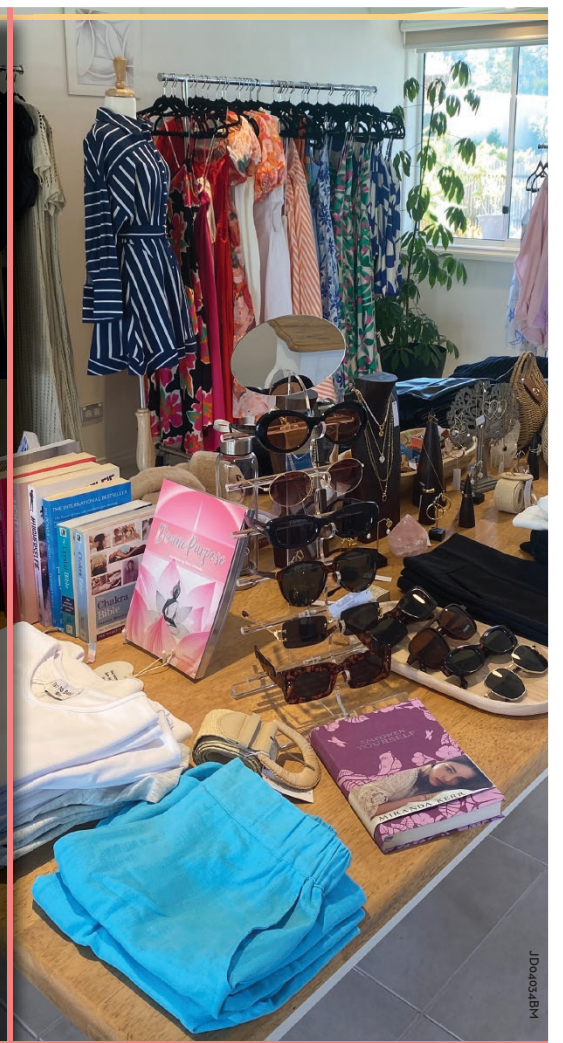
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# Compromise on Newhaven skate park

## GRAYDENS RESERVE

Newhaven's Graydens Reserve has been earmarked for a \$1 million upgrade, including a skate park, despite some Bass Coast Shire councillors expressing disappointment in the plan.

Councillors at last week's meeting voted unanimously for the upgrade, which ends years of delays and angst for Newhaven residents, as well as the broader skate community.

Councillors voted to approve the Graydens Reserve Master Plan, which includes a small skate park, about 200m<sup>2</sup>, catering for beginners to intermediate, with the previous aging skate box recently removed. There will also be new play equipment, upgraded basketball and netball court, and picnic area, with the low-risk upgrade bowing to resident concerns.

There will be no new toilets or rotunda and the gravel car-park will remain.

Because a portion of the park is in the Phillip Island Road Reserve, which could be reclaimed by Regional Roads Victoria if the duplication of Phillip Island proceeds - including a dual-lane roundabout at the intersection of Phillip Island Road and Forrest Avenue - there are no new amenities within this area.

The upgrade will cost up to \$1 million, with \$350,000 allocated in the shire's council plan, and additional funds needed to be sourced from external funding.

Cr Tracey Bell moved the motion in support of the master plan, even though she had con-

cerns with the community consultation.

"I had some feedback from parents who said they had not been able to attend engagement sessions during working hours," Cr Bell said.

"Across the shire I think we need to have a look at that.

"But in the context of Graydens Reserve we have quite a lot of families with teens and tweens who would have liked to have seen a few more complex elements in the skate park.

"There can't be complaints in the Newhaven community about the levels of graffiti if we aren't going to give stuff for the teens to do."

Mayor Rochelle Halstead was a keen supporter of skate park facilities in the last term of council and last week she said it had been a "tumultuous up and down approach".

"It has gone through significant community engagement," Cr Halstead said.

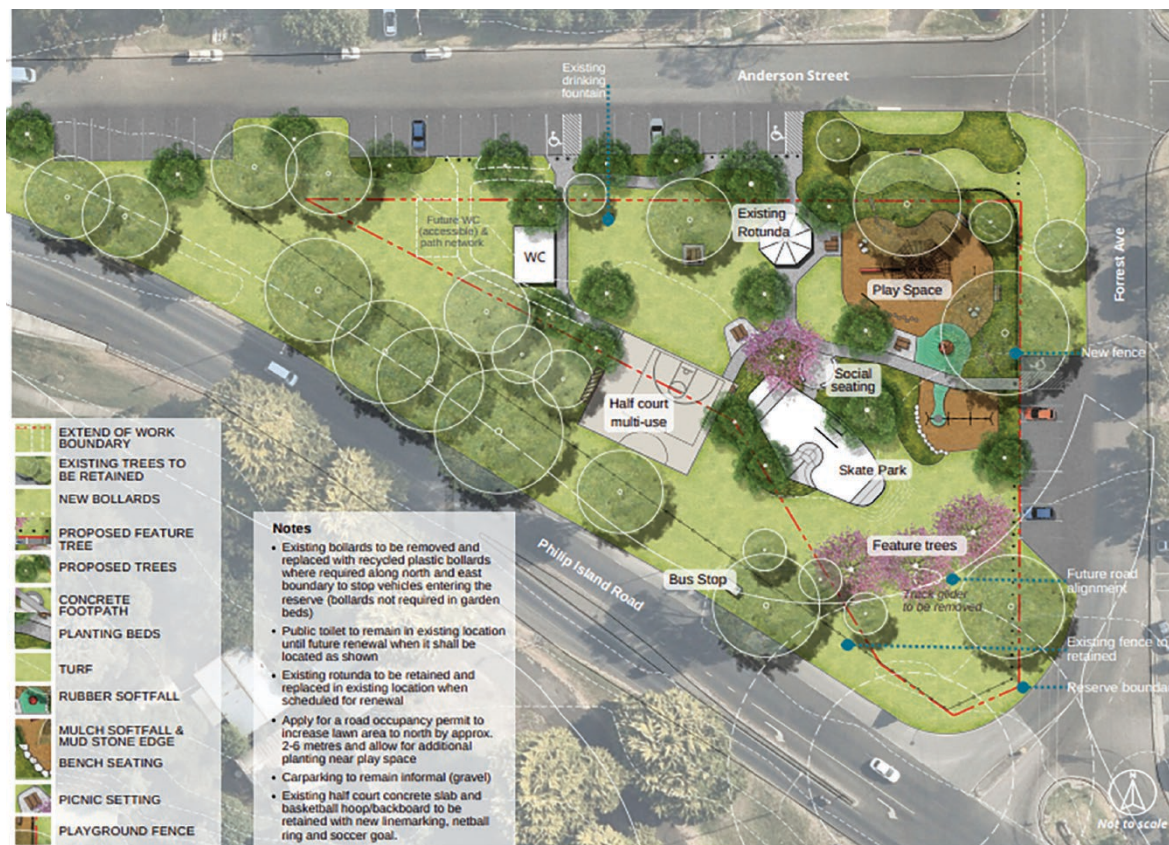
"I agree with Cr Bell's comments we may not have got everything in there. But certainly we've come to an agreement that works for the community.

"Officers have done an amazing job over a long period of time."

## Controversy

After years of lobbying by the skate community, in 2018 the Bass Coast Skate Strategy proposed constructing a new regional skate park in San Remo, with \$650,000 secured from government funding.

After pushback by residents, the location for the regional skate park changed to Graydens



Councillors at last week's meeting voted unanimously for the upgrade of Graydens Reserve, which ends years of delays and angst for Newhaven residents, as well as the broader skate community.

Reserve, but then this too was "abandoned due to community concerns".

In 2023 council agreed to review the skate strategy, which then nominated Graydens Reserve as a high priority for a local level skate park, which is reflected in the proposed new small, beginner level park.

"A risk identified at the start of the project was that the project may cause concern amongst the residents who were split between

those who want a skate park as part of the design and those who did not," the master plan acknowledges.

Last year community consultation on the master plan saw residents express concerns against a large skate park or a pump track-style facility, also requesting the entry from the bridge to be welcoming.

Council initially received 162 online surveys and around 20 people attended the in-person

sessions, with a panel creating "community champions" for the project.

"As a result, there was significant community participation throughout the various consultations and minimal concerns," shire officers noted.

Details: <https://regionalroads.vic.gov.au/map/gippsland-improvements/philip-island-road-newhaven-proposed-upgrades> or <https://engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/graydensreserve>

# Is enough being done to protect residents from "party houses"?

From page 1

While the majority of councillors voted to support these recommendations, Cr Ronnie Bauer voted against.

Cr Bauer - who helped draft the local law in 2022 - said the petition was a "cry for help to make the liveability for residents around the Airbnb better".

"The report (recommendation) says to continue enforcing the local laws," Cr Bauer said.

"We have let the petitioners down.

"We need to look at how we can improve the local laws.

"I think we haven't gone far enough to satisfy the needs of the community on this issue."

Shire officers said since the introduction of the local law, there had been a "significant reduction in the number of neighborhood amenity issues" and complaints about Airbnb-style properties.

"Council investigates all short stay rental accommodation compliance requests to achieve compliance outcomes," officers said, "and will continue to do so to address the issues raised in the petition."

Officers said through 2025 the

shire would undertake a review of the local law to "ensure its effectiveness in enhancing community amenity and maintaining standard of management, and to identify any opportunities to strengthen enforcement".

"Council is not currently in a position to de-register the identified property," officers said.

"Council officers, managers and representatives have met regularly with neighbourhood stakeholders in relation to this property and will continue to prioritise compliance and neighbourhood amenity outcomes at the site.

"All concerns regarding the safety of any community member should be reported immediately to Victoria Police."

## Support?

Cr Mat Morgan was critical of the short stay rental accommodation market for taking away homes from the long-term rental market and sympathised with Corinella residents.

"If you have bought a house next to a pub and complain about the noise I have almost no sympathy for you," Cr Morgan said.

"But when you have a party

house next to you - a symptom of the short stay unregulated market - where you've got no ability from a local laws or police perspective.

"When we have a legislative gap, we can at least use our voices to give some sympathy and give our support to the locals who are losing sleep over this."

Cr Meg Edwards said while she supported helping the Corinella residents "in this particular case", more broadly she was against government interference in private business and supported homeowners who rented out their homes.

# "Party house" neighbours air concerns

## TOURISM

While Bass Coast Shire councillors last week debated whether local laws sufficiently protected residents from antisocial short stay accommodation visitors, on social media the community shared their stories.

Kelly said their home was surrounded by short stay accommodation and "I literally hate the holiday periods".

"I don't feel it's fair or right that we have to live like this," Kelly said, explaining they lived in a rental and couldn't afford to move so felt "stuck".

"Last night the noise was extreme at 9:30pm. Woke my children (I have four, two with cognitive disabilities). So we are just

exhausted every weekend.

"It's just a lot to deal with. I was in tears last night again."

Linda said increasing numbers of short stay accommodations were popping up on their estate.

"You get multiple adults sharing costs so it's party time from start to finish, multiple cars. Security issues are a risk," Linda said.

"I don't think it's fair on permanent residents, after all we wouldn't buy next door to a motel, hotel, restaurant or whatever."

"We are retired, spent 18 months building what was intended to be our 'last home' to a lovely semi-rural spot seeking peace and quiet."

Pam said in her experience parking was a "big problem",

with a rental nearby sleeping 18 people and "half of them seem to drive cars".

"Been unable to get out of our own driveway across the street and rubbish truck can't get through," Pam said.

"Only hope emergency services vehicles don't need to get through. Noise has also been a problem with drunken adults and kids running riot unsupervised. A quiet residential area has become a money grabbing mess."

Melody recommended approaching the owners calmly, then council, including submitting evidence, warning "it will be a long process so be prepared".

Elaine agreed saying they had a "party house" in their street that slept 12, which meant many

cars in a court.

She said the Melbourne owner was phoned after midnight whenever the party house was noisy and "after a few of these calls the house went on the market and was sold".

## Solutions?

Vicky said she was a property manager in Kilcunda and "Airbnb take noise disturbances very seriously".

"If you message Airbnb regarding the noise they will contact the guests on your behalf. Three complaints and above it then gets escalated, and the host is notified asked for evidence on how they are handling the situation," Vicky said.

"If the noise complaints continue and they are genuine past 11pm and you have consistent video footage, Airbnb can and

have taken listings down."

Vicky added this didn't apply if the bookings were from Booking.com or VRBO, and recommended contacting council to ensure the house was registered, including checking compliance such as maximum number of guests.

"We only have the police and council to lean on.

"The council should step in according to the police, but they just sprout EPA rules and laws and don't do anything."

Steven said the shire's short stay rental accommodation local law required the host to communicate with neighbours, which "at least it gives you a process to get a resolution".

"Last resort call the cops as that's generally what happens when it's just a normal residence having a great party and are a bit loud," Steven said.



# Erosion works to start in weeks

## SILVERLEAVES

Emergency works to protect the Silverleaves foreshore from erosion will start next month, with major works expected in June.

The state government last week confirmed the progress, after earlier this month announcing the government had approved funding.

However, the government is yet to provide specific details on the amount of funding for Silverleaves, with last week's announcement instead detailing that \$10 million will go to works at Silverleaves, Inverloch, and four other towns including Tooradin and Warrnambool.

Environment Minister Steve Dimopoulos said work at Silverleaves would see the "protection of dune and assets from erosion and maintaining safe access to the beach".

"Initial emergency works will commence next month, with major works expected to commence in June," he said.

"Silverleaves will have works completed before Easter to protect the dunes from further erosion and to protect inland Philip Island from flooding and to maintain public access to the beach."

MP for Bass Jordan Crugnale said project costings would be re-evaluated and finalised as designs and tenders were completed.

Ms Crugnale said designs for immediate emergency

works had been completed and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Bass Coast Shire and consultants could "now work through the on-the-ground plan to start protection measures immediately in preparation for the Easter tides as to a medium-term solution".

"In the coming weeks, work will commence at Silverleaves and Inverloch surf beach to address critical coastal hazards," she said.

"DEECA will work with land managers to determine the most effective way to deliver these projects and ensure communities are informed throughout the process."

Residents expect the interim works before Easter will be rock bags, while the major works to start in June will be the long-anticipated geotextile sandbag wall.

## Sandbags

The Save Silverleaves' petition, with 4370 signatures, was tabled in state parliament in February, with bipartisan support.

The petition called on the government to urgently fund the proposed geotextile sandbag wall and work "with the community to plan and fund long term solutions to mitigate and manage coastal erosion".

In November, DEECA proposed the sandbag wall, cost-

ing up to \$500,000, as an interim measure to stop further erosion.

This followed an "angry" community meeting in August where residents demanded answers to accelerating erosion in a "hotspot" near Sanders Road.

The geotextile revetment will be a 2.6m high wall with interlocking small sandbags, that can be "modified, relocated or removed in the future".

However, consultant Andrew Pomeroy, who designed the revetment solution, cautioned in November it could have an impact on erosion downstream. He said the sandbag wall would hold the line of erosion in the current location, but would not recover previously lost land.

"That does not mean there might not be erosion in other areas not managed by this particular intervention," Mr Pomeroy said.

"Hopefully there will be minimum impacts downstream, although impacts may still occur."

"Where the works end we will probably expect to see impacts at that location as well."

Mr Pomeroy said the sandbag wall could be up to 350m long, with a longer wall preferred, ending at an area that has more stable, accumulated sand.

Details: [marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au](http://marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au).



The 'Save Silverleaves' petition received 4370 signatures and was tabled in state parliament earlier this year, which helped lead to the government committing to funding. Pictured left to right are residents Tristan White, Natalie Gray (petition initiator) Nationals Melina Bath MP, and Kaylene Turner.

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# Island may avoid mega tourism merger

**BUSINESS**

A tourism merger with Mornington Peninsula or Gippsland has been rejected by Bass Coast Shire councillors, who have instead opted to stand alone as a solo tourist association.

Councillors at last week's meeting were required to vote on a Victorian Government proposal to merge tourism associations, following nine other government-mandated mergers in other areas of the state.

According to the government proposal, Bass Coast could opt for three options: merge with the Gippsland region; merge with Mornington Peninsula; or Phillip Island/San Remo join with Mornington Peninsula and the balance of Bass Coast to remain in Gippsland.

The proposed changes would have required Destination Phillip Island (DPI) to join with another organisation if it was to continue to be recognised by the Victorian Government.

However, after DPI and the shire rejected all three options, shire officers recommended a fourth option, which councillors supported: One Bass Coast, with Bass Coast as its only member. Officers said the fourth option ensured a unified approach, but acknowledged "challenges remain" with the Victorian Government now needing to endorse the option.

Currently, the shire has an annual budget of \$134,500 to support the two regional tourism Boards in Bass Coast: Des-

tinuation Phillip Island and Destination Gippsland (DG), which expires on December 31, 2025.

Councillors voted to maintain that current funding allocation and requested the Victorian Government maintain its current funding level to Destination Phillip Island of \$250,000.

Cr Ronnie Bauer said the fourth option gave the "best bang for buck" with Phillip Island the jewel in the crown.

Cr Brett Tessari responded if Phillip Island was the jewel, then "the mainland is the crown".

Mayor Rochelle Halstead said Phillip Island was the second most visited destination in the state and there was a "strong case" for it having a stand-alone destination of its own.

"This doesn't preclude us from being able to partner with Gippsland or with Mornington. We still very much want to be a part of those conversations with our neighbours," Cr Halstead said.

"However I think we are strong enough as a region, Bass Coast and Phillip Island, to hold up our own destination.

"I'm also concerned the state government has proposed on geographical grounds rather than economic benefit grounds."

Cr Tim O'Brien said the three options offered by the Victorian Government were "unsuitable" and the fourth option should be "vigorously" supported.

Cr Tracey Bell said one Bass Coast "makes sense", with "more cohesion and consistency across the shire".

Cr Meg Edwards agreed the proposal was about governance and not branding and so Bass Coast would not lose its links to Wilsons Promontory. Tourism in Bass Coast contributes \$308.5 million in economic output and more than 1,600 Jobs.

**Background**

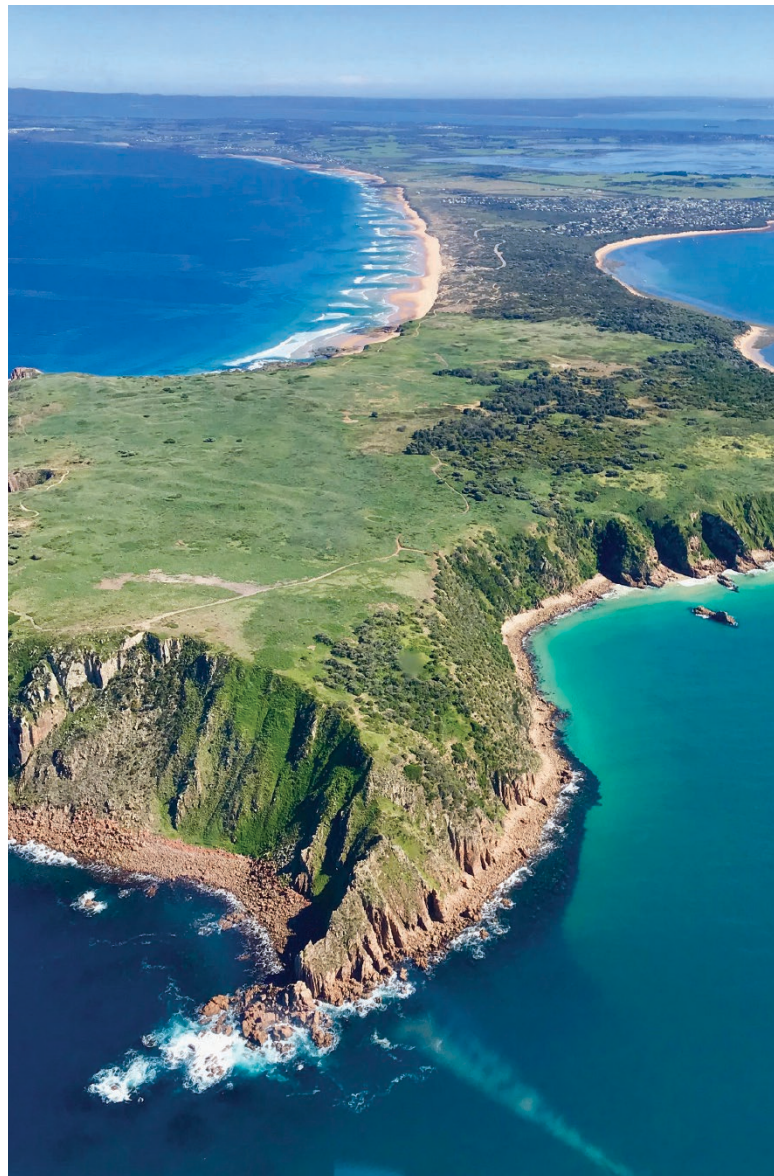
In 2019, the State Government reviewed regional tourism needs, with a key recommendation that regional tourism boards become Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEPs).

In 2024, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) ran a workshop between Bass Coast Shire Council, DPI, DG but no formal agreement was established.

"Phillip Island/San Remo has a strong international profile, with only 618 visitor economy businesses, however it does not achieve the principle of scale outlined as an objective of reform," a DJSIR discussion paper explains.

"Even before the pandemic and extreme weather events, a new approach was needed to realise the full potential of regional Victoria's tourism offering.

"As the visitor economy recovers with new and upcoming experiences and events, the challenge is to make sure that growth is sustained and shared across the state."



Destination Phillip Island could have joined with the Mornington Peninsula under a tourism proposal instigated by the Victorian Government.



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Westernport Water are upgrading the Cowes pressure reduction valve at 2102 Phillip Island Road, which will increase the flow rate of water required to meet demand for the next 40 years.

## Cloudy water safe to drink

### WESTERNPORT WATER

When cloudy and white water came out of household taps last week around Phillip Island, one online wit commented he would “expect milk to come out of a Cowes tap”.

Another suggested people “just add Milo”.

But Westernport Water reassured residents the milky water was the result of an upgrading project on Phillip Island Rd, near Wimbleton Heights.

A Westernport Water spokesperson said an alternative water supply line was introduced to enable upgrade works to replace a large pressure reduction valve (PRV), requiring the existing water network to be taken offline.

“When charging the water pipe on Wednesday March 19, air has been trapped making the water appear milky or cloudy,” the spokesperson said.

“Our team has been flushing the pipe to clear the air. This is harmless, and the water remains safe to consume.”

They said the appearance would clear once the aerated water had been flushed from the system, however, “aerated water can take up to 48 hours to clear”.

“We ask that customers who experience this, please flush their back tap until the water runs clear.”

Westernport Water are upgrading the Cowes PRV at 2102 Phillip Island Road, which will increase the flow rate of water required to meet demand for the next 40 years.

“To improve safety, we’re moving the entire PRV system above ground and upgrading access to the site as part of the project.”

Details: [westernportwater.com.au/faq-cowes-pressure-reducing-valve-prv-upgrade/](http://westernportwater.com.au/faq-cowes-pressure-reducing-valve-prv-upgrade/)



Gav Panesar, from Mon Dieu Cafe and Restaurant, has been awarded Most Innovative Hospitality Entrepreneur at the Australian Enterprise Awards.

## The “creative visionary” behind Mon Dieu

### BUSINESS

Gav Panesar has been awarded Most Innovative Hospitality Entrepreneur at the Australian Enterprise Awards, with his Cowes venue, Mon Dieu Cafe and Restaurant also heralded for leading the ‘farm-to-fork’ dining experience in Victoria.

The awards, hosted by Corporate Vision magazine, celebrate “exceptional achievements and innovations of businesses across Australia”.

Corporate Vision described the island resident as a “passionate chef, exceptional entrepreneur and creative visionary”.

Gav’s restaurant, on Church Street in Cowes, was celebrated as a “beacon of innovative and successful hospitality services, rooted in sustainability and a commitment to client-centricity.”

### Humble beginnings

The father-of-two arrived in Australia from India at the age of 17, not knowing a word of English. His first job in hospitality was as a pizza delivery driver for a venue on Lygon Street.

Since then, Gav forged his way up the ranks to become the owner and founder of Panesar Hospitality Group and two Cowes venues - Mon Dieu and Cafe Biscotti.

Initially studying law in Australia, Gav said he decided to pivot to hospitality while working in a French restaurant in Melbourne.

“I just found it fascinating how somebody was able to create something so special with ordinary ingredients, and so I dropped my studies and chose to follow hospitality,” he said.

Gav said as a society we are being pushed away from “real food”, and one of the biggest trends he had noticed over recent years was more people seeking out healthy, local ingredients.

“My biggest concern is that nowadays you go to Coles and you can find every-

thing in a can. We’re moving away from the actual taste of food.

“It’s a huge difference in taste when you’re dealing with something that’s organic and comes directly from the farm, rather than a product with all the sprays and preservatives on it.”

Gav said both his restaurants champion locally grown fresh produce.

“We have so many (producers) around us here, and I’m not sure many restaurants even know about it. We can source pretty much everything locally out here, and it’s good for local producers too.”

### For the locals

For several years before opening Mon Dieu, Gav was the head chef at Mad Cowes and said during that time he developed a deep understanding of “exactly what locals want”.

“(As a chef) you start reading people and what they like, and you write the menu accordingly. And of course you give (locals) a bit of special treatment, because on the island here, as a local they want just a little bit extra.”

Gav said that hospitality venues are the lifeblood of the island.

Recently, he began the Panesar Hospitality Group - which aims to provide support and guidance to up-and-coming businesses in the industry.

Gav said he named his restaurant Mon Dieu (French for “my goodness”) because he wanted that to be what everyone said when they had a bite of his food or a sip of his coffee.

“Coffees are the new cocktail,” Gav laughed, noting you can have everything from a simple flat-white to a decaf-soy-chai-extra-shot latte.

“And it’s great!” Gav said. “Why not? We’re living in 2025, if we’re not going to enjoy our life with the new variety of things coming up, then what’s the point of having all this innovation?”

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Chris works in water 12 miles offshore and in 80 metre depths.



Dr Chris Gillies diving with sea sponges.

# World-first in underwater science at Newhaven

## ENVIRONMENT

From page 1

In a world-first, a Newhaven company is cultivating sea sponges to help restore the seafloor for the oil and gas industry, and for future wind farm projects.

Dr Chris Gillies, CEO of Offshore Biotechnologies, operates from the Newhaven hatchery, between the Phillip Island bridge and Saltwater restaurant, where he has successfully cultivated 100 different species of sea sponges for a trial project 12 miles offshore in 80 metres of water.

He said the sea sponges were an Australian first, with sponges cultivated in other parts of the world for medical purposes, as well as for bath sponges.

But, he said, their project was the first to use sponges for underwater habitat rehabilitation.

"In the North Sea they have tried oysters and kelp forests to restore the seafloor from industry, and in Mexico mangroves, but that is in shallow water," Chris said.

"No one has ever gone offshore in deep water to develop methods of restoration."

Chris, who studied marine biology and completed his PhD in Antarctica, said he had the idea for sea sponges to restore coastal ecosystems after seeing the upcoming offshore wind energy boom and decommissioning of old oil and gas platforms.

"In the next 10 years there will be \$60 billion worth of existing oil and gas infrastructure decommissioned and \$92 billion worth of wind farms going into the water."

He described sponges as "the unsung heroes of the ocean", with at least 30,000 species around the world, found in all waters and able to breed at depth without light.

The animals are more efficient at filtering water than oysters and mussels and come in a range of sizes and colours, creating vast gardens, which restore habitat for underwater life.

Last year Chris and his team



At Newhaven the sponges are cultivated, "taking tiny bits of them" and glueing this to reef pods, like concrete donuts, which are "miniature reefs specially developed for deepwater sponges".

collected species off Apollo Bay, transporting them to Newhaven where they fed and monitored them, before cultivating them, "taking tiny bits of them and glueing them to reef pods ("miniature reefs specially developed for deepwater sponges").

Last month these pods were then taken back out to Apollo Bay with researchers from Deakin University.

The team dropped the pods 12 miles offshore in 80 metres of water.

Every year for the next five years the researchers will send remotely operated drones underwater to monitor the progress of the sponges, then monitoring them every three years for the next 30 years.

Chris said they were confident the sponges would survive and the trial would be a success, but monitoring was required to apply their work more broadly across the industry.

Currently, he explained, there

was no accepted method for deep sea restoration, which made it difficult for the environmental regulator to enforce rehabilitation after seabed disturbances.

Chris' work will now hopefully add to that knowledge, including even the reef pods.

"It's hard to enforce if you don't have a method," he said.

"Ultimately we'd like to take this work globally too."

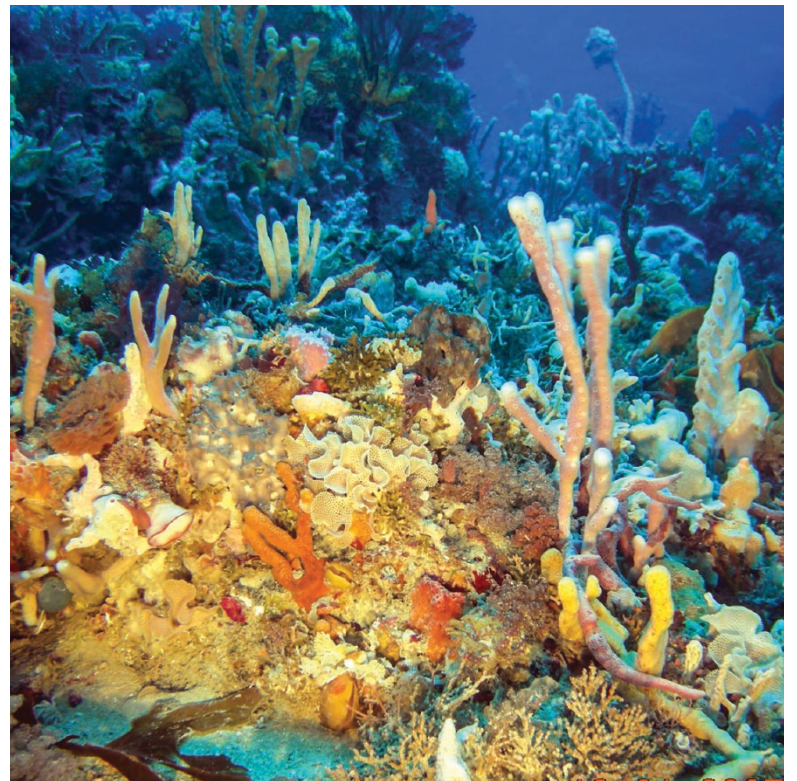
Chris said while they were continuing research, their methods were ready to be rolled out "now".

### Newhaven

So why do all this work on Phillip Island?

Chris said there were only two hatcheries in Victoria: Newhaven and Queenscliff, which each have the necessary facilities including pumping water, food for species, tanks and heat pumps.

At the Newhaven hatchery, Chris and his team of four also work on breeding oysters, mus-



Sea sponges are animals that are more efficient at filtering water than oysters and mussels and come in a range of sizes and colours, creating vast gardens and restoring habitat for underwater life. Pic: Daniel Lerodiaconou

sels and seaweed, which is run under the umbrella of Chris' other company, SeaGen Aquaculture.

"People are always curious about what happens here at the hatchery, and I explain it's cool stuff," said the 43-year-old.

"When we were first starting out with the sponge project, I'd wade out from the hatchery to get some sponges, which was very handy."

Chris started his company in Newhaven in 2022 and 14 months ago moved with his family to Cape Woolamai, with his daughter now attending Newhaven Primary.

After completing his Antarctica stint - where he studied food chains by diving off the frozen continent for three seasons - he then worked for The Nature Conservancy for eight years rehabilitating seafloors using oysters and shellfish.

He opted to start his own companies because "I decided we

needed more private sector involvement in conservation".

"On land we have plant nurseries to restore forest, but so far there isn't the equivalent for the marine environment."

### Another first

As reported last year another aquaculture business operating out of the Newhaven hatchery is growing seaweed that will reduce plastic waste and help tackle climate change, in a trial that is one of the first of its kind in Australia.

Steve Cooper, who runs the Phillip Island Oyster Hatchery, teamed up in a joint venture with Ozwide Energy + Carbon to create the Rori project (a First Nations word for seaweed).

"There are plenty of people around the world doing seaweed for livestock feed to stop methane and wakame as a food source, others doing kelp for food and makeup, but no one is doing kelp for this purpose," Steve said.



# Primary schools celebrate Harmony Day



Irie, Hineamaru and Whitney in traditional dress, celebrating Newhaven Primary school's Harmony Day on last Friday. Irie and Hineamaru are wearing traditional Samoan dress, and Whitney is wearing traditional Nigerian dress. For more photos go to [pisra.com.au/galleries](http://pisra.com.au/galleries)



Andy and Reed from Our Lady Star of the Sea.



OLSS student Indi helping celebrate Harmony Day, which acknowledges and celebrates the rich cultural diversity and unique contributions of different backgrounds to society.



Principal Tony Corr led the Ride2School ride from Cape Woolamai to the school grounds.

## On your bike

### EDUCATION

Newhaven College principal Tony Corr jumped on his bike last Friday morning to accompany 157 students as they took part in National Ride2School Day.

The event, organised by the

College's MTB Academy, saw the group ride along Phillip Island Rd from Cape Woolamai, while another contingent rode from Cowes.

Parents, friends and older students guided them safely to the school gates, by providing sup-

port vehicles and experienced rider leaders. Mr Corr's bike suffered a flat tyre on the first leg, but dad Sean Cohoe saved the day by offering up his bike.

Everyone donned their 'splash of orange' to support Harmony Day, the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Newhaven College celebrated Australia's cultural diversity with different activities across the school.



Newhaven College Year 4 student Ollie Armstrong and his mum Kirsty enjoyed the ride from Cape Woolamai. Ollie also wore a 'splash of orange' for Harmony Day.



Newhaven College junior school students Annalise Golic-Williams and Yuri Chaseling wore a 'splash of orange' for International Harmony Day on Friday.

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# Connecting with local, edible plants

## ENVIRONMENT

Local nature lover Jessica Moulynox held a launch party for her Backyard Botany at the Cowes Yacht Club in March.

Jess said she will be installing native edible garden beds with signs into facilities around Phillip Island “to help community members connect with local edible plants”.

“This helps with a greater sense of wellbeing and expansion of knowledge regarding our natural environment,” Jess said.

Jess will also be running coastal foraging “walkshops” in Cape Woolamai where people are provided an “Emerson’s experience - emphasising the importance of individual experience as a source of knowledge and wisdom - to connect with their local landscape”.

Joining her at the launch was Tegan Carter from Tegan Carter Illustrations, who has illustrated 10 native plants on gift cards, which are now in stockists around the island, which are “another avenue for connection to our native plants”.



Backyard Botany's Jessica Moulynox with Tegan Carter from Tegan Carter Illustrations.

# Katie and Karin come to Cowes

## MUSIC

Award-winning artists Katie Noonan and Karin Schaupp will perform at Berninnet, Cowes, on April 6.

Following the release of their latest co-creation, Songs of the Southern Skies Volume 2, Katie and Karin have been touring nationally since last year.

Their acclaimed Southern Skies catalogue reinterprets some of their favourite songs by antipodean artists, this time focusing on some of our finest female artists.

Performing a varied program with reimagined arrangements of songs by artists such as Auntie Ruby Hunter, Missy Higgins, Sia, Kate Ceberano, Sarah Blasko and more as well as revisiting some favourites from the first Southern Skies instalment.

Renowned for breaking down genre boundaries, Katie Noonan’s technical mastery and pure voice makes her one of Australia’s most versatile and beloved vocalists.

Guitarist Karin Schaupp is an internation-

ally sought-after recitalist and soloist. These two virtuosi combine forces to create a unique sound and a spellbinding performance.

The duo have an intuitive musical connection that has developed over the 20 years of their creative relationship, with their collaborations earning them an ARIA Award.

“Karin and I actually met through our music teacher mothers - my mum Maggie and her mum Isolde, at the Stoliarsky School of Music in the mid 80s in Brisbane,” Katie says.

“Although neither of us remember meeting, we admired each other’s musical journeys from afar as we both became professional musicians.”

She said in 2004, Richard Tognetti (Australian

Chamber Orchestra) partnered her with Karin and they started collaborating.

“Playing with Karin is such an exquisite pleasure, but what has been even more special is that

we have become close friends and it’s been wonderful to share the experience of being professional working mums together”.

Details: [www.katiemoon.com.au](http://www.katiemoon.com.au) [www.karinschaupp.com](http://www.karinschaupp.com)

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Lighten Up Theatre's Trish Oostendarp



The Probuss Club of Cowes recently voted in newly-elected committee members.

**EASTER HIGH TEA**

Lighten Up Theatre invite you to our fundraiser of the year!

**Sunday April 13, 2025**  
1.00 - 3.30pm  
Newhaven Hall  
23 Cleeland Street  
Newhaven

Delicately filled sandwiches  
Savoury Canapes  
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**Tickets \$35**

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<https://www.trybooking.com/CZXZR>  
Or Call Trish on 0400 817 481

Lighten Up Theatre's Easter high tea on April 13.

## Lighten up for a high tea

### FUNDRAISER

Phillip Island community theatre group, Lighten Up Theatre, is holding an Easter high tea on April 13 at the Newhaven Community Hall to fundraise for their productions.

Led by Cowes based thespian Trish Oostendarp, the group was formed in 2023 and has since flourished in numbers.

A community-orientated, not-for-profit group, Trish says all money raised

will go towards future productions and events.

The high tea will include sandwiches, canapes, cakes, slices, scones and the choice of tea or coffee.

Lighten Up aims to target a different audience and style to the Island's long-established Offshore Theatre group, which Trish says "produces brilliant theatre".

Easter high tea, April 13, 1pm-3.30pm. Tickets are \$35 each. For bookings go to: <https://www.trybooking.com/CZXZR>

## Sweet Talk at Archies

### MUSIC

Since their launch onto the scene, Sweet Talk - who will perform at Archies Creek on March 28 - have enjoyed widespread acclaim from industry and fans alike.

Sweet Talk's highly anticipated debut album is set for release in 2025.

Produced by Texan tunesmith Robert Ellis and mixed by Grammy magnet Trina Shoemaker, the album represents the band at the peak of its road ready powers.

Sweet Talk stitch together a rich tapestry of vintage influence into something altogether their own.

On March 28 they will perform with special guests Loretta Miller & Her Boyfriends.

Let Sweet Talk remind you why music's still the best kind of trouble.

Doors open 7.30pm, with the show starting 8pm (outside stage).

Details: [archiescreekarts.com.au/events/sweet-talk-2](http://archiescreekarts.com.au/events/sweet-talk-2)

The Archies Creek Hotel presents

**Sweet Talk**

with very special guests  
**Loretta Miller with her Band**

**FRI 28TH MARCH 7:30PM**  
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Scan QR code for tickets and info or visit the website  
[WWW.ARCHIESCREEKHOTEL.COM.AU](http://WWW.ARCHIESCREEKHOTEL.COM.AU)

## Probuss welcomes new faces

### COMMUNITY

The Probuss Club of Cowes held its annual general meeting on March 17, voting in newly-elected committee members.

The new committee are, left to right: Lyn Duguid (secretary), Lynore Mercer (past president), Liz Bowen (vice president), Rob Watson (president), Tom Jacobson (trips convenor), Caroline Talbot (greeters and morning tea convenor), Judy Masters (dine out convenor), Aggie Gratton (community services), Harold Jackson (guest speaker

convenor), Lee Jones (memberships), Selby Witeveen (special events) and Ian Bell Towers (treasurer). Missing is Geoff Taylor (newsletter editor).

The Cowes club has 140 members, meets monthly, and members mix with like-minded retirees, listen to guest speakers, participate in activities like outings and interest groups, and enjoy the fellowship of new friends, all while exploring new interests and hobbies.

Details: [www.probusphillipisland.com/](http://www.probusphillipisland.com/)

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FRI 11/4 HUSSY HICKS  
FRI 18/4 ED KUEPPER  
SAT 19/4 PETER BAIRD ALBUM LAUNCH  
FRI 25/4 SHAUN KIRK  
SAT 26/4 MORELAND CITY SOUL REVUE  
SUN 27/4 MESS ESQUE

**May**

FRI 2/5 EL ROLLO  
SUN 4/5 KATHLEEN HALLORAN & BAND  
FRI 9/5 THE NASH  
SAT 17/5 HENRY WAGONS 'STORIES FROM THE ROAD' TOUR

**June**

SUN 1/6 FROM ST KILDA TO THE CREEK FEATURING DELSINKI & THE QUIET COACHMEN & BROOKE TAYLOR & THE POISON SPITTING GIN QUEENS  
FRI 13/6 VAN WALKER & BAND  
SAT 14/6 MEL PARSONS (NZ)

**ARCHIES CREEK HOTEL** SHOWS BEING ADDED DAILY SO BEST TO CHECK THE WEBSITE!!!  
89-91 ARCHIES CREEK ROAD / [WWW.ARCHIESCREEKARTS.COM.AU](http://WWW.ARCHIESCREEKARTS.COM.AU)





11-piece party band, The Avenue Ensemble will be at the Westernport Hotel.

# The Avenue Ensemble at the Westernport

## MUSIC

After a year consigned to the wilderness, 11-piece party band, The Avenue Ensemble, will return for one show only at the Westernport Hotel, San Remo on Saturday March 29, at 9pm.

It will be a dance party for young and old. The middle-aged are welcome too.

The Avenue Ensemble is a motley crew of internationally-recognised musicians who have come together to bring good times to dance floors across Victoria.

At one venue, revellers got so carried away the pub had to re-stump its dance floor.

Some readers may remember their last show here in 2024.

To others, it will be a hazy blur.

They have spent the last year polishing their horns and beating their drums in preparation, and will return to the stage with more soul than a preacher's boot and more funk than a sharehouse fridge. Entry is free. Spirits will be high (and available at the bar). There will be dancing.



Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling is donating 100 per cent of all funds raised from their event directly to the Good Friday Appeal, supporting the Royal Children's Hospital.

# Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling supports Good Friday Appeal

## CHARITY

Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling is partnering with the Good Friday Appeal to make a difference, holding a pyjama disco party on March 31. The tenpin team is donating 100 per cent of all funds raised directly from the event, which runs 5pm-8pm, to the Good Friday Appeal, supporting the Royal Children's Hospital.

"Given the recent changes that prevent us from collecting donations at roundabouts, we are seeking alternative ways to raise money for this organisation," the team said.

The tenpin team will hold a raffle and auction, calling on local businesses for support.

"We would greatly appreciate any donations of products, services or vouchers that would be included in our fundraising efforts."

The event will feature:

- \$15 entry per person which will include 30 minutes of arcade play time, one game of tenpin bowling and one laser zone mission;
- Door prizes and raffles;
- Plenty of fun activities for families and children.

The community's generosity will not only help raise crucial funds for the Good Friday Appeal but will also provide local business with valuable exposure.

"We would be delighted to acknowledge your support through event signage and social media mentions upcoming and on the night of the event," the team said.

If you are interested in contributing, contact Phillip Island Tenpin Bowling on 03 5952 3977 or [tenpin@pitenpin.com.au](mailto:tenpin@pitenpin.com.au) to arrange collection or discuss further details.

"We truly appreciate any support you can offer and thank you in advance for helping to make this event a great success."



## GIG GUIDE

29/03 THE AVENUE ENSEMBLE - 9PM  
30/03 LIVE MUSIC TBC - 5PM

02/04 ZIGGY ALBERTS - 8:30PM \$86+BF  
11/04 FLUX

20/09 FRENZAL RHOMB 'A MAN'S (STILL) NOT A CAMEL' 25TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR - 9PM \$53+BF

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\$17 PARMA NIGHT

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All proceeds donated to  
The Phillip Island Good Friday Appeal

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# Nominate a community gem

**COMMUNITY**

It's that time of the year again to nominate that extraordinary someone living among us who has shown community colours.

For the sixth year running, Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale has put the call out to everyone across the Bass district to celebrate a community member who has gone above and beyond to help others.

"Whether it is an act of kindness small or big, a caring, thoughtful gesture seen in your school, work, street, club or town, exceptional service at the shops, servo, café or on the local bus - we want to hear about it so we can thank them too," Jordan said.

In the previous year, more than 120 nominations streamed in from Pearcedale to Clyde, Koo Wee Rup to Phillip Island, recounting remarkable people doing remarkable things from Secret Santas, volunteering at op shops, school breakfast clubs, storytelling at the library, fundraising, knitting for charities, donating toys to families in need, sponsoring art awards and more.

There are no rules, no age barriers, no categories, it's just open to everyone living or working in the Bass electorate.

Community members are encouraged to nominate those who exemplify a dedication to making a difference.

Whether through volunteering, small acts of kindness, or innovative community projects, these Gems will be acknowledged for their efforts.

Everyone nominated will receive a letter of appreciation, with five outstanding Gems also being gifted with a hamper packed with the very best our region has to offer, local produce, handcrafted goods, and vouchers for nature-based experiences.

The stories of these inspiring individuals will then be featured on the Jordan Crugnale MP Facebook page, as part of the regular Sunday series titled 'Community Gems as nominated by you'.

"Our community is full of incredible people who step up, lend a hand and give their time and energy to make where we live even stronger and more connected," she said.

"They do this not for recognition but because



Jordan Crugnale MP with 2024 Community Gem Brooke Smith

community is at the heart of who they are."

Nominations are now open, closing April 13.

To nominate submit a few paragraphs about your nominee and how they make our communi-

ties stronger, kinder and more connected. Add your contact details, and the contact details of your

nominee via email, letter, phone call or in person at Jordan Crugnale's office.

/sponsored article/

# STAY SAFE IN BASS COAST

As we enjoy more beautiful weather, the Bass Coast region is calling all beachgoers to come and enjoy the sandy shores safely.

To help you stay safe, we encourage everyone to **download the Surf Life Saving Australia, Beachsafe app** and access important information available on the Life Saving Victoria website (lsv.com.au) and throughout the Visitor Information Centres.



[beachsafe.org.au](https://beachsafe.org.au)

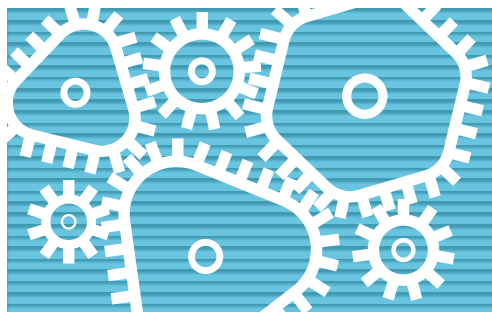
Always swim at patrolled locations whenever possible, and in hot weather, take steps to protect yourself and others by keeping cool, staying hydrated, planning ahead and checking in with others.

**We want everyone to keep safe when exploring the amazing coastline of Bass Coast.**



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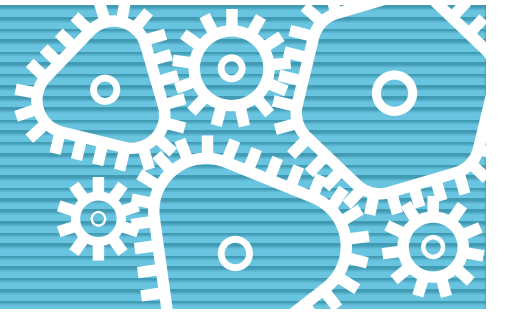
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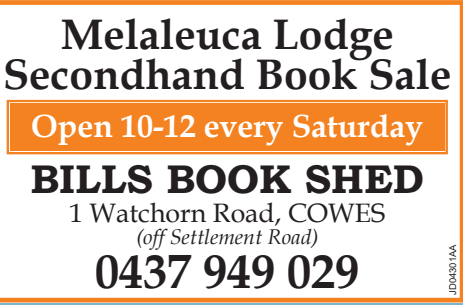
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### Nuclear risk

The risk that Dan Cafrey's letter of March 19 draws our attention to is most likely exaggerated.

He quotes an assessment that nuclear power stations are vulnerable in time of war because if targeted by conventional weapons they could have the effect of a 'dirty' nuclear weapon.

The scenario is of course that we somehow found ourselves in a very fierce war with China.

But China is already nuclear-armed and therefore power stations as targets would not present China with opportunities that it does not already have.

There is of course a great deal of convoluted tactical politics going on behind proposals for nuclear power here.

The positive thing is the Liberal party has shown us that Australians are no longer frightened about nuclear power.

They remind us that nuclear power is the most obvious response to the problem of climate change though that would have been much better said 25 years ago.

Still the Liberal party has not really come clean about climate change and the idea to go nuclear might be more about wedging climate change activists and delaying the phase-out of fossil fuels.

In any case it is an issue in the coming federal election.

Russell Broadbent evidently sees no need for nuclear power since he denies climate change.

I believe and hope that with the election of Teals last time we have put that particular argument behind us for good.

It would be nice if can-

didates wrote in with their views about nuclear power.

*Robert Durkacz, Cape Woolamai*

### Support for Deb

Come April or May, the electors of Monash will be tasked with choosing the candidate they want to represent and serve them for the next three years.

As I write this letter, I can already hear some people claiming all politicians are the same.

If Deb Leonard is elected she will definitely not be the same as all the rest.

Deb has been meeting the people of Monash at events right around the electorate in places both small and large.

Deb and her team of over 200 volunteers have knocked on thousands of doors throughout Monash listening to people's concerns and answering their questions.

Deb has recently released her policy agenda including infrastructure improvements, action on climate change and integrity in government.

If you are looking for "More for Monash" vote 1 Deb Leonard.

*Stephen Gough, Corinella*

### Autumn planned burning

As summer fades and autumn begins, we take a moment to reflect on the challenges of extreme heat, bushfires and storms.

While the seasons may be changing, our focus remains the same - making sure resources are where they're needed, learning from recent events and strengthening our strategies for the future.

The seasonal outlook

shows a higher chance of warmer maximum temperatures into early autumn which may delay the start of planned burning in some parts of the state.

We manage Victoria's bushfire risk in a holistic way, including - but not exclusively - through planned burning.

Reducing the risk and impacts of bushfires requires a multi-faceted approach; there are no magic bullets.

Victoria's approach includes having the right road network for accessibility, strategic fuel breaks, fuel management through planned burning and mechanical fuel treatment and advanced approaches to suppression through well-trained people and highly specialised plant, equipment and aviation.

Victorian firefighters and fire managers are world class. We rely on the latest, wide-ranging and global body of research and work with other jurisdictions, but we apply our experience and knowledge to Victorian conditions.

Planned burning is part of our long-term strategy. It's not just about a single burn, or single year, but an ongoing process aimed at creating a strategic network of fuel-reduced areas on public land.

Autumn typically provides our crews more opportunities to conduct planned burns, as the weather is more stable, and fire behaviour tends to be manageable and predictable.

As soon as favourable weather and forest conditions arrive, we'll be making sure all available resources are delivering planned burning.

If you live in or are visiting an area where planned burning is taking place, there's a good chance you'll see FFM-Vic firefighters preparing locations or delivering planned burns. They'll be the ones in our distinctive green firefighting uniforms.

Register for the latest updates if you want to know more about where and when we burn at <https://plannedburns.ffm.vic.gov.au/>.

*Chris Hardman, Chief Fire Officer, Forest Fire Management Victoria*

### Road rage on bitumen

Residents of the Koala Estate in Cowes have received notification from Bass Coast Shire Council their streets are going to have the bitumen ripped up, and the streets "rehabilitated" to a gravel surface.

The letter continued to explain our options regarding dust suppressant and drainage as part of a special charge scheme that is well known to many locals.

The letter is clear: the road will be "rehabilitated" then any other actions will be considered after the fact.

My opinion is, let's explore those options prior to "rehabilitation".

The current condition of the bitumen streets, pot-holes etc, may be better to endure than the dust created by gravel roads servicing up to 500 residents.

To assist and advise me in dealing with council I sent the following text message to Ron Bauer our local Island Ward Councillor:

"Hi Ron. I recently received a letter from council regarding rehabilita-

tion of Park Lane Cowes. Basically council wants to rip the bitumen up and return the road to gravel.

"I'm hoping for your assistance with the matter in objecting to the works and maintaining a bitumen surface. I would appreciate an onsite meeting with you if possible."

Cr Bauer replied: "Hi Darren, I already have. I am sure there will be a petition going round. Sign it."

Cr Bauer, is this the best you can do?

"You already have", what, had a meeting? Inspection? Helped? With who? When?

Your reply is flippant, shows no concern for this local issue, does not even start to hear or address my questions or those of my neighbours.

Is this the way you treat your residents who may have recently voted for you?

It an absolute disgrace to the position you hold and I will say with this reply you are unfit to be our councillor.

*Darren Murphy, Cowes Editor's note: See story inside paper for a response by Cr Bauer*

### Road to exclusion

Council is planning to rip up the tar and convert our bitumen road back to gravel.

As a young mum with a hip injury, I currently don't walk on the gravel roads in our area, as I find it difficult to push the pram on the gravel roads, the wheels get caught in the corrugations, our baby wakes up.

Because of my hip injury carrying my baby or getting a bigger pram isn't an option.

I am worried by council

removing the tar and by gravelling the road I won't be able to get out of the house easily.

Council consistently talks about gender equality, accessibility and inclusion.

However, they don't think about the impact they'll have on people's lives when making these decisions.

Had our house been on a gravel road, we would never have purchased it and unfortunately if this decision goes ahead we will be forced to move house due to the limitations it will place on me.

Our road isn't due to be upgraded until 2065, so for the next 40 years we will be putting up with this inaccessibility, unless we sell.

If we do sell council have reduced our house price and that means as a young family we're in a poorer financial position.

It will devalue our home in a cost-of-living crisis.

Additionally, I'm worried about the dust and its impact on our health.

Residents in Surf Beach can talk to this.

I am extremely disappointed Bass Coast Shire Council chose not to consider accessibility, inclusion, gender equality in their decision, despite saying they're "committed to promoting the rights of people with disability by fostering an accessible environment".

Your 21-25 Disability Action Plan states you're aiming to "reduce barriers to persons with disability accessing goods, services and facilities".

Yet your decision to unseal our road will make my own neighbourhood inaccessible for me.

*R Ferguson, Cowes*

## Saucy use of tomatoes

### COMMUNITY

About 50 people joined local chef Kara Williams at the inaugural Big Italian Bass Coast Sauce Day in March.

The event was set to be held at Chippin Estate in Woolamai, using 200kg of ripe heirloom Siberian tomatoes grown on the property to make a tomato sauce.

However, a forecast storm meant the gathering quickly shifted nearby to the Bass Hall. Kara, a local private chef from Foodies On Phillip Island, hosted with Shane O'Keefe from Chippin Estate Farm at the community workshop.

"Everyone pitched in to make the Italian tomato passata sauce," Kara said.

"It was about coming

together as a community, learning, sharing stories, having some fun, and eating together, Italian style.

"We had people travel from Melbourne and the Mornington Peninsula, and local businesses attend.

"Everyone asked for it to be an annual event."

Following the lesson on making passata, attendees sat down to eat pasta with the sauce.

Then followed homemade rhubarb, apple and lemon cake, with Italian espresso coffee on arrival.

There was also locally baked bread, cheese, and Chianti Classico wine.

Attendees also took home two 750ml organic homemade passata sauce bottles.



People came from around Bass Coast and as far as Melbourne for the inaugural Big Italian Bass Coast Sauce Day in March. Pic: Sawaya Photography





Congratulations to last week's winners on 35 points (from left): Peter Boradale (2), Elaine Williams (L), Bev Elliott (3) and Vern Elliott (S).

## Midweek at Corinella

### BOWLS

Thursday, March 20 proved another great day of competition at Corinella for the Southwest Gippsland Midweek Bowls Group. Terry prepared the green, Pauline and John welcomed players, whilst Peter and Claire prepared the teams.

On the green the temperature proved perfect. The competition stan-

dard was excellent, with little by way of wrong bias bowls.

### Results

Congratulations to last week's winners on 35 points: Peter Boradale (2), Elaine Williams (L), Bev Elliott (3) and Vern Elliott (S).

Runners up on 33 points: Luke Monckton (S), Jim Noonan (L) and Jaye A-D (3).

Best one game winners on 19 points: Clair Sheers (3), Marianne Scales (L), Louis Magrit (S) and Karen Hickson (2).

The club give their thanks to Phil, Terry and Cheryl for their hard work in the kitchen, along with leaders Peter, Pauline and John.

This week the club meets at San Remo and looks forward to seeing players there before 10am.

## News from the table

### BRIDGE

The Phillip Island Bridge Club recently held a seminar in the ABC of Declarer Play.

Paul and Janet Hill typically teach bridge on cruise ships travelling the world, however kindly took time out of their busy schedule to share their expertise.

Over 25 club members attended the event.

Utilising their new skills, duplicate bridge saw some keen competition, with North and South's first place going to Neville Chapman and Lorrie Read with 55.36 per cent along with Bronwyn Sund and John Farr taking out East and West first place with 61.01 per cent.

Additionally, Trish and Don Stewart-Uden took out first place in the first of two weeks in the mid-

week pair's competition on March 19 with 61.91 per cent.

### Euchre

Ladies' winner: Phyllis with six wins.

Men's winner: Sammy with seven wins.

Encouragement award: Laurie Jones.

## Breakers storm to top spot

### DARTS

The Phillip Island and Districts Darts League is delivering a season of thrilling matches with competition heating up after Round 3.

A shoutout to all participants for their exemplary camaraderie and fair play.

The ladder is beginning to take shape and the unbeaten Breakers are currently perched at the summit.

Hot on their heels, separated only by percentage are the formidable Aulin.

Monday night witnessed a series of decisive victories.

The Breakers, fuelled by the spirit of St Patrick's Day and undoubtedly a few pints of Guinness, delivered a dominant perfor-



Congratulations to Bob Hee who took home the San Remo Butchers' meat tray.

care of business with a 6-1 win over the Dart Vaders.

In other matches, Joes Hornets stung Deadly Darts with a 5-2 victory, while the Vikings emerged triumphant in a closely contested battle against Storm, securing a 4-3 win.

Off the oche, the excitement continued.

The coveted San Remo Butchers' meat tray was won by the incredibly lucky Bob, whose winning streak has some whispering about a potential raffle ban.

New member Stu celebrated his first week by taking home the Crownies, adding to the festive atmosphere.

With the ladder taking shape, next week promises more thrilling darts action.

mance, dismantling the Mustangs with a 6-1 victory.

Aulin matched the Breakers' scoreline, delivering a 6-1 blow to the Riverboys.

Miramar also asserted their dominance, taking

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The competing SGB team at the Country All Juniors Championships last weekend.

## All smiles for All Juniors stars

### SWIMMING

It was all smiles at MSAC on Saturday March 22 as 32 South Gippsland Bass Swim Club (SGB) competitors (aged eight through to 16) competed in the Country All Juniors Championship, competing in heats after finishing in the top eight for the Gippsland region a month ago.

Coaches Lorri and Sam were on hand to help their young chargers.

"We are so proud of

them, 50 metres off the blocks is a big deal when you are eight-years-old.

"Some of them get nervous but they give their all."

On Saturday the eight to 11-year-olds competed in the morning, while the 12 to 16-year-olds swam in the afternoon.

Following onto Sunday, 19 swimmers returned to participate in the finals along with three returning as emergencies.

The event highlighted

the best of regional swimming, giving competitors in rural Victoria a chance to race against others matching their ability in a high-quality pool - something that many in regional areas often do not get.

SGB finish up their season in time for the April holidays before returning for the winter competition season beginning in June.

For SGB's All Juniors Championship results go to [www.pisra.com.au/sport](http://www.pisra.com.au/sport)



Senior students from The Village School (Royston Senior Campus) have helped construct a ga-ga ball pit Star of the Sea School in Cowes.

## Rotary and students go ga-ga

### COMMUNITY

Students from The Village School - together with the Rotary Club of Phillip Island and San Remo - have constructed a ga-ga ball pit Star of the Sea School in Cowes.

Ga-ga ball, a fast-paced and inclusive game similar to dodgeball, has been growing in popularity among school children.

The latest project follows a similar project last year that saw senior students from The Village School (Royston Senior Campus) partner with Rotary to build a ga-ga pit after seeing one at their

junior campus on Phillip Island.

"Rather than having Rotary simply build it for them, the students were invited to learn the process and construct their own pit under the guidance of Rotary club members," a Rotary spokesperson said.

"This year, Star of the Sea School in Cowes reached out to Rotary with a request for a Ga-Ga pit of their own.

"Seeing another opportunity to involve young people in the project, Rotary approached The Village School to see if students would be interested

in helping - and they eagerly accepted."

The spokesperson commended the students for their leadership, teamwork, and sense of community spirit.

"More than just a construction project, this initiative has provided students with hands-on experience, a sense of responsibility, and the opportunity to leave a lasting impact on their schools.

"It also reflects Rotary's motto, "Service Above Self," by inspiring young people to contribute to their community in a hands-on way."

## Results from the green

### GOLF

BDL: 12 pts C/B.

#### Tuesday, March 18

##### Men's 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Brent Scott (11) with 39 pts.

A Grade winner: A-1 Brent Scott (11) with 39 pts.

B Grade winners: B-1 Stephen Mack (17) with 38 pts.

C Grade winners: C-1 Don Cleeland (38) with 38 pts.

BDL: 32 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Michael Coghlan, 7th Alf Micallef.

##### Men's 9H Stableford

Winners: John Jackson (28) with 18 pts from Lou Portier (38) on 16 pts C/B.

BDL: 15 pts.

#### Wednesday, March 19

##### Women's 18H Stableford

Overall winner: Cheryl White (19) with 38 pts.

A Grade winner: Cheryl White (19) with 38 pts.

B Grade winner: Ros Reid (26) with 34 pts.

C Grade winner: Tracy Cooksey (36) with 34 pts.

BDL: 31 pts C/B.

##### Women's 9H Stableford

Overall winner: Pamela Williams (38) with 16 pts from Julie Robinson (45) on 15 pts.

#### Thursday, March 20

##### Open 18H Stableford

Overall winner: John Maglica (26) with 41 pts C/B.

A Grade winner: A-1 Steven Sloss (12) with 37 pts.

B Grade winner: B-1 Stephen Earl (16) with 41 pts.

C Grade winner: C-1 John Maglica (26) with 1 pt.

BDL: 34 pts C/B.

NTP: 5th Wayne Morris, 7th Shane Palmer, 10th Barry Gibson, 17th Darrell Clark.

##### Men's 9H Stableford

Winners: David Gladman (17) with 18 pts C/B from Robert Leak (33) on 18 pts.

BDL: 16 pts C/B.

#### Saturday, March 22

##### Men's and Mixed 18H Stensons Stableford

Overall winners: Rowan Wales, Peter Cartwright, Mark White and Peter Ablett (107).

Second place: Rob Haydon, Peter Rymer, Mark Davey and Dennis Hackling (103).

BDL: 95 pts.

NTP: 5th Lucas Piera, 7th Mark Reid, 10th Jeffrey Sellenger, 17th Mark White.

##### Women's 18H Team Stableford

Overall winners: Barb Haydon, Lesley Meadowcroft, Rosemary McQuade and Cecily Pezet (91).

Second place: Vicki Ramage, Sheryl Smith, Susan Brown and Alice Schofield (87).

BDL: 86 pts.

NTP: 5th Sheryl Smith, 7th Helen Coghlan, 10th Tracey Cuff, 17th Vicki Ramage.

##### Open 9H Stableford

Winner: Patrick Owens (20) with 21 pts from Brendan Marrinon (28) on 20 pts.

BDL: 18 pts C/B.

#### Sunday, March 23

##### Canadian 18H Foursomes Mixed

Winners: Paul Cashman and Lynn McCole (72.375) from Patricia Jamieson and Mark Jamieson (72.675).

BDL: 75.625.

Women's NTP: 7th Megan Elbaz, 10th Vicki Amato, 17th Jane Sellenger.

Men's NTP: 7th Phillip Ellard, 10th Ray Smith.

##### Open 18H Stableford

Winner Max Mattock (15) with 36 pts from Brandon Lloyd (16) on 31 pts.

BDL: 30 pts.



The winning trivia team from the Naughty Corner at the fundraiser for the pickleball project in Rhyll.

## Pickleball is a winner

### RHYLL

The introduction of pickleball has seen a 300 per cent rise in membership at the Rhyll Tennis Club, with a new banner announcing games hoisted to the fence in early March.

Players have enjoyed a game three mornings a week with introductory play and learn sessions, which have been extended to the end of May.

These are available to those new to the game or more experienced with two free sessions before joining up.

Paddles and balls are available, with a \$10 hire fee after the two free sessions.

Players can join the WhatsApp group to arrange individual games, which would suit those who want to play at different times.

### Trivia

On March 22, a trivia night fundraiser was held at the Rhyll Hall and hosted by community stalwarts Cheryl and Bill.

The hall was at capacity, with 12 teams battling through the six rounds of 10 questions. The winning team, The Naughty Corner, claimed "you can be naughty and intelligent".

The night raised \$1,556 to the club's pickleball project. To join please contact: [rhylltennis@gmail.com](mailto:rhylltennis@gmail.com)

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

# TIDE GUIDE

WED 26 MAR	THU 27 MAR	FRI 28 MAR	SAT 29 MAR	SUN 30 MAR	MON 31 MAR	TUE 1 APR
LOW 2:47 am 1.31 m	LOW 3:45 am 1.34 m	LOW 5:01 am 1.28 m	HIGH 12:42 am 2.55 m	HIGH 1:46 am 2.63 m	HIGH 2:43 am 2.72 m	HIGH 3:32 am 2.79 m
HIGH 8:52 am 2.38 m	HIGH 10:02 am 2.33 m	HIGH 11:34 am 2.35 m	LOW 6:24 am 1.11 m	LOW 7:34 am 0.86 m	LOW 8:32 am 0.60 m	LOW 9:25 am 0.37 m
LOW 2:57 pm 0.73 m	LOW 4:01 pm 0.84 m	LOW 5:25 pm 0.93 m	HIGH 1:07 pm 2.51 m	HIGH 2:24 pm 2.75 m	HIGH 3:29 pm 2.99 m	HIGH 4:25 pm 3.17 m
HIGH 10:22 pm 2.52 m	HIGH 11:30 pm 2.50 m		LOW 6:52 pm 0.94 m	LOW 8:06 pm 0.90 m	LOW 9:07 pm 0.87 m	LOW 10:00 pm 0.85 m

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The Island A1 Grade Sharks put on a stellar performance in the semi finals last weekend against Wonthaggi, launching them to a spot in the grand finals for the fourth year in a row.

# Sharks push for fourth premiership

## CRICKET

### A1 Grade

Can the Sharks make it four in a row? That's the question on everybody's lips after an epic Semi Final victory on the weekend.

Taking on the power of Wonthaggi Club on their home deck, a Semi Final victory was never going to be an easy task for the Island Sharks.

Captain Daniel Mock won the toss and after some late week rain, bravely chose to bowl against an inform and deep Club batting line-up.

Young left-arm prodigies George McCausland and Tim Niven took the new ball against the number one opening partnership in the league in what many saw as a battle of David versus Goliath.

It was Tim Niven who struck with his first ball in A1 finals, dismissing the dangerous Mitch Thomas, caught by the Skipper.

McCausland soon joined the action removing the league's second leading run scorer in the third over, finding the outside edge to keeper Jarrod Black.

Niven then removed Ryan Thomas, trapping him in front of the middle stump, with the scoreboard reading three-for-four.

Opposition Captain Brann decided that attack was the best method, however that plan fell through leading the Club to lose

their fourth wicket for just 12 runs.

Leader of the attack, Max Royal joined the party with his first ball strangling the rock-solid Beaumont, which was sharply caught by the Black behind the wicket.

At five-for-14 many thought the Island Sharks would keep rolling through the Club batters.

However, the deepest batting line up in the competition would show the dog fight that has witnessed them continually push near the top of the ladder.

Some tight bowling and patient batting saw the score creep to 64 before Tim Niven struck again removing Jakeb Thomas just as he began to up the scoring rate.

Another partnership ensued and saw the score tick past 100 and suddenly, the batting side were eyeing off a score of 150 plus.

Enter Max Royal who ran through the tail end, aptly supported by Kurt Lane's off-spin.

Royal finished with four-for-39 off his 15 overs whilst McCausland with two great spells finished with a measly one-for-15 off 13 overs.

Lane bowled his 10 overs unchanged, finishing with one-for-13 off 10.

Tim Niven proved the pick of the bowlers in his first finals series, with four-for-25 off 15 including six maidens - his best figures in his short A1 career.

Chasing 120 and having to navigate a tricky 27-over period on a difficult pitch, the Sharks wanted a positive start whilst

also maintaining their wickets.

Kurt Lane opened with the in-from of Lochie Cleeland, however unfortunately Lane fell to a sharp catch in the ring.

Brodie Johnston then joined Cleeland and the pair began to tick the score over as they moved it along to 42 before Johnston found the edge and was out for 12.

Joining Cleeland, Mock immediately got the scoreboard moving, crashing three boundaries through the cover off one-McCall-over. From there, Cleeland kept the score ticking, whilst Mock dropped anchor as the pair navigated the rest of the evening session, finishing at two-for-67.

Both teams were greeted with sunny conditions, although the pitch still had plenty of demons left in it.

Mock, with the intention of moving the game forward struck three boundaries off the first over from leg-spinner Sheerin, before Cleeland knocked one behind for a well compiled 33 from 100 deliveries.

The rock-solid Tom Niven then joined Mock as the pair had one thing in mind: get the remaining runs.

Tom - playing a great supporting role - ticked over the ones and twos whilst Mock continued to play his shots.

The pair were able to reach the target before Mock was dismissed for 57-off-103 balls, with the score at 126.

From there the Sharks' middle and lower order offered little resistance to be all out for 144, leaving the Club side on the hunt for a second innings result with two

sessions left in the day.

The Wonthaggi Club went about their strategy in an aggressive manner, trying to move far enough ahead to declare with enough overs left in the day to take 10 Sharks wickets.

Some great bowling from George McCausland (one-for-37 off eight), once again ensured the Club chewed up 18 overs in their process of setting a target.

The declaration came, leaving the Sharks with 38 overs to survive.

With the wicket still offering plenty of assistance to the bowlers and with a first innings result in their favour, batting out their overs was the only goal. Cleeland proved the man for the job, successfully navigating his way through the entire innings, facing 110 balls for his unbeaten 38.

Tom Niven (five-off-48) and Kohen Beaumont (eight-off-37) provided valuable support to Cleeland as the Island boys reached 5/64 from their 38 overs. Securing a first innings victory, the Sharks move onto their fourth Grand Final in a row - an incredible achievement. Their opponents, OMK are always a tough side to beat and with a one all ledger in their match ups this season, a tantalising Grand Final is in store at Wonthaggi's Butch West Oval.

Good luck Sharks.

For the Island B Grade and C Grade reports visit [pisra.com.au/sport](http://pisra.com.au/sport)

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The PIBC had 24 wildcard entries in the 2025 Phillip Island Pro QS 3000, with President Jake Eisen saying it "gave the whole town a buzz". Pic: World Surf League

# Massive community swell at Phillip Island Pro

## SURFING

The waves of Cape Woolamai were lit up by some of the best surfers in the Asia-Pacific region last week, competing alongside 24 wildcard entries from the Phillip Island Boardriders' Club (PIBC) in the 2025 Phillip Island Pro QS 3000.

For the first time 3000 World Surf League (WSL) points were up for grabs at the Phillip Island competition, an increase from 1000 in previous years.

The added points drew some of the best up-and-coming surfers from across Australia to the island, as well as international competitors from countries including China, Philippines and Indonesia, as they competed to secure their places on the WSL Challenger Series tour.

WSL Asia Pacific tour director Ty Sorati grew up on the island and has a long-held connection with PIBC.

"Not every event would have 24 (local wildcard entries), but there's a good selection of local talent down here," Ty said.

"They all went really well, and it was a lot of locals first time surfing in a professional event."

Stand-out local performances came from Carl Wright and Niki van Dijk in the men's and women's categories, both progressing to the round of 16, with Blake Green and Eva Bassed also shining in the junior competition.

### Local pride

PIBC president Jake Eisen said the atmosphere was "really exciting" for the local community.

Islander and wildcard entry Carl Wright put on a backyard clinic before being "stiff" to not make it through to the quarterfinal, eliminated in the round of 16 by just 0.15 points.

"It was the best I'd seen him surf in years," said Jake.

"He looked like a seasoned competitor that hadn't lost his touch.

"He was really unlucky (not to make it through to the quarterfinals), it really could have gone either way."

Nikki van Dijk surfed with exceptional style in her WSL comeback and was similarly unlucky in challenging six-to-eight-foot conditions.

Jake said the event "completely changed the whole town."

"It gave the whole place such a buzz, specifically for all the grommets who were all just pro-spotting and losing



Victorian Xavier Huxtable claimed victory in the 2025 Phillip Island Pro QS 3000, posting a nine-point ride (out of a possible 10) in the final for a backside snap on a massive closeout section on Saturday at Cape Woolamai. Pic: Andrew Lidsey / @bunpix

their minds. They were all just in awe of all these pro surfers who were around town."

The competition's youngest competitor was local 10-year-old Eddie Maier, who Jake said "pulled a massive crowd".

"It was amazing to see how courageous that was from a 10-year-old-kid who really stepped out of his comfort zone."

### Woolies lit up

Locals said watching athletes of such high calibre, including former World Junior Champions, surf their home break was special.

"They just lit the place up," said local surfer Pat O'Garey.

"They were tearing some waves up out the back that most of us would normally watch in awe from the carpark."

Sophie McCullouch from the Sunshine Coast won the women's category, while the male category was taken out by Victorian surfer Xavier Huxtable.

In the final Xavier posted a 7.40 (out of a possible 10) and then backed it up with a nine-point ride with a critical backside snap on a massive closeout section.

Both Sophie and Xavier said they loved surfing on Phillip Island.

Sophie, who posted a 16.25 two-wave total in the final, told WSL "I love competing here in Phillip Island."

Ty Sorati said the event had a great turnout from local, national and international competitors, with nearly 300 surfers.

### Groms

Meanwhile, World Junior Champions Bronson Meydi and Jarvis Earle took a group of local grommet surfers out for a special rip-bowl session on the sides of the 2025 Phillip Island Pro QS 3000 event.

Three young island surfers, Dom, Eddie and Rusty were able to share waves with the world's best, organised by Phillip Island Boardriders Club (PIBC) President Jake Eisen.

Eddie Maier was the youngest competitor in the Phillip Island Pro Junior competition, at just 10 years old, while Rusty, Eddie's younger brother, is eight-years-old.

Eddie's father Adrian said it was an amazing experience to be able to surf with a world champion at their home break.

"Rusty went in and surfed some really solid waves, which he normally wouldn't do but was just so pumped to be out there."

Jake said being able to rub shoulders with surfing royalty "just lit the flame".

Jarvis Earle also donated a board to the PIBC to be raffled with a fundraiser.

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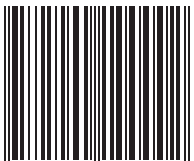
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