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**EXCITING TIMES AHEAD FOR NAGAMBIE YOUTH**

Young people of Nagambie will soon benefit from local youth program *Engage Nagambie* which now has a home and a staff member to drive it.

Andy Bell, recently appointed as Youth Development Officer at Strathbogie Shire Council, said he looks forward to being able to deliver a program that is tailored to the needs of the local community.

“I see a real opportunity to develop a great program for young people in Nagambie and surrounds, accessing existing skills within the community and commencing collaborative projects that will benefit more than just the targeted 12-25 year olds,” Mr Bell said.

The program will operate out of the old Croquet Club building, which will be refurbished in the coming months to include an all abilities toilet, a new kitchen, a chill out zone and an extension of the building by way of a wider verandah on the east side of the building.

Andy will be driving the program from the ground up and said he looks forward to meeting and getting to know the Nagambie community in the coming months.

“I’m currently planning consultation with local youth, including a survey, to gauge the community’s interests and preferences, which will help me to develop a program that will best interest and benefit local youth,” Mr Bell said.

Engage Nagambie will be designed to strengthen education, training and employment pathways and maximise the health and wellbeing of young people in the region.

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Cr Amanda McClaren said Engage Nagambie is being funded by the Victorian Government’s Engage Program.

“We’re really pleased that we’re going to be able to deliver a youth program in Nagambie and we really encourage our young people to connect, give us their ideas and feedback and make the most of the service,” Cr McClaren explained.

“This program will be all about connecting and empowering our local young people through volunteering, mentorships, leadership and skills building.”

Council will keep the community informed on the progression of the program and look forward to engaging with local young people in the coming months.

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