

Strathbogie Shire | August 2023

Community Update

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Strathbogie
SHIRE COUNCIL



1.

ADVOCACY IN CANBERRA

Advocacy is an important role of Council. While advocacy work takes place on a regular bases, there are also key opportunities to engage in this work.

I recently attended the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA) and met with several politicians to advocate for funding.

It was a fantastic opportunity to bring Council's top five Advocacy Asks to various politicians in an array of portfolios.

Council's current top five asks include:

- Roads and Bridges (including a specific call for funding to reopen Kirwans Bridge)
- Greening Euroa Project
- Reliable power supply
- Equitable digital and telecommunications infrastructure
- Nature Based Play Space

For more information about Council's advocacy work visit www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/advocacy/

1. Mayor Cr Laura Binks with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at an advocacy event in Canberra.

2. Council hosted several ministerial visits following the October 2022 flood to advocate for our community. At Kirwans Bridge are Mayor Binks with ministers Sam Birrell and Catherine King.



2.

A message from Mayor Cr Laura Binks

In recent times we have seen incredible projects come to fruition with the support of our community.

You will find just a selection of some of the fantastic things that have been happening at Council recently in this edition of our Community Update.

Read on to find out more about our new travelling exhibition space ARTBOX which we opened in June.

We share the fantastic news that Euroa took out four categories at the National Tidy Town Sustainability Awards.

2 |

Shire-wide Developments

ARTBOX

To express your interest to exhibit in ARTBOX, visit www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/community/arts-and-culture/artbox/



Strathbogie Shire Council is excited to announce the official launch of ARTBOX - a new travelling exhibition space for the municipality.

The launch was celebrated with the official opening of the space's first exhibition by proud Taungurung artist Aimee McCartney of Luruk-In.

ARTBOX is a mobile, professional exhibition space that welcomes proposals from artists, designers, festivals, curators, community and cultural groups in all art forms including but not limited to; visual arts, sculpture, craft, design, digital media, architectural installations, performance, literary arts, installation/site specific works, fashion and cultural heritage projects that display innovative ideas and approaches.

ARTBOX has been brought to Strathbogie Shire with Creative Victoria grant funding.

Youth in Strathbogie Shire were recently treated to a jam-packed school holiday program.

The program kicked off with the second Euroa-Da-Boat live music event in Euroa followed by a free movie screening and super at the Euroa Community Cinema featuring Guardians of the Galaxy.

There were two 'learn how to podcast' days - one in Euroa and one in Nagambie - where youth learned how to set up, design, create content, record and interview. There was something for every creative with workshops on screen printing, murals, event design and make up application.

The program wrapped up with a special opportunity for five young people aged 14-17 who took part in Camp #23 which focused on life skills.

Council also partnered with My Future Academy to help deliver its 'Term 3

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

Council is developing a Playground and Open Space Strategy to provide strategic direction on the future provision and upgrade of playgrounds and open spaces across Strathbogie Shire over the next 10 years.

Council is currently engaging with the community on the development of this strategy which will take place in a staged process.

You can find out more information and how to get involved at www.share.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/playground-and-open-space-strategy

IDAHOBIT 2023

Strathbogie Shire Council was proud to join all Victorian Councils this year in support of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) on May 17 this year.

For the first time the LGBTQI+ rainbow flag was flown in the main streets of Euroa and Nagambie to support the cause.



3.

3. Local band YNOT.

YOUTH

Adventures' program. The program includes a barbecue at Seven Creeks Park, fishing, bike riding and hiking for anyone aged 11-17 years.

My Future Academy is also delivering the Spartan program in Term 3 at the Euroa Secondary College ECA Centre. For more information on My Future Academy programs, visit www.myfutureacademy.com/book-online

To stay up to date with all things youth, visit www.facebook.com/StrathbogieYouthPrograms

Community Projects Funded

Six community projects valued at more than \$200,000 were endorsed for funding through Strathbogie Shire Council's Pitch My Project initiative at an Extraordinary Council Meeting in June.

Now in its third year, Pitch My Project allows the community to pitch ideas to Council for inclusion in its annual budget.

For the 2023/24 Budget, Council took community input to the next level, and created a participatory budgeting exercise to put the decision making into the hands of the community.

Locals pitched ideas that aligned to the Strategic Focus Areas in the 2021/25 Council Plan.

The projects scoring the highest in each category, and endorsed for funding, at the June 27th Extraordinary Council Meeting are outlined in the table.

Mayor, Cr Laura Binks said the aim of the Pitch My Project initiative was to ensure community input into the development of the Draft Budget.

"It means we're developing our Draft Budget in partnership with our community and ensures we're funding the projects and initiatives that matter to them," Cr Binks said.

"Since the project was established, Council has funded more than 20 projects right across the municipality.

"This year we established clear guidelines, to guide the community through the application process and we created a participatory budgeting exercise that put the decision making in the hands of the community.

"We wanted to ensure meaningful community input. To show our commitment to genuine community engagement."

To ensure the engagement exercise was fair Council established hard copy survey stations in townships throughout the Shire and in some categories looked at the score as a percentage of population so smaller towns were not disadvantaged.

During the engagement period 15 submissions were received to the Draft Budget and 572 contributions were received for Pitch My Project (425 through www.share.strathbogie.vic.gov.au and 147 through township survey stations).

2023/24 BUDGET ENDORSED

Also endorsed at the Extraordinary Council Meeting was the 2023/24 Budget which maintains financial stability while recognising the challenging financial environment faced not only by Council and the ongoing impacts of cost-of-living pressures being experienced by the community.

"We recognise that inflation remains high, materials and labour remain in short supply and that there is still much to do to rebuild our infrastructure and buildings following the October 2022 flood," Cr Binks said.

"In preparing the 2023/2024 Budget, we have considered these factors alongside the need to ensure we continue to deliver a long term sustainable financial position.

FAIR GO RATES CAP

"I am pleased to say we have set the overall increase to our rate base at a 3 per cent increase for this new financial year.

"Our goal was to carefully consider our funding priorities to achieve an overall rate rise below the Fair Go Rates system rating cap set by the Victorian Government of 3.5 per cent."



Strategic Focus Area	Project	Value
Engage. Create. Unite.	Strathbogie Memorial Hall: Stage upgrade	\$50,000
Live. Access. Connect.	Longwood Nature Play Space	\$50,000
Inclusive. Productive. Balanced.	Euroa Branding Project: To enhance tourism and investment in Euroa	\$50,000
Strong. Healthy. Safe.	Graytown Community Centre: Shade Sail	\$15,000
Strong. Healthy. Safe.	Longwood Football and Netball Club: Shelters and seating	\$35,000
Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.	Euroa Memorial Oval: Septic tank decommissioning	\$20,000

Locals pitched ideas that aligned to the Strategic Focus Areas in the 2021/25 Council Plan.



1. The Strathbogie Memorial Hall has received funding in both the 202/23 and 2023/24 Pitch My Project initiative.
2. Among the successful recipients of last year's projects was the Longwood Master Plan.
3. Last year's successful projects included funding for a business case into mountain bike trails.

Waste collection and disposal charges will also rise by 3 per cent in recognition of the pressures faced by the waste sector in terms of fuel prices and increases in State government landfill levies.

The 2023/2024 Budget provides for operating expenditure of \$34.4 million on services with new initiatives including:

ROADS BRIDGES & CULVERTS

Funding dedicated to the repair of roads, bridges and culverts following the October 2022 flood event.

Additional resources for our Operations team to support road, culvert and drainage repairs and maintenance.

BUCKLEY PARK PRECINCT

Scoping for traffic and parking management options in the Buckley Park precinct, Nagambie.

TRACKS & TRAILS STRATEGY

Funding for a number of footpath projects and funding for the review of our Tracks and Trails Strategy to improve connectivity and physical activity across the Shire.

FOOTPATHS & STREETSCAPES

Continued investment in our streetscape improvement programs.

The Budget also provides for a \$12.99 million capital works program, together with \$3.49 million carried forward from 2022/2023.

"I want to sincerely thank all who gave their time to participate in the 2023/24 Budget process," she said.

"There is no doubt we have produced a better budget because of our community's input."

Community Grants Program

OPEN

Quick Response Grants

Up to **\$1,000**
Open year-round until **31 May, 2024**
or until funds are expended

Event Grants

Up to **\$5,000**
Applications close on **30 June, 2024**
or until funds are expended

1. Avenel Bowls Club celebrated receiving a Council grant last year. 2. Little Athletics Nagambie kicked off with the help of a Council grant last year.

Strathbogie Shire Council has updated its community grants program to better deliver outcomes for the community.

Mayor, Cr Laura Binks, said the grant amount had been doubled to \$10,000 and Council had simplified processes for application and administration.

There are now three funding opportunities for community groups and an events funding stream.

Groups have already participated in informative workshops and had the opportunity to apply for the Community Conversations and Community Strengthening Grants.

“The \$1000 Quick Response Grants will be open year-round, and approval is by the CEO ensuring they are quick and accessible.”

EVENT GRANTS

The funding pool for Event Grants has increased from \$30,000 annually to \$50,000, with event organisers able to apply for up to \$5000.

Council’s grant review highlighted the need to simplify the model for community and Council.

“We’re excited to present a new funding model that removes category restrictions and encourages significant projects with greater benefits for the community,” she said.



2.



TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

Greater Shepparton City, Mitchell Shire and Strathbogie Shire Councils are collaborating on the delivery of the **Goulburn Region Tourism Partnership project**. This collaborative project is aimed at strengthening and growing the visitor economy offering of the region.

The partnership will provide a collaborative approach and strategic framework to the region’s visitor economy through the completion of a series of projects.

To date, Council has conducted engagement on the creation of a Regional Destination Management Plan through industry workshops, drop-in sessions and an online survey.

The partnership will also focus on the delivery of an industry skills development program. Additionally the partnership will work with State Government in a co-design process to investigate the region’s place within the regional tourism network.

This project is an exciting step to unlocking the Goulburn region’s potential as a resilient destination within the flourishing visitor economy. To find out more, visit www.share.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/goulburn-region-tourism-partnership

The project is funded by the Victorian Government’s Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Engagement innovations

Strathbogie Shire Council is offering new and exciting ways for more people in the municipality to engage and provide their feedback.

To capture members of the community who have trouble accessing a secure internet connection or those who are uncomfortable using digital platforms, Council has installed a series of physical survey stations throughout the Shire.

Our stations are located at:

- Avenel Library
- Euroa Library
- Graytown Community Centre
- Longwood General Store and PO
- Nagambie Visitor Information Centre
- Strathbogie General Store
- Tablelands Community Centre
- Violet Town Library

REPORTS

Council’s engagement reports via our website at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/plans-policies-strategies-and-reports/ under the heading ‘Engagement Reports’.



ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

Residents are encouraged to visit Share Strathbogie - Council’s online engagement hub. Share Strathbogie is a platform where community members can have their say on all of Council’s projects currently open for engagement. It’s also a place where you can catch up on past projects and keep track on how they are progressing even after the engagement period has closed.

There’s new and exciting projects opening on a frequent basis. It’s easy to stay up to date, simply follow us on social media to hear about all our new projects or find out information in our regular newspaper column.

ENGAGEMENT REPORTS

Councillors endorse engagement reports for each of our projects. These detailed documents are compiled by Council’s Communications and Engagement Team and outline all the engagement activities and outcomes for the project.

You’ll find out what process Council has gone through to gain community feedback and how it was subsequently incorporated for all recent projects.

SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

Following on from Euroa’s win at the Victorian Tidy Towns Sustainability Awards, Councillor Chris Raeburn represented the community at the national awards ceremony, held in King Island, Tasmania. Euroa won the following categories which focused on case studies in the township:

- **Resource Recovery and Waste Management Award, Bowerbird Op-Shop**
- Environmental Sustainability (Energy), Euroa Microgrid
- **Environmental Sustainability (Natural Environment Management), Euroa Arboretum**
- Environmental Communication and Engagement Award (joint winner), Fungi Festival



The National Awards judging panel commended Euroa on its range of sustainability initiatives and community collaboration. **“Recycling and waste avoidance education community events have built a community of confident recyclers ready to share their knowledge,”** the judge’s said. Congratulations to all involved in entering the Awards.

1. The Bowerbird Op-Shop
2. The Fungi Festival and
3. The Euroa Arboretum.

News, movies, events & your say

eNews

Scan the QR code to sign up



Council's monthly eNews bulletin is another way to keep you up to date on the latest news, information and work of Strathbogie Shire Council and projects in our Community.

We urge you to share this with your friends and family and encourage them to sign up for their own copy which will land in your email inbox each month.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Strathbogie Shire Council's online engagement portal Share Strathbogie enables community members to have their say on our important projects.

It's a fantastic way for you to contribute ideas, provide feedback and exchange views with others on key decisions and priorities for our community.

It's updated regularly so we encourage you to visit often and have your say.



Scan the QR code or visit www.share.strathbogie.com.au to start engaging!



UPCOMING EVENTS

There is always lots of exciting things happening in all corners of Strathbogie Shire. Whether it's a market, live music, something for the kids or a fine dining experience, there's something for everyone to enjoy. You can stay up to date with the region's upcoming events on Council's website.

1. The 131st Euroa Agricultural Show (28-29 Oct). 2. Euroa Music Festival (21 Oct) 3. Vineyards Running Festival (5 Nov), Tahbilk Winery



Scan the QR code or visit www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/things-to-do/events/whats-on/

EUROA COMMUNITY CINEMA

Screenings are held regularly on Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 4pm, unless otherwise stated.

You can also vote on monthly community choice screenings at the Euroa Community Cinema by visiting www.share.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/euroa-community-cinema



To view upcoming screenings and more, visit www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/things-to-do/euroa-community-cinema/ or scan the QR code.



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Council is calling for volunteers for our Nagambie and Euroa Visitor Information Centres and the Euroa Community Cinema.

Nagambie Visitor Information Centre volunteer Bill Northey has a passion for volunteering. "Every day brings many different questions," Bill said.

He encouraged community members to sign up to volunteer. **"It would be great if we could have more volunteers to assist in Nagambie and Euroa,"** he said.

Volunteers learn new skills, develop new friendships, and make a positive contribution to the community.



Scan the QR code or call 1800 065 993 for information.

