



Welcome to the winter edition of Mount Alexander Shire Council's quarterly newsletter. You have received this email because you've subscribed to Shire News, are a ratepayer or live in our shire. If you'd prefer not to receive this newsletter you can [unsubscribe](#). Thanks for reading.



## Funding our small town streetscapes

Over the past few years one of our big priorities has been to improve the streetscapes in our towns across the shire. Based on community feedback, we've been planting trees, improving traffic management and creating better social spaces for everyone.

We were very excited to see local MP Maree Edwards – Member for Bendigo East - drop into Newstead last month to announce \$1.4 million from the Victorian Government's Regional Infrastructure Fund to help complete small town streetscape projects in Guildford, Chewton and Newstead. We're looking forward to implementing the third stage of the project over the coming months.

While on the topic of streetscapes, it's all systems go in Maldon, with a project to underground the powerlines in the historic town centre nearing completion. Plans are on track to underground the power along sections of High, Main, Fountain, Francis, Templeton

and Dolphin streets by the end of June, weather permitting.

Residents and visitors to the historic town will also notice we've installed a temporary trial pedestrian crossing point between the Maldon Quality Butchers and Tres Doux Tres Beau Salon. We are testing four different kerb materials at the site, along with alternative landscape designs. Head on over to [Shape Mount Alexander](#) to let us know which option you prefer.

The works are all part of the Maldon Streetscape Revitalisation Project. Thanks to residents, businesses, visitors and building owners for your patience and support as we roll out this major project.

*Image: Mount Alexander Shire Councillor Matthew Driscoll, Guildford resident Bob Forde, Council's Chief Executive Officer, Darren Fuzzard, Newstead resident Robyn Lynn, Mount Alexander Shire Mayor, Tony Cordy and Chewton residents Marie and John Ellis of Chewton at the recent small town streetscapes funding announcement.*

[Read more](#)



## Mayor's message

As we gear up to the end of the financial year and continue to adjust to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there's always a lot going on at Council. Over the past few months, staff and Councillors have been preparing the proposed budget for the financial year ahead, which we will consider at this month's Council Meeting.

We've also been busy collecting feedback from the community to develop a 10-year community vision that will help shape our next Council Plan. Staff and councillors are weaving through the feedback, and will soon report back to the community to share what you have told us so far.

Thank you to everyone who shared feedback with us during the first phase of the project. We want you to continue to be part of the conversation. Keep in touch with the project and find out more about the next stage at [Shape Mount Alexander](#).

Finally, I hope everyone is feeling ok after



## COVID-19 update

Our Customer Service Centre and Visitor Information Centre in Castlemaine have reopened, following the easing of recent COVID-19 restrictions for Regional Victoria.

The Civic Centre is open for limited face-to-face services including general queries, pet registrations and payments. Staff are also available for technical queries by phone, email and online.

The Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre is open seven days to visitors from regional Victoria. COVIDSafe measures include mandatory QR code check-in and face masks.

Parks, reserves and playgrounds remain open for outdoor exercise in line with the latest restrictions. Visit our website to stay up-to-date with other [changes to Council services](#) as restrictions change.



the recent lockdown. We've all had to adapt to rapid changes in restrictions and I know many of our local businesses are still hurting. Please support them by shopping local where you can, and know that our dedicated COVID-19 support service is still operating if you need local support. Stay well and stay connected.

### Mayor Tony Cordy

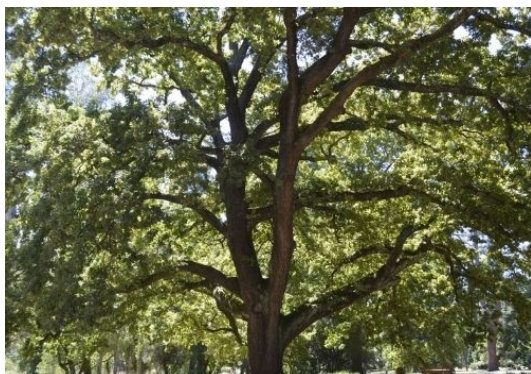


## Budget 2021/2022

Submissions on Council's Proposed Budget 2021/2022 recently closed. The \$39.61 million budget outlines the resources necessary to maintain and improve infrastructure, and deliver projects and services which are valued by our community.

We have earmarked more than \$10.2 million towards capital works and key infrastructure projects. There's \$3.26 million to improve our roads, \$2.49 million to revitalise Maldon and streetscapes in Taradale, Elphinstone and Campbells Creek, and \$650,000 to improve walking and cycling trails.

Councillors are preparing to adopt the final budget at the Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday 15 June at 6.30pm. In the meantime take a look at the [budget summary](#).



If you or anyone you know needs local help, support or food relief contact Council's dedicated COVID-19 support line from 9.00am to 5.00pm on 1800 512 446 (Monday to Friday) or email [covid19@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:covid19@mountalexander.vic.gov.au).



## COVID-19 vaccine

Getting vaccinated helps protect you from getting sick from COVID-19. Vaccination centres are open to people who are [eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine](#), including those people who are aged 40 years and over.

Castlemaine Health is currently operating a local COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Bookings are preferred, with walk-in vaccinations until noon dependent on vaccine availability. Visit their [website](#) to register and for more information including clinic times.

Please make sure you get tested if you show any symptoms of COVID-19. Keep an eye on [CHIRP Community Health's website](#) for operating hours at the drive-through COVID-19 screening clinic in Castlemaine. For information on COVID-19 visit [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au).



## Grant announcements

Get prepared for an exciting and busy twelve months ahead, following the recent

## A tree-mendous oak

Did you know that the magnificent English Oak at the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens has been crowned 2021 Victorian Tree of the Year?

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is behind the annual competition, which is determined by public vote.

The stunning tree, also known as the Royal Oak, is the oldest in the gardens. It was planted in 1863 to celebrate the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Start planning your visit to the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens to see the award-winning tree. It stands at 22 metres tall and is located near the children's playground.



## Harcourt tree works

And while we are talking about magnificent trees, works will begin along Harcourt's historically significant Avenue of Honour this month.

Tree improvement works include pruning, soil aeration, mulching and protection, along with the introduction of bollards to clearly define car parking areas.

We're hoping that the works will help ensure the health, condition and longevity of trees at the site, to help ensure the avenue continues to be an important Australian War Memorial into the future.

[Read more](#)

announcement of our community and events grants program recipients.

Eighteen local community groups and 26 local event organisers will share in more than \$90,000 in grants to deliver a range of community projects and initiatives.

We're looking forward to seeing the outcome of these fantastic projects, including events such as the Guildford Music Jamboree, Maldon Easter Fair, the Newstead Live Winter Concert, Harcourt Valley Easter Festival, the Castlemaine Billy Cart Challenge and much more.

Community projects on the way include radio training opportunities for people with disabilities at MAINfm, website design and building for the Elphinstone Progress Association, the purchase of bowls at Maldon Bowling Club and the incorporation and launch of Mt Alexander Cycling.

Thank you to all [community](#) and [events](#) grant recipients for your energy in making our shire a great place to live.

*Image: Previous grant recipients, members from the Maldon Tennis Club.*



## Senior Citz upgrade

Did you know we have recently made some changes to improve accessibility at the Chewton Senior Citizens Centre? A number of community groups use the space, hosting activities such as training, social support programs, and arts and cultural events. Recent works include the development of a new all-abilities pathway, that travels from the car park to the main entrance, and through to the rear of the building.

Other works underway include the conversion of a disused storage room into





range of community groups and organisations. Head along to a COVIDSafe session to enjoy a cup of tea and a chat with our community connectors.

You can visit our website or call 5471 1700 to find out more information on [times and locations](#). Due to the recent COVID-19 restrictions, we had to postpone sessions planned for this week. The schedule will go ahead, pending public health advice, so keep an eye on the website for any changes.

The Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) program is a Council-led project, funded by the Victorian Government.



## Emergency Expo

A big thanks to all the amazing volunteers and organisations that contributed to the success of the recent Castlemaine Emergency Response Expo.

The day was a fantastic opportunity to learn about basic CPR, home fire safety, volunteer opportunities and being prepared for bushfires, flood and storm events.

It provided a great chance to meet the first responders and find out more about those organisations dedicated to preventing an emergency or providing relief and support. What a great collaboration.

[Find out more.](#)



## Heartfelt thanks

During National Volunteer Week in May, we said thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers who bring so much richness and colour to our shire.

Our volunteers help plan and coordinate events for young people, are friends and companions to some of our most vulnerable community members, help us manage sports and recreation reserves, improve our environment and welcome visitors to the shire with a smile.

Their example, and the pride they take in their varied community commitments demonstrates to the rest of us just how life-affirming volunteering can be.

*Image: Volunteers helped present the youth event Shakin' the Shed at the Goods Shed in May. School Band (pictured) was part of the talented line-up.*

## Volunteer opportunities



## Climate news

Are you interested in the latest climate and sustainability news from Council? Here are some hot topics:

Council is one of 46 local governments to





## Outdoor spaces

Have you visited any of the pop-up outdoor spaces around the shire?

During the pandemic we had to rethink how we use our public spaces to enable you to visit your favourite cafes and restaurants, and make the most of the outdoors under COVID-19 restrictions.

With thanks to the support from the Victorian Government's Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Program, we established a number of outdoor spaces to support dining and entertainment like the Old Bank Corner in Maldon, the Village Square in Frederick Street, Castlemaine (pictured), and parklets and picnic tables in places like Castlemaine and Harcourt.

We would love to hear more about your experience to help us make recommendations for the future. [Tell us your thoughts](#) about the outdoor spaces.

A big shout out to all the local businesses willing to try something new, and to the Men's Shed for building new picnic tables from reclaimed timber.



## G'day to new citizens

Say congratulations and welcome to our newest citizens!

sign up to VECO, [the Victorian Energy Collaboration](#). VECO is the largest emissions reduction project ever undertaken by local government in Australia.

This means we'll be pooling our energy needs into a long-term contract to power our civic centre, town hall, library, market building, community centres and street lights with renewable energy generated from wind farms right here in Victoria.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their ideas on how we can build a carbon reduced future as part of the community consultation on our ZNET Community Transition Plan.

We heard about some fantastic incentives such as a shared tool shed, a neighbourhood goat grazing co-operative to reduce weeds, and an electric car and bike share scheme. Keep an eye on our [collaborative platform](#) for news and updates on how you can get involved in the next step of the project.

Have you seen the new electric vehicle charging station in Harcourt? It's located at 7 High Street and can fully recharge a battery electric vehicle within one to two hours.

A second charging station, located near the IGA supermarket in Castlemaine, will be operational by August. This landmark initiative is part of the innovative Charging the Regions program.

[Sign up to e-news](#)



## New tourism guide

Keep an eye out for the updated Official Visitor Guide for Castlemaine, Maldon and

Seven shire residents became Australian citizens at a recent citizenship ceremony at the Civic Centre. The new citizens hail from France, Malaysia, the Irish Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States.

They each received a certificate and a native Grevillea plant to mark the occasion.

New citizen Marie Goodhall (pictured), originally from Somerset, England, said she was excited to be part of the day's celebrations.

"I've been in Australia nine years, almost to the day, so to now have the privilege of being able to vote and take part in the direction of the country is something that I'm really looking forward to," said Ms Goodhall.

[Read more](#)



## Business workshops

Council is offering a range of workshops for local businesses to help people develop practical tools for managing their mental health.

The sessions are part of the Mindfit at Work program, and are held monthly, pending public health advice.

We also have a range of digital workshops on offer to support businesses to upskill and grow.

*Image: The team from Oxley Feed Mill, who are previous participants in the Mindfit at Work program.*

[Find out more](#)

Surrounds.

The guide contains the best of the region in one neat little package and is expected to be available to pick up from the Castlemaine & Maldon Visitor Information Centres in August.



## Queen's Birthday

With the recent COVID-19 outbreak it's been tricky to lock in plans for the long weekend. Our hearts go out to all event organisers who've had to cancel an event as we know how much blood, sweat and tears it takes to organise.

At this stage we know the Main Game has been postponed until Spring and we'll be waiting to see what the Castlemaine Jazz Festival organisers decide to do when they meet in a few weeks. Stay on the lookout for more news on how you can support these events in the coming months. Antique enthusiasts can save the date for the [Maldon Swap Meet](#), and art collectors can lock in the new dates for the [Rotary Art Show](#) at the end of July.

While things have been a moving feast, there are still many ways you can support local businesses, makers and traders by staying local over the long weekend.

Dine-in or pick up some takeaway from a pub, restaurant, café or bakery as you explore our beautiful towns, or hibernate at home with a glass of local wine and a hearty meal made from fresh produce from the farmer's markets.

Pick up some goodies from local shops and creatives as you indulge in some retail therapy, or feast on deli delights as you catch up with friends around a warm fire in surrounding native bushlands.





Make sure you rug up!

Don't forget our friendly team of staff and volunteers at local Visitor Information Centres are available every day (except Christmas Day) to help you find out what's on or book accommodation.

## Sign up to Shape

Want to have your say on projects and initiatives happening in the shire?

Register at our new online engagement platform called [Shape Mount Alexander](#) to provide your feedback and stay informed.

## Council meetings

Our next Council Meetings will be held at 6.30pm on:

- Tuesday, 15 June 2021
- Tuesday, 20 July 2021
- Tuesday, 17 August 2021

Meetings are broadcast live via [YouTube](#). To raise a question at the Council meeting email or write to the Governance Team at PO Box 185, Castlemaine 3450 VIC.

Messages must be received by 12noon on the day of the meeting.

Find [meeting agendas](#) or get in touch with your local [councillor](#).

## What's on

Stay up-to-date with things to see and do, and all the best places to eat, drink and stay across the region via our [tourism website](#).

Find out [what's on](#) or [add your own event](#).

For updates on local events and things to do follow Castlemaine, Maldon and Surrounds on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Follow Council on [Facebook](#) for our latest news and updates, and read our Council Column in the Midland Express each Tuesday for public notices.



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