

FREE

Ageing Well



Creating an age-friendly shire

Edition 23 – February 2026

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A bouquet of seniors

The 2025 Cardinia Shire Seniors Festival was a resounding success, bringing together our community in a vibrant celebration of life, connection, and creativity!

Throughout October, seniors from across the shire participated in more than 30 events, all designed to inspire, engage and celebrate the contributions of our older residents.

Our seniors groups came together to plan events, build new friendships, and break down barriers.

To kick off the festival, seniors groups in the hills joined forces to host “High Tea in the Hills,” a heartwarming event that welcomed more than 150 seniors from diverse backgrounds to Gembrook. The day was filled with joyful dancing, delicious treats, laughter, and a beautiful sense of community spirit.

The 2025 Cardinia Shire Seniors Festival was made possible by the incredible passion and collaboration of the Cardinia Seniors Network and dedicated volunteers representing numerous seniors’ groups across the shire.



Get your newsletter direct!

For more information, contact the Ageing Well team:

Email: ageingwell@cardinia.vic.gov.au
Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/ageingwell
Ph: **1300 787 624**

- Scan the QR code (above)
- Request a printed copy and join our mailing list
- Visit a pick-up point (see back page)
- Read / subscribe online (includes large print format)

Ageing Well information pop-ups!

Come and visit us at our next information display at Pakenham Marketplace. This is your opportunity to come and chat with us and get information about a wide range of services for seniors.

Date: **Thursday 12 February**
Time: **10am–12pm**
Venue: **Pakenham Marketplace, 50-54 John Street, Pakenham**

Enquiries:

Ph: **1300 787 624**
Email: mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au
Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/ageingwellevents

Raising awareness



Gembrook Park – a little “gem”

Nestled in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, just 65km southeast of Melbourne, Gembrook Park is a local gem located 200 metres from Gembrook township. Originally established in 1873 by the Zoological and Acclimatisation Society, the reserve was part of a 259 hectare bushland site used to study introduced species. Today, it spans 29 hectares and showcases a rich damp forest ecosystem, including two striking Californian Redwood trees planted in the 1800s.

For 30 years, Cardinia Shire Council and the Friends of Gembrook Park have worked together to care for this botanically significant site, home to six distinct plant communities. The Friends group plays a vital role in maintaining the park through weeding, planting, signage, and track clearing, as well as educating the public about its natural value.

During the Seniors Festival, the group hosted its first event, featuring a talk about the park’s history, a tree planting activity, and a guided bushwalk highlighting local flora and fauna. The day ended with a relaxed bush-style picnic, where participants shared stories over sandwiches, cakes, and a cuppa. While the event was designed for older adults, Gembrook Park welcomes everyone. It’s a peaceful, beautiful space right on our doorstep.

If you enjoy the outdoors and would like to get involved, the Friends of Gembrook Park are always looking for new volunteers!

For more information

Merle Mathisen
Friends of Gembrook Park
Ph: **0407 011 344**

Growing gardens for wildlife!

Looking for a rewarding way to spend time outdoors? Register now and get involved in Cardinia Shire Council’s Gardens for Wildlife program, relaunched this year with program partner Cardinia Environment Coalition.

Cardinia Shire Council’s Gardens for Wildlife program is here to help you create a beautiful garden that attracts birds, butterflies, and other native wildlife. Indigenous plants are low-maintenance and thrive in local conditions, making them perfect for any garden.

When you sign up to this free program, you’ll receive six free indigenous plants and plenty of tips to get started. Join a workshop or planting day to receive an additional plant voucher, learn more and meet like-minded locals.

Get more information and sign up today at www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/gardensforwildlife or phone Council on **1300 787 624**.



Raising awareness

Keep your home safe from burglary

Thieves often spend just eight minutes inside a home, grabbing items that are visible or near the door, such as cash, car keys, jewellery and other valuables. Follow these simple steps to protect your home:

- Keep valuables out of sight.
- Lock doors and windows, even when you are at home.
- Lock your car, even in your driveway.
- Make a habit of checking locks before going to bed.
- Improve lighting around your home, especially near entry points.
- Keep front yards clear so neighbours can see unusual activity.
- Install security cameras to deter intruders.
- Always report suspicious behaviour.

In an emergency, call **000 (triple zero)**. For non-urgent matters call **131 444** or report online to Victoria Police and remember to contact Crime Stoppers Victoria if you have information on **1800 333 000**.



We encourage you to take the Neighbourhood Watch Safety Quiz: www.howsafeismyplace.com.au

Be prepared

People who need extra support, carers, and service providers are invited to attend a Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) Workshop.

Update and review your emergency plan in this guided session. Emergency Services staff will be available to chat with throughout the session.

We will support you to work through the booklet. Light lunch and refreshments included.

When: **Friday 27 March**
Time: **11am–1:30pm (lunch provided)**
Where: **8 Church Street, Emerald (Evergreen Senior Citizens)**
Cost: **Free**
RSVP: **20 March**
Please advise dietary requirements by email
ageingwell@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Seniors Festival highlights

The 2025 Seniors Festival was a huge success with more than 1,000 participants attending 30 events across the shire throughout October.

One of the festival highlights was Shared Plates – Shared Stories at the Gurdwara Siri Guru Nanak Darbar Officer. Seniors from all walks of life came together to enjoy mouth-watering dishes, swap recipes, and share stories over great food and laughter. The event was attended by Gary Maas MP, Senator Lisa Darmanin, Lee Tarlamis MP and Mayor at the time, Cr Jack Kowarzik.



High Tea in the Hills
(Gembrook, Emerald seniors and Cockatoo Over 50s)



Spit Roast and Wellness Day
(Koo Wee Rup Men's Shed and other local sheds)



Bouquet of Seniors day
(Cardinia Senior Citizens Group) / **Line dance performance** (by Cockatoo Over 50s)



Live art demos (Moy Yan Neighbourhood House)

Seniors Festival highlights



**Bush Bites
Truffle Delights**
(Cardinia U3A -
Pakenham)



**Tree planting
and guided
bush walks and
picnic** (Friends of
Gembrook Park)



**Dementia
friendly games
days** (Outlook
Community Centre
and Koo Wee Rup
Regional Health
Service)



**Victorian
Seniors
Festival
2025**



**CONNECT
CREATE
CELEBRATE**

**Victorian
Seniors
Festival
2025**



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**CONNECT
CREATE
CELEBRATE**

Be informed

Your voice matters

Thank you to everyone who shared feedback on Council projects and plans this past year! More than 56,000 people visited the Creating Cardinia website, contributing more than 1,600 times through surveys and pop-up events.

Your input helped shape upgrades to playgrounds, pedestrian safety improvements, the Fair Access Policy, and a 20-year lease for the Riding for the Disabled Association of Victoria.

Community involvement also guided major plans, including:

- Council Plan 2025–29
- Updated Liveability Plan 2017–29
- Financial Plan 2025–35
- Asset Plan 2025–35



We're proud to see so many residents involved – your voice helps ensure Council decisions reflect what matters most to our growing, diverse community.

For more information:

Ph: **1300 787 624**

Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Jobs and Skills Showcase!

The Cardinia Jobs and Skills Showcase is back by popular demand!

Date: **Wednesday 18 March**
Time: **9:15–10am: Jobseeker information session**
10am–12pm: Jobs and Skills Showcase
Venue: **Cardinia Cultural Centre,**
40 Lakeside Boulevard, Pakenham
Cost: **FREE**

Explore, Experience and Empower Your Future

Join Cardinia Shire Council and Workforce Australia for a dynamic career event featuring interactive exhibits, training options, local employers, and support services. Discover pathways, gain tailored advice, and connect with professionals. Whether you're job-seeking, upskilling, or exploring new opportunities, this event will inspire your next confident step.

Enquiries: **business@cardinia.vic.gov.au**

Bookings: **1300 767 624**
(ask for Rosie, Council's Economic Development Officer)



Health and safety

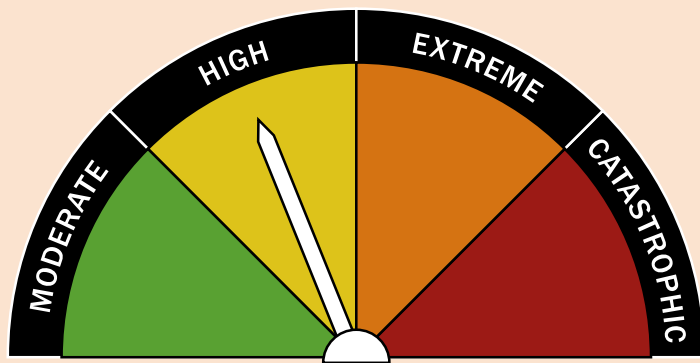
Be safe in the heat

Extreme heat can lead to dehydration, cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke. It can also interfere with medical conditions and medications.

Be prepared: Consult your doctor or call **NURSE-ON-CALL (1300 606 024)** to discuss your fluid intake and medications. In an emergency, always call **000**.

Heat health tips

- Shop for essentials on cooler days.
- Shut off unused rooms, draw curtains and blinds.
- Drink water all day, eat hydrating foods like fruit and salad.
- Wear light, breathable clothing.
- Visit air-conditioned locations such as libraries and shopping centres.
- If going outside, wear a sun hat, take water and seek shade.



MODERATE

Plan and prepare

HIGH

Be ready to act

EXTREME

Take action now to protect life and property

CATASTROPHIC

For your survival, **leave bushfire risk areas**

Fire danger season

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) declares the Fire Danger Period for Cardinia Shire, using Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) data, forecasting ratings up to four days in advance based on weather and local conditions. Understanding the Australian Fire Danger Rating messaging is crucial. It's fire danger levels that help you know when to enact your bushfire survival plan with clear actions to reduce risk.

Council's Fire Prevention Officers inspect properties throughout the summer season. You can report fire hazards online or call Cardinia Shire Council. If you receive a fire prevention notice, complete the required works by the due date. Are you and your property prepared for an emergency situation?

For more information:

Better Health Channel:

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/extreme-heat

Vic Emergency website:

www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Vic Emergency hotline:

1800 226 226

Cardinia Shire Council Emergency Management team:

Ph: **1300 787 624**

Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/emergency

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/PrepareForEmergency

CFA website:

www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Download the VicEmergency App

Listen to ABC local radio or watch ABC news

Call **000** when an immediate threat to life or property.

Cardinia Support – for you!

Council provides information about community organisations, seniors groups, service providers, and government departments that offer social, health, and financial support, and local community groups.

Scan the QR code or, if you need help, please phone the Ageing Well team on the phone number below.

Ph: **1300 787 624**

Web: www.cardiniasupport.com.au



Health promotion



Cardinia Prostate Cancer Support Group

If you have been impacted by prostate cancer, join this new group for connection, understanding, information and support. This group can help you and your loved ones cope with a diagnosis. Listen to guest presentations and learn in a respectful and friendly environment.

Date: **First Thursday of the month**
Time: **7-8:30pm**
Venue: **Outlook Community Centre,
24 Toomuc Valley Road, Pakenham**
Cost: **Gold coin donation**
Bookings: **5940 4728**
Enquiries: **Span 0422 917 386 or spanetc@hotmail.com**



New men's discussion group in Emerald

Looking for new members to join a monthly men's group for conversation, connection and fun. Please contact Kerry at Fernlea Community House on **5968 3895 (Option 5)** or Ken on **5941 7400**.

Pick up a copy of your Ageing Well Newsletter from the following locations or download a digital copy from www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/ageingwell

- Beaconsfield Community Complex, 8 O'Neil Road, Beaconsfield
- Mobile Library Beaconsfield Community Complex, O'Neil Road, Beaconsfield 12pm-7pm (Wed)
- Cardinia Cultural Centre, 40 Lakeside Boulevard, Pakenham
- Cardinia Life, 4 Olympic Way, Pakenham
- Cardinia Shire Council Civic Centre, 20 Siding Avenue, Officer
- Outlook Community Centre, 24 Toomuc Valley Road, Pakenham
- Pakenham Library or Cardinia U3A, corner John and Henry streets, Pakenham

- Kooweerup Regional Health Reception, 235 Rossiter Road, Koo Wee Rup
- Lang Lang Community Centre, 7 Westernport Road, Lang Lang
- Mobile Library points:
 - Bunyip, Main Street 9:30am-1:45pm (Sat)
 - Bunyip Primary School 10:45am-12:15pm (Mon)
 - Garfield, Ritchie Street 12:30-3:15pm (Mon)
 - Koo Wee Rup, V/Line Bus interchange 2:15-5:30pm (Fri)
 - Lang Lang Primary School 11am-1:45pm (Fri)
 - Maryknoll, Koolbirra Road 12:30-1:30pm (Thur)
 - Nar Nar Goon Primary School 11am-12pm (Thur)
 - Tynong, Railway Avenue 3:30-5:30pm (Tues)
- Moy-Yan Neighbourhood House, Beswick Street, Garfield

- Cockatoo Community House, 23 Bailey Road, Cockatoo
- Fernlea Community House, 356-8 Belgrave-Gembrook Road, Emerald
- Emerald Library 400A Belgrave-Gembrook Road, Emerald
- Emerald Senior Citizens, cnr Anne and Church streets, Emerald
- Mobile Library points:
 - Cockatoo Bowling Club 2:15-6pm (Thur)
 - Gembrook Community Complex, Gembrook Pakenham Road, 2:30-5:30pm (Tues)
 - Upper Beaconsfield, Charing Cross Reserve 10:45am-1:30pm (Tues)
- Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre, 10-12 Salisbury Road, Beaconsfield Upper



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20 Siding Avenue, Officer

Postal address:
PO Box 7, Pakenham 3810

Phone: 1300 787 624
Email: mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au
Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

After-hours emergencies:
1300 787 624

National Relay Service (NRS):
Customers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can call through the NRS. This is a free service.

TTY users phone 133 677
then ask for 1300 787 624.

Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay)
users phone 1300 555 727
then ask for 1300 787 624.



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