Connect

YOUR COUNCIL MAGAZINE

Spring 2026



NATURE ON OUR DOORSTEP

Discover how we're working to protect local wildlife, waterways and biodiversity.

GRANTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

We're supporting our local community groups to deliver projects, programs and improvements across the shire.

GET ACTIVE OUTDOORS THIS SPRING

From BMX tracks to dog parks and playgrounds, there's never been a better time to get moving.

Cardinia

Have your say!

Help shape the future of Cardinia Shire by having your say on our upcoming proposals, projects and initiatives.

Head to Creating Cardinia to provide your feedback - it helps guide our decision-making and plans to ensure we're delivering what the community needs.

Scan the QR code to explore current consultations and follow project pages to receive updates.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay



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Henty Ward

Cr Liz Roberts (Deputy Mayor)
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Bunyip Ward

Cr Alanna Pomeroy
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Central Ward

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Pakenham Hills Ward

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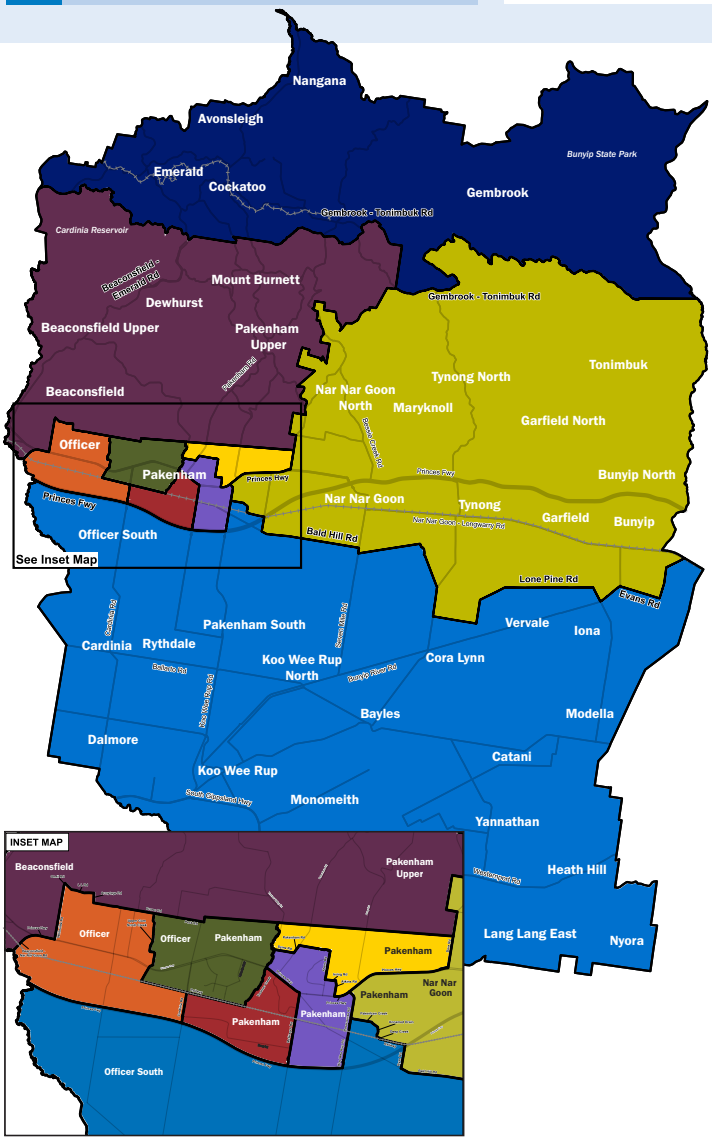
Toomuc Ward

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Westernport Ward

Cr Trudi Paton
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To find out which ward you're in, visit **www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/communitycompass** and type your street address into the 'My Council services' tool.

On the cover

Community members came together for a recent tree planting day in Koo Wee Rup.



Stay up-to-date

Find out what's happening across the shire by reading a range of our publications.

Subscribe to our monthly Connect+ e-newsletter to read updates about the services that we offer, upcoming projects, local events and opportunities to have your say.

You can also subscribe to our speciality newsletters including Ageing Well, Cardinia Business, Down to Earth and Youth News.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/connect



Mayor's message

Cardinia Shire Mayor Cr Brett Owen attending the Catchment to Coast exhibition at Cardinia Cultural Centre.

Spring has arrived, bringing longer days, blooming gardens and plenty of reasons to get outdoors and enjoy our beautiful shire. Whether you're planting vegetables, walking through a local reserve, exploring a playground with the family or simply soaking up the sunshine, it's a great time to reconnect with nature and your community.

This spring, I encourage residents to get outside to learn more about our local environment and consider how small actions can help protect it for future generations. Our region is home to more than 1,700 native plant and animal species, and it's important that we take the steps now to protect the incredible plants, animals, waterways and landscapes that make Cardinia Shire unique, so we can continue to appreciate them for generations to come. Small actions like participating in citizen science initiatives and joining a local Landcare group can help build a stronger understanding of the biodiversity that exists right on our doorstep.

There are also plenty of opportunities to get active this spring. Across the shire, we're continuing to invest in community spaces that support healthy and connected lifestyles. We've recently completed upgrades to several local playgrounds, the Bunyip Sanctuary BMX track is ready to take riders to new heights, and dog owners will be barking mad not to visit the new Alma Treloar Reserve Dog off-leash area.

You'll also see continued progress on other important infrastructure projects across the shire, including the road sealing projects in the Hills and the Pakenham town centre streetscape upgrades.

Although many of these projects may cause temporary disruptions, I would like to thank the community for their ongoing patience and understanding, as we work to deliver these upgrades that will benefit our communities for years to come.

We're continuing to advocate strongly for the infrastructure and services our community needs. Through our *Together We Rise* campaign, we're calling for improved infrastructure and services so residents can access what they need closer to home. Ahead of the State election, we're seeking support for key priorities including the redevelopment of Cardinia Life, improved public transport, local higher education opportunities, the Lang Lang truck bypass, a strategic sealed roads package, and better parks and open spaces.

Looking ahead to October, we've got a month packed with events and activities to celebrate Seniors Month.

Seniors Month provides an opportunity to recognise and celebrate their invaluable contributions, while also creating opportunities to connect, learn and have fun. I encourage seniors, along with their families, friends and carers, to take part in the many events and activities happening across the shire.

As we move towards summer, now is also the time to prepare your property for the warmer months ahead. Simple actions such as mowing grass, clearing gutters, reducing excess vegetation and reviewing your fire plan can help keep your family, property and community safe during fire season.

As my term as Mayor comes to an end in November, I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank our residents, community groups, volunteers, businesses, fellow councillors and Council staff for their ongoing contribution to Cardinia Shire. It has been a privilege to serve our community and witness the passion, resilience and community spirit that makes our shire such a special place to call home.

Cr Brett Owen
Mayor of Cardinia Shire

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/councillors

Council meetings

Council meetings are held on the third Monday of each month from 6pm.

Visit our website for upcoming meeting dates, agendas and minutes. You can also watch meetings live or view recordings of past meetings online.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/meetings

INVEST CARDINIA

TOGETHER WE RISE



Calling for investment in Cardinia Shire's future

With the 2026 State election on the horizon, we're stepping up our call for all levels of government to invest in the infrastructure and services our growing community needs and deserves.

Community needs and community voice are at the centre of our campaign, which seeks urgent state government investment in essential projects and services to support the shire's rapidly growing population.

We understand that meeting these needs will require strong collaboration and a shared commitment. Council is seeking to partner with other levels of government to plan, fund and deliver essential infrastructure and services to support our communities.

Our community wants action

Across Cardinia Shire, people are proud of where they live, but they can also see the pressure that rapid growth is placing on local infrastructure and services.

Families want places to play sport, young people need local education pathways, residents want safer and better-connected roads, and communities across the shire want access to the services and facilities that help them thrive.

The message from our community is loud and clear: Cardinia Shire is growing fast, and investment needs to keep pace.

Get involved

Want to make a difference in your community? You can play a key role in calling for change in the areas that are most important to you and your family.

- Contact your local MP if you are concerned about a State or Federal issue.
- Explore our Community Advocacy Toolkit.
- Engage with Council.
- Read more about our key priorities in our 2026 State Government Advocacy Prospectus - which is available on Council's website.

Key advocacy priorities

Our priority projects focus on what matters most to our community:

- **Cardinia Life redevelopment**
- **Essential parks and open space projects**
- **Strategic road sealing**
- **Lang Lang bypass**
- **Improved public transport**
- **Local higher education**

We're also advocating for projects that will support our growth, prepare us for the future and help make Cardinia Shire even more liveable, such as:

- **Officer Town Centre activation.**
- **Thompsons Road extension and upgrade.**
- **South East Melbourne Airport.**
- **Princes Highway connectivity and safety upgrades.**
- **Pakenham Revitalisation Project.**

Advocacy win!

We're pleased to welcome the recent advocacy commitments for Cardinia Shire!

These commitments are an important step towards delivering better-connected, more liveable and resilient communities; helping ensure residents can access the services, facilities and opportunities they need close to home.

We're continuing to advocate for the infrastructure and investment that our growing communities need, ahead of the upcoming State election.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/advocacy



Be part of shaping a more accessible shire

Community members and staff representing the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Everyone should be able to participate, connect and feel welcome in their community. That's why we're working alongside the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee to help make our facilities, services and public spaces more accessible for people with disability.

We're currently looking for new community members to join the committee and help shape a more inclusive Cardinia Shire.

From community spaces and services through to programs, infrastructure and future projects, the committee provides practical advice and lived-experience perspectives on ways to improve access and inclusion across the shire.

It's a great opportunity to share your experiences, ideas and local knowledge, and help shape decisions that make a real difference for people with disability and their families.

A recent project supported by the committee was the upgrade of facilities at the Cockatoo Athletics Club at Mountain Recreation Reserve. Improvements included a new accessible toilet, male and female ambulant toilets and a mobility mat providing easier access to the grassed track and field.

These upgrades are important, because they remove barriers that can prevent people from participating in sport, recreation and community life. Improved accessibility means more people can access facilities safely and comfortably, take part in activities with greater independence, and feel welcomed as valued members of the community.

Accessible facilities also support spectators, volunteers, carers, family members and visitors, making it easier for everyone to be involved in club and community activities.

By creating environments that are inclusive and welcoming, we help strengthen social connections, encourage participation and build a more connected community.

The committee helps identify and prioritise accessibility upgrades across the shire each year.

If you are passionate about helping create a more accessible and inclusive Cardinia Shire, we would love to hear from you!

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/CAIAC

Stay safe this October

Community Safety Month returns this October, bringing practical information, advice and resources to communities across Cardinia Shire.

Come along to one of our local pop-up events to chat with emergency services, Council staff and community safety organisations. You'll be able to pick up practical tips, learn how to prepare for emergencies and find out how to keep yourself, your family and your property safe.

Whether you're new to the area or have lived here for years, come along and learn how you can help keep yourself, your family and your community safe.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/support



Ageing Well at the Victorian Seniors Festival

October is set to be a month of connection, creativity and celebration, as the Victorian Seniors Festival returns for 2026. With thousands of free and low-cost events taking place across Victoria, it's the perfect opportunity to celebrate positive ageing and try something new.

This year's theme, *Connect, Create, Celebrate*, encourages older Victorians to reconnect with their interests, discover new opportunities, make meaningful social connections and celebrate the diversity, experience and contributions of older people in our communities.

Across Cardinia Shire, more than 20 local events and activities will be delivered through the remarkable support of the Cardinia Seniors Network. The network consists of dedicated and active older residents representing a diverse range of community groups across the shire.

Events include:

- Cardinia Leisure Seniors Expo at Cardinia Life.
- Community spit roast and emergency planning session at Koo Wee Rup Men's Shed.
- Rotary dance in Pakenham.
- Try before you ride the bus at Cardinia Cultural Centre.
- Lifelong learning morning tea at Pakenham Library.
- History talk-and-walk sessions in Koo Wee Rup.
- Bouquet of seniors celebration.
- Biggest Group Line Dancing event at Cardinia Life.
- Art exhibition at the Koo Wee Rup Forget Me Not Café.
- Carer's games day at Outlook Community Centre.

While the festival is a highlight of the year, it's just one of the many ways we support older residents to age well, stay active, feel safe and remain connected to their community.

Throughout the year, residents can access information and support through our Ageing Well initiatives, including local seniors' groups, community activities, healthy ageing resources, support services and assistance navigating the aged care system. The Ageing Well newsletter also keeps residents informed about local events, opportunities, health and wellbeing information, and inspiring community stories.

Whether you're looking to learn a new skill, stay socially connected, access support services or meet new people, there are plenty of ways to get involved.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/seniors

Australia Day Award nominations open

Do you know someone who goes above and beyond for their local community, or a great local event that brings people together and builds connection? Nominate them for Cardinia Shire Council's 2027 Australia Day Awards.

Award categories include Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, and Community event of the Year.

Nominations close at midnight on **4 November 2026.**

For eligibility, nomination details and previous award recipients, please visit Council's website.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/australiaday



Thriving communities

Creating stronger, more inclusive communities

We're developing a new Thriving Communities Inclusion and Equity Strategy 2026–2030, which will outline how we can continue building a welcoming, fair and inclusive community together.

As our community grows and becomes more diverse, we know people's experiences are different. Factors like age, culture, ability, identity and life circumstances can shape how people access services, spaces and opportunities.

This strategy recognises those differences and focuses on removing barriers so everyone can participate fully and feel a genuine sense of belonging.

By bringing together several existing plans into one clear direction, the strategy will guide how we design accessible services, create inclusive places and strengthen community voice.

The community will be invited to have their say on this upcoming strategy and provide feedback to shape its future direction.

Did you know?

- 18% of residents speak a language other than English at home.
- 9.8% of residents identify as LGBTIQ+.
- 22% of residents are aged 55+.
- First Nations residents make up 1% of the Cardinia Shire community compared to an average of 0.7% across Greater Melbourne.
- Over 20% of residents experience some activity limitation due to disability or chronic illness.
- 22.6% of the Cardinia population are children aged 0–14 years.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

A place to call home

Everyone deserves access to a safe and secure place to call home.

Over the past seven years, our Social and Affordable Housing Strategy has helped create more housing opportunities for residents across Cardinia Shire and support those who need it most.

Through advocacy, partnerships and long-term planning, we've completed 21 of the 23 actions outlined in the strategy and delivered strong results for our community.

Key achievements include:

- Significantly exceeded our social and affordable housing target. We aimed to secure five new developments and instead, we secured approximately 150 social and affordable homes across the shire.
- Greater diversity in social and affordable housing options.
- Improved community understanding and acceptance of social housing developments, with 66% of the community reporting being supportive of social housing developments.
- Affordable housing considerations have now been embedded into major growth area planning.

These outcomes are about more than housing. They've helped create pathways to safe and secure homes for women and children escaping family violence, people living with disability, people experiencing mental health challenges and other vulnerable members of our community.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/social-housing



Building a Better Cardinia

Every day, work is happening across Cardinia Shire to improve our local roads, parks, sporting facilities and community spaces. This year, we're investing $66.3 million in projects that will help keep our growing community connected, active and liveable.

Completed works

- ✓ Alma Treloar dog park (Cockatoo).
- ✓ Bessie Creek Road – road sealing works (Nar Nar Goon North).
- ✓ Bunyip Sanctuary BMX track.
- ✓ Eagle Drive – road safety improvements (Pakenham).
- ✓ Huxtable Road – road sealing works (Pakenham Upper).
- ✓ Lauriston Court playground renewal (Koo Wee Rup).
- ✓ Main Street Gateway precinct (Stage 1) – Pakenham Revitalisation.
- ✓ Mt Burnett Road – road sealing works (Mount Burnett).

Under construction

- Annual road pavement renewal and resurfacing programs – across the shire.
- Drake Place and John Street precinct (Stages 2 and 3) – Pakenham Revitalisation.
- Koo Wee Rup netball court redevelopment.
- Pakenham Outdoor Pool – maintenance works.
- Pakenham Regional Tennis Centre lighting upgrades.
- Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Pavilion

Upcoming projects

- Cardinia Life renewal works (Pakenham).
- Ebony Drive Reserve playground renewal (Pakenham).
- Heatherbrae Recreation Reserve netball court upgrades (Officer).
- Holm Park oval resurfacing (Beaconsfield).
- John Street extension – Pakenham Revitalisation.
- McGregor Road, Henty Street and Rogers Street intersection (Pakenham).
- Mountain Road – road sealing works (Cockatoo).
- Ron Andrews wetlands (Pakenham).
- Ure Road – road sealing works (Gembrook).

Thank you for your patience

We understand that construction works can sometimes be disruptive, particularly for nearby residents, local businesses and those travelling through the area.

We appreciate the patience, flexibility and understanding our community continues to show while these projects are delivered.

Together, we're building better roads, parks, facilities and public spaces that will benefit current and future generations across Cardinia Shire.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/majorprojects



Pakenham
a place for people

Upgraded town centre coming to life

Pakenham's town centre transformation is starting to come to life, with the first stage of the Pakenham Revitalisation Project almost complete and exciting progress continuing across the precinct.

Visitors to Pakenham may have already noticed a fresh new look at the entrance to Main Street.

Completed as part of Stage 1, the Main Street Gateway upgrade has transformed the area from the railway line through to the Main Street roundabout and into Drake Place, creating a greener, safer and more welcoming gateway to Pakenham's town centre.

Main Street Gateway upgrades included:

- Upgraded road pavement, kerb, channel and drainage infrastructure.
- Wider footpaths and four new pedestrian crossings to improve accessibility.
- Enhanced lighting to improve safety and visibility.
- Lush garden beds and mature trees to add colour, shade and character.
- New community amenities including seating, bins and a drinking fountain.

More than just a streetscape upgrade, the project is helping create a town centre that's easier to walk around, more enjoyable to spend time in, and better connected for residents, visitors and local businesses. The revitalised gateway provides a stronger sense of arrival into Pakenham and lays the foundation for the exciting upgrades still to come as the broader revitalisation project continues.

Stage 2 is progressing in Drake Place, with streetscape upgrades underway between the Railway Hotel and John Street.

We're prioritising completing upgrades in Drake Place this year, so we can support the community and local businesses ahead of the busy Christmas trading period. By completing upgrades to these areas now, we're able to return the greatest number of parking spaces back into the precinct. To further support local businesses, encourage visitation and improve access to the town centre during one of its busiest times of year, we're also planning to pause construction from December 2026 to early January 2027.

Stages 2 and 3 are being delivered together in smaller phases to minimise disruption and help local businesses continue trading throughout construction. Stage 3 streetscape upgrades are planned for John Street, from Drake Place through to the Main Street roundabout, with majority of upgrades works scheduled to be completed in 2027.

Stage 4 plans to extend John Street through to Henty Street are also progressing, with construction expected to start in the coming months.

Looking further ahead, we're continuing to explore options for Stage 5, which will focus on delivering streetscape upgrades to the Main Street Central precinct, between the John Street and Station Street roundabouts. No works are currently scheduled in this area, as we continue to develop these plans. We will be looking to share more information with the community as planning progresses.

While construction can bring some short-term inconvenience, we sincerely thank the community for its patience and support. Together, these projects are helping create a more vibrant, connected and welcoming town centre that Pakenham can be proud of for years to come.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/pakenham



From Catchment to Coast: celebrating nature on our doorstep

Toomuc Ward Councillor Casey Thomsen attending the recent Catchment to Coast exhibition.

How often do you stop and think about where the water flowing through a local creek ends up, or what wildlife might be living in the reserve just down the road? For many people, the answer is not very often.

Yet Cardinia Shire is home to an extraordinary natural environment, including waterways, wetlands, forests and grasslands that support more than 1,700 native plant and animal species. From southern brown bandicoots and powerful owls to the creeks and wetlands that eventually feed into Western Port Bay, nature is all around us.

That's why we're investing in environmental education programs that help residents discover, understand and protect the natural environment around them.

Toomuc Ward Councillor Casey Thomsen said knowledge is often the first step towards protecting the environment.

"People care about the places they know and value. The more we learn about the wildlife, waterways and natural landscapes around us, the more likely we are to take action that helps protect them," he said.

"Education is one of the most effective tools we have for creating long-term environmental change.

"When people understand how ecosystems work and why they're important, they're more likely to take action. Whether it's keeping rubbish out of drains, planting indigenous species or reporting wildlife sightings, every action contributes to a healthier environment."

One recent initiative bringing that message to life was the Catchment to Coast exhibition at Cardinia Cultural Centre. The exhibition invited visitors to follow the journey of water through the shire, exploring how local creeks, rivers and wetlands are connected to each other, to wildlife habitats and ultimately to Western Port Bay. Through art, storytelling and interactive displays, it encouraged residents to see familiar landscapes through a new lens.

Although the exhibition is now closed, the conversation continues. This spring, residents are invited to continue exploring the natural world through ongoing activities, including citizen science like Biodiversity Blitz, our Gardens for Wildlife program and regular Trees for Weeds events.

Programs such as Biodiversity Blitz encourage people to record native plants and wildlife using the iNaturalist platform, contributing valuable information that helps build a better understanding of biodiversity across the region.

"Spring is the perfect time to explore the natural environment and discover the diversity of plants and wildlife around us. You don't need to be a scientist to make a difference," Cr Thomsen said.

"Whether you're walking through a reserve, learning about local species or recording a wildlife sighting, every observation helps build knowledge about our local environment and contributes to its ongoing protection."

Our environmental education initiatives are designed to empower residents with the knowledge and confidence to make a positive difference, whether that's protecting local waterways, supporting wildlife habitats, controlling weeds or participating in citizen science projects.

As Cardinia Shire continues to grow, Council remains committed to working with the community to protect the landscapes, waterways and biodiversity that make the region unique.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/environment



A tree-mendous leap for local wildlife

Hidden high in the treetops across Cardinia Shire live two remarkable native species: southern greater gliders and yellow-bellied gliders.

These protected native species are an important part of our local environment, and conserving their habitat is essential to helping local populations survive and thrive for future generations.

From climate change initiatives and reserve upgrades to environmental monitoring projects, Council has installed almost 60 nest boxes across the shire this year to support gliders and other native wildlife.

Helping wildlife adapt to climate change

As part of our Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, we're taking practical action to help protect wildlife that may be vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate. One of the biggest challenges facing gliders is finding suitable shelter. They rely on large hollow-bearing trees for nesting, breeding and raising their young, but naturally formed hollows can take more than 100 years to develop and are becoming increasingly scarce in some areas.

That's where nest boxes can help. Nest boxes are specially designed structures that replicate the natural hollows found in old trees. Installed high in the tree canopy, they provide safe places for gliders and other native wildlife to shelter, rest and breed when natural hollows are limited.

Across four reserves in Pakenham, Emerald and Gembrook, nest boxes were carefully installed by specialist arborists, and form part of our broader efforts to improve the resilience of local wildlife populations to climate change and other environmental pressures.

A recent night survey at RJ Chambers Flora and Fauna Reserve spotted a southern greater glider near the newly installed boxes. Although they are among Australia's largest gliding mammals, southern greater gliders can be surprisingly difficult to find, thanks to their quiet nature, nocturnal behaviour and remarkable camouflage among the treetops.

Balancing recreation upgrades with wildlife conservation

At Holm Park Reserve in Beaconsfield, glider and bat nest boxes have been installed in nearby treetops to provide safe new homes for local wildlife.

Built in partnership with the Emerald Men's Shed, the boxes were installed ahead of upcoming oval redevelopment works to help protect native species and enhance habitat within the reserve. The project demonstrates how environmental considerations can be incorporated into the planning and delivery of recreation infrastructure upgrades.

Using technology to inform road upgrades

Providing new homes through our nest box program is just one way we're helping local wildlife thrive. We've also used thermal drone surveys to learn more about where gliders live and how they move through our local environment. This valuable information helps us better protect important habitats and informs planning for projects, including road sealing works, before construction begins.

Following the completion of the Bessie Creek Road upgrade in Nar Nar Goon North, we partnered with Trust for Nature to undertake an additional thermal drone surveys in nearby bushland areas. The survey recorded an impressive 12 greater gliders and two yellow-bellied gliders in a single night, providing valuable information to help guide future habitat management and conservation planning.

Protecting local wildlife for the future

These projects might happen quietly behind the scenes, but together they're making a real difference.

From installing nest boxes and restoring habitat to monitoring wildlife populations and planning for climate change, we're investing in practical actions that help preserve the plants, animals and landscapes that make Cardinia Shire so special.

Did you know?

- Greater Gliders don't actually fly. Using a special membrane between their front and back legs, they can glide up to 100 metres between trees, making connected habitats vital for their survival.
- Gliders are nocturnal. They're most active at night, which is why many people never realise they're living nearby.
- A tree hollow suitable for a glider can take more than 100 years to form naturally.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/environment

Let's TALK RUBBISH



Let's go, FOGO!

Did you know that more than 60% of our residents have already opted in for a green-lidded Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) bin as part of their kerbside service? Even better, contamination rates are sitting at less than 1%!

We know our residents are already making good use of their FOGO bins for grass clippings, small branches and fallen leaves, but your green bin can handle much more than just garden waste.

FOGO also accepts:

- Fruit and vegetable scraps.
- Mouldy or expired food.
- Dairy and eggs.
- Meat and seafood (including small bones).
- Coffee grounds and tea leaves.
- Citrus, onion and garlic.
- Paper towel, tissues and serviettes.
- Hair and pet fur.

The key thing to remember? Not to include any food packaging, even if it's "compostable".

With spring and summer just around the corner, gardens start growing faster and backyard barbecues, family gatherings and entertaining often mean more food scraps. Now is the perfect time to opt-in, make more room in your red bin and get the most out of your FOGO bin.

Let's go, FOGO! Order yours today.

Reuse. Rehome. Recycle.

Planning to spring clean? You can always book in your hard rubbish as part of your two-yearly collections.

Before you place everything outside on the kerb, consider the many ways your unwanted items could be reused or recycled.

Start with items that are still in good condition. Could they be sold, donated or passed on to family, friends or neighbours? Your unwanted items could become someone else's treasure.

- **Got e-waste?** Small items such as CDs, handheld devices, batteries and light globes can be dropped off at one of our local e-waste collection points.
- **Cleaning out your wardrobe or linen cupboard?** Most textiles, including clothing, shoes and bedding, can be repurposed rather than sent to landfill. Find local textile bins or book a home collection service (fees apply).
- **Found old paint, chemicals or gas canisters?** Hazardous materials should never go in your household bins. Check with your local transfer station for safe disposal options (fees may apply).
- **For larger items** that are broken, damaged or beyond repair you can take them to a transfer station (fees apply) or arrange a hard waste collection.

Taking a little extra time to sort your unwanted items helps recover valuable materials, reduce landfill and support a more circular economy.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/bins



Grants for good

Central Ward Councillor Collin Ross visiting recent grant recipient, the Cardinia Tigers Netball Club to see their new team uniforms!

Grants at a glance

- **Total funding awarded:** $319,199.86
- **Number of groups, organisations and initiatives supported:** 62
- **Community Capital Works Grant program:** 23 grants totalling $252,933.82 including:
  - » **Minor Capital Works Grants:** 14 projects valued at $202,234.50
  - » **Essential Equipment Grants:** 9 grants worth $50,699.32
- **Wellbeing Support Grant program:** 39 initiatives supported through $66,266.04 in funding.

It's often the small improvements that make the biggest difference – an improved space to gather, new equipment for a sporting or community group, or wellbeing programs that help people connect.

In 2026–27, a total of 62 community groups, not-for-profit organisations and volunteer-led initiatives will share in almost $320,000 as part of Cardinia Shire Council's Wellbeing Support Grant and Community Capital Works Grant programs.

From facility upgrades and essential equipment to community wellbeing initiatives, the funding will help local groups and organisations continue their work in supporting the community, strengthening connection and creating more welcoming and inclusive spaces across the shire.

Central Ward Councillor Collin Ross said Council was proud to support local groups to deliver projects and initiatives that made a positive difference to the community.

"Local community groups and organisations are at the heart of what makes Cardinia Shire such a connected and vibrant place to live," Cr Ross said.

"These grants help give volunteers and organisations the practical support they need to keep delivering important projects, programs and initiatives for our community.

"Whether it's upgrading a much-loved community facility, purchasing essential equipment or supporting a wellbeing initiative, each of these projects makes a positive difference.

"Our community groups and volunteers play a vital role in making Cardinia Shire a great place to live, and we're pleased to support their efforts through these grant programs."

For a full list of grant recipients, or to find out more, head to our website.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/grants

Have you got an idea for a community project?

Applications are now open for stage one – project proposals of the 2027–28 Community Capital Works Grant program.

You're invited to submit a basic project proposal outlining your idea and key details.

Supported project proposals will be invited to complete a detailed grant application.

Project proposal submissions close **9 December 2026**. Visit our website to learn more or register your interest in an upcoming information session.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/ccwg



Spring into action!

As the weather warms up, we've been busy upgrading some of your favourite active recreation spaces, creating even more opportunities to get fresh air and get active outdoors.

Test your BMX skills in Bunyip

BMX riders of all ages and abilities can now enjoy the newly upgraded BMX track at Bunyip Sanctuary. Located off Wattletree Road, the refreshed facility features an improved track layout and surface, upgraded jumps for different skill levels, a junior pump track, enhanced drainage, landscaping, better path connections and spectator amenities.

Play and explore at Lauriston Estate Park

Families are already making the most of the refreshed play space at Lauriston Estate Park. The upgraded park, located off Townley Rd in Koo Wee Rup, now includes more inclusive play equipment, improved pathways and a new shelter, creating a welcoming place where children and families can come together to play, relax and connect. While you're there, keep an eye out for the wooden bandicoot sculpture, which celebrates local wildlife.

A new community hub for Upper Beaconsfield

The Upper Beaconsfield Pavilion is nearing completion and set to become a thriving community hub, featuring modern change rooms, improved accessibility, upgraded amenities, a new Scouts Hall and a community meeting room for events and gatherings. The revitalised facility will support local clubs and community groups for years to come.

Unleash some fun at the brand-new Alma Treloar dog park

You and your paw-esome friend can enjoy the fantastic, improved features at the upgraded Alma Treloar Reserve dog park in Cockatoo! Featuring a large off-leash area with agility equipment, separate entry points for active and quiet dogs, a dedicated quiet zone, walking paths, shelter and seating, there's plenty to enjoy. To help everyone enjoy the park, please keep your dog under control and make sure they can be called back and put on a lead when needed.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/parks

Active Cardinia

We were excited to welcome Richmond Football Club's senior leaders to Cardinia Shire for an inspiring event focused on building stronger community sporting clubs. Local sport and active recreation clubs gained valuable insights into how strong culture and values paired with leading with integrity can help create successful and sustainable clubs.

Through the Active Cardinia Strategy, we're committed to supporting local sport every step of the way, helping clubs to grow, thrive and create positive opportunities for members, volunteers and participants.

The event was delivered in partnership with Aligned Leisure and marked the first of its kind in Cardinia Shire, providing local clubs with a unique opportunity to learn from leaders at the highest level of Australian sport.





It's time to get prepared for summer

What we're doing to prepare

Council works year-round to help reduce fire risk and support our community to be ready for emergencies.

In the lead-up to the warmer months, crews undertake mowing, slashing and vegetation management across Council-managed land to help reduce fuel loads.

We also maintain 33 fire access tracks across the shire to support emergency service access during bushfires.

Council coordinates local emergency planning through the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee and supports relief and recovery efforts during emergencies.

As the weather warms up, now is the time to prepare your property, family and emergency plans before the fire season arrives.

What you can do now

A few simple jobs completed in spring can make your property safer ahead of summer.

Around your property:

- Slash grass and weeds.
- Remove leaves, sticks and other combustible materials from around your home.
- Trim vegetation around your property. Permits may be required for significant vegetation removal, please contact Council for more information.
- Ensure gates, driveways and water supplies are accessible for emergency services.
- Check that water tanks, pumps and hoses are working correctly.
- Make sure your property number can be clearly seen from the road.
- Understand local burning off requirements before undertaking any planned burn.
- Review your emergency plan and discuss it with everyone in your household.

Review your emergency plan:

Emergencies can happen quickly, so it's important everyone in your household knows what they'll do if an emergency occurs.

Take time to:

- Discuss your emergency plan as a family.
- Decide where you'll go if you need to leave.
- Make plans for pets, children and anyone needing additional support.
- Save important emergency contacts in your phone.
- Back up important documents and check your insurance details are up-to-date.
- Pack an emergency kit.
- Download the VicEmergency app and set up local watch zones.

Following a major emergency, services such as power, water, communications and road access may be disrupted. Emergency services may not be able to reach everyone immediately, so it's important to be prepared to look after yourself and your family for the first 72 hours.

Your emergency kit should include:

- Drinking water.
- Non-perishable food.
- Medications.
- First aid supplies.
- Torches and batteries.
- Mobile phone chargers.
- Important documents.
- Supplies for children and pets.

A little preparation today can make a big difference when it matters most.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/emergency

What's on?

Here are some of the events and activities happening across our shire in Spring 2026

Cardinia Cultural Centre (CCC)

Cosentino: UNPLUGGED – The Impossible, Up Close
8 October from 7pm -9pm

Experience an unforgettable evening of close-up magic, mind-bending mentalism and sleight-of-hand as Australia's premier magician, Cosentino, returns to his roots in this intimate live show.

Divas Diwali Bazaar
17 October from 11am-6pm

Experience the colour, culture and excitement of Diwali at this vibrant community bazaar, featuring festive shopping, unique gifts, delicious treats and local businesses from across Melbourne.

Pakenham Community Aged Care Expo
28 October from 10am-1pm

Explore local aged care, health and support services at this free community expo. Speak directly with providers, ask questions, compare options and discover information to help you or a loved one plan for the future with confidence.

Pakenham National Photography Prize 2026
29 October - 22 November

The 22nd annual prize showcases a wide range of contemporary photography from across Australia, including the finalists and winning works from this year's prize.

Moonwalker: Michael Jackson's HIStory
31 October from 7:30pm-10pm

Celebrate the music, moves and legacy of Michael Jackson in this spectacular tribute production.

Unforgotten: Songs of Australians at War
11 November from 10am

Mark Remembrance Day with this powerful Morning Melodies performance by acclaimed songwriter Fred Smith. Through music, storytelling and historic imagery, Unforgotten honours the service and sacrifice of Australians at war and shares the stories behind their experiences.

Libraries

To DNA or not DNA?
21 October from 10am Emerald Library

Qi Gong for Seniors
30 October from 11am Pakenham Library

Horror movie history
30 October from 6:30pm Pakenham Library

Info about Council events: **www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/events**

The information in this edition of Connect was correct at the time of print. For the most up-to-date information about Council services, events and programs, visit **www.cardinia.vic.gov.au**

Acknowledgement of Country

Cardinia Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong and Wurundjeri peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands of Cardinia Shire, and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

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