

Connect

YOUR COUNCIL MAGAZINE

Autumn 2025



LOOKING AHEAD

Have your say on the future of the shire

CARDINIA CALLS FOR SUPPORT

Learn more about our advocacy priorities

MAJOR PROJECTS

We're building a better Cardinia

WHAT'S ON

Check out events happening across the shire

Have your say

Head to Creating Cardinia to share your thoughts and feedback on Council projects and initiatives.

You can stay up to date with your favourite consultations by hitting the 'follow' button at the top of each project page.

Consultations now open or due to open for feedback soon include:

- Council's draft strategic objectives, which will guide the development of the new Council Plan and other key plans.
- Draft Budget 2025-26 and draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29.
- Waste Resource and Recovery Strategy.

Scan the QR code to view our current consultations and to provide your feedback.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay



Pakenham Hills Ward

Cr Jack Kowarzik (Mayor)
0439 620 809 | j.kowarzik@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Bunyip Ward

Cr Alanna Pomeroy (Deputy Mayor)
0436 353 194 | alanna.pomeroy@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Beacon Hills Ward

Cr Brett Owen
0418 993 370 | b.owen@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Central Ward

Cr Collin Ross
0428 598 491 | c.ross@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Henty Ward

Cr Liz Roberts
0428 436 326 | liz.roberts@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Officer Ward

Cr Samantha-Jane Potter
0429 077 510 | s.potter@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Ranges Ward

Cr David Nickell
0428 630 155 | david.nickell@cardinia.vic.gov.au



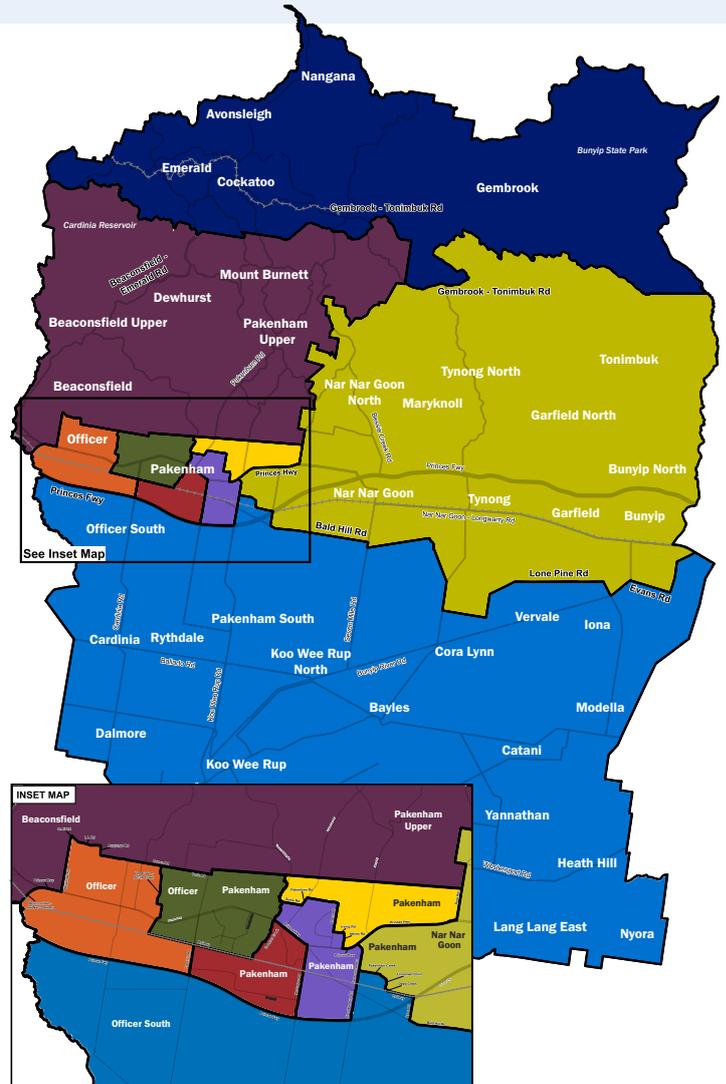
Toomuc Ward

Cr Casey Thomsen
0428 185 791 | casey.thomsen@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Westernport Ward

Cr Trudi Paton
0437 719 572 | trudi.paton@cardinia.vic.gov.au



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

BMX riders, skaters and scooter enthusiasts gathered for a thrilling day of friendly competition at the Pakenham Show recently. Our Youth Services team partnered with Shredability to host the event. Find out more about our services, programs, events and activities for young people at www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/youth





Mayor's Message

Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik with Deputy Mayor Cr Alanna Pomeroy (front row) and (back row L-R) Cr David Nickell, Cr Collin Ross, Cr Trudi Paton, Cr Casey Thomsen, Cr Samantha-Jane Potter, Cr Brett Owen and Cr Liz Roberts.

Reflecting on the first 6 months of the new Council term, I'm filled with a sense of accomplishment, pride and intention. The new Council group, which includes three returning councillors, five new faces and a returning former councillor, has hit the ground running with a number of key projects and strategies underway. Our focus is to work together for the benefit of our community and to ensure our shire remains a great place to call home.

Work has commenced to develop our new Council Plan and associated strategic documents. We're inviting community feedback on the strategic objectives, which will guide the development of the new plans. Thank you to members of our Community Panel for their valuable input and insights as part of the deliberative engagement process in February. Community input is so important in helping us to shape the future of our shire. Find out how you can become involved on pages 4-5.

We've developed our first annual draft budget of the new Council term, with a focus on balancing our response to financial challenges while prioritising existing services and infrastructure to support community needs. We've worked hard to balance the delivery of Council services and projects while

recognising the ongoing cost of living pressures facing our community. We're budgeting for a \$3.2 million adjusted underlying deficit, which is down from this year's current forecast of \$7.5 million, and reflects our commitment to responsible financial management. You can provide feedback on the draft budget until 9 May. See page 5.

Advocacy has been a major focus over the past couple of months, with Council endorsing our key advocacy priorities and launching our Federal election advocacy campaign. We're seeking funding and support to address a number of critical needs across the shire - the Princes Highway intersection upgrades from Nar Nar Goon to Longwarry, Cardinia Life redevelopment, road sealing package and the Lang Lang sand truck bypass. Our campaign aims to amplify our community's voice and seek support for the projects that matter to you. Turn to pages 8-9 to learn more.

It's been great getting out and about with my fellow Councillors across the shire for my regular Meet the Mayor sessions. We've heard what's important to you, answered questions and enjoyed a chat! Keep an eye on my Facebook page and Council's website for details of upcoming sessions.

I've also enjoyed celebrating the completion of a number of projects with

the community recently, including Koo Wee Rup Bowls and Community Hub (page 10) and the Alma Treloar Reserve amphitheatre and new stage (page 13).

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Connect* magazine and, if you're not already on our mailing list for our monthly *Connect+* e-newsletter, be sure to sign up on our website (see details below).

Cr Jack Kowarzik
Mayor of Cardinia Shire

Council meetings

Council and Town Planning meetings are held monthly. Check our website for the most up-to-date information.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/meetings

You can watch Council meetings live or catch up on previous meetings at:

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/webcast

Sign up to Connect+

Sign up to *Connect+*, our new monthly electronic newsletter, to receive the latest Council news direct to your inbox. Read about Council services, programs and projects as well as local events, activities and community engagement opportunities.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/connect

Looking to the future



Have Your Say

Community input is essential in helping to guide Council in planning for the future of our shire.

That's why we're inviting you to provide feedback on Council's draft strategic objectives, which will guide the development of the new Council Plan 2025–29 and other key plans.

You may be wondering what a strategic objective is – these are goals that Council will work towards achieving over the next 4 years during the life of the new Council Plan.

These objectives, or goals, have been informed by priorities that the Community Panel identified during the deliberative engagement process in February.

The Community Panel, which was made up of residents from across the shire, shared ideas and valuable insights over four workshops as part of the deliberative engagement process. The panel reviewed and updated Council's Community Vision and identified a number of key focus areas that have helped to inform the draft strategic objectives.

Now it's time for you to tell us what you think of the draft strategic objectives.



Thriving communities: we deliver inclusive programs and facilities that enhance engagement, wellbeing and resilience.



Vibrant places: we celebrate our well-designed towns and infrastructure that strengthens belonging and connection.



Adaptive environments: we care for our natural environment and support recovery from challenges.



Prosperous economies: we encourage urban and rural business and local employment to grow.



Responsible leaders: we demonstrate responsible leadership and financial stewardship.

The new Council Plan and other key plans will ultimately guide Council's activities and decision making for the next 4 years, so it's important that we develop plans that reflect the community's priorities and that will enable us to respond to our rapid growth and challenges, and ensure that our shire remains a vibrant and liveable place that people are proud to call home.

How can I get involved?

Community consultation is open until 11 May.

Head to our Creating Cardinia engagement platform to learn more or to complete the survey.

What's next?

Following the consultation period, the finalised strategic objectives will inform the development of the Council Plan 2025–29, the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan and Liveability Plan. Each plan will go out for wider community engagement later in the year.

Community Vision 2040

One of the key roles of the Community Panel was to review and update the Community Vision 2040. The new vision below has been endorsed by Council:

“We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people.

“We understand, value and incorporate these contributions, past and present. We empower everyone to have a voice. We speak with the optimism and insight of our people, the energy of our community members and the wisdom of all those that came before us.

“We support all people of Cardinia so that they are strong, resilient, safe, socially connected and physically and mentally well. We do this by strengthening community cohesion through engagement and advocacy.

“We care for our country. We take preventative and mitigative actions on climate change in our community, environment, and the planet in everything we do.

“We are sustainable in the way we live, we work close to home, we grow food and we make valuable contributions to the nation. We protect our community, farms, industries, landscapes and biodiversity to ensure they are resilient.

“We provide fit for purpose infrastructure and services that cater for the growth of the community. Growth will be managed prudently and sustainably so that it enables our progress towards community priorities.

“Through advocacy and community engagement, the infrastructure, local community and healthcare services are in place to meet our needs.”

Draft Budget 2025–26

Cardinia Shire Council's Draft Budget 2025–26 is available for community feedback until 9 May.

The draft budget is the first budget of the new Council term and highlights how Council proposes to fund its investment in services, projects and programs over the next four years.

The draft budget strives to reflect the key priorities identified by the Community Panel as part of the deliberative engagement process for the development of our new Council Plan 2025–29.

We've worked hard to balance our response to financial challenges while prioritising existing services and infrastructure to support community needs.

Council has also developed the draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025–29, which determines the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council over the next 4 years and sets guidelines for use in developing Council's Budget, Financial Plan and other strategic planning documents.

To view the Draft Budget 2025–26 and Draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025–29, and to find out how you can provide feedback, please visit our Creating Cardinia website.

Council will consider community feedback before the draft documents are considered for endorsement at the ordinary Council Meeting on 16 June.

Learn more

Head to the Future Cardinia page on our Creating Cardinia website to learn more and provide feedback.



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Introducing Officer's newest park!



Get ready to explore the ultimate destination for adventure, fitness, relaxation and nature right here in Officer!

Our brand-new 10-hectare regional park, perched on the scenic hilltop along Lansell Avenue, is now open.

Epic multi-level playgrounds

Have you seen our rainbow adventure playground and the impressive two 20-metre-long embankment slides running down Lansell Avenue?

Our new park features an incredible playground with various play zones and experiences, which have been designed to entertain everyone from young children to adventurous adults, guaranteeing fun for all ages.

Parkour

Officer District Park is home to Cardinia Shire's first purpose-built Parkour Zone, including a mix of obstacles of different heights, angles, and shapes. Parkour equipment is designed to be traversed in a fluid motion, running, climbing, leaping and balancing between obstacles.

Fitness facilities

Looking for a new place to get some exercise and fresh air? Look no further than Officer District Park! Complete with fitness running stairs, a 1km loop track around the hillside and two exercise equipment stations, the park is an ideal spot for fitness enthusiasts to visit.

Scenic lookout and picnic facilities

At the top of the hillside, a lookout offers breathtaking views over the southern part of the shire and out to Western Port, providing a perfect spot for relaxation and appreciation of the natural surroundings. Picnic facilities, including tables, seating, barbecues and shading are located closer to the central plaza area.

Dog off-leash area

Let your furry friends run free in our dedicated off-leash area, designed for fun and social interaction. The space

includes a larger off-leash area for all dogs to enjoy which includes agility equipment and seating, and there is also a smaller enclosed space for smaller dogs to feel safe to explore.

Dog owners are reminded to always maintain control of their dogs, while visiting off-leash areas. All dog owners must be able to recall their dog promptly and place it back on a leash if required.

Parking and public toilets are available onsite. A permanent unique two-level restroom facility is under construction and will service the split-level design of the play spaces.

Officer's new regional park is the perfect spot for your next day out with family, friends, and pets. Whether you're looking for adventure, a workout, or a peaceful retreat, this park has it all. Come and experience the vibrant, multifaceted charm of our newest landmark!



Building A Better Cardinia

We have been busy working to build, maintain and upgrade new roads, parks, sporting reserves, community facilities and infrastructure around the shire.

However, we understand that these projects can cause disruptions that are an inconvenience. We're aiming to keep you more informed about the works we're planning and completing as they progress.

To find out more about projects being delivered around you, head to our Building a Better Cardinia website for all the latest updates.

 www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/majorprojects

Featured projects

Works underway

- Bessie Creek Road, Nar Nar Goon North.
- First Grenville package, Emerald.
- 2024-25 road resurfacing program – more than 110 sealed road segments over more than 30kms will be resealed or asphalted.
- 2024-25 Black Spot program, including Fieldstone Boulevard, Beaconsfield.
- Garfield North Cannibal Creek Community Hub.

Recently completed

- 2024-25 road renewal program – four roads included in Bunyip, Cardinia, Nar Nar Goon and Officer.
- Koo Wee Rup Bowling Club Pavilion.
- Boollam Boollam Child and Family Centre, Pakenham.
- Oxford Street, Lang Lang.
- Alma Treloar carpark, Cockatoo.

Upcoming projects

- Old Gembrook package, Emerald.
- Stoney Creek package, Beaconsfield Upper.
- Huxtable Road, Pakenham Upper.
- Arena Parade and Princes Highway intersection.

Reimagining Pakenham

Pakenham Revitalisation is a long-term priority project which aims to reimagine the future look and feel of the heart of Pakenham.

We are committed to finding new ways to make Pakenham an active and vibrant community town centre, and we have been taking time to review and consider the best ways to deliver streetscape upgrades in the community's best interest.

Through the proposed upgrades, we are aiming to improve accessibility, community safety, connectivity, boost the local economy and create an attractive environment that can host a range of events and activities.

Council remains committed to delivering the Pakenham Revitalisation project over the next decade, and we are still looking forward to delivering vital upgrades and reimagining Pakenham as a place for people.

We are hoping to share an exciting update with the community shortly about our proposed plans for this project!



Cardinia Calls For...



Cardinia Shire Council is calling for investment and support to help our community thrive.

We're working hard to advocate for what our community needs.

Council is seeking investment from all levels of government for essential infrastructure and services to support our rapidly growing community's needs, now and into the future.

At the centre of our advocacy campaign are four critical projects that our community deserves.

Princes Highway intersection upgrades

The need

The intersections along Princes Highway between Nar Nar Goon and Longwarry are known for near misses and accidents. There are no slip lanes or overpasses, forcing vehicles entering the highway to pull out in front of oncoming traffic. Since 2017, there have been more than 115 road accidents along this 30km stretch of road, including four fatalities.

The ask

Council is seeking \$25 million to develop a business case for construction of four grade separated interchanges along the Princes Highway between Nar Nar Goon and Longwarry.

The plan

If supported, Council would partner with other levels of government to deliver a business case and masterplan that outlines the safest and most effective solutions to the current intersections linking Nar Nar Goon, Tynong, Garfield, Bunyip and Longwarry to the Princes Highway. These plans will then be used to deliver the new interchanges with the support of the Australian and Victorian governments.

Community benefit

These critical intersection upgrades will enhance road safety for community members and visitors to the shire, and will improve access to the townships of Tynong, Garfield and Bunyip. These towns are also significant tourist destinations, with many people travelling from Melbourne to visit Gippsland.

Cardinia Life redevelopment

The need

Since Cardinia Life opened in 2006, the shire's population has more than doubled and it is expected to grow by another 40,000 over the next 10 years. This ageing facility has been unable to keep up with demand, with community members missing out on swim classes, community sport and leisure activities.

The ask

Council is calling for \$28.54 million from both the Australian and Victorian governments to commence Stage 1 of the Cardinia Life redevelopment, providing modern sports and aquatic facilities in the heart of Cardinia Shire.

The plan

If funded, Council would deliver a total refurbishment of Cardinia Life in three stages, improving and expanding on aquatic, sporting, and community facilities, including new aquatic facilities, additional sports courts (bringing the total to 12), expanded gym, leisure and wellness opportunities, and better community facilities.

Community benefit

A redeveloped Cardinia Life will benefit residents of all ages and abilities from right across the shire, as well as provide opportunities for people to stay healthy and active, and help to build connection within the community.

The redeveloped centre will be future-proofed to cater to population growth, to meet our community's needs now and into the future.



Road sealing package

The need

Cardinia Shire's hills communities are home to an extensive network of unsealed roads that present significant safety, maintenance and amenity issues across the region. Our community has been asking for safe, reliable roads in this part of the shire to ensure emergency services have access during times of emergency such as bushfires and storms. The former Federal Government committed \$150 million over 10 years to seal roads in the northern region of the shire through the 'Sealing the Hills' program. Following the change of government, only \$41 million has been provided.

The ask

Council is seeking \$109 million to seal roads in emergency-prone areas in the northern region of the shire, to improve access and safety during natural disasters.

The plan

If funding is reinstated, Council would upgrade and seal hundreds of kilometres of roads across the Dandenong Ranges, including in Emerald, Cockatoo, Gembrook, and the surrounding towns.

Community benefit

Sealing additional roads in this area will not only improve access and safety, but it will also mean that residents no longer have to deal with regular potholes, road surface issues and dust. The roads will also be safer and more reliable in emergency situations.

Sealing the extensive road network in the hills will dramatically reduce ongoing maintenance costs and will free up Council funds for investment in other much needed community services and projects that benefit people right across the shire.



Lang Lang bypass

The need

Sand extraction is a major industry in Lang Lang and the Victorian Government is actively encouraging the expansion of existing quarries. Lang Lang sand is essential to the building industry, but trucks must pass through the main streets of Lang Lang to reach the rest of Melbourne.

Analysis by Council has revealed that truck traffic through Lang Lang town centre has increased significantly in recent years. The latest data shows that more than 80 trucks an hour travel through the main shopping strip in Lang Lang on weekdays – this is an average of one truck every 45 seconds.

The ask

Council is seeking \$24 million from the Australian and Victorian governments to construct the new bypass road, which will divert large trucks from the Lang Lang town centre and provide an alternative route that connects quarries directly to the South Gippsland Highway.

The plan

If funded, Council would construct a dedicated bypass for trucks travelling from sand quarries in Lang Lang towards the South Gippsland Highway, removing them from local roads and Lang Lang's main streets.

Community benefit

A bypass would improve traffic flow for quarry trucks and other heavy vehicles travelling through Lang Lang and future-proof the area by accommodating more trucks with larger loads. Most importantly, a bypass would improve safety and amenity. The quarries are a significant source of local jobs in the region, and the bypass will support the local economy and encourage growth in this industry without compromising the liveability of Lang Lang.



Learn more about our advocacy priorities:



www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/advocacy

New bowls and community hub for Koo Wee Rup



Cr Trudi Paton and Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik were joined by Ellen Brown, wife of former councillor the late Ray Brown, and grandson Matthew, to honour his memory at the opening of the Ray Brown Memorial Community Rooms.



The Koo Wee Rup community has celebrated the opening of the new state-of-the-art bowls and community hub.

The modern, modular build features social, lounge and community rooms, separate kitchen and office spaces, first aid room, change rooms, toilet amenities and a large, decked area and spectator seating. A new car park and access paths have also been completed.

Westernport Ward Councillor Cr Trudi Paton said she was pleased the project was now complete.

“The new community rooms provide marvellous meeting and activity spaces for Koo Wee Rup’s active community groups,” Cr Paton said.

“Combined with the bright, modern and well fitted social spaces, this new building puts Koo Wee Rup on the map as a classy event space and Koo Wee Rup’s Bowls President, Tim, will be keen to hear from anyone looking to hire it.”

As part of the redevelopment project, a community room in the new facility has been dedicated in the memory of former Westernport Ward Councillor, the late Ray Brown, who played a pivotal role in securing funding for the project. The project was jointly funded by Council, Victorian Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund and the Federal Government’s Building Better Regions Fund.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/majorprojects

Stan Henwood nominees announced

Congratulations to our Stan Henwood Award nominees for 2025.

These worthy community members have been nominated for the award for their commitment to volunteering and the local community. The winner will be announced during a special ceremony during national Volunteers Week in May.

The nominees are:

- Denise Davidson
- Geoffrey Young

- George Fry
- Kirra Kruzicevic
- Meg Platte
- Ray Spencer
- Ron Harmer
- Sarah Kelly
- Sunny Duggal

To learn more about the nominees, visit our website.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/stanhenwood

Making Cardinia Shire a better place

Would you like to give back to the community and connect with others? Volunteering with a local group may be for you!

Whether you’re interested in gardening, the environment, sports and recreation, or just want to contribute to making the community a better place, there is a volunteering opportunity for everyone.

You can search for volunteer roles on our website, and access information and workshops to support you in your volunteering journey.

We’re running a number of free volunteer training sessions to support the shire’s many volunteer groups and organisations. Designed for both current and prospective volunteers, the sessions will help participants build their skills and knowledge.

For more information about opportunities and workshops, head to our website.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/volunteering

Officer town centre



Cardinia Shire Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik and Officer Ward Cr Samantha-Jane Potter look to the future for Officer town centre.



Jobs boost

The Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan has been approved.

The Minister for Planning has approved the Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan and Infrastructure Contributions Plan under Amendment C274, which is incorporated into the Cardinia Planning Scheme.

The precinct will offer a dedicated hub for employment separate from residential areas, providing ample space for industries requiring larger lots and buffer distances from sensitive uses. With convenient access to infrastructure, nearby services, and freight connections, the precinct is designed to attract a diverse range of innovative industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and commercial operations. Officer South sets a new standard for future employment precincts in the shire.

This State Significant Employment Precinct will generate abundant employment opportunities, with approximately 22,000 diverse new jobs created closer to emerging communities in Cardinia Shire. The precinct will also feature a well-designed and sustainable residential neighbourhood for around 5,000 residents to support living and working locally. The plan also aims to enhance local biodiversity with more than 330 hectares of open space and a focus on the protection of Cardinia Creek and Lower Gum Scrub Creek.

The approval of the Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan and subsequent Infrastructure Contributions Plan further strengthen the Council's advocacy efforts in calling for the extension of Thompsons Road to connect Berwick-Cranbourne Road in Clyde with Koo Wee Rup Road in Pakenham.

Council remains committed to working with landowners and the Victorian Government to progress development of the Officer town centre.

The town centre will be developed in line with the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and will accommodate multiple uses, including retail, commercial and office use, supermarkets and shops, hospitality and entertainment activities, health and government services, and higher density housing such as town houses and apartments.

Council is responsible for assessing and issuing planning permits, and providing assistance and guidance on meeting the relevant planning requirements. However, Council cannot progress development on behalf of private or State Government landowners.

Cardinia Shire Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik said development of the town centre was reliant on landowners choosing to develop their land.

"Unfortunately, Council cannot influence the timing of development in Officer town centre, as landowners have the right to decide when to develop their land.

"Council issues planning permits for development, however, this doesn't necessarily guarantee development commences. The permit holder decides when they will progress with their

development and use of the site. Often, this decision can be impacted by various commercial and market factors."

Officer Ward Councillor Samantha-Jane Potter said she looked forward to further development of the town centre.

"The ambition for Officer town centre is to create a diverse and vibrant space that accommodates multiple uses," Cr Potter said.

"Whilst Council is unable to make planning decisions on behalf of landowners, Council officers are available to support and assist landowners as development progresses."

Council has issued a permit for a site in Officer north of the highway for a mixed-use commercial development including a supermarket, offices and other retailers. Council is also currently working with another major retailer to progress a planning permit application for a site in Siding Avenue. We will share more information when it becomes publicly available.

Council's Planning and Economic Development teams are frequently meeting with developers, investors and businesses to promote opportunities in Officer Town Centre.

Shape our future waste services



The community will soon be invited to have their say on the future of waste services in Cardinia Shire, including household bins, hard waste collection and green waste drop-off events.

Cardinia Shire Council is renewing its Waste Resource and Recovery Strategy. This strategy serves as a roadmap for the future direction of Council's waste services, education and advocacy.

Community feedback will help create a draft strategy. In early 2026, the community will be invited to share their thoughts on the draft, before the strategy is finalised.

To stay in the loop, go to www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

For info on our current Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, go to

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/wastestrategy

Upcoming green waste drop-off event

Drop off your green waste for FREE at our June drop-off event!

Event details

Location: Future Recycling Transfer Station (30-32 Exchange Drive, Pakenham)

Date: Saturday 7 June, Monday 9 June to Saturday 14 June.

Times: Mon: 8am - 2pm
Tue to Fri: 7:30am - 3:30pm
Sat: 8am - 2pm

These events are a free service accepting residential amounts of green waste including garden prunings, tree branches and trunks (up to 30 centimetres wide and 1 metre long), weeds, grass clippings, leaves, and flowers.

Residents must present photo ID as proof of residence within Cardinia Shire to access the free service.

Waste will only be accepted from residential vehicles and trailers; commercial business operators cannot use this service.

More information available at www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/dropoff

Report dumped rubbish

The community is encouraged to report dumped rubbish on Council-owned land to Cardinia Shire Council.

Council investigates all cases of dumped rubbish on council-owned land and has CCTV cameras at rubbish dumping hotspots.

Dumped rubbish ends up in our streets, parks and waterways, impacting on our environment and community health. In 2023-24, it cost Council more than \$300,000 to manage and remove dumped rubbish in the shire.

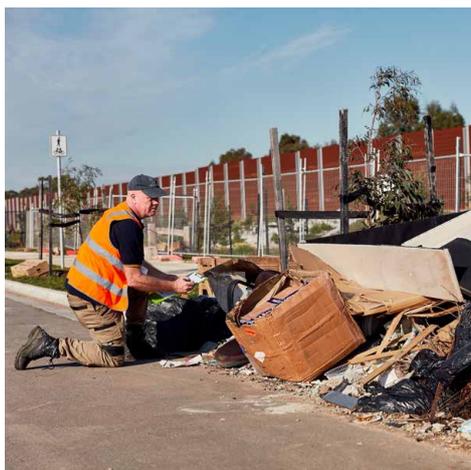
When reporting dumped rubbish to Council, having as much detail as possible helps the investigation. Council values community safety and asks that community members do not approach anyone dumping rubbish or touch dumped rubbish.

For more information on dumped rubbish:

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/dumpedrubbish

For more information on how to dispose of household items:

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/atoz





New amphitheatre takes centre stage

Cockatoo community members, including the Cockatoo Community Childcare, joined Cardinia Shire Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik, Ranges Ward Councillor David Nickell, Cardinia Shire Council CEO Carol Jeffs, Member for Eastern Victoria and Minister, the Hon Harriet Shing, and Member for Monbulk Daniela De Martino for the official opening.

The amphitheatre and new stage at Alma Treloar Reserve in Cockatoo is now open.

The amphitheatre and stage have been upgraded to increase participation and inclusion of people with disability by enhancing access and reducing barriers. Other works include a new shade sail, picnic and barbecue area, drinking fountain, accessible ramps, seating, tables and landscaping.

Ranges Ward Councillor David Nickell said he was pleased to see the project completed.

“It’s great to see this project delivered for the Cockatoo community, and no doubt the community is looking forward to a range of community events, performances and concerts being hosted at the new amphitheatre,” Cr Nickell said.

“These upgrades will increase the amenity and appeal of the reserve to visitors, significantly reduce ongoing maintenance and will offer a more comfortable experience for the audience.

“Off the back of this latest milestone at the reserve, I am looking forward

to the community engagement on the completion of the dog park soon.”

Works have been completed as part of the Alma Treloar Reserve Masterplan and have been funded by Cardinia Shire Council, the Victorian Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund and the Federal Government’s Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund. Car park works have also been completed.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/majorprojects

Trees for Weeds event

Are weeds causing trouble in your garden? Why not trade them in for some free, local native plants at the upcoming Trees for Weeds swap event in Pakenham?

We’re excited to partner with the Cardinia Environment Coalition to host a Trees for Weeds swap event on Saturday 31 May.

Bring along small clippings of your weeds to get expert advice from a specialist

team and swap your samples for free indigenous plants.

Date: Saturday 31 May

Time: 9am–12pm

Location: Cardinia Environment Coalition Nursery, 62 Cameron Way, Pakenham

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/weeds

Apply for a grant

Applications are open for our Heritage Grants and Beautification Grants programs.

The Heritage Grants program, open until 30 May, supports the local community to restore and conserve places of heritage value.

The Beautification Grants program supports community groups and individuals to undertake landscape enhancement projects on public open spaces and is open until 9 May.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/grants



Register for kinder or attend an open day

Cardinia Shire families are encouraged to register for 2026 kindergarten places by 30 June 2025 to be considered for first-round offers.

Kindergarten is free at Cardinia Shire’s community kindergartens, and Cardinia Shire Council provides a central registration portal for sessional

kindergarten programs offered across the shire.

Kindergarten open days will be held at all sessional kindergartens across the shire during May. Parents and carers are invited to visit the kindergartens, talk to educators and learn about the unique facilities, programs and activities on offer.

For more information, details about the open days, or to register for kindergarten, head to our website.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/kindergarten

Calling Cardinia dads

If you’re a dad looking for support, guidance, and a space to build social connections, register now for our Cardinia Dads support groups.

These free 6-week support groups are offered as part of Council’s Maternal and Child Health services and will help you build social connections with other dads from the area, receive information about support services, and learn more about early childhood development and early years services.



Cardinia Dads support groups help to connect dads in the shire.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/mch

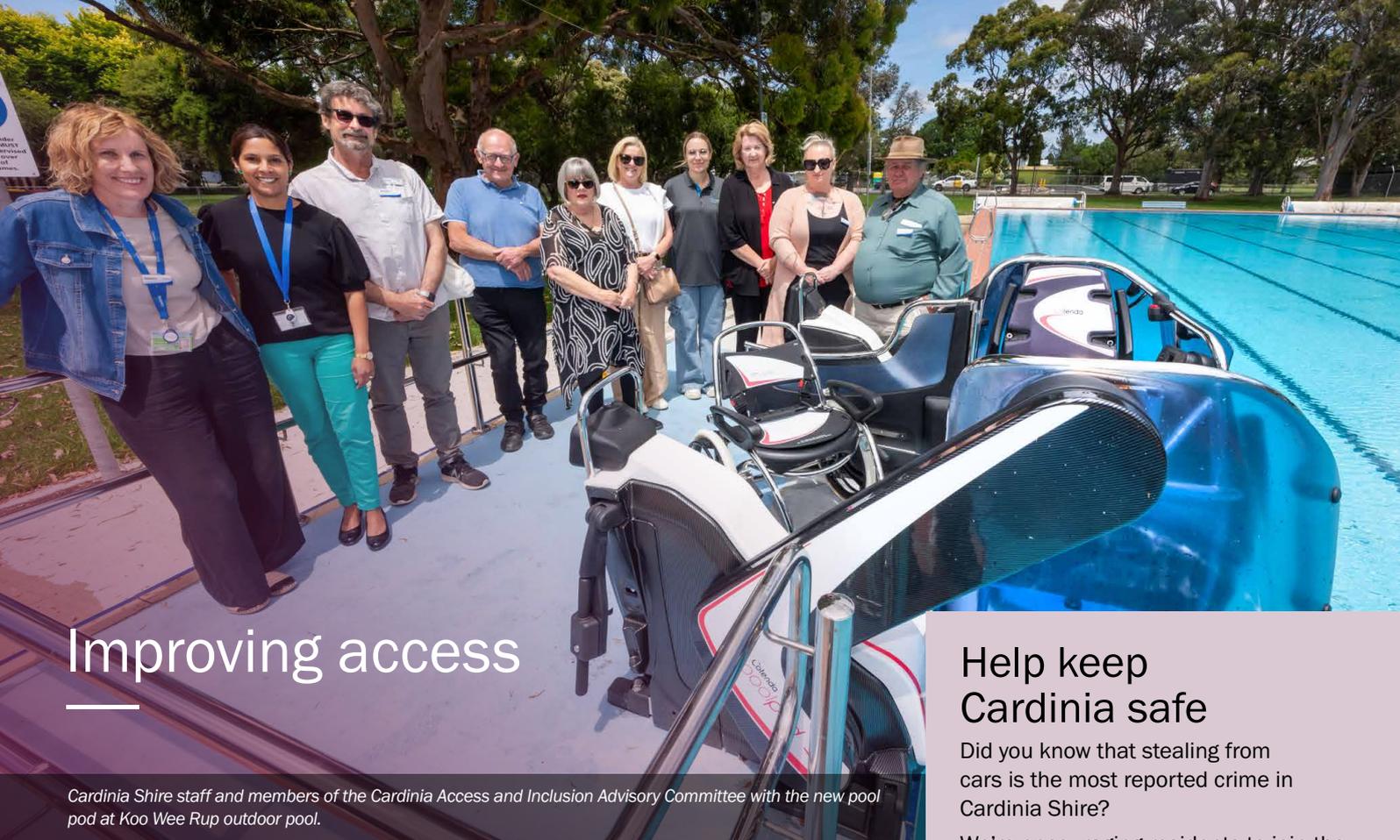
New kinder coming to Lang Lang

We’re partnering with the Victorian Government to deliver a new kindergarten and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) facility for Lang Lang.

As part of the Building Blocks Partnership, the Victorian Government is contributing \$3 million to build the new Lang Lang Kindergarten on a Council-owned site in Oxford Street.

The new kindergarten will feature two kindergarten rooms, allowing us to provide a total of 118 kinder places for local families, as well as a consulting room, outdoor play space and off-street car parking.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/majorprojects



Improving access

Cardinia Shire staff and members of the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee with the new pool pod at Koo Wee Rup outdoor pool.

We're making our facilities more accessible for our community as part of our Disability Access Upgrade Program 2024–25.

We've installed an innovative new pool pod and undertaken accessible bathroom upgrades at the Koo Wee Rup outdoor pool, with works completed late last year.

Work is now underway on an accessible bathroom upgrade at Lilypond House

Community Centre in Pakenham, with works expected to be complete by June.

Council recognises that it has an important role to play in encouraging and supporting active participation in community life, and ensuring that Council's services and facilities are accessible, equitable and inclusive.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/accessibility

Immunisations

Keeping up to date with routine immunisations is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting children and adults against many diseases.

Our immunisation service provides infants, children, adolescents, and adults that fall under special risk groups with free vaccines eligible under the National Immunisation Program.

Immunisation bookings can be made throughout the year and across various sites in Cardinia Shire.

View the full booking schedule and make a booking on our website.



Immunisation bookings are available across Cardinia Shire.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/immunisations

Help keep Cardinia safe

Did you know that stealing from cars is the most reported crime in Cardinia Shire?

We're encouraging residents to join the 9PM Routine, a community initiative led by Victoria Police and supported by Council, to help secure your valuables and deter thieves. We're asking our community to:

- Collect valuables from your car
- Lock your car
- Lock your home (doors and windows)
- Lock your garage
- Park in secure, well-lit areas.

By making this a nightly habit, we can keep our community safe. If you see anything suspicious, don't hesitate to report it. In an emergency call 000 or for non-urgent matters, phone Victoria Police on 131 444.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/communitysafety

Booking Cardinia

Did you know that you can hire a range of indoor and outdoor Council facilities for your next event?

Head to Booking Cardinia – our online booking request website – to submit an enquiry and check availability for a range of indoor and outdoor spaces available for shire, including community halls, meeting rooms, parks and reserves.

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/bookingcardinia

What's on?

Here are just some of the amazing events and activities happening in our shire

Cardinia Cultural Centre

Artemis: Utter Mess

A show about labels and the difference between the words that confine us and the words that set us free.

Saturday 17 May, 6–7pm



Thndo

Experience the unforgettable talent of Thndo as she delivers a powerful performance alongside a skilled guitarist, as part of the Sip and See program.

Wednesday 18 June, 10am–12:05pm

The Wobbly Wallaby and The Absolute Bandicoot

A multi-sensory immersion into a story set in the forest of the Dandenong Ranges, themed around neurodiversity, empathy and emotional awareness.

Saturday 28 June, 10–11am



Polite Mammals

Celebrate animals of all kinds in this variety show for the whole family.

Saturday 12 July, 1:30–2:30pm

Subscribe to Cardinia Cultural Centre's What's On monthly newsletter or follow the social media pages for the latest shows, exhibitions and workshops.

www.cardiniaculturalcentre.com.au

Libraries

Storytime

Emerald Library,
Thursdays 11:15am–12pm
Pakenham Library,
Thursdays 11am–11:45am

Toddler time

Pakenham Library, Tuesdays 11–11:30am
Emerald Library, Fridays 11:15–11:45am

Baby rhyme time

Pakenham Library, Mondays
2:15–2:45pm, Wednesdays 10:30–11am
Emerald Library, Mondays 11:15–11:45am

Youth writing group on Zoom

Fourth Thursday of each month,
4pm (online)

Board game club

Pakenham Library
Second Saturday of each month,
10:30am–3:30pm

Tech help one-on-one

Emerald Library
Tuesdays 2pm or 3pm

All events are free.

Visit: myli.au/cardiniaevents

For 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.

Cardinia Shire Council

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Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

TTY users: 1300 677 then ask
for 1300 787 624

Speak and Listen users: 1300 555 727
then ask for 1300 787 624

After-hours emergencies: 1300 787 624

 **Translating and Interpreting Service**
(TIS) 131 450 (ask for 1300 787 624)

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