



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Community Newsletter

Summer 2020 – 2021

Outdoor Dining in the Pyrenees Shire

Residents may have noticed the roll out of new outdoor dining barriers for hospitality businesses throughout the Pyrenees Shire.

The barriers have been built and installed as part of the State Government's Outdoor Eating and Entertainment package, which provided \$250,000 for councils to improve outdoor dining in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Individual hospitality businesses were also able to access up to \$5000 to buy outdoor furniture to further enhance their alfresco dining.

The new café barriers have been widely welcomed by business owners.

"The barriers have given our town of Beaufort some consistency and street appeal, which assists with the overall feel of the town and enticing visitors to spend time here," Samantha Thayer from the Pyrenees Pantry in Beaufort said.

Across the road, Michelle Hawkes, owner of Café 56, is similarly enthusiastic.

"I've noticed that since the outdoor barriers have been installed and we've got our seats towards the road rather against the shop we've had a lot more people using them," Ms Hawkes said.

Mayor Damian Ferrari said he hoped that locals and visitors will get out and enjoy eating outdoors, particularly as the weather gets warmer.

"We understand how tough this year has been for the local business community, so we're excited that we've been able to assist businesses to improve their outdoor dining experiences as part of the COVID-19 recovery," Cr Ferrari said.

More improvements are planned through late December and January, including the installation of planter boxes and other infrastructure to support outdoor dining and encourage footpath use. Business owners are excited about these further improvements. "Our customers are opting to sit outside since the café barriers have been installed. When you create a beautiful space people want to be in it," said Ms Thayer, who is particularly looking forward to getting umbrellas that will further add to the feel and character of outdoor dining.

Other businesses have also benefited from the funding package. The planter boxes are being fabricated locally, the plants will be supplied by a local nursery, while the ongoing care of the plants has also been contracted out locally.

In consultation with local hospitality businesses there will be further efforts to improve the outdoor dining experience in the Shire in the new year.

Council Place Making Facilitator Kate Joss and Community and Economic Recovery Officer Sheree Chevalier enjoy a drink at a café with the new barriers.



Contact Your Councillor

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Shaping the Pyrenees: We WANT YOU!

In the first half of 2021, Pyrenees Shire Council will be working with community to establish three important strategic documents: our Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan.

Community Vision (10 years)

The Community Vision will describe the aspirations for the Pyrenees Shire Community for 2031. It will lay out what the Shire region will be like as a place to live, play, work and visit in the future. The vision will identify the priorities for how to achieve these aspirations.

Council Plan (4 years)

The Council Plan is closely related to the Community vision and will set goals and measures for how to achieve the vision.

Financial Plan (10 years)

The Financial Plan articulates what services and initiatives will be developed and implemented by Council to work toward achieving the objectives set out in the Council Plan.

How will these plans affect me?

The Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan will guide the ways in which Council plans and delivers services that affect every person who lives, visits, plays, or works in the Pyrenees Shire Council area. This includes how Council manages things like:

- **Services** from community care to waste collection
- **Infrastructure** from roads to sporting facilities
- **Amenity** from parks to the look and feel of the Shire's towns and places.

Shaping Pyrenees Postcards

To start us off in this process, all residents are invited to tell us what they value most about our community, in the enclosed postcards. More copies of these postcards can be found at the Beaufort and Avoca Resource Centres, if you'd like to have one for each member of the family. You can also respond online at www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/shaping

Community Engagement in 2021

Over January and February 2021, we will be recruiting participants to form a community panel to have input into this planning process between March and June 2021. There'll be more information to follow. If you would like to express interest in being involved, or hear more about the project, please contact Community Engagement Officer, Ember Parkin ember.parkin@pyrenees.vic.gov.au

The Book-lovers Bus is Coming

The Pyrenees Shire's new mobile library bus will be operational in early 2021. The Renault Master Bus is fully fitted out, it just needs the exterior artwork to be completed and it will be hitting the roads of the Shire, delivering books to remote and rural communities, and extending the reach of Beaufort and Avoca libraries. The bus has been funded by the Living Libraries program from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.



Library Services Co-ordinator Peter O'Rourke tests the awning of the new library bus.



Introducing the Pyrenees Shire's new Economic and Community Recovery Officer

Hello. My name is Sheree Chevalier and I am the Economic and Community Recovery Officer for the Pyrenees Shire. Part of my role covers assisting COVID-19 affected businesses and sole traders to connect with government and local support systems. These supports include financial assistance, applying for grants, mentoring, and mental health and wellbeing issues. Please feel free to phone me on 0429 917 891 or email me on sheree.chevalier@pyrenees.vic.gov.au. I would love to help you.

The Economic and Community Recovery Officer position has been made possible thanks to the Victorian Government's Working for Victoria initiative.

Books for the Little Ones

Improving literacy rates is an important goal of Pyrenees Shire Council's Maternal and Child Health Service.

This year our MC&H nurses have bought a range of books to provide to children at their key ages and stages visits. This is an annual program.

Reading and storytelling with babies and children promotes brain development and imagination, develops language and emotions, and strengthens relationships. (www.raisingchildren.net.au)



Pictured with the new collection of books headed out to Pyrenees children are Ele Welsh, Billy Welsh and Sarah Deppeler.



Your elected Council, lead by Mayor Damian Ferrari, and councillors Ron Eason, Robert Vance, Tanya Kehoe and David Clark.



Council received a new CAT grader this year for road works in the northern part of Pyrenees Shire. Pictured is Grader Driver/Leading Hand Assistant Colin Gloury.

Renewable Energy for Skipton Hospital

Leading the way in renewable-energy innovation, Beaufort and Skipton Health Services (BSHS) is installing a new straw pellet-fuelled boiler at Skipton Hospital. Straw from local farms will fuel the bioenergy boiler, providing hot water and hydronic heating for the hospital.

Pyrenees Shire Council has partnered with the health service, local farmers and the State Government to help deliver this project, which was funded through the Renewable Communities Program.

"Council worked with the farming group to demonstrate the potential for straw to be

a competitively priced renewable energy," Pyrenees Shire Council Mayor Damian Ferrari said.

Meryn Pease, the Chief Executive Officer of the BSHS, said the straw-fuelled system would replace LPG.

"We are really excited to be involved in this project which is about using renewable energy sourced from within our local community, and where the money for our heating will benefit local farmers."

Created using a special mill, straw pellets are highly combustible, cheaper than fossil fuels, do not produce any poisonous gases, and are carbon neutral because the growing of the straw absorbs as much carbon dioxide as the burning produces.

Furthermore, residual ashes can be returned to farmers to fertilise the next season's crop, creating a cyclical process.

Enerbi Pty Ltd has been engaged to install the new boiler system, and the project is expected to be finalised within the next couple of months.

The project has been awarded \$273,662 in funding from the Victorian Government through the New Energy Jobs Fund Round Four - Renewable Communities Program.

Pyrenees Community Care

The Pyrenees Community Care (PCC) Team has been supporting residents and maintaining social connections with them throughout 2020.

COVID-19 restrictions meant all group social activities had to cease, however our care staff were able to think outside the box in a range of ways:

- Fortnightly calls to clients.
- One on one social support.
- One on one shopping program.
- Pen Pal Program between clients and Beaufort High School Students.
- Activity packs.

In line with the Health Departments guidelines, care staff adapted to providing

support in a COVID-safe way, including wearing personal protective equipment and following strict hygiene practices.

Pyrenees Community Care has also started providing home maintenance to residents who qualify under the Commonwealth Home Support Program.

2020 ended on a high, with nearly 40 people heading into Ballarat to look at Christmas lights and enjoy a meal out.

"Clients love the annual night out, not only for the social connection but also seeing the Christmas spirit alive and well in the light displays," PCC Team Leader Marina Veal said.

"This year we've also started a meal voucher program, providing clients with a book of \$5 vouchers towards a meal out," Ms Veal said.

"The program has benefits across the community, it gives hospitality venues in the Shire another customer base and it helps our clients maintain their independence." Call 1300 797 363 for further information.

2021 will hopefully mean many of the social services the PCC Team provide can resume, such as Social Support Groups, the Monthly Community Meal, Transport to Ballarat and Maryborough pools for Hydrotherapy, Beaufort Shopping Bus and the Beaufort & Avoca Out and About groups will also be going again. Look for new services commencing in 2021.

If you or someone you love are looking for support to remain at home, please get in touch with the PCC Team who can guide you through the process. Call 1300 797 363.

Bulk Buying Solar in the Pyrenees Shire

Pyrenees Shire Council is excited to be partnering with MASH (More Australian Solar Homes), a program run by the not-for-profit Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance that allows homeowners to easily access high quality and competitively priced solar power systems and batteries.

"Council is keen to promote the uptake of solar for homes and businesses in our Shire," PSC Chief Executive Officer, Jim Nolan said. "It's a clean source of sustainable energy and can help reduce electricity bills."

As a bonus, the more people who purchase through MASH, the more money there is for free solar for local community groups and schools.

For those who are interested, there are two information sessions planned for the bulk buy scheme in 2021: Tuesday 16 February in Maryborough (in conjunction with the Central Goldfield Shire Council); and Wednesday 17 February in Beaufort at the Beeripmo Centre in Lawrence Street. You can find pricing and links to previously recorded online information sessions at <https://mash.org.au/pyrenees>.

Pyrenees Shire Council Waste Survey 2020

Council's 2020 Waste Survey has so far had a great response, with more than 160 people taking part.

The majority of those surveyed (89%) said that street collection worked for them, while the major themes of feedback around how street collection could work better were mostly focused on the regularity of collection and the provision of glass recycling bins.

The question that received the most feedback was: Do you have any ideas as to how Council could encourage people to be better at recycling and reducing landfill?

Responses were many, varied and thoughtful. To give just a few examples of people's feedback, it ranged from providing glass and food-scrap bins, introducing a container deposit scheme (similar to the one run in South Australia) to improving communication around what can and can't be recycled, while others suggested that there needed to be more places to drop off glass, particularly for those far from major centres.

To have your say, you can find the survey at www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/wastesurvey

Pyrenees Shire Council acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Djab Wurrung and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respects to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the Elders and people of these tribes.