

Greater Dandenong Council News



Get ready for
Keysborough's
pet-friendly
Big Picnic

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Centre on the way**

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**50 years in Australia for
Vietnamese refugees**

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Customer Service Centres

Dandenong Civic Centre

225 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong

Springvale Community Hub

5 Hillcrest Grove, Springvale

Keysborough Customer Service

Shop A7 Parkmore Shopping Centre,
Keysborough

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www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au



@greaterdandy



facebook.com/greaterdandenong



cityofgreaterdandenong



youtube.com/citygreaterdandenong



TTY: 133 677

Speak and listen: 1300 555 727
relayservice.gov.au



TIS: 131 450



council@cgd.vic.gov.au

Important Numbers

Emergency calls

Police / Fire / Ambulance.....000

Street lighting faults /
non-operational

United Energy..... 13 20 99

Traffic signal faults /

non-operational..... 8571 1000

Hoon Hotline..... 1800 333 000

Hard Waste Collection

WM Waste Management

Services..... 9721 1915

Australian Animal

Protection Society..... 9798 8415

RSPCA..... 9224 2222

Nurse on Call..... 1300 606 024

Non Urgent Police Response

(no sirens)..... 131 444

Dandenong Police..... 9767 7444

Springvale Police..... 8558 8600

Information in this publication is correct at the time of printing and is subject to change. For updates please visit our website and social media platforms.

Mayor's Message

Welcome to the April edition of Greater Dandenong Council News.

Already in 2025, we've celebrated so many landmark achievements, important days and festivals across our municipality. April is also packed full of significant days for people of faith in our community.

Our Muslim community has just celebrated the end of Ramadan, a month of dawn-to-dusk fasting, ending with Eid – a celebration that brings families and friends together to feast.

Passover, or Pesach, one of the most important holidays on the Jewish calendar will take place between April 12 and 20. While our Sikh community will come together to celebrate Vaisakhi on April 14.

There's also Easter and Orthodox Easter on April 20. This is a time for Christians to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and come together for a sweet treat or two.

Kids will have two weeks off for school holidays at the end of Term One. As always, we offer a fantastic school holiday program to keep children active and entertained. Read more about that on page seven.

And in huge news that's worth celebrating, we've awarded the contract to build the new Dandenong Wellbeing Centre. This monumental investment will benefit the health of our whole community and replace the ageing Oasis. See more on this on page three.

Victorian Premier Jacinta Allen and Minister for Planning, Sonia Kilkenny recently visited to announce Dandenong, Springvale, Noble Park and Yarraman are among new activity centres that will help provide much-needed housing.

We also welcomed the Federal Government matching the State Government's \$6.3 million commitment to improve safety on Stud Road. You can read about our advocacy and the governments' investment in Greater Dandenong on page 14.

Mayor Cr Jim Memeti

My City

Harry Habitat is tree-mendously excited that the Discover Dandenong Creek Festival is back at Tirhatuan Park, Dandenong North, this April! Head down on Thursday 10 April from 11am–2pm for a jam-packed day of fun, free activities for all ages and abilities. Visit, greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/discover-dandenong-creek-festival-2025 for more information.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Bunurong People, and pay respect to their Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters.



This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. This publication is fully recyclable, please dispose of wisely.

It is printed carbon neutral in Victoria using vegetable based inks by an ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certified printer.

Front cover: This super pup is ready for a chilled-out, pet-friendly day at Keysborough's Big Picnic on April 13. See the back page for more details.

FSC
Logo

Grand opening of Dandenong Wellbeing Centre within sight

INVESTMENT
IN COMMUNITY
HEALTH



A concept drawing of the Dandenong Wellbeing Centre which is on track to open in 2027.



Council has awarded the contract to build the facility and work is due to start onsite at Mills Reserve in a matter of weeks.

The centre will replace the ageing Dandenong Oasis and aligns with the vision of getting “more people, more active, more often”. It will complement the nearby Noble Park Aquatic Centre and focus on allied health, education, fitness and wellness.

Greater Dandenong Mayor, Councillor Jim Memeti, said this decision marks a major milestone in bringing this vital community facility to life.

“This is a historic decision. It’s the biggest single investment this Council has ever made, and I’m proud of the impact it will have on the health, wellbeing and water safety of our community.

The contract was awarded to ADCO Constructions Pty Ltd. They are a national leader in the construction of sports and aquatic facilities. They’re currently also building the Mordi Aquatic Centre for the City of Kingston.

“It will be a space for people to connect, socialise and take care of their health year-round and offer fun, culturally safe programs, health therapies, rehabilitation and much more.”

Designed to replace the much-loved but now out-dated Dandenong Oasis, the new Dandenong Wellbeing Centre represents a once-in-a-generation investment in community health and wellbeing.

“Careful planning will ensure the project will be financially and environmentally sustainable, delivering a lasting benefit for all.

“All age groups, cultures and abilities will be welcomed, with programs and activities designed for everyone,” Cr Memeti said.

“I am incredibly proud of this project and cannot wait to be at the grand opening in 2027.

“Together, we are building a healthier, more connected, and vibrant community for all.”

Works are set to commence in the weeks ahead.



Register to stay up-to-date on the project by visiting greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/DWC

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APRIL

MONDAY

14

APRIL

Council Meetings

Council meetings are held in the city chambers at the Dandenong Civic Centre, 225 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong, commencing at 7pm.

Upcoming meetings will be held on:

- ▶ **Monday 14 April**
- ▶ **Monday 28 April**

📍 **To view meetings or to find out more about Public Question Time visit greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/council-meetings**

Inflatable World at Springers Leisure Centre – Open All School Holidays!



Springers Leisure Centre is the perfect place

to bounce, jump and slide your way through an enormous inflatable playground!

Covering two full basketball courts, this massive inflatable course offers hours of entertainment for kids and adults alike. Whether you're racing through obstacle courses, diving into giant slides, or simply bouncing for fun, there's something for everyone.

Parents can relax while the kids play, with an on-site café serving drinks and snacks.

Open daily from 10am to 4pm throughout the school holidays, except for Good Friday. No bookings required – just bring your energy and get ready for an action-packed day!



ULTIMATE FAMILY FUN

Head to Springers Leisure Centre and experience the excitement of Inflatable World these holidays.



Head to inflatableworldoz.com.au/stadiums/springers/ for more information.

► Springvale North Ward

Cr Sean O'Reilly



It is fantastic to be back in the seat for Springvale North Ward. I am looking forward to another Council term jam-packed with new opportunities and improvements to our reserves, play spaces and facilities.

The Springvale Master Plan identified the need for more casual recreation opportunities and highlighted Springvale Reserve as a great location for a new playground. This was designed, constructed and completed in 2024.

The finished playground includes a fence along the front of the car park ensuring its safety, a path network to aid in movement around the playground and a picnic shelter and furniture to provide people a place to sit and relax.

Last year we also completed the reconstruction of Ross Reserve athletics track. The works took about 12 months with the previous track having been in poor condition and requiring consistent maintenance.



The project included demolition of the existing track, drainage improvements and track and field equipment upgrades. We reworked the natural turf with all the necessary supports to enable athletics competitions and training at the complex.

I encourage everyone to check out the new playground at Springvale Reserve

and the athletics track at Ross Reserve as they are fantastic additions to Springvale North Ward.

📍 If you would like to talk to me about local issues, please email Sean.OReilly@cgd.vic.gov.au or phone 0422 523 258.

Cr Melinda Yim

► Keysborough Ward



I am thrilled to be your community representative for the Keysborough Ward.

Thank you to everyone who placed their trust in me.

Coming together to enjoy each other's company in our marvellous public spaces helps build social cohesion and connection to place.

We have a super fun opportunity to get out and do this in April with our annual Keysborough's Big Picnic on Sunday 13 April at Frederick Wachter Reserve.

This is Greater Dandenong's pet friendly event and will be jam-packed with activities such as pet competitions, a sports zone, stage performance and kids' interactive activities including an Easter egg hunt.

Bring your furry friend along for a fun day in the park. Find out more at greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/keysboroughs-big-picnic

Speaking of Frederick Wachter Reserve, if you haven't already – be sure to check out our concept plan for the reserve's new informal recreation area.

yoursay.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/frederick-wachter-reserve

It is based on the feedback we received from you during our engagement last year including that you wanted to keep the open space areas, plant more trees for shade, incorporate bouldering or climbing opportunities, a full-size multi-purpose court for basketball and futsal, a pump track and more park furniture. What exciting inclusions!

📍 If you would like to talk to me about local issues, please email Melinda.Yim@cgd.vic.gov.au or phone 0428 331 557.

A new space to connect, create and unwind: The Community Lounge at Keysborough South Community Hub



Later this year, the doors will open to a brand-new space designed for everyone in the community – the Community Lounge at the Keysborough South Community Hub.

Whether you're looking for a quiet place to study, a comfy spot to read, or somewhere to catch up with friends over a cup of tea, this welcoming space will have you covered.

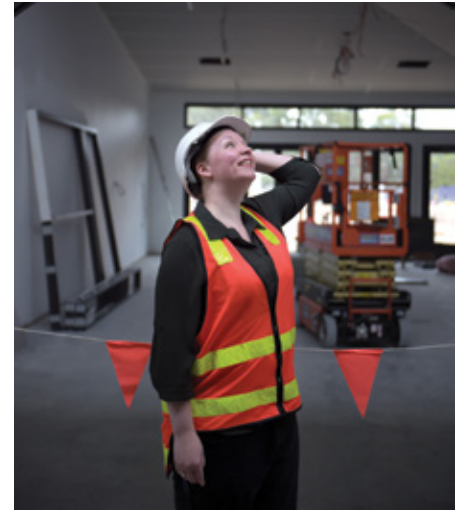
With free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee facilities, a community noticeboard and a library book pick-up and drop-off service, the Community Lounge is all about making life a little easier and a lot more connected.

Greater Dandenong Mayor, Councillor Jim Memeti is excited about plans for the new Community Lounge.

“The new Community Lounge at Keysborough South Community Hub, incorporating Library services, is a fantastic example of how we’re creating welcoming spaces that bring people together.

“It’s more than just books – it’s about connection, creativity, and community.”

As part of Greater Dandenong’s Community Hub network, this new hub will join other library services including Dandenong Library, Springvale Library, and the Little Library in Menzies Avenue, ensuring that no matter where you live, a place to learn and connect is never far away.



Greater Dandenong City Council Coordinator Building Projects, Samantha Ackland, marvels at how the Keysborough South Community Hub is coming together.

Hear from Sam about her career at Council on page 15.



To keep up to date on the Keysborough South Community Hub visit greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/keysborough-south-community-hub

Have Your Say

We are transforming Multicultural Place into a space which is vibrant, flexible and functional, servicing business and community.



Situated in the heart of the bustling retail precinct of Buckingham and Balmoral Avenues, Multicultural Place is a much-loved outdoor public place. With around 10,000 people a day, this popular public gathering space is where people meet up and proceed to the many exciting shopping and eating experiences within Springvale.

Informed by community feedback as part of the Springvale Revitalisation Action Plan, a concept design is now ready for community feedback.

The concept design to revitalise Multicultural Place and the adjacent laneway includes:

- ▶ new street furniture
- ▶ pavement upgrades
- ▶ lighting and art
- ▶ green spaces
- ▶ seating and tables for outdoor dining
- ▶ recreation and play spaces

Have your say on the concept design by visiting yoursay.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/shape-springvale from **Monday 17 March – Sunday 13 April 2025.**

We are upgrading the Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve

Don’t forget to have your say on the draft concept design for the Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve and nearby Sense Trail.

The upgrade will enhance accessibility, promote biodiversity and activate spaces in the Reserve for all our community to enjoy.



Head on to yoursay.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/alex-wilkie-reserve-upgrade to share your thoughts on the draft concept design.

Consultation closes Friday 7 April 2025.

Greater Dandy Kids Crowned Victoria's Biggest Summer Readers



In a massive win for Greater Dandenong, local children read more books than anywhere else in Victoria during this year's BIG Summer Read!

Greater Dandenong Mayor, Councillor Jim Memeti, had the honour of announcing the exciting news during a celebration event at Dandenong Library in February.

A very proud Cr Memeti congratulated the families who read 8931 books between them.

"I am honestly bursting with pride! Thousands of Victorian children took part in the BIG Summer Read and this is an incredible achievement. Congratulations to all of you," the Mayor beamed.

"We're lucky to have wonderful libraries here in Dandenong, and in Springvale, where everyone is welcome to share in the joy of reading and all the community activities we offer."

The BIG Summer Read is an annual reading challenge for children aged 4 to 12 years. It is presented by Public Libraries Victoria and Greater Dandenong Libraries.

It encourages children across the state to have fun and keep up with reading over the summer holidays. This year, children from 50 council areas took part.



Greater Dandenong's BIG Summer Readers are treated to a performance by Mr Snotbottom at Dandenong Library at Saturday's finale event.

State Member for Dandenong, Gabrielle Williams, said the BIG Summer Read helped young readers tackle the 'summer slide'— a common challenge where students lose literacy skills during extended breaks from reading.

"I'm thrilled that our families read the most books this BIG Summer Read! You should all be so proud and I hope you enjoy your prizes," Ms Williams said.

"I can only imagine the adventures you had as you read all of those books! Thank you to everyone who took part. This enthusiasm for reading is a great sign that we'll see an uplift in literacy across Greater Dandenong too!"

April School Holiday Activities



Looking for something fun to do these school holidays? If you're aged between 12 and 25, our Youth and Family Services team have you covered. See the highlights below or visit, youth.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/programs/holiday-activities to find out more.

Bus pick-up and drop-off is available from locations in Dandenong, Springvale and Noble Park for Luna Park and Treetops Adventure.

Luna Park

Make your school holidays unforgettable by joining us at Luna Park for unlimited rides and fun.

Tuesday 8 April, 10:30am–3:00pm
Luna Park, St Kilda
Cost: \$30. Registration essential.

Treetops Adventure

Climb your way to new heights and join us for an amazing time at Treetops Adventure, Belgrave.

Tuesday 15 April, 11.15am–2pm.
Cost: \$35. Registrations essential.

Badminton Tournament

Get ready to smash, serve, and rally your way to victory in our badminton tournament on Wednesday 16 April, from 9am–5pm.

Under 16 and under 25 mixed divisions available.

Apply now for Council's 2025 Young Leaders Program



The inspiring program is open to people aged 16-25 years who live, work or study in Greater Dandenong.

The program introduces young people to local government and supports the development of skills across a wide range of topics, including leadership, communication, public speaking, advocacy and conflict management.

Young Leaders runs from May to September and provides a unique

opportunity for young people to connect with one another and make a positive impact by planning and delivering community projects.



Visit youth.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/programs/young-leaders-program for more information and to register your interest.

What's On April 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>During this month: We Built This City Exhibition 16 October 2024 - 18 May 2025 Open times: Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am-2pm (excludes public holidays) Benga, Heritage Hill Museum and Historic Gardens 66 McCrae St, Dandenong</p> 		<p>Noble Park Public Hall Centenary History Board display 10am-1pm and Beyond Band performance 11am-1pm at Noble Park Public Hall</p>	<p>Noble Park Public Hall Centenary History Board display 10am-1pm and Beyond Band performance 11am-1pm at Noble Park Public Hall</p> <p>Multifaith Mindfulness Meditation 2.30pm-3pm Dandenong Hospital (Sacred Space)</p>	<p>School Term 1 Ends</p> <p>Noble Park Public Hall Centenary History Board display 10am-1pm and Beyond Band performance 11am-1pm at Noble Park Public Hall</p> 	<p>Noble Park Public Hall Centenary Official Ceremony 1pm at Noble Park Public Hall</p> <p>Dandenong Parkrun 8am at Dandenong Park</p>	<p>Daylight Savings Ends</p> 
7			10	11	12	13
<p>Multicultural Anxiety Support Group 6pm-7.30pm Online, details on Council's website</p>			<p>Discover Dandenong Creek Festival 2025 11am-2pm at Tirhatuan Park</p> <p>Multifaith Mindfulness Meditation 2.30pm-3pm Dandenong Hospital (Sacred Space)</p>		<p>Passover Begins</p> <p>Dandenong Parkrun 8am at Dandenong Park</p> 	<p>Keysborough's Big Picnic Frederick Wachter Reserve 11am-4pm</p> <p>Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve Open Day 10am-5pm</p> 
14			17	18	19	20
<p>Vaisakhi (Sikh holiday)</p> <p>Council Meeting 7pm at Dandenong Civic Centre</p>			<p>Multifaith Mindfulness Meditation 2.30pm-3pm Dandenong Hospital (Sacred Space)</p>	<p>Good Friday</p>	<p>Easter Saturday Dandenong Parkrun 8am at Dandenong Park</p>	<p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>Orthodox Easter</p> <p>Passover Ends</p>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<p>Easter Monday</p>	<p>School Term 2 Begins</p>	<p>"WE" - Women's Empowerment Workshops Term 2 10.30am-12.30pm at Paddy O'Donoghue</p> 	<p>Heritage Hill House and Garden Tour 10am-12pm at Heritage Hill Museum and Historic Gardens</p> <p>Multifaith Mindfulness Meditation 2.30pm-3pm Dandenong Hospital (Sacred Space)</p>	<p>Anzac Day</p>	<p>Dandenong Parkrun 8am at Dandenong Park</p>	
28	29	30				
<p>Council Meeting 7pm at Dandenong Civic Centre</p> 		<p>"WE" - Women's Empowerment Workshops Term 2 10.30am-12.30pm at Paddy O'Donoghue</p>		<p>During this month: 9 by 5 Exhibition Monday 10 February to Friday 2 May Drum Theatre Foyer Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm Saturday 5 April, 10.30am-2.30pm</p>		

50th anniversary of Vietnamese refugees' arrival



This year marks the 50-year anniversary of the first Vietnamese refugees arriving in Australia. They arrived having fled the devastation of war and political persecution. Many endured dangerous boat journeys on their way to Australia.

Our own Councillor Loi Truong participated in nine treacherous border crossings before ultimately being resettled in Australia in 1983.

He remembers the journey, is proud of his past and grateful to Australia for the resettlement opportunities it provided.

"The last time I escaped on a boat woven from bamboo and rubbed on the outside with a layer of road plastic to reduce water absorption, we had to take turns pumping out water day and night.

"The boat was at its widest in the middle about 1.6 meters and about 7 meters long. On the boat were 10 men from 18 to 40 years old, a 16-year-old woman and 5 children from 5 to 10 years old.

"We decided to go in September, the middle of the storm season because this time of year is very dangerous to go to the beach, so there are few patrols by the Communist government's border guards and police.

"It was very hard to survive as a boat person when I escaped my home country. With open arms, the Australian people welcomed me here to this beautiful country with very kind people."

The resettlement of Vietnamese refugees is one of the most successful stories of integration and community building in Australia.

It is also a testament to Australia's commitment to humanitarian values, demonstrating our openness to welcoming people in need and providing them with a fair go.

Cr Isabella Do was born in Australia and talks about the harrowing experiences of her mother's family who fled to Australia as refugees from Vietnam. Her grandparents had nine children. They were so desperately afraid for their children's safety, they felt their only



chance was to put them on boats in small groups and hope for refuge and safety in another country.

"My mother arrived in Australia at 13 with two older sisters and two much younger siblings as unaccompanied minors. They were fostered by an Australian family, the Dellavedova's, in Maryborough.

"Eventually, my grandparents also made it to Australia and the whole family re-united to begin their life in Springvale. They worked hard to create a good life.

"They sent my mother and aunts to Killester College and that's where I went to school as well," Cr Do said, adding that her mother's experience as a 13-year-old 'boat person' left an indelible mark.

"I could never complain much. My mother always reminded me what she went through – drinking a dirty teaspoon of water a day as ration on their journey to hopefully make it somewhere safe. While it was sometimes annoying as a younger person, it helps me appreciate how incredibly lucky we are to live safely in Australia."

Many Vietnamese refugees spent time in the Enterprise Hostel in Springvale and then started market gardens and food businesses in the southeast. Almost 10 per cent of our population in Greater Dandenong is made up people born in Vietnam and Vietnamese is our most spoken language other than English.

Over the last five decades, they have become an integral part of Australia's multicultural society, contributing significantly to the country's social, economic, and cultural landscape.

The influence of those refugee arrivals, later waves of migration and subsequent generations has influenced our Greater Dandenong culture and community. Springvale is famous across Australia for our banh mi and pho. The hard work, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of our Vietnamese community is evident throughout our city.

Greater Dandenong Mayor, Councillor Jim Memeti, said, "We are proud to reflect on the struggle, resilience and success of the Vietnamese people and to acknowledge the profound impact they have had on our community."

To read a powerful account of Cr Truong's journey, in his own words, visit greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/greater-dandenong-council-news-April-2025

Succession planning for your business



Succession planning is an important process to ensure the smooth transition of ownership and the continued success of your business.

It is a process, not a single event and is a structured, controlled changeover which may take place over several years.

Local Dandenong Market Business, Food to Go Vietnamese and Chinese owner Mr Trila is beginning to look at retirement. He plans on passing his business over to his daughter, Linh and has already begun his succession plan.

Linh has spent the last few months learning the ropes, from sourcing fresh ingredients to connecting with their community and she's also looking ahead to the future.

"He's set the bar really high," Linh says with a mix of pride and determination.

The succession plan means that Linh is already thinking about the future of the family business.

"At its core, it will always be about community and connection. That's what Dad built, and that's what I want to continue," she said.

🎯 If you need support in planning for retirement, Business Victoria have a range of workshops as well as one-on-one business mentoring sessions available to help start the conversation, visit learn.business.vic.gov.au

Collaboration leads to great community outcomes

✓ When local businesses and organisations work together, great things happen. That's certainly the case with the partnership between Dandenong RSL and My Inspiration Never Dies (MIND), an exercise physiology, sport and health science business.

The pair joined forces 12 months ago and began offering exercise physiology support to veterans and their partners at Dandenong RSL.

Veterans Welfare Advocate and Coordinator Vladimir Nagorny said the relationship grew after MIND was invited to be a guest speaker at several veterans' events.

"The veterans' feedback was outstanding," Vladimir said.

"Many of our veterans have PTSD, anxiety, depression and most of the elderly veterans sit at home. Group exercise helps people to talk to each

other and they learn how to move around the home and how to prevent falls. We've found it very useful."

The program was so well received, Dandenong RSL and MIND put in a joint application and successfully won a \$100,000 Department of Veterans' Affairs grant to provide up to 800 hours of exercise physiology support to veterans in 2025.

"We'll be putting a MIND facility inside the Dandenong RSL for about 15 to 20 hours per week," MIND co-owner and director Graham Dudley said.

"There will be free access for veterans to come and do workshops, do some exercise and access education around their wellbeing," he continued.

After launching as a single-site operation in Dandenong South in 2021, MIND is currently undergoing a tremendous period of growth, with 150 satellite sites to be opened across Australia over the next 18 to 24 months.

Later this year, MIND is also planning to do a roadshow to visit more than 80 RSLs across the country to explore partnership opportunities.

Graham's advice to other businesses looking to form partnerships is to ensure both parties' values align.

"The philosophy of our business is based upon empathy, so we specifically work with partners that we can empathise with," he said.

WORKING TOGETHER

Contact Council for Business Support

If you're looking for business support, have plans to establish or expand a business or considering a major development, Council's Business Development and Investment department is the best place to start.

🎯 Visit greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/business or contact us via email at business@cgd.vic.gov.au or phone 8571 1550 for further information.

Sportsperson of the Year Award – Giancarlo Artho

Giancarlo Artho is Greater Dandenong’s Sportsperson of the Year.

Giancarlo started out in motorsports as a seven-year-old and has won over 30 trophies.

Giancarlo received the award for the dedication, effort and time he devotes to motorsports and the local community.

“It’s a really big honour for me. It’s special to be recognised by my community and it will have a lasting place in my heart. I feel it’s important to be recognised as someone who puts Dandenong in a good light,” Giancarlo said.

“I’ve always believed hard work beats talent, so I always aspire to improve. Knowing how lucky I am to have the opportunities I do also pushes me and being able to represent Dandenong on the world stage also gives purpose to my training.”

In 2023, Giancarlo was selected as one of the top 25 drivers from the Asia Pacific Oceania region for the Ferrari Driver Academy Asia Pacific/Oceania Selection Program in Malaysia.

He also triumphed at the 2023 Go Kart Club of Victoria KA3 Junior Heavy Championship.



Most recently he won the F4 Indian Championship Global Shootout at the Circuit du Var in France and earned himself a full scholarship for the 2024 Indian F4 Championship season.

“The adrenaline rush and the thrill of competing against other drivers, the challenges within each race, behind every move, and the pure competition keeps me hooked. It’s also a sport that constantly challenges me to improve, both physically and mentally,” Giancarlo said.

Alongside his incredible achievements in motorsport, he also volunteers with FReeZA and Noble Park Youth Committees by assisting with events, guest speaking and mentorship.

“There’s a real sense of achievement being hands on in creating events that bring the community together, whether it’s a music festival, workshop, or sports event. It also put me in situations that allowed growth like public speaking,” he said.

“I love the teamwork involved; collaborating with others, problem-solving, and making sure everything runs smoothly is really rewarding.”



Brighter future for Dandenong Cricket Club

A green energy power station, which was turned on at Shepley Oval last month, will generate thousands of dollars in savings for Dandenong Cricket Club.

The savings will be used to promote development among young female cricketers, helping them to follow in the footsteps of local talent who have played for Australia, including Kim Garth and Sophie Molineaux.

The first-of-its-kind green energy initiative is a collaboration between the club, Council, Amber Electric, Wattle Power and Cricket for Climate – an organisation founded by Australian Test Captain Pat Cummins.

Greater Dandenong Mayor, Cr Jim Memeti said “As a Council we are so pleased to collaborate on installing this green energy power station in our facility at Shepley Oval. It’s a no brainer to support projects that make community sports more environmentally and financially sustainable, and especially where women’s and girls’ participation stands to gain,” he said.

Former Australian Women’s Cricket Team Captain and cricketing legend Belinda Clark praised the club’s initiative.

“Dandenong has done so much for the women’s game over many years and is home to so many incredible players. It’s fantastic to see the club continuing to support girls who want to play whilst helping cut costs and create revenue through the clean energy transition,” she said.

Cricket for Climate is a player-led movement to mobilise cricket players and fans across the globe to support climate action and advocacy.

love your libraries

||||| / / / / /
Libraries
Change Lives

Libraries at Dusk



Fluffy Rafia Key Rings

Love the idea of a book club, but don't know of any you can join?

Our online and evening book club would be perfect for you!

Each month we will read or listen to a book from the OverDrive collection and meet online to discuss it.

Thursday 3 April, 6.30–8pm

Thursday 1 May, 6.30–8pm

Bad Art

Unleash your creativity and create something delightfully ugly. Using the materials we supply, play around and let your imagination run wild.

Springvale Library

Thursday 10 April, 6.30pm–8pm

Life Hacks with Chat GPT

Discover practical tips and tricks to make everyday tasks easier. Learn how to use ChatGPT effectively to save time, boost creativity and solve problems.

Dandenong Library

Thursday 17 April, 6.30pm–8pm



Tai Chi and Pilates

Discover balance and strength at our Tai Chi and Pilates workshop. Join us to improve flexibility, reduce stress, and leave feeling refreshed and energised.

Springvale Library

Thursday 24 April, 6.30pm–8pm

Library School Holiday Programs

Collage workshop

Dandenong Library

Monday, 7 April 2025, 2.30pm–4pm

Explore the art of collage as we guide you through a variety of image-making processes and techniques.

Acrylic Pour Painting Workshop

Springvale Library

Monday 14 April, 2.30pm–4pm

Create your very own abstract art masterpieces using acrylic pouring. Embrace the unpredictable nature of the creative process and let your imagination run wild.

Easter Craft Workshop

Dandenong Library

Tuesday 15 April, 10.30am–11.30am

Craft your way into Easter in our egg-citing DIY creative workshop. This event is suitable for ages 5–12.

Easter Hunt and Bag Making

Springvale Library

Wednesday 16 April

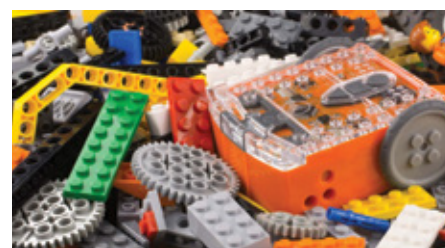
2.30pm–4pm

Join the fun of exploring the Springvale Community Hub through a story walk and hunt down the answers to the Easter quiz to collect Easter Eggs.



Visit, libraries.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au for more information.

Children's Programs



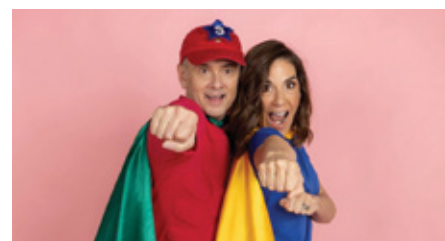
Edison Bots – Code Club

Dandenong Library

Tuesday 8 April and 17 April

2.30pm–3.30pm

Edison Bots empowers students to become not just coders, but inventors, problem solvers and creative thinkers.



Laugh Til You Snort (interactive show)

Dandenong Library

Friday 11 April, 10.30am–11.30am

Super Dooper the Superhero is making a special appearance. But what exactly are his superpowers? And why is his sidekick a bendy banana? What will supervillain I M Unpleasant do when he arrives? Find out in this super silly show.

ARTS | Arts in Greater Dandenong

Celebrating the Winners of the 9 by 5 Exhibition

Earlier this year we celebrated some incredible artists' work in the 9 by 5 exhibition.

Best in Show Award

Ivan Dinsdale, with *Ferns at Sherbrooke* – Recognised for outstanding artistic merit and exceptional execution.



Community Connections Award

Noni Sigh, with *Dandenong Butter Factory* – Awarded to an artwork that beautifully reflects the spirit and identity of Greater Dandenong.

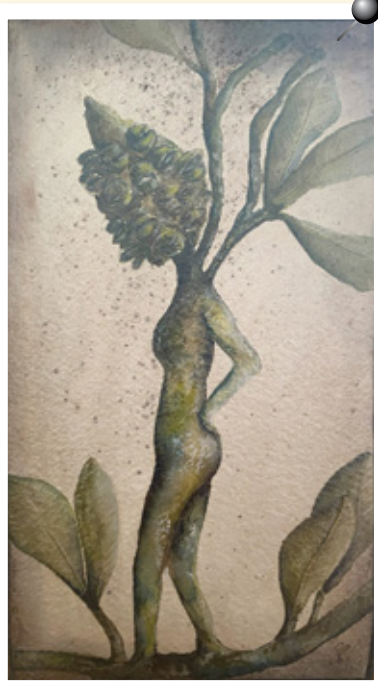


Highly Commended Award

Skye Petho, *We Came from Nature* – A notable mention for artistic excellence and creative impact.

The People's Choice Award has not been awarded yet as voting remains open for most of the exhibition, with the winner set to be announced between Monday 5 May and Friday 9 May 2025.

The 9 by 5 Exhibition has been running since February and has been enjoyed by many members of the community.



Skye Petho, *We Came from Nature*

Officially launched in mid-February, the event was a lively evening filled with art appreciation, as guests compared and admired the diverse submissions. The exhibition continues to showcase a wide array of creative works that reflect the artistic vibrancy of our community.

Don't miss the opportunity to experience this impressive collection of small-scale yet impactful artworks.

The exhibition is open Monday to Friday, 10am–4pm.

Find out more about 9 by 5 Exhibition, visit greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/9by5

Walker Street Gallery Shop Spotlight – Artist Almost Iris

The Walker Street Gallery and Arts Centre is partnering with local artists to showcase and sell unique art pieces. Our latest collaboration features Almost Iris, bringing fresh new designs to the Walker Street Gallery shop.

Explore the collection and find something special for yourself or a friend while supporting a local Greater Dandenong artist.

Walker Street Gallery and Arts Centre



Confluence: The Dreaming Project

This multi-artform installation explores global shared experiences through the lens of Australian First Nations perspectives, highlighting themes of identity, heritage, and unity. Inspired by the Dandenong Creek's cultural and natural significance to the Bunurong, Wurundjeri, and local communities.

Open from Tuesday 25 March to Friday 30 May.

Connect with us

Instagram [@artsgreaterdandy](https://www.instagram.com/artsgreaterdandy)
 Facebook [/artsingreaterdandenong](https://www.facebook.com/artsingreaterdandenong)
 newsletter drum.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au

Lobbying pays off



We had two good pieces of news recently. They reflect persistent lobbying and a confidence in this Council to get things done.

Stud Road safety measures receive matched funding

We were pleased to welcome an announcement by the Federal Government that they will match the State Government's \$6.3 million commitment to improve safety on Stud Road, near McFees Road in Dandenong North. Cr Lana Formoso was inspired to run for Council by the need for safety improvements on Stud Road. "Following a persistent, sustained advocacy campaign, we're proud that in one year, this project will be completed for our community," Cr Formoso said.

This important work will reduce the likelihood of further serious accidents on this section of Stud Road, which has a residential neighbourhood on one side, and on the other, Dandenong Stadium, a park, wetlands, bike paths and a bus stop, as well as intersecting freeway ramps.

Four 'Train and Tram Zone' activity centres in Greater Dandenong

The Mayor, Cr Jim Memeti and Greater Dandenong City Council CEO Jacqui Weatherill were pleased to host the



Councillor Lana Formoso visits Stud Road in 2024 as part of Council's advocacy campaign

Premier, Jacinta Allan and Minister for Planning, Sonia Kilkeny at Ross Reserve in late February. They were announcing 25 more 'Train and Tram Zone' activity centres help deliver more than 300,000 additional homes close to jobs, services and transport by 2051. Dandenong, Springvale, Noble Park and Yarraman were among these.

We welcome new investment in housing in our city. This seems like a vote of confidence in the good transport and liveability Greater Dandenong already offers. The Mayor noted the Minister's commitment that planning controls would be designed in close consultation with Council, and residents and business in each neighbourhood.



RSL Locations in Greater Dandenong

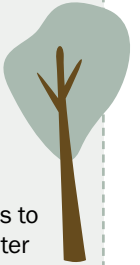
Noble Park RSL
Phone: 9548 3750
Visit: nobleparkrsl.com.au

Dandenong RSL
Phone: 9792 1535
Visit: dandenongrsl.com.au

Springvale RSL
Phone: 9548 4155
Visit: springvalersl.com.au

A Decade Celebrated in Green Wedge Style

How does a Green Wedge Management Plan celebrate entering double digits? By planting trees of course!



At Council, we were so excited by the Plan's tenth birthday that we gave away some pretty cool presents – 3600 free, indigenous plants to 353 landowners in the Greater Dandenong green wedge... and boy were they excited!

Over three days late last year, the green wedge residents turned out to Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve in their droves to get their hands on the plants and they were even asking when we'll do it all again.

We'll keep you posted on our next party but in the meantime, we can't wait to see how the little ones flourish and add to our biodiversity and growing tree canopy in Greater Dandenong.

Did you know, our canopy cover increased from nine per cent in 2018 to 14 per cent in 2024? We're well and truly on track to reach our target of 15 per cent by 2028.

Our Green Wedge Management Plan Vision for the Natural Environment

"Indigenous vegetation provides a rich and connected habitat for fauna, that supports the biodiversity of the broader metropolitan area with priority given to the protection and management of ecological areas of highest value".

In further exciting news, we've just conducted the second five-year review of the Green Wedge Management Plan. Stay tuned and we'll update you on this later in the year. Hopefully there's another celebration in store.

ANZAC Day in Greater Dandenong – Lest We Forget



ANZAC Day is a National Day of Remembrance held on 25 April and commemorates the landing of Australian and New Zealand troops at Gallipoli in 1915.

On ANZAC Day, we pay tribute to all Australians and New Zealanders who have served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

Find out about Anzac Day services in Greater Dandenong by contacting your local RSL or by searching ANZAC Day March and Services on our website.

Friendly group assessment sessions lead to calmer kids and parents



In partnership with the Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services are offered by every Council in Victoria for families with children from birth to school age.

These services take many shapes and forms, including at-home visits for new parents and in-centre visits at key developmental stages.

Over the past few years, Greater Dandenong City Council's MCH services have trialled a new program called Key Age and Stage Group sessions for children aged 18 months to three-and-a-half.

There are 10 sessions to encompass all age groups, with up to 12 families invited to attend each session to play together and chat privately with an MCH nurse. These fun and engaging sessions allow our nurses and parents to freely observe their children at play and to see how they socialise with other children their own age.

We have found that with other children present and age-appropriate toys to play with, children are more relaxed and engaged, parents are calmer and more able to navigate the assessment process.

We also engage interpreters to meet the needs of all our culturally and linguistically diverse families. All to make sure every child and their parents are getting the help they need to thrive right here in Greater Dandenong.

Please contact the City of Greater Dandenong Maternal and Child Health booking line on 8571 1880 to find out more and make a booking.

Behind the Scenes at Council



Meet Samantha Ackland

Tell us about what you do at Council?

I'm Coordinator of Building Projects, which means I oversee the planning and delivery of some truly exciting community infrastructure projects like the Keysborough South Community Hub, the Ross Reserve Pavilion and the Dandenong New Art project.

All these projects are about so much more than just bricks and mortar – they're about creating vibrant, accessible spaces that bring people together and enhance community life.

What is the most rewarding thing about working at Greater Dandenong City Council?

I love the chance to make a real impact on the community and feel incredibly lucky to be part of a Council, and a community, that is delivering projects that will impact the community for generations to come.

What challenges have you faced in your career?

Working in a traditionally male-dominated sector, I find it empowering to break stereotypes and inspire future generations of women in construction and building projects. I really value the supportive team environment here at Greater Dandenong, where diverse perspectives are encouraged, and my contributions are genuinely appreciated.

How long have you worked here?

Almost eight years now.

Why did you pursue a career in Building Projects?

I've always been fascinated by how structures come to life from just an idea on paper.

This career has allowed me to combine my passion for design and engineering with a desire to create spaces that positively impact people's lives.

I love the challenge of problem-solving and the satisfaction of seeing a project through from concept to completion.

It's incredibly rewarding to know that the work I do contributes to the community and helps shape the environment we live in. Plus, every project is unique, which keeps my job exciting and fulfilling... there's never a quiet day.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I love to stay active and give back to the community.

I've been a volunteer with the Country Fire Authority (CFA) for 13 years, which has been incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. Over the years, I've taken on various roles, including Lieutenant, Secretary, and Firefighter.

Each role has given me a unique perspective and allowed me to contribute in different ways, whether it's leading a team, handling administrative tasks, or being on the front lines during emergencies. It's a privilege to serve and support my community through the CFA.

When I'm not at work or volunteering, you'll likely find me kayaking. I love paddling down the rivers and exploring the lakes throughout Victoria – it's such a peaceful and invigorating way to connect with nature.

I also have a passion for travel and have been fortunate to visit more than 25 countries. I'm counting down the days to my next trip which is to South America.



KEYSBOROUGH'S BIG PICNIC

Sunday 13 April 2025, 11am – 4pm

Frederick Wachter Reserve,
Kingsclere Ave, Keysborough

Easter Egg Hunt | Pet Competition | Live Entertainment
Food, Market and Community Stalls
Make Your Move Sports Zone | Free Children's Activities



This is a no smoking, no alcohol and no drugs event.



Acknowledging
Bunurong Country

OPTUS