

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## FLOOD SUPPORT

### Issue Five: 24 March 2023



Council continues to work with local, state and commonwealth partners to support communities in the recovery from the October-December 2022 floods. This newsletter outlines support available and efforts Council and partner agencies are undertaking.

### Community Flood Recovery Committee

The Gannawarra Community Flood Recovery Committee held its second meeting in March.

The group discussed event planning, the Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2022 Flood event, and funding opportunities.

Advocacy issues were also discussed including levee banks, levee bank breaches, flood planning, connectivity and grant timelines.

The committee is also inputting into the development of the Gannawarra Flood Recovery Plan and providing guidance on priorities going forward.

The next meeting will be held on 18 April.

### Support contacts

Rural Aid: 1300 327 624

Rural Financial Counselling Service:  
1300 735 578

Flood Recovery Hotline: 1800 560 760

Northern District Community Health:  
03 5451 0200

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

BlazeAid: 0401 798 280



### BlazeAid here to help

Blazeaid's dedicated volunteers continue to assist Gannawarra residents to reinstate fencing and clean up following the October-December 2022 floods.

Blazeaid have so far assisted 35 properties and have more on their waiting list. The team have moved to their new base at Murrabit, and are looking for volunteers. If you would like to assist, or need assistance, please contact 0459 434 766.

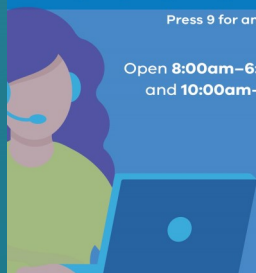
Pictured below is Blazeaid volunteer, Charmaine, with Murrabit Group School students who are raising money for a school camp by selling produce at the school gate.



**FLOOD RECOVERY HOTLINE**  
**1800 560 760**

Press 9 for an interpreter

Open 8:00am–6:00pm Monday to Friday  
and 10:00am–6:00pm on weekends



**GANNAWARRA CARES**  
Take the time to connect with your community....

**CONNECT...**  
with the people  
around you...

**TAKE  
NOTICE...**  
of what's happening  
around you...

**KEEP  
LEARNING...**  
discover new  
things...

**BE  
ACTIVE...**  
step outside...

**GIVE...**  
your time, smile,  
listen to others...

Ph: (03) 5450 9333

[www.gsc.vic.gov.au](http://www.gsc.vic.gov.au)



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## Road Repair Update

Council has completed emergency road repairs on 27 Council-managed roads to ensure access to properties is reinstated and that roads are safe for use.

Rehabilitation of the road network to pre-flood condition will occur over the next 12-18 months.

Nine contractors have been appointed to rehabilitate the Gannawarra road network, with the first works due to commence shortly.

## Secondary Impact Assessments continuing

Secondary Impact Assessments on Council assets are continuing.

These assessments detail damage to Council-managed roads, levees or bridges, and provide recommendations, such as repairs needed or follow-up inspections by specialists.

All data will assist Council in advocating for additional funding from the Federal and State governments.

## Farmers – have you submitted your flood recovery grants application to Rural Finance?

Grants of between \$15,000 and \$75,000, as well as a loan of up to \$250,000, are available to assist farmers recover from the October-December 2022 floods.

**Applications close 4pm Sunday, 30 April 2023.** It does not matter if your application is completed by this date, as long as you have submitted your details.

To apply online visit [www.ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/victorian-primary-producer-flood-recovery-grants](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/victorian-primary-producer-flood-recovery-grants)

The Rural Financial Counselling Service - North West can support the application process. Phone 1300 735 578 or contact online at [www.wswrcs.com.au](http://www.wswrcs.com.au)

You can also contact the Agriculture Victoria Recovery Team on 0427 694 185 or email [recovery@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

For questions relating to the grants program phone Rural Finance on 1800 260 425.

## Re-establishment assistance available

The Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's Personal Hardship Assistance Program provides support for you to return home if you cannot live in your home because it is damaged or destroyed; or you cannot access your home for more than 7 days because of flooding.

For more information, please visit <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program>

A DFFH representative will be based at Council's Kerang Customer Service Centre on Friday, 31 March to assist with your questions.

## Emergency Recovery Victoria Structural Assessments

Where residential property has been damaged by the October-December 2022 floods, residents can register for a free structural assessment. This detailed assessment can be used to provide guidance on how your structure needs to be managed and the next steps.

You can register for an assessment by phoning 1800 560 760 or online at [www.vic.gov.au/2022-flood-recovery](http://www.vic.gov.au/2022-flood-recovery)

For more information about the program, visit [www.vic.gov.au/2022-floods-clean-up-program](http://www.vic.gov.au/2022-floods-clean-up-program)

☺ You've got what it takes ☺



...to have a  
conversation  
that could  
change a life

Visit [ruok.org.au](http://ruok.org.au)

**RU OK?**  
A conversation could change a life.

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## Submissions now open to Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event

The Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee has been tasked with investigating Victoria's preparedness for, and response to the major flooding event of October-December 2022.

Submissions to the Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria may be made up until Monday, 8 May 2023.

Gannawarra residents affected by the 2022 flood event are urged to make a submission to this parliamentary inquiry.

Submissions can be made online at <http://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/floodinginquiry>, emailing [floodinginquiry@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:floodinginquiry@parliament.vic.gov.au) or writing to:

Parliament of Victoria

Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Planning

Parliament House, Spring Street

EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

The Committee intends to follow up submissions by holding public hearings in flood-affected areas and will deliver its findings and recommendations by 30 June 2024.

Any questions can be directed to the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Planning on (03) 8682 2869.

For more information, please visit <http://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/floodinginquiry>

## Gannawarra Giving Account

The Gannawarra Giving Account is accepting donations to support local flood recovery efforts. All donations are tax deductible and can be made at Northern District Community Health.

For more information, phone 03 5451 0200 or visit [www.givenow.com.au/gannawarragivingaccount](http://www.givenow.com.au/gannawarragivingaccount)

## Building Farm Spirit Campaign and Grants Available

Are you planning a community event to help support the health and wellbeing of farmers and farm families impacted by the 2022 floods?

The National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) #BuildingFarmSpirit program has grants of \$500 to \$1,500 available through to 30 May 2023 for activities that provide social connection and mental health promotion for farmers and farming communities.

If you have an idea for a community event or program that promotes social connection and wellbeing for farmers and farm families, go to [www.farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit) and register your interest.

There is also a social media campaign, #BuildingFarmSpirit, which enables Victorian farmers and farming families affected by flood, to share stories, ideas and tips with others, without the need to leave the farm during the increased workload of flood recovery.

Visit [www.farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit) for more information or to register for a Building Farm Spirit grant.

Council also has funding available to support communities to come together post-floods. Contact Council's Flood Recovery team on 03 5450 9333 to discuss your event idea.



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## Services Australia October Flood Payments

Eligible Gannawarra households impacted by the October-December 2022 floods have until **Friday, 16 June 2023** to submit claims for the following two payments:



Services  
Australia

- **Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment** - A lump sum payment to help people seriously affected by the Victorian floods that started in October 2022. For more information, please visit [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-australian-government-disaster-recovery-payment](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-australian-government-disaster-recovery-payment)
- **Disaster Recovery Allowance**— Support if you have lost income as a direct result of the Victorian floods that started in October 2022. For more information, please visit [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-disaster-recovery-allowance](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-disaster-recovery-allowance)

## Gannawarra Reflections Video Series

Council and Northern District Community Health partnered to produce the *Gannawarra Reflections* video series.

The videos feature Kerang, Koondrook, Quambatook, Macorna, Murrabit and Benjeroop, and Cohuna.

Seven videos have been produced which highlight how residents were impacted by the October-December 2022 floods and how each community worked together to support each other.

The videos can be viewed by clicking on the *Gannawarra Reflections* heading at [www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods](http://www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods)



Cohuna

## Free financial counselling

Financial counselling is available for small businesses and farmers through the Rural Financial Counselling Service, North West.

Rural Financial Counsellors are available to meet with you on your farm, at your business, or elsewhere if required.

The service is free and independent and confidentiality is assured.

Phone 1300 735 578

Mallee Family Care also offers free financial counselling.

Help is available to identify options, advocate and negotiate payments, develop a money plan, and referrals to other supports.

Phone 1800 632 263.