

# COMMUNITY UPDATE FLOOD SUPPORT

*Issue Ten: 1 September 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.

## Support Contacts

**Mallee Family Care:** 03 5032 4479

**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

**Council:** 03 5450 9333

## GANNAWARRA COMMUNITY FLOOD RECOVERY GRANTS ANNOUNCED

Sixteen community events and activities will share in \$39,918 of funding thanks to the Gannawarra Community Flood Recovery Grants program.

Gannawarra Shire-based community groups were able to apply for up to \$3,000 to support events, programs and activities that will assist the Gannawarra's social recovery from the October-December 2022 floods, with Council receiving 22 applications.

"Council thanks all community groups that took the time to apply for funding, with the successful initiatives to help our communities continue to recover from our second major flood event in 11 years," Mayor Charlie Gillingham said.

Seven applications successfully received the maximum amount of \$3,000, with five of these supporting events that will bring residents and schools together for activities or a meal.

"All projects or events that received funding need to hold their event or complete their initiatives by the end of March 2024, meaning it will be a busy seven-month period for the Gannawarra," Mayor Gillingham said.

### Successful Grant Recipients:

Benjeroop Public Hall Inc. -Benjeroop Community Connect and Wellbeing Day (\$3,000)

Cohuna Neighbourhood House -Art, Culture and Entertainment Events (\$3,000)

Dingwall Community Hall -Dingwall Community Creative Art Project (\$3,000)

Koondrook Primary School -Murray Plains Cluster Wellbeing Day (\$3,000)

Leitchville Gunbower Football Netball Club Inc.-Leitchville Community Wellbeing Day (\$3,000)

Murrabit and District Lions Club Inc -Murrabit and District Community Dinner (\$3,000)

Murrabit Group School -Art therapy with a local Aboriginal Artist (\$2,888)

Quambatook District Share Shop Inc.-Quambatook Family Fun Day (\$3,000)

Kerang & District Agricultural Society -Kerang Agricultural Show Music Festival (\$2,500)

Quambatook Community Resource Centre -Quambatook Community Lunch and Walking Netball Event (\$2,500)

Lake Charm Playgroup -Lakes District Family Colour Run (\$2,460)

Koondrook Development Committee Inc.-Koondrook New Year's Eve Event (\$2,340)

Kerang and District Community Centre Inc.-Koondrook Get Connected Wellbeing Session (\$2,300)

Kerang District Health -Volunteer Acknowledgement Dinner (\$2,000)

Kerang Group of the Legacy Club Of Bendigo Inc. -Legacy morning tea events (\$1080)

Kerang Traders Inc. -Kerang Street Activation (\$850)

The Gannawarra Flood Recovery Grants Program is an initiative of the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee, which consist of 32 agencies working with Council to implement the Municipal Recovery Plan.

## GANNAWARRA FLOOD RECOVERY EVENTS SUCCESS

Two events have been successfully held with funds received through the Gannawarra Community Flood Recovery Grants program. The Leitchville Gunbower Football Netball Club hosted a Community Wellbeing Day on July 29. Over 100 attendees enjoyed lunch and were able to take away messages of resilience from former Lockington resident and current Beyond Blue ambassador, Brad McEwan. Brad also spoke about the Rochester floods and reinforced the importance of local sporting clubs for rebuilding and improving mental health and wellbeing.



The Kerang Traders provided street activation with the funding received through the grant program. Balloonatic Bruce performed in Victoria



Square on Friday 25 August prior to the annual Kerang Book Week Parade. Bruce engaged the gathering of pre-school children and parents with his story of zoo animals and magical rabbit.

# COMMUNITY UPDATE FLOOD SUPPORT



## Free mental health resources and support for farmers, and grants available for community events

The National Centre for Farmer Health has partnered with a leading telehealth mental health service provider, LYSN, to improve access to mental health support for Victoria's flood affected farmers.

The Farmer Online Assist Program provides free, short-term, confidential psychological support to help Victorian farmers deal with immediate, or compounding, issues related to mental health.

The confidential, high-quality mental health support is provided either online or by phone. Up to three sessions are provided free of charge, with no need to leave the farm and no GP referral or mental health plan required.

The Farmer Online Assist Program is open to Victorian farmers, farm family members over 16 years of age, and farm workers who are living or working on a farm in a local government area affected by floods or extreme weather conditions.

Resources, a list of contacts for emotional and social wellbeing support, and grants to support community events that support farmers and farming communities, and more are available at <https://farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit>

The grants program has been extended. If you have an idea that promotes social connection and wellbeing for farmers, register your interest or have a chat with Sally on (03) 5551 8533. Grant amounts from \$500-\$1,500 are available. Ideas can be registered by scanning the QR code:



## SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/buildingfarmspirit>



@National Centre for Farmer Health



@buildingfarmspirit



@buildfarmspirit



@farmerhealth

## BFS HASHTAGS

#farmerhealth #NCFH #saferfarmer  
#buildingfarmspirit

## FLOOD RECOVERY – FARMER PERSPECTIVES VIDEO

In the months following the floods, the National Centre for Farmer Health's Lyall Grey, spoke to more than 50 farmers, health professionals and industry advisors across Victoria about the impact the unusual season had on their health and wellbeing.

The high rainfall and subsequent flooding, caused losses to the Victorian agricultural sector of almost \$1 billion across 40 local government areas for the horticultural, grazing and broad-acre cropping industries and an additional \$840 million in asset losses.

"The one thing that really stood out for me was the resilience of our farmers," Lyall said.

Despite it being a tough time for many on the land, farmers talk about what they had learnt about themselves, their community and what helped them tackle the challenges and stay positive in the months of hard work after flood.

Their stories were shared on social media to let farmers know they were not alone, that help was available and to provide an avenue for sharing their thoughts and tips during flood recovery.

The 18 minute compilation video on Victorian farmers' perspectives on flood recovery can be viewed at <https://farmerhealth.org.au/buildingfarmspirit>. The video features dairy farmers from both the Kerang and Cohuna area.



# COMMUNITY UPDATE FLOOD SUPPORT



## Affected by the October 2022 floods?

We can check for damage,  
for free.



To learn more or register

**Call 1800 560 760**

or go to [vic.gov.au/erv-structural-assessment](https://vic.gov.au/erv-structural-assessment)



If where you live or work was affected by the October 2022 floods, help is available to check for damage.

Emergency Recovery Victoria can provide a free assessment of structures on your property that have been impacted by flood.

The assessment will tell you:

- about any damage including whether the structure is dangerous to live in or use
- if there are any hazards like mould or electrical dangers
- how to manage the structure
- whether it is eligible for extra support under the program.

You can use your structural assessment as part of an insurance claim, or to tell tradespeople about the repairs you need

Register for an assessment at [vic.gov.au/erv-structural-assessment](https://vic.gov.au/erv-structural-assessment) or call the Flood Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760

## Council presents at the Flood Inquiry Public Hearing

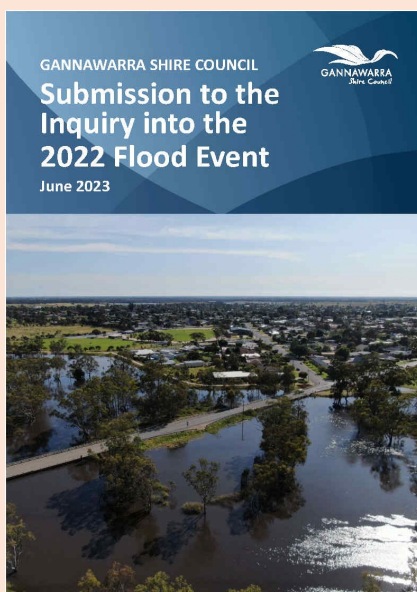
Council's Mayor Charlie Gillingham and Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson presented to the Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee at Echuca on August 24.

The experiences from the October-December 2022 flood event that were captured in Council's submission to the Inquiry provided the foundation for the presentation. The impacts to the community and repairing and improving flood mitigation infrastructure, connecting our communities and disaster recovery funding arrangements were key themes.

Council presented with other local governments from across the region to help highlight the collective measures that can be taken to ensure the next major flood event does not impact our communities as significantly.

Findings and recommendations from the Committee are expected in mid-2024 which are passed onto the State Government for consideration, and possibly accepted and implemented.

To view the submission, click on the **Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria** heading at [www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods](https://www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods)



## MURRAY PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK GRANTS

Murray PHN have opened Round 2 of the Australian Government grants for flood wellbeing and resilience. The funding is aimed at strengthening social connectedness and assisting communities as they recover.

People, organisations, and community groups are invited to apply for grants up to \$10,000 per application.

Applications are designed for easy completion and can be found at [www.murrayphn.org.au/flood-wellbeing-and-resilience-grants-open/](https://www.murrayphn.org.au/flood-wellbeing-and-resilience-grants-open/)

The selection criteria

1. The applicant is based in a 2022 flood affected area, or the activities proposed will directly benefit the community within a flood affected area.
  2. The proposed activities aim to:
    - reduce mental health issues and support suicide prevention,
    - identify post-traumatic stress disorder,
    - build resilience within the community, and/or
    - provide social connectedness for communities.
  3. The proposal demonstrates a clear outline of the proposed activities.
  4. The proposal describes the need within the community.
  5. The proposal must fit within a \$10,000 budget and not be used for personal gain.
- Applications close 5pm on Tuesday 5 September 2023.



An Australian Government Initiative

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## MEN'S BREAKFAST IN MURRABIT

A relaxed breakfast barbecue was held around the fire at Murrabit on August 16. The morning was supported by Mallee Family Care and Council and brought together people from Murrabit & District, with others travelling from outside the area to catch up. The gathering was a great opportunity for all to come together and show community support and help their own wellbeing. The campfire provided an ideal opportunity for men to just gather and talk. David Hosking from Quambatook with help from John Pay from Murrabit cooked the breakfast.

Mallee Family Care have expressed interest to supporting other men's breakfasts in other Gannawarra communities impacted by the October-December 2022 flood event. If you are interested in being involved, please get in touch.



## FLOOD DAMAGED ROAD REPAIRS CONTINUES

The Macorna North area is currently undergoing repair to flood damaged roads. This is part of Package 2 which includes culvert cleaning, maintenance grading and some re-sheeting. Package 1 in the Mincha West area has been completed.

Currently, Package 3 is waiting approval from the Department of Transport.

Council is continuing to work through the extensive process to gather evidence and estimates to develop road repair Packages 4-12. This process is essential to ensure that government funding is secured prior to the works being undertaken. Tenders for these 9 packages closed on August 30 and will assist with Council applying for a cash advance from the government for each road repair package.



## HELP REWRITE THE GANNAWARRA MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Residents are encouraged to help Gannawarra Shire Council and agencies rewrite the document that guides the management of emergencies in the Gannawarra and how agencies respond to these incidents and coordinate recovery operations.

Last reviewed in 2020, the Gannawarra Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) guides how Council and fellow agencies work together during times of emergency, with the plan last used during the October-December 2022 floods.

"The document is connected to numerous Council, Regional and State emergency plans, and outlines which actions agencies are responsible for managing during emergencies, such as floods, fires, road accidents, epidemics, essential service disruption or rescue." Council Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson said.

To assist with the rewriting of the plan, residents are encouraged to provide feedback on what they would like included in the new version of the document by completing a 10-minute survey located at [www.gsc.vic.gov.au/emergencyplan](http://www.gsc.vic.gov.au/emergencyplan) up to 5pm Wednesday, 27 September.

## COUNCIL WELCOMES BETTERMENT FUNDING

State and Federal governments have announced additional funding for repairing and rebuilding Council assets damaged during the October-December 2022 floods. Gannawarra Shire Council is one of 14 councils set to benefit from the \$9.4 million *Council Priority Betterment Program* to improve roads, bridges and footpaths damaged during the flood event.

The funding will ensure infrastructure can be built back using more resilient methods or materials, meaning it is less likely these assets will be impacted in future flood events.

As an example, the funding would allow for under road 300mm culverts to be increased to 450mm increasing the volume of water capacity during high rain or flood events.



# COMMUNITY UPDATE FLOOD SUPPORT



## eRESILIENCE

an online wellbeing and performance program.

Currently FREE for eligible regional Victorians.



### eRESILIENCE — A GROUND-BREAKING ONLINE COURSE DESIGNED TO EQUIP PEOPLE TO DEAL WITH LIFE'S ADVERSITIES

We all know that life can be unpredictable – and sometimes really tough – which is why the team at Resilience Builders have developed the online wellbeing and performance program, **eResilience**.

Thanks to the Victorian Government Department of Health, the self-paced online program is currently available for FREE to eligible regional Victorians.

Throughout the course, participants will learn how to incorporate strategies for building resilience into their everyday life, and will have access to a range of resources and tools to achieve their goals.

Interested? Find out more at [resiliencebuilders.com.au/tour/eresilience](https://resiliencebuilders.com.au/tour/eresilience)

### MALLEE FAMILY CARE – HERE TO HELP

Mallee Family Care has Recovery Support Workers dedicated to assisting individuals and families impacted by the floods with their recovery journey.

Services available include:

- Financial counselling
- Available grants
- Legal assistance and advice
- Psychosocial support
- Housing advocacy
- Flood case management and more.

Reach out by giving us a call or popping into one of our offices.

[www.malleefamilycare.org.au/](https://www.malleefamilycare.org.au/)



#### Swan Hill

Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm  
229 Beveridge St, Swan Hill  
Phone: 03 5032 4479

#### Kerang

Mon-Fri 12pm – 4pm  
1/22 Victoria St, Kerang  
Phone: 03 5452 2863

### Mallee Family Care Flood Recovery Events

As a part of Mallee Family Care's flood recovery support program, a breakfast get-together was held on Wednesday 16 August for those who were affected by the 2022-2023 floods.

This event was a great opportunity for members of the community to connect and socialise with neighbours and others in the area.

At Mallee Family Care we believe it's important that community connections are maintained during the recovery process, allowing people to come together to share stories, offering informal support, and socialising in a comfortable and friendly environment.

We're here to help with your flood recovery support and will be planning more of these events. If you would like to know more, please contact us for further details.



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

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### R U OK? DAY

**THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Gannawarra Shire Council has partnered with Northern District Community Health, Kerang District Health and the local Neighbourhood houses in Kerang, Cohuna and Quambatook to support R U OK? Day on Thursday 14 September 2023.

Morning tea events will be held across the Shire to raise awareness and help people develop the skills to ask the question, 'are you OK?' in a safe and supportive way.

Resources such as posters, conversations starter cards and bookmarks will highlight the four steps to start a meaningful conversation.

The R U OK? Day organisation states, "you don't need to be an expert to reach out – just a good friend and a great listener."

Developing the knowledge on R U OK? Day is important for building skills to support friends, family and colleagues all year round.

Lifeline 13 11 14 and Beyond Blue 1300 224 636 are available 24 hours for anyone concerned for their mental health or the mental health of another person. In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000).

To learn more about how to ask R U OK? and what to say when someone says they are not okay, please visit [www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask](http://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask)

## Make staying connected and asking R U OK? part of your everyday

### Start by asking, 'are you OK?'

No, I'm not OK.

Yes, I'm fine.

But your gut says they're not:

Dig a bit deeper:

"What's been happening?"

"It's just that you don't seem to be your usual self lately."

"Have you been feeling this way for a while?"

"I'm always here if you want to chat."

"I'm ready to listen if you want to talk."

"Is there someone else you'd rather talk to?"

### Listen with an open mind

### Encourage action and offer support

"How can I help?"

"Have you thought about seeing your doctor?"

"What would help take the pressure off?"

### Make time to check in

"Let's chat again next week."

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

**RUOK?**



### Rural Aid assistance for farmers

Farmers impacted by the October-December 2022 floods can register with Rural Aid for future assistance and other support by completing the Farmer Registration on the Rural Aid website [www.ruralaid.org.au](http://www.ruralaid.org.au), or by phoning 1300 327 624.

Fodder assistance is also available from Need for Feed. Please visit their website to apply for assistance and further information.

Deliveries are totally free of any cost to the recipients. For more information, visit:

[www.needforfeed.org/apply-for-assistance.html](http://www.needforfeed.org/apply-for-assistance.html)