



Mayor's message

As we delve into the latest edition of the Gazette, I am delighted to extend a warm invitation to explore the myriad of ways in which Council is supporting our community.

Within these pages, you'll discover the latest updates on our community's progress and initiatives. From welcoming Michael Tudball as our interim CEO, to the ongoing advancement of our infrastructure projects. Additionally, our latest projects are steadily progressing, contributing to the growth and development of our region. Celebrate with us the opening of new modules at Haddon and Bannockburn kindergartens, which further enrich our community and create additional early education opportunities.

We are well into this year's Draft Budget process, which reflects our commitment to prudent financial management while prioritising investments in essential services and community initiatives. We thank those community members who made a submission to the Draft Budget, and we look forward to finalising and sharing the Budget with you.

As winter school holidays beckon, discover an array of diverse activities tailored for our youth. Additionally, uncover our commitment to well-being through mental health first aid training and other community engagement activities.



Lastly, we take this opportunity to pay our respects to former Mayor and Councillor Jenny Blake. Jenny was a much-loved member of Golden Plains Shire and served as a Councillor from 1996 until 2016. During this period, Jenny served as the first female Mayor of Golden Plains Shire from 2008 to 2010 and served another term as Mayor from 2012 to 2014. Jenny along with her husband Kevin, who served as a Councillor with the former Leigh Shire, lived a life of serving and advocating on behalf of all residents of Golden Plains Shire. On behalf of Council, we send our condolences to Jenny's husband Kevin and her family and relatives.

As always, I extend my gratitude to the residents of Golden Plains Shire for your ongoing support and collaboration. Together, we will continue to make our Shire a vibrant and inclusive place to live, work, and socialise.

Cr Brett Cunningham
Mayor



Eric Braslis



Michael Tudball

With a wealth of experience in local government, Michael brings a deep understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities facing rural councils. With a background across local and state government spanning more than 25 years, Michael brings experiences from across the sector in senior executive and CEO roles at Moira, Hindmarsh, Corangamite, Southern Grampians and Melton Councils.

COUNCIL WELCOMES GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE'S INTERIM CEO

Golden Plains Shire Council announced the appointment of the organisation's Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Michael Tudball in April, following the resignation of Eric Braslis who finishing his tenure with Council on 3 May 2024.

The recruitment process for an ongoing CEO is already underway, and a dedicated recruitment company has been tasked with finding a dynamic leader who shares Council's vision for Golden Plains Shire's future.

Mr Braslis served as Golden Plains Shire CEO for more than six years, and guided Council through a transformative period which included the COVID-19 pandemic, historic flooding events and bush fires. Mr Braslis is now working with Wyndham City Council.



Hendersons Road Bridge in Bamganie Opens for Traffic

The construction project to replace the old single-lane, hazardous structure at Hendersons Road Bridge in Bamganie was completed in May 2024.

The replacement of the bridge included the construction of a new seven-metre-wide two-lane bridge deck spanning 20 metres across Wilsons Creek using prestressed concrete bridge girders. The existing columns in the waterway were removed and the bridge's alignment was modified to improve access and sight distance, with extended guardrails installed on both approaches.

This \$742,000 project was funded from Round 6 of the Federal Government's Bridge Replacement Program (80% of construction costs) with additional funding from Council's Bridge Replacement program.

LATEST ROAD WORKS AND REPAIRS IN GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Maintaining, repairing and improving Council-managed roads in Golden Plains Shire is always a priority for our Roads and Drainage Teams.

In recent months, significant projects have progressed including the ongoing reconstruction of the Linton-Piggoreet Road Bridge, the replacement of Hendersons Road Bridge in Bamganie and ongoing drainage and road grading works at locations across the Shire.

For more information about roads in Golden Plains Shire, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/resident/roads



Bassetts Road, Mannibadar, road and drain repair. (shown above)



Cape Clear-Rokewood Road widening in Rokewood. (shown above)

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

BUDGET 2024/25

The final version of Golden Plains Shire Council's Draft Budget 2024/25 (Draft Budget) will be presented to Council for adoption at its 25 June meeting.

The Draft Budget was endorsed for public exhibition by Council at its meeting on 23 April, and community feedback was invited until Monday 20 May 2024. Council held a meeting at the Golden Plains Civic Centre on Tuesday 4 June 2024 where anyone who lodged a written submission had an opportunity to present it to Council.

Golden Plains Shire Mayor Cr Brett Cunningham acknowledged the economic challenges and focus on financial sustainability, stating that the Draft Budget reflects a notable reduction in overall expenditure, with Council making the difficult but necessary decision to streamline operations and optimise resources.

"In light of the current circumstances, certain services, programs and initiatives may experience adjustments. Whilst there are no new initiatives or additional staff included, ongoing capital works program and upcoming projects such as the Rokewood Community Hub, Linton Oval, and the Teesdale Don Wallace Reserve developments have been represented in the Draft Budget," he said.

"We assure our residents that every effort has been made to minimise the impact on critical services, however it is imperative that we exercise prudence and foresight in our financial planning."

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

**\$1.5
MILLION**

Teesdale Don Wallace
Rec Reserve Female
Friendly Changerooms

**\$100
THOUSAND**

Tennis/Netball
Court renewals.

**\$1
MILLION**

Local Roads Improvement
Program - Mt Mercer-
Dereel Road widening.

**\$1.2
MILLION**

Wilgul-Werneth Road/
Wurrook Road bridge
replacement.

Key Features of Draft Budget 2024/25

- This budget seeks to continue to provide services and improve and maintain infrastructure as well as deliver projects and services that are valued by our community. However, we have another year with the rate cap being below inflation (2024/25 maximum 2.75% rate cap). Councils across the State will likely have to reduce the level of service provided to their community or continue to operate at a loss, which is not a long-term sustainable business model.
- \$50m to continue to deliver more than 70 services to the Golden Plains community.
- 2.75% rate cap
- Waste Management Fee set at \$447 per household.
- Operating surplus of \$7.3m, with an overall underlying surplus of \$32k.

Key Operational Programs included in Draft Budget 2024/25

- Funding for six more communities to progress through the Community Planning Program.
- Continued implementation of Climate Emergency Plan actions.
- Continued transition of Waste Services to reflect State mandated 4 bin service.
- Continued development and implementation of the Core Systems Transformation Project.
- Delivery of the Rokewood Community Hub.
- Funding for various programs to support active ageing, youth development, and the general health, wellbeing and inclusion of all cohorts across the community.



VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT DELIVERS MORE KINDERGARTEN PLACES IN GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Victorian Minister for Children and Minister for Disability the Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn proudly opened the Haddon Kindergarten Upgrade in April, while Member for Geelong Christine Couzens unveiled the upgrades at Bannockburn Family Services Centre in May.

The Victorian Government has also delivered a new kindergarten in Napoleons (which opened in 2023) and upgrades to Bannockburn Family Services Centre for additional kindergarten spaces run by Kardinia Early Learning. This work is part of the State Government’s Best Start, Best Life reform.

CONSTRUCTION OF INVERLEIGH ACTIVE YOUTH SPACE PROGRESSES

Construction of the Inverleigh Active Youth Space is set to deliver expanded opportunities for physical activity, fostering social connections and promoting positive lifestyles.

The enhanced facility will feature a brand-new skate park, bicycle pump track, social basketball courts, seating, shade and shelters, as well as lighting and beautification enhancement. Construction began in April and is projected to be completed by September 2024.

This \$2.3million project is a collaborative effort, with the Victorian Government contributing \$1.48million from its Growing Suburbs Fund, and the Federal Government providing \$700,000. Additionally, Council has contributed \$150,000, ensuring full funding for the project.

Local Council Election to be held in October 2024

The next local council election for Golden Plains Shire Council will be held in October 2024 and will be administered by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC).

In the 2024 Golden Plains Shire Council election, voters will elect seven Councillors to represent Golden Plains Shire for the 2024-2028 term.

In a Council election, there are two types of voters: State enrolled voters and Council enrolled voters. To vote in the upcoming election, all eligible voters must be correctly enrolled to vote by the close of the Electoral Roll at 4pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024.

The VEC will begin accepting candidate nominations from Monday 9 September 2024, with nominations closing on Tuesday 17 September 2024. Council will then enter the Election Period which will run until 6pm on Saturday 26 October 2024. Elections will be held by postal ballot from 7 October to 25 October 2024.

Visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/CouncilElection for everything you need to know.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

Council has partnered with the Victorian Government to deliver free mental health first aid training for eligible community members.

Expressions of interest (EOI) are available for active community members wanting to gain their mental health first aid accreditation. Participants will learn how to assist a friend, family member or other members of the community who may be seeking support or experiencing a mental health crisis.

The skills learnt in the course can be applied in any setting, with the course content tailored for delivery in a community setting.

To complete this course, participants will be required to attend a four-hour in-person workshop and undertake five to seven hours of online pre-training.

For more information and to complete an EOI, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/events. This training is funded by the Victorian Government's Building Safer Communities Program.



WINTER HOLIDAY PROGRAM 2024

Council is hosting a series of free activities for young people aged 12 to 25 years throughout the upcoming Winter School Holidays, with exciting activities running from Monday 1 July to Friday 12 July.

Activities may include: pop up BBQs, skate sessions, art and craft projects, music or technology programs and trips to Melbourne.

The free holiday activities held across the Shire have been designed to support the needs and interests of young people, while also providing opportunities to learn new skills and connect with other young people.

To see a full schedule of available activities and to register, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/holiday-activity-program

FURTHER RESEARCH INFORMS GROWING PLACES STRATEGY

Council is getting closer to completing a full draft of the Growing Places Strategy, as the remaining research and technical studies are being finalised.

These studies relate to post-contact heritage and an assessment of essential services and infrastructure availability. A community health and wellbeing assessment (in addition to economic growth) was completed in early 2024.

Together with the significant research already undertaken and valuable input from the community and stakeholder organisations in 2023, these insights are shaping the draft Growing Places Strategy.

The Growing Places Strategy will set the overall direction for housing and population growth in Golden Plains Shire into the future. The strategy aims to balance the benefits of population growth with the importance of preserving Golden Plains Shire's unique character.

The latest research and technical studies will be published on Council's website as they are finalised, and the community will be able to review and provide feedback on the draft Growing Places Strategy once it is completed later this year.

You can watch a short video to learn more about the Growing Places Strategy at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/consultations or join the mailing list for updates by emailing growingplaces@gplains.vic.gov.au

ADDRESS SIGNS ASSIST WITH EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Cape Clear Fire Brigade recently installed almost 60 address signs on rural properties in their brigade area.

This is a community safety initiative that supports emergency services for a speedy response in emergency situations. The project was supported by Council’s Community Strengthening Grants program.



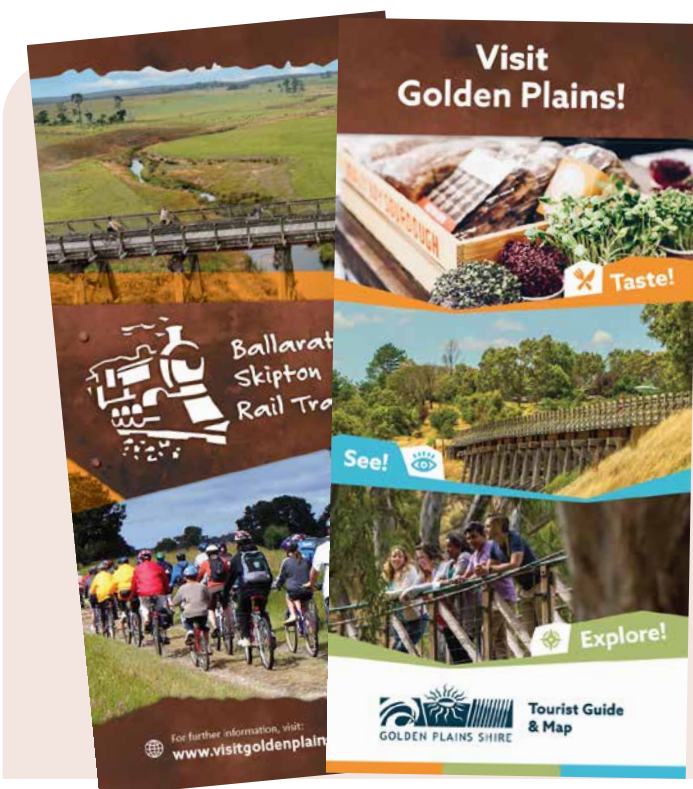
MILESTONE APPROACHING FOR LINTON OVAL REDEVELOPMENT

The \$1.2 million Linton Oval Reconstruction project is further progressing towards a key milestone, with works on laying the 100mm sand profile on the oval surface approaching completion.

Works undertaken so far include demolition, laying of new irrigation lines and system installation, establishment of the new perimeter fencing, spoon drain, cricket wicket and goal posts and subsurface drainage works consisting of pipes, pits and connection networks. The surface was also levelled and surveyed in preparation for the laying of the sand profile.

With the Linton Recreation Reserve Oval out of action for the current football season, the laying of instant (rollout) turf will be undertaken in September 2024 to coincide with the establishment period for warm season grasses.

Additional works including installation of coaches and umpire’s boxes, synthetic pads at entry points and surface treatments/pathing around the outside of the oval footprint are also underway.



New Tourism Brochures for Golden Plains Shire

Golden Plains Shire is now easier to explore thanks to the release of two updated tourism brochures.

The brochures include a Golden Plains Shire wide brochure which highlights the best to taste, see and explore across the Shire, and a Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail brochure which guides guests on the highlights of the scenic trail.

Council’s Economic Development team is currently distributing 10,000 copies of the brochures at locations in Golden Plains Shire. If you would like copies to distribute, please email tourism@gplains.vic.gov.au or call 5220 7111.



COMMUNITY VISION 2040 UPDATE

In March, Golden Plains Shire met with almost 40 community members to discuss our 2040 Community Vision. We wanted to ensure the Vision still reflected the needs, ambitions and priorities of our community.

These workshops marked the conclusion of a three-month consultation period in which over 400 local people contributed. Officers are now working through the feedback received before presenting recommendations to Council in September 2024.

Refreshing the Community Vision forms an integral part of the preparation for the 2024 Local Government Elections and the development of our new Council Plan.

FAMILY FUN AT THE GOLDEN PLAINS FARMERS' MARKET

Each month, the Golden Plains Farmers' Market offers the very best in artisan food and handcrafted goods with a fantastic range of farm-fresh and homemade foods as well as unique art, handmade homewares and much more.

With live music, family entertainment, espresso coffee and the aroma of fresh baking pastries adrift, the Golden Plains Farmers' Market offers a lively atmosphere for visitors of all ages.

The Golden Plains Farmers' Market is held on the first Saturday of each month (except January) at the corner of Milton and High Streets in Bannockburn from 8:30am to 12:30pm.

Mark the calendar with the remaining 2024 market dates: 6 July, 3 August, 7 September, 5 October, 2 November and 7 December





CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Garibaldi Community Plan (the Plan) was launched at the Garibaldi Community Celebration in May.

The priority projects outlined in the plan include expanding community activities such as arts and crafts sessions and children's activities, as well as enhancing facilities such as public toilets, noticeboards, seating and playground upgrades.

Rokewood/Corindhap, Haddon, Scarsdale, Wallinduc, Lethbridge and Berringa/Staffordshire Reef will commence the planning phase of the program in the coming months. Council is currently seeking Expressions of Interest from residents in these towns to participate in the Community Planning program.

For more information, please contact Council's Community Partnerships Officer at community.planning@gplains.vic.gov.au or call 5220 7111.

Golden Plains Local Food Network Formed



Golden Plains Shire Council has partnered with Sustain: *The Australian Food Network* to establish a Golden Plains Local Food Network (the Network) in 2024.

The formation of the Network follows a Community Food Survey undertaken in January 2024 (which aimed to understand the community's food system needs and priorities) and the Golden Plains Food Forum event, which was held in March 2024. An Expression of Interest process to join the Network was also open from March through to April 2024 for interested community members.

The Network will meet four times over the next 12 months to develop and implement an action plan to support the local agriculture and food industries in Golden Plains Shire.

Over the next 12 months, we'll be sharing updates across our website and social media channels to keep our local community informed on the key actions of the Network and implementation of the action plan.

This project is funded by the Victorian Local Government Partnership Agreement to deliver key objectives relating to Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.



Another Successful Wiser Driver Program

Council's Community Inclusion team successfully hosted another iteration of the popular Wiser Driver sessions throughout April, aimed at empowering older drivers to enhance their driving skills and confidence.

Led by facilitator Lynne Kidman, the four sessions provided a relaxed and engaging learning environment for participants. Senior Constable Mathew Beavis from the Moorabool Highway Patrol joined us on the third session, offering valuable insights on rural highway driving and statistics for our local area.

With a focus on refreshing existing knowledge and acquainting participants with new road regulations, the program equips older drivers with the necessary tools to continue to drive safely and confidently on our roads.

Express your interest in joining the waitlist for the next Wiser Driver! Call 5220 7111 or email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

GET IN TOUCH

If you have any suggestions for future editions or comments you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact Council's Active Ageing and Inclusion Department on the following details:

Golden Plains Shire Council's Community and Inclusion team (during business hours): 5220 7151

Email: ageingandinclusion@gplains.vic.gov.au

UPCOMING EVENTS

Escape the Cold

Come and join us for some soup and a social chat.

Linton

When: Tuesday 4 June 2024

Time: 11am – 1pm

Meredith

When: Tuesday 25th June 2024

Time: 11am – 1pm

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

A guest speaker from Seniors Rights Victoria will be joining us to encourage dialogue and educate us on how to recognise and prevent elder abuse.

When: Thursday 20 June 2024

Time: 11am – 1pm

Warm Safe Home Project

The Warm Safe Home Project uses the icon of the house to stimulate discussion around older people's right to feel safe and live free from fear in their own homes.

As part of this project, paper-house-making templates are being distributed around our local community, encouraging seniors groups and individuals to participate in this creative project and encourage dialogue surrounding the issue of elder abuse.

REGISTER TO ATTEND EVENTS

To request to take part in an event, call 5220 7151 or email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au





CUSTOMER HUBS

BANNOCKBURN

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
2 Pope Street, Bannockburn
Victoria, 3331.

SMYTHESDALE

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale
Victoria, 3351.

PHONE

P: 5220 7111

POSTAL ADDRESS

Golden Plains Shire Council
PO Box 111, Bannockburn,
Victoria 3331.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

P: 1300 363 036
P: 5220 7111 (24 Hours)

*COVER: Participants at the
Community Vision 2040 workshop in
Smythesdale.*

RATES PAYMENT 2024/2025

All Golden Plains Shire ratepayers will receive their
2024/25 Rates Notice in August.



There are three options for paying your Rates and Charges in 2024/25:

1. **One full payment** – due by 15 February 2025.
2. **Four instalments**
due: 30 September, 30 November, 28 February, and 31 May.
 - Direct debit is available, and notices are mailed out for each instalment with a range of payment options.
3. **10 monthly direct debit payments** – due on the 15th of the month from September 2024 to June 2025. You must register for direct debit by contacting Council.

Residents who opt to pay their rates in installments should note that the first payment is due on 30 September 2024. For more information or any questions about rates, please call Council's Rates team on 5220 7111.

DISPOSING OF HAY OR SILAGE BALE NET WRAP IN GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Hay or silage bale net wrap is used across Golden Plains Shire and is a valuable material for protecting round bales of hay or silage from adverse weather conditions.

However, net wrap from hay bales cannot be recycled through our kerbside recycling system and may lead to significant disruptions in the sorting machinery at the Material Recovery Facility. Therefore, please do not place hay or silage bale net wrap in your yellow-lidded recycling bin.

You can bring hay or silage bale net wrap to your closest Transfer Station to ensure it is disposed of correctly. Visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au for more information.

ONLINE COMMUNITY DIRECTORY PROVING POPULAR



Council's new Online Community Directory is a great way to connect with local community groups, clubs, services, associations and facilities.

The Online Community Directory provides easy-to-find information and features a range of categories and listings for people to search. Eligible groups can also add their own free listing by creating an account at Golden Plains Shire Council's website. Once approved, groups can independently manage their own listings and update them as needed.

A user guide with instructions on how to create a community listing is available at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/community-directory

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE
eGAZETTE

Scan to sign up now!



CONNECT WITH GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

@GPSCouncilNews

GoldenPlainsShire

goldenplains.vic.gov.au

GoldenPlainsMayor

[lovegoldenplains](https://www.instagram.com/lovegoldenplains)