





CEO's Message

I would like to introduce myself; I am the new CEO of Golden Plains Shire Council. It is a privilege to join such a vibrant community, and I look forward to working together to support the Shire's ongoing growth and success.

Now the election is complete, I congratulate the newly appointed Councillors. This new Council brings together a dedicated team, who are all passionate about representing the community and advancing our shared goals. Further information can be found on our website goldenplains.vic.gov.au/council/councillors. Over the next four years, we will work closely to ensure that Golden Plains remains a fantastic place to live, work and socialise.

It is also important to take the time to acknowledge the previous Council and thank them for their service. Whether they retired, were unsuccessful in the election or were successful in returning for another term, I want to thank them for their commitment to the role and their decision making as representatives of the community over the past four years.

As 2024 draws to a close, Council has had a remarkable year delivering services and programs for our residents, from road and facilities maintenance to expanding our waste services and in supporting local businesses and community initiatives. I am proud to lead a professional organisation with people dedicated to supporting our residents, ratepayers, and visitors.

Community engagement is important, and we look forward to connecting with you at upcoming events and forums. Our teams are eager to hear your thoughts and aspirations on important projects and initiatives, including developing our next Council Plan 2025-2029, Financial Plan and Asset Plan. These conversations are essential to ensure that the planning for the future reflects the values and needs of our community.

My commitment as CEO in 2025 is to ensure that Council is proactive, transparent, and responds to emerging opportunities and challenges. Thank you for your warm welcome – it is an exciting journey ahead and I look forward to meeting many of you soon.

On behalf of everyone here at Council, we wish all Golden Plains Shire residents, businesses, and ratepayers a Merry Christmas and a happy, relaxing, and rewarding New Year.

Shane Walden



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Golden Plains Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24 was presented to Council at its meeting on Tuesday 22 October 2024.



Council's Annual Report 2023/24 provides a comprehensive overview of our achievements and performance in the 2023/24 financial year against the five community outcome areas as set out in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

From infrastructure improvements to environmental sustainability, community engagement to economic growth, major achievements to major changes, each chapter tells a story of our collective efforts and the positive impact we have had on the community.

To access a copy of the Annual Report, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au.

Golden Plains Shire Council Welcomes New Councillor Group

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) finalised the vote count and declared the seven councillors-elect who will form the Golden Plains Shire Council.

Golden Plains Shire Council welcomes the following councillors-elect who will represent Golden Plains Shire for the 2024-2028 term:

- Lachlan Glen
- Sarah Hayden
- Des Phelan
- Brett Cunningham
- Emma Robbins
- Helena Kirby
- Owen Sharkey

Thank you to all 10 candidates who put themselves forward to represent the Golden Plains Shire at last month's election.

The final Council meeting of the calendar year will take place on Tuesday 17 December 2024 in the Council Chambers at the Golden Plains Civic Centre. The meeting starts at 6pm and will be livestreamed with a link being made available at Council's website.



HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Golden Plains Shire Council invited the community and key stakeholders to help shape the future by participating in the development of the next Council Plan 2025-2029.

As we plan for the next four years, community members were invited to help shape our future together and provide input into the development of the Council Plan 2025-2029, which will be vital in guiding our decisions and setting priorities that reflect the needs and aspirations of our residents.

The Council Plan 2025-2029 is aligned with the Community Vision 2040, Asset Plan and Financial Plan. The Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan will be embedded in this new Council Plan, ensuring the health and wellbeing of our community remains at the forefront of our priorities.

Community engagement is at the heart of shaping this important document. Through an extensive deliberative engagement process, across a broad cross-section of the community all ratepayers, business owners and stakeholders were invited to provide their input.

This ensures that the voices of our community are brought to Council and will help shape the direction of the Council Plan 2025-2029.

For the latest update on this community engagement, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/consultations.



Sebastopol-Smythesdale and Tom Jones Road Intersection Works

Works have been completed to provide a channelised left onto Tom Jones Road and provide a squarer approach with a splitter island and kerbed returns. This intersection significantly improves the safety of turning movements into and out of Tom Jones Road.

This \$330,000 project was funded by the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program.



MEREDITH-SHELFORD ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The bridge replacement to finalise the multi-staged Meredith Shelford Road widening project is in its final stages with work due to be complete by the end of 2024.

This \$5 million project has been completed in stages over the past five years, and has attracted funding from the Federal Government's LRCI Program, Roads to Recovery Program and the Victorian Government's AgriLinks Upgrade Program.



2024-25 ROAD GRADING SCHEDULE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE



Golden Plains Shire Council's Roads and Drainage Team continues to grade Council's unsealed road network in line with the 2024/25 road grading calendar.

Council's annual Road Grading Program allows for grading of Council's unsealed road network in the Shire throughout the year. Council has committed to grading every unsealed road in the Shire's 705km unsealed Council road network at least once a year through its Unsealed Road Grading Maintenance Charter.

Residents can visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/events to see when Council's graders will be in which areas of the Shire to easily track when maintenance will be done on unsealed roads. Residents can either put their town in the search box or click the calendar link to view all listings.

Instructions on how to search for road grading listings is available at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/roads.

STAY FIRE READY

This Summer will see extreme heat, dry conditions and increased fire danger. The Fire Danger Period is when the CFA restricts the use of fire in the community to help prevent fires from starting. It's important to not only prepare for yourself and family, but also learn how you can support your community during this time.

To help prepare and familiarise yourself, visit

goldenplains.vic.gov.au/community/fire-flood-and-emergencies

FIRE DANGER PERIOD BEGINS IN GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Golden Plains Shire entered the Fire Danger Period (FDP) on Monday 25 November 2024, with fire restrictions in force until the Country Fire Authority (CFA) announces the end of the season.

During the FDP, there are a number of restrictions that residents must adhere to and landowners are required to maintain the levels of fine fuels on their properties.

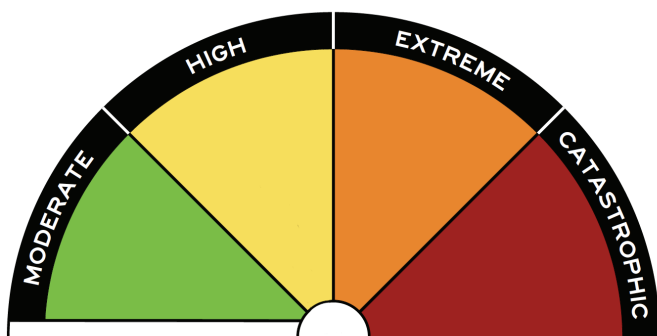
Landowners in Golden Plains are required to keep grass on their residential properties cut so it is no higher than

100mm during the Fire Danger Period. On properties more than two hectares, grass must be kept below 100mm, up to a minimum of 20 metres from a house or outbuilding.

Council commenced its Fire Hazard Inspection Program on Monday 4 November 2024. For all enquiries about Fire Prevention Notices, please contact Council at enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au or call 5220 7111.

Residents who have been issued with a Fire Prevention Notice are required to complete necessary works to limit hazards by 4 weeks after the date of issue.

For the most up to date information about the fire season, head to goldenplains.vic.gov.au



MODERATE

Plan and prepare

HIGH

Be ready to act

EXTREME

Take action now to protect life and property

CATASTROPHIC

For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

FIRE DANGER RATING SYSTEM

The Fire Danger Rating System consists of four categories ranging from moderate to catastrophic.

Fire Danger Ratings provide information so people in affected areas can take action to protect themselves and others. The higher the fire danger, the more dangerous conditions and the greater the impact will be if a fire starts.

Residents are encouraged to keep an eye on the Fire Danger Rating signs across the Shire this fire season and have a plan in place for fire events. Fire danger ratings are shown in the same way across all of Australia, so whether you're at home or travelling, you will see the same rating system.

2024 Year in Review

In 2024, Council reached important milestones, navigated challenges and continued to support community growth and progress. Throughout the year, our resilience and adaptability have been put to the test, giving us valuable insights to carry forward into the future.

Our work across the Shire has made a real difference, delivering more than 70 services that positively impact the lives of residents, rate payers and businesses every day. As we look back on the accomplishments, challenges and growth we've shared this year, we look forward to 2025 and thank our community in working with us as we shape the exciting journey ahead for Golden Plains Shire.



GROWING PLACES STRATEGY



Following extensive stakeholder and community engagement, the draft Growing Places Strategy (GPS) is complete. The GPS is the culmination of three years of evidence-based research guided by principles from the Community Vision 2040. The GPS proposes a plan for where housing and population could be supported to 2050 and beyond.

In mid 2023, Council released a draft ‘future growth scenario’ as part of the Informing Document to discuss with the community. This outlined where new housing and population growth to 2050 would be directed to capture the benefits of growth while preserving Golden Plains’ unique character. Extensive engagement with stakeholders and the community included in-person and online information sessions around the Shire, fact sheets, a webpage and information video.

We received valuable feedback from the community and stakeholders, highlighting three key concerns: traffic and transport, the timely supply of supporting infrastructure and services, and protecting the Shire’s country feel. The findings have informed the next stage of the project, being the preparing of the Strategy.

Since then, the final research and technical studies around post-contact heritage, an assessment of essential services and infrastructure availability, and a community wealth and well-being assessment have also been completed.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Based on the stakeholder and engagement findings and the further research undertaken, the new growth scenario continues to focus growth in areas where supporting infrastructure already exists.

This includes:

- Growth in Bannockburn (already identified in the Bannockburn Growth Plan).
- Incremental growth in Lethbridge, Teesdale, Smythesdale and Inverleigh.
- Minimal growth in all other towns.
- No longer prioritises growth to undeveloped areas of Cambrian Hill and Stonehaven where there is no existing infrastructure. These locations are still considered suitable options for future growth, but only when significant infrastructure is available and the timing is right.
- Continues to identify Meredith as a future stand-alone service-based hub, by making it a focus for residential and economic growth if and when reticulated sewerage becomes available.

This is a draft Strategy and there is still more work to do before it can be finalised. Community engagement is the next phase and final approval is required by the Minister for Planning. The process takes time, however it’s important to continue making progress and keep in step with Plan Victoria and anticipated growth.

Stay up to date by visiting goldenplains.vic.gov.au/consultations.



Golden Plains Twilight Market

The Golden Plains Twilight Market returns on Thursday 19 December 2024!

Residents are invited to join the festivities at the Bannockburn Heart, corner of Milton, Byron & High Streets, Bannockburn on Thursday 19 December from 4 to 9pm where the Heart will be transformed into a bustling hub of stallholders, featuring a variety of tasty food, fine crafts, live music, free activities, and much more.

The market will feature a variety of ready to eat foods, including a full bar where you can enjoy a chilled craft beer, local wine or cocktail. Don't miss the opportunity to stock up on farm fresh goods, spices, sauces and meats for all your festive feasts, and support our growers and makers by picking up those last-minute Christmas gifts for your loved ones.

The Golden Plains Twilight Market is brought to you by Golden Plains Shire Council and proudly sponsored by Beyond the Valley, GPG Naturgy Group, Josco, Golden Plains Storage and Stockdale & Leggo.

For more information, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/events. We can't wait to see you there!



MUNICIPAL EARLY YEARS AND CHILDREN'S PLAN



Golden Plains Shire Council is excited to announce the launch of the Municipal Early Years and Children's Plan (MEYCP), our dedicated framework to ensure every child in our community has access to nurturing, inclusive, and supportive environments from ages 0 to 12.

Research shows that the first twelve years of a child's life are critical in shaping their social, emotional, and cognitive growth. By investing in children aged 0 to 12, we're building a strong foundation for children's lifelong learning, health, and wellbeing.

Council will be engaging with families, childcare providers, and community members in the coming months to implement and refine the MEYCP. Stay tuned for more updates, including opportunities to participate in workshops and provide feedback.

Scan the QR Code to complete a short survey and have your say.





Council is proud to support the local business community this festive season by encouraging residents, visitors and individuals passing through our Shire to priorities shopping with local business.

This festive season, consider supporting local businesses that make our Shire unique and discover what hidden treasures are hiding right on your doorstep.

Every dollar spent creates local jobs and sustains the vibrant, unique character of our Shire.

To learn more about how you can Buy, Gift and Celebrate Local this festive season, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au

GOLDEN SPACES SUMMER EXHIBITION LAUNCH

The Golden Spaces Summer Exhibition will launch at the Bannockburn Cultural Centre on Thursday 19 December 2024.

The Summer Exhibition will feature a catalogue of over 20 artists showcasing a vibrant array of artworks, which will travel throughout the Shire over a 12-month period.

The aim of Golden Spaces is to encourage the broader community’s participation in, and access to, the arts in a local setting while providing professional development opportunities for emerging and established artists within the Shire.

The Golden Spaces Winter Exhibition 2024 is currently on display at The Well in Smythesdale, and will move to the Golden Plains Civic Centre in early 2025.

There are two opportunities to apply to exhibit at Golden Spaces throughout the calendar year, with Expressions of Interest for the next intake to open in early 2025 for the 2025 Winter Exhibition. For more information, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/goldenspaces.



**JOIN THE
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
REGISTER**



Join the Community Engagement Register to receive *Engage*, Council’s monthly engagement e-newsletter.



Complete the simple web form at goldenplains.vic.gov.au/community-engagement-registry



Email communityengagement@gplains.vic.gov.au

GLASS BIN ROLLOUT IN GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Throughout November and December, Golden Plains Shire Council has been rolling out new purple-lidded bins to residents and businesses currently receiving Council kerbside waste and recycling services. The new purple-lidded bin is specifically for glass bottles and jars.

The Victorian Government is standardising household waste and recycling services to create a more sustainable future. By diverting recyclables items, the aim is to reduce waste and resources going to landfill.

The introduction of separate glass collection service means that Council's standard waste and recycling service will no longer accept glass in the yellow commingled recycling bin. This is being applied to both Council's residential and commercial waste services.

CHANGES TO HOW OFTEN YOUR BIN IS COLLECTED

Your glass recycling will be collected every four weeks on your regular collection day, starting the week of 17 February 2025.

Your mixed recycling bin will be collected fortnightly on your regular collection day from the week commencing 3 February 2025.

Your general waste bin will continue to be collected fortnightly on your regular collection day from the week commencing 27 January 2025.

For FAQs and the latest updates, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au or scan the QR Code.



Council wishes you a

MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

On behalf of Councillors and Council staff, Golden Plains Shire Council wishes all residents and visitors a Merry Christmas and a safe, Happy New Year.

Golden Plains Shire Council will have altered hours during the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

Friday 20 December 2024

The Smythesdale Customer Hub (19 Heales Street, Smythesdale) will be closed all day. The Bannockburn Customer Hub (2 Pope Street, Bannockburn) will close at 12pm for the remainder of the day.

The Customer Experience Team will be available by phone until 12pm and will close for the remainder of the day.

Monday 23 December 2024

Council's offices and the Smythesdale and Bannockburn Customer Hubs will be open 8.30am – 5pm.

Tuesday 24 December 2024

Council's offices and the Smythesdale and Bannockburn Customer Hubs will be open 8.30am – 5pm.

Wednesday 25 December 2024 – Wednesday 1 January 2025

Council's Offices and Customer Hubs will be closed for the holiday period. Essential services will be available in this period. If you need urgent assistance, please call 5220 7111 and follow the prompts.

Thursday 2 January 2025

Council's offices and Customer Hubs will reopen at 8.30am.

RUBBISH AND RECYCLE COLLECTION

From Wednesday 25 December, all collections will be completed one day later than usual.

Normal Collection Day

Wednesday 25 December

Thursday 26 December

Friday 27 December

Replacement Collection Day

Thursday 26 December

Friday 27 December

Saturday 28 December

For further information, scan the QR Code to view the collection calendar



ROKEWOOD TRANSFER STATION

The Rokewood Resource Recovery Centre will be closed on Sunday 29 December 2024. It will re-open on Sunday 5 January 2024 from 10am to 3pm.

Seniors Festival 2024

Golden Plains Shire Council celebrated our older people across the Shire during the month of October during Seniors Festival 2024.

The theme for this year was Explore. Engage. Evolve. The Community Inclusion team partnered with local and external stakeholders, and community groups providing our senior population the opportunity to attend a total of 23 activities and outings.

We had much pleasure in celebrating International Day of Older People with a Mature Movers 50+ Ballet class and a Silk Painting workshop for Ageism Awareness Day.



Two Creation Station's took place for an intergenerational activity, utilising recycled materials to create a new work of art. Participants were greatly entertained with an outing to Ballarat to watch Wendy Stapleton perform the Swinging Sixties and a trip into Geelong to experience Andy Pobjoy play at the Piano Bar.

Bannockburn Library hosted group sessions and there was an array of arts and crafts activities across the Shire. There were walking groups in Bannockburn and Rokewood while the Dereel Men's Shed and Bannockburn Men's Shed had open days. Linton also hosted "Come and Try" activities for all to enjoy.

It was a month full of laughs, amusement, trying new things and connecting people through shared experiences.



Upcoming EVENTS

Escape the Heat 2024

The Community Inclusion team will be running its annual Escape the Heat morning tea sessions in January 2025.

The aim of this event is to educate our older residents on heat awareness and fire safety, and to encourage them to take care of one another during the dangerous heatwaves that can occur in the summer months.

Sessions will be held in Bannockburn and Smythesdale. For more information, please call 5220 7111.

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 Community Inclusion Team on the following details:

Golden Plains Shire Council's Community Inclusion Team
(during business hours): 5220 7111

Email: enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



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: An intergenerational session
at Bannockburn Library.*

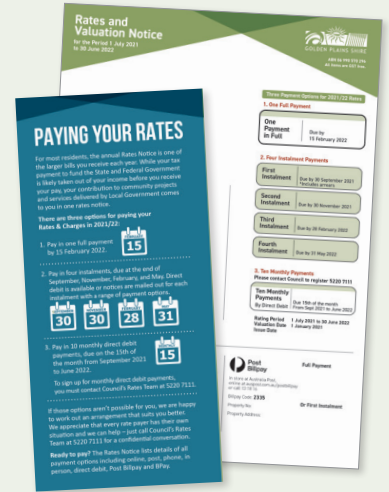
RATES PAYMENT

All Golden Plains Shire ratepayers received their 2024-25 Rates Notices in August.

Thank you to all ratepayers who have signed up to the monthly payment programs, with those payments due on the 15th of the month through to June 2025.

For residents who signed up to pay their rates by instalments, the third payment is due by 28 February 2025. Full payment of your Rates Notice is due on 15 February 2025.

To discuss your rates payment, please call our Rates team for a confidential conversation at 5220 7111.



ONLINE COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Council's Online Community Directory provides easy-to-find information and assists residents and visitors in engaging with the many local community groups, clubs, services, associations and facilities based in the Shire.

The Online Community Directory 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.

To learn more, visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/online-community-directory.

BEYOND THE VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Beyond the Valley will be held from Saturday 28 December 2024 to Wednesday 1 January 2025 at Barunah Plains in Hesse.

Residents are advised that there will be increased traffic along the Hamilton Highway in the days of the festival, with traffic management in place to assist traffic flow. Traffic will be heaviest on Saturday 28 December.

Patrons exiting the festival will be able to travel via Bannockburn, Winchelsea and Inverleigh to return home.

For more information regarding the festival, visit beyondthevalley.com.au/information.

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eGAZETTE

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