

MARCH 2026

Local Scoop

Your City of Whittlesea news

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Community Festival**

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Introducing your new

Youth Council

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Connect with us

- Civic Centre, South Morang**
25 Ferres Boulevard
Monday to Friday, 8.30am–5pm
- Whittlesea Service Hub**
63 Church Street
Monday to Friday, 9.30am–5pm
- 9217 2170
(including after hours emergencies)
National Relay Service
133 677 (ask for 9217 2170)
- Locked Bag 1,
Bundoora MDC VIC 3083
- whittlesea.vic.gov.au



Upcoming Council Meetings

- Tuesday 17 March, 6pm**
- Tuesday 21 April, 6pm**
- Tuesday 19 May, 6pm**

Council meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

Meetings can be viewed live on the City of Whittlesea YouTube channel.

For more information visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings

The information provided in this newsletter was accurate at the time of print. Visit Council's website for the latest information.

Printed on PEFC™ certified paper using vegetable inks.

Free telephone interpreter service
131 450

Your Councillors



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blair.colwell@whittlesea.vic.gov.au



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martin.taylor@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Thomastown Ward
Vacant

Visit our website to find out which ward you live in and who is your local Councillor.
whittlesea.vic.gov.au/Councillors

Inside this edition



Park makes major impression in Mernda

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Community Festival fun for the whole family

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Arabic خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية المجانية
Chinese Simplified 免费电话译服务
Chinese Traditional 免費電話傳譯服務
Greek Δωρεάν τηλεφωνική υπηρεσία διερμηνέων
Italian Servizio di interpretariato telefonico gratuito

Macedonian Бесплатна телефонска услуга за преведување
Persian/Farsi خدمات مترجم شفاهی تلفنی رایگان
Punjabi ਮੁਫਤ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੇਵਾ
Turkish Ücretsiz telefonla tercümanlık servisi
Vietnamese Dịch vụ thông dịch qua điện thoại miễn phí



City of Whittlesea Youth Council

We are proud to welcome the 2026 Youth Council – a group of passionate young people from across our community who are ready to share their ideas, experiences and perspectives.

Working closely with Council, members advocate for the needs and opportunities of young people, ensure youth voices are heard, and provide thoughtful input on key issues.



AHMED ABUMEIS
AGED 20



ALANA LUSCOMBE
AGED 16



CHARLIZE POMMIER
AGED 15



CLARE JOSEPH
AGED 16



DHYANI BHAVSAR
AGED 17



EMMA FASCIANI
AGED 18



ETHAN KOSUMO
AGED 17



GABRIELLE CHARMAN
AGED 17



HEMAL SHARMA
AGED 17



MANNAT SOOCH
AGED 16



OSAMA AKKAD
AGED 19



SUAD ISSA
AGED 19



THERESA YAN
AGED 15



SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR NEW YOUTH COUNCIL.

Plans for new Youth Hub

The City of Whittlesea is taking steps to create a Youth Hub.

Youth Hubs are safe, welcoming spaces where young people can meet friends, join activities and access support. With over a third of the community aged 25 or under, a Youth Hub will help improve health, wellbeing, and connection for local young people.

A business case assessing potential sites in Epping and South Morang is due to be presented at the March Council Meeting.

youth.

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.



Message from the Mayor

Cr Lawrie Cox

Councillors out and about

Welcome to the March edition of Local Scoop.

It's been a busy few months to start off the new year with many events and activities taking place over the summer. It's been wonderful to see everyone out and about enjoying these free events and connecting with each other.

Of course, the event season continues with our annual Community Festival on Sunday 15 March. You can read more about the fantastic line up of performances, activities and stalls on pages 8-9.

We've also completed a number of major projects across our city recently. These include the Aboriginal Gathering Place and Granite Hills Major Community Park at bunjil nganga Parkland, Quarry Hills, which were officially opened last month with a wonderful community celebration. These key projects will provide our community with spaces to connect within the spectacular surrounds, and in the case of the gathering place, will foster a sense of belonging through activities, programs and services that strengthen culture and enhance wellbeing.

Earlier this year we introduced our new Youth Council. We are so proud of the wonderful young people we have here in the City of Whittlesea, and as a Council we value their thoughts and perspectives. We look forward to working with them over their two-year term. More information about our new Youth Council is available on page 3. I would also like to thank the outgoing Youth Council members for their dedication and contribution to Council during their term, which concluded at the end of 2025.

As always, we value your feedback and I encourage you to keep up to date with projects that are open for community consultation via engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au. Coming up next month we will be asking for feedback on our proposed 2026-27 Budget and Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27.

The Victorian Electoral Commission will also be conducting a by-election to fill the Thomastown ward vacancy following the resignation in January of Nic Brooks as Councillor. On behalf of Council, we thank Mr Brooks for his service to the City of Whittlesea community.

Mayor Cr Lawrie Cox



ABOVE Cr Lappin, Deputy Mayor Cr Colwell, Mayor Cr Cox, Cr Stow, Cr Taylor and Cr Zinni at the City of Whittlesea Carols; Cr McLindon and Cr Lenberg at Coffee with Council.



ABOVE New Epping – Cr Lappin, Cr Stow, Cr Taylor, Mayor Cr Cox, Cr Labrador, Cr Lenberg and Deputy Mayor Cr Colwell.



ABOVE Cr Labrador at Coffee with Council; Cr Gunn, Cr Lappin, Cr Taylor and Deputy Mayor Cr Colwell at the opening of the Hill Top Splash Park and playground.



ABOVE Mayor, Cr Cox at the official opening of the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association hub in Thomastown; Mayor, Cr Cox at Coffee with Council.



ADVOCACY



ABOVE The City of Whittlesea is seeking urgent investment in the construction of Wollert Rail.

Supporting our changing community

As the City of Whittlesea continues to grow, so do the everyday needs of our community. From finding an affordable place to live, to getting to work safely and accessing local services, planning for the future is about ensuring residents can thrive now and in the years ahead.

With our population expected to grow from more than 244,000 people today to around 361,000 by 2041, investment in housing, transport, community facilities and environmental protection is essential. These are areas that shape daily life for families, older residents, young people and businesses across our city.

Many of these critical services and infrastructure projects sit outside Council's direct responsibility and cannot be delivered by Council alone. That's why the City of Whittlesea is calling for strong support from the Victorian and Australian Governments to help deliver what our community needs most, including affordable and social housing, improved public transport connections, safer roads, better access to community services and digital connectivity, and the protection of our natural environment.

Together, these priorities respond to the real pressures facing a fast-growing

community and aim to create inclusive, well-connected neighbourhoods that support health, wellbeing and opportunity for everyone.

Our advocacy on these priorities comes at a critical time, ahead of the Victorian State Government election and upcoming federal budget decisions, when governments are setting priorities for funding and infrastructure investment. Council will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of residents to ensure the City of Whittlesea receives its fair share of support.

We will work alongside governments, community organisations and residents and keep the community informed as progress is made.



For more information, visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/Advocacy

Plan builds on housing legacy

The City of Whittlesea has adopted a new plan to help address the critical need for affordable housing in the local community.

The Affordable Housing Plan 2025-2030, which was adopted by Council in December 2025, sets clear policy directions to respond to the challenge.

Affordable housing ensures low-to-moderate income families can live in safe, suitable homes within their community. It is estimated the City of Whittlesea has a deficit of more than 5200 affordable houses, which is expected to rise to about 9000 by 2041.

The Affordable Housing Plan sets out a strategic path to expand availability of affordable homes by working with federal and state governments, delivery partners and the community to provide safe and secure housing.



More than **74%** of respondents believe affordable housing should be part of future neighbourhoods.¹



Affordable housing reduces government spending on health, justice, crisis accommodation and welfare.²

¹ City of Whittlesea Community Insights Survey 2025
² Community Housing Industry Association 2019

The new plan continues Council's commitment to increasing affordable housing, which has helped deliver 151 affordable homes in the Epping Renewal Site, with a further 27 soon to be constructed in Ashline Street, Wollert.



ABOVE Karen North and Peter Hopper are thrilled to see the lake in better health.

Peter Hopper Lake brought back to life

A multimillion-dollar project to return Redleap Reserve's Peter Hopper Lake to good health is set to deliver a suburban oasis for the community to enjoy.

The lake has been an important part of many Mill Park residents' lives since the 1970s. But water quality issues in recent years, including frequent blue-green algae outbreaks, have increasingly rendered the lake unsightly and harmful to wildlife.

With funding support from the Australian Government's Urban Rivers and Catchments Program, Council's engineers and environmental scientists devised a solution.

It involved removing more than 10,000 cubic metres of silt and other pollutants that had accumulated on the lakebed and reshaping the lake. The lake was then drained and water-filtering equipment installed.

This infrastructure is designed to minimise algae from forming by improving the quality of water flowing into the lake and keeping it circulating.

Peter Hopper, the former long-serving Shire of Whittlesea engineer after whom the lake is named, and Karen North from the Friends of Peter Hopper Lake group, toured the site in January and were impressed.

"The lake is so important for families, children and wildlife and it will be so beneficial for everyone's mental health to have a healthy lake to enjoy again," Karen said.

The temporary fencing at the lake will be removed once works to reconstruct the circuit path around the lake are complete.

MAJOR PROJECTS

We've recently completed and opened a number of major projects across the City of Whittlesea.

To find out more about all our major projects, visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/majorprojects

No place like home

Residents have embraced Donnybrook's newly opened murnong Community Centre as a place to connect, learn and belong.

The \$11.4 million centre at 183W Olivine Boulevard provides a wide range of services and spaces for people of all ages and abilities to access.

The centre features a mini-branch library, two kindergarten rooms and two Maternal and Child Health Services consultation suites.

A large community hall with adjoining kitchen facilities and multipurpose activity rooms are available for residents to hire for events or programs.

Among the community groups to welcome the new facility is the Donnybrook Community Church, which had been holding its meetings in Kalkallo.

BELOW Donnybrook Community Church pastor Kathryn Jensen (right) relaxes in the murnong Community Centre public lounge with parishioners (from left) Suzi, Laura and Robert.

INSET One of the community spaces at the murnong Community Centre, featuring mural artwork by Lucy Lucy and Katira.



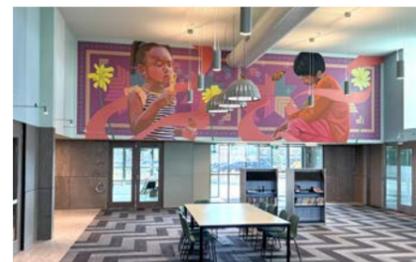
"It's so modern and beautiful and light-filled," said Reverend Kathryn Jensen.

"Donnybrook is such a wonderful community and to have a centre like this for locals to use is really important."

— Reverend Kathryn Jensen

Council contributed \$4 million towards the project, with the remainder funded through Victorian Government grants.

These included \$4.5 million from the Building Blocks Capital Grants Program, \$2 million from the Growing Suburbs Fund, \$709,500 from the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program and \$180,000 from the Changing Places Program.



MAJOR PROJECTS



ABOVE Siblings Reuben, Ava and Dan swing into action at the Granite Hills Major Community Park.

Park makes major impression

The new Granite Hills Major Community Park in Mernda has earned rave reviews from visitors of all ages and abilities since opening just in time for the summer holidays.

The \$8 million park, located in bunjil nganga Parkland Quarry Hills, has quickly become a favourite destination for recreation and relaxation.

Local mum Lijo was struck by the park's size and variety of features when visiting for the first time with her children.

"It's a beautifully built park and in a perfect location. It's a really good place for family gatherings with the barbecue area and all the play equipment." — Lijo

The park is designed to maximise the area's natural environment by offering connections to the precinct's expansive network of walking and cycling trails.

There is also a boardwalk winding through two waterbodies created

from converted farm dams that attract native wildlife.

The playground features slides and swings suitable for children of all ages, climbing nets, water features, trampolines, sandpit, nature play elements and much more.

Large shelters over the picnic tables and built-in barbecues provide protection from the elements, while there are public toilets and a Changing Places facility for people with higher care needs.

The park is accessible from the southern end of Cravens Road, Mernda and serviced by a large new car park.

Council contributed \$5.5 million towards the project, with the Victorian Government providing \$2.5 million from its Growing Suburbs Fund.



ABOVE The Aboriginal Gathering Place at bunjil nganga Parkland Quarry Hills will promote reconciliation and cultural awareness.

Long-held vision comes to life

A vision more than 20 years in the making has become a reality.

The Aboriginal Gathering Place at bunjil nganga Parkland Quarry Hills is open and starting to fulfil its promise as a beacon for reconciliation and self-determination.

Located on a site of cultural and historical significance to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People, the new facility is a safe space for all First Peoples and their allies.

The centre features a range of multipurpose spaces, including a welcome space, large community meeting space, consulting rooms, quiet rooms, kitchen facilities, an amphitheatre and yarning circle.

It will host a range of programs and services delivered by Council and external service providers, while also providing a place to celebrate culture and identity, improve connections and facilitate knowledge sharing.

Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group co-chair Andrew Morrison paid tribute to the "leadership, patience and persistence" of local First Peoples.

"This achievement reflects more than 20 years of advocacy by Aboriginal community members and Elders who carried the vision long before plans were drawn up or funding secured," Andrew said. "The completion of the Aboriginal Gathering Place is a moment of deep pride for our whole community."

"It stands as an example of what can be achieved when Aboriginal voices are listened to, respected and embedded in decision-making, creating a space that fosters belonging, understanding and shared pride for generations to come."



**Sunday
15 March
2026**

**11AM
UNTIL
5PM**

Community Festival

Free event

Civic Centre lawns, 25 Ferres Blvd, South Morang

Come along to the City of Whittlesea's biggest celebration – a day filled with fun, connection, and activities for all ages!

- live music and entertainment
- cultural performances
- arts and crafts activities
- theatre shows
- ageing well activities
- community and market stalls
- family zone with face painting
- food trucks
- youth zone
- a pet expo.

Join us for a lively day celebrating our vibrant community. Don't miss this chance to make great memories with family and friends.

For all the details, scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/CommunityFestival



The City of Whittlesea is dedicated to hosting sustainable events.

P Parking is available at Civic Centre, however we encourage you to carpool, use public transport or ride to the festival.

♿ Marveloo Mobile Accessible Restroom on site



Highlights

Theatre performances

Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre

JUNKLANDIA
1pm and 3.30pm, Yan Yean theatre

From JUNK to FUNK! In the hands of the Junklandians, ordinary recycled materials are transformed into extraordinary musical instruments, and forgotten junk comes alive in exciting & surprising ways!



BUNKTOPIA
12noon and 2.30pm, Woodstock theatre

Jeff Achtem (Bunk Puppets) trots out a selection of his favourite puppetry characters and clown adventures. Audiences witness the transformation of household objects into evocative and funny shadow puppet sketches.



BLOOM
11.30am, 2pm, & 4pm, PRACC forecourt

Bloom! is a vibrant, uplifting aerial spectacle performed atop SWAY's bespoke sway-pole apparatus. Inspired by the richness and diversity of the floral world, the work journeys into a realm of colour, vitality, and transformation — brought vividly to life by three highly skilled and distinct aerial performers.



Lawn stage performances

CHIKCHIKA
2pm, Lawn Stage

Chikchika features renowned Oromo singer-songwriter Muluu Baqqalaa with Tigrinya vocalists Anbessa Gebrehiwot and Haftu Reda. Accompanied by traditional Eritrean and Ethiopian stringed instruments, the krar and masinko, Chikchika weave important stories of culture, love and peace into percussion heavy and up-tempo tunes.

HORNS OF LEROY feat. Thndo
3pm, Lawn Stage

Inspired by the sounds of New Orleans and fused with the energy of the Melbourne streets, the group has earned themselves a reputation for delivering raucous shows built on strong foundations and insatiable energy.



The cost of dumped rubbish

\$4,884 fine for illegally dumping rubbish – or free with some planning?

Most people in the City of Whittlesea dispose of their waste responsibly, but a small number of people still choose to dump rubbish illegally. A recent case in Mernda shows just how costly that choice can be.

Council staff discovered electronic waste, a bike frame, and furniture panels dumped inside a bus shelter.

The offenders had already been issued a Waste Abatement Notice, a legal order requiring them to clean up dumped waste from their property.

Council offers many options to dispose of your household waste safely.

Illegal dumping harms the community, is costly and creates safety risks. Council takes this behaviour seriously, using targeted patrols, investigations, and community reports to identify offenders and hold them accountable.

You play a key role in keeping our neighbourhoods clean.

Dumped rubbish

See it **Report it**

- Snap Send Solve app
- 9217 2170
- whittlesea.vic.gov.au/litter

Instead of using Council's free and discounted waste and recycling services, they turned a public bus stop into a personal dumping spot.

The fines were significant:

- ✔ \$1,221 for illegally dumping the waste
- ✔ \$1,221 for failing to comply with the notice

As there were two people registered at the property, both are liable under the law for fines related to the illegally dumped waste, bringing the total fines issued to \$4,884.

Planning ahead, however, is free. Items such as electronic waste and scrap metal can be disposed of responsibly at Council's recycling facilities using free or discounted waste vouchers. Residents can also book a free hard rubbish collection or use repair and reuse programs.

By choosing to use Council services available, these offenders could have paid nothing:

- ✔ Dropping electronic waste off at Heidelberg Materials (Wollert Landfill)
- ✔ Booking a Council hard waste collection for bike frame and furniture

To dispose of items correctly, visit the A-Z waste and recycling guide at

whittlesea.vic.gov.au/a-zwaste

For vouchers, recycling stations, and collections, visit

whittlesea.vic.gov.au/waste



Keep batteries out of your bins

If an item lights up, makes a sound, moves, or needs charging, it contains a battery and should never go in your bin.

From toys and headphones to power tools and toothbrushes, many everyday items have hidden batteries. When crushed, batteries can spark fires and leak toxic chemicals.

Recycle batteries and e-waste safely at free drop-off points using our A-Z Waste and Recycling Guide.

Find the right place for your used battery or e-waste with our A-Z Waste and Recycling Guide at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/a-zwaste

Circular Fashion MARKET



24 May • 23 Aug • 22 Nov

Shop preloved pieces, vintage fashion, baby and kids clothing while supporting slow fashion and reducing waste.

Dozens of stallholders. All ages, sizes and genders. Free coffee when you bring a reusable cup.

10am to 2pm
Civic Centre Car Park, South Morang

Exciting changes – a food and garden waste bin for all

Council's popular food and garden waste service (light green bin lid) makes it easy for residents to turn everyday food scraps and garden clippings into valuable compost.

With 55,000 households already using the service, another 35,000 homes will receive a new food and garden waste bin later this year to help reduce the amount of food and garden waste sent to landfill.

What this means

- ✔ If you don't have a food and garden waste bin, we will deliver one to you later this year
- ✔ Food and garden waste bins will be collected every two weeks
- ✔ Your rubbish bin (red-lid) will still be collected weekly.
- ✔ If you already have a food and garden waste bin, nothing is changing. It will still be collected as usual.

"It feels good knowing our food scraps are being turned into compost and used in our local parks."

– Karen

"Using the green bin was easier than I thought," said South Morang resident Karen. "We keep a small container in the kitchen and empty it in the green bin every night."

BELOW Karen putting food scraps in the food and garden waste bin.



Why is this change important?

About 40% of household waste is food. Using your food and garden waste bin keeps waste out of landfill, cuts emissions, and turns it into compost. The State Government requires all councils to provide this four-bin system.

How and when will I receive my new bin?

You don't need to do anything – your new food and garden waste bin will be delivered to you. Letters will be sent with delivery information.

What can go in the food and garden waste bin?

Food scraps: fruit and vegetables, meat, bones, dairy, leftovers.

Garden waste: grass clippings, leaves, small branches.

Where does food and garden waste go?

It goes to Repurpose It in Epping, where it is turned into compost for parks, gardens, schools, and community spaces.



Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/foodandgarden



Stronger tree protection rules introduced

Residents are being urged to check new planning requirements before removing trees from their properties, following the introduction by the Victorian Government of state-wide rules aimed at protecting suburban tree canopy.

The changes came into effect on 15 September 2025 through Planning Scheme Amendment VC289. The amendment means many trees on residential land now require a planning permit before they can be removed, lopped or destroyed.

What is a canopy tree?

- any tree over five metres tall
- has a trunk circumference greater than 0.5 metres when measured 1.4 metres above ground
- has a canopy spread of at least four metres.

Additional controls apply to "boundary canopy trees", which are located within six metres of a property's narrowest street frontage or within 4.5 metres of the rear boundary.

The permit requirements apply across residential and mixed-use zones, including vacant land, lots where new dwellings are proposed and sites where existing homes are being extended.

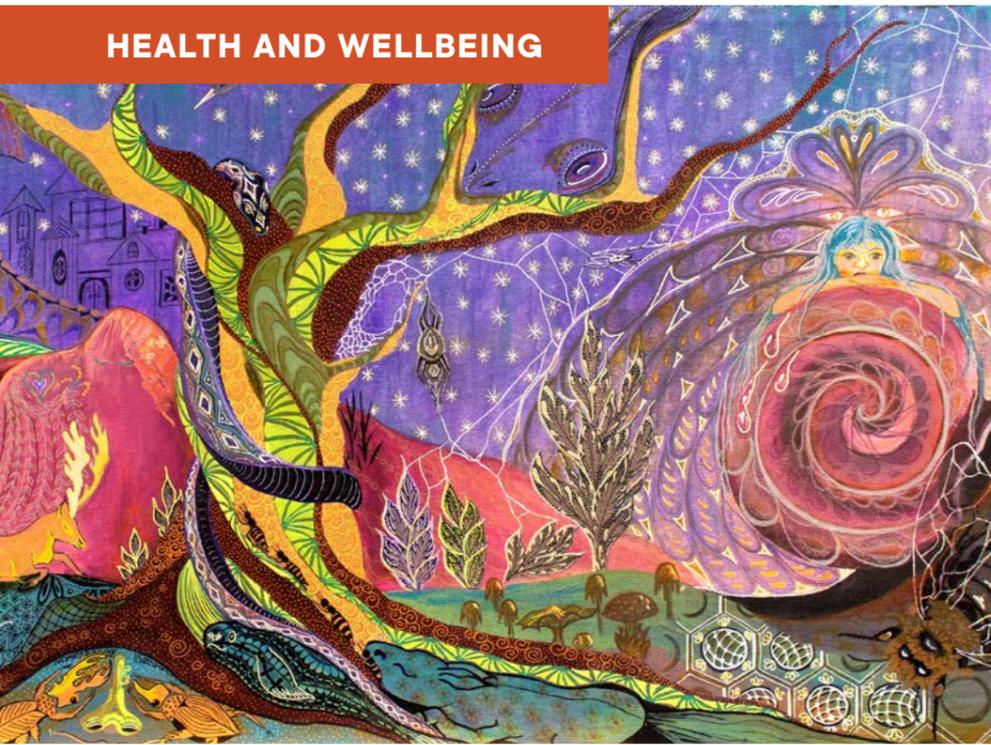
Residents should seek advice from Council before carrying out any tree works, as unauthorised removal may result in fines, replanting orders and/or prosecution.

Some applicants may be eligible for VicSmart, a fast-track permit process that provides decisions within 10 business days once all required documentation is submitted.

For more information, call 9217 2170 or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/canopy-trees-residential



Fined 4 fines – total **\$4,884**



ABOVE Local artist Ildiko Kormanyos won the 2025 Art Exhibition with her piece *Contemplation*.

Share your *story* of belonging

Artists, it's your time to shine! The City of Whittlesea's annual Art Exhibition is back, and we want your creativity front and centre.

Whether you're an experienced artist, just starting out, or creating art simply for fun, this is your chance to showcase your work and connect with the community.

"I'm very happy to participate in the exhibition. I love it because anyone can be involved."

– Ildiko

This year's exhibition invites artists to explore the theme *Belong*.

To belong is a fundamental human need – it draws us toward family, friends, and community.

Belonging connects us to place around us, bringing people together through shared interests, values, and experiences. It helps us bridge differences, reminding us that each of us is part of something greater than ourselves.

You can create in any medium – paintings, sculptures, digital works, or something entirely unique. Let your imagination run wild and make your mark!

Winner of the 2025 Art Award winner, Ildiko Kormanyos, shared her thoughts on participating in the exhibition.



For more details and to apply, scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/artexhibition

This exhibition has been running for over 20 years and is an excellent opportunity for local residents to connect, share, and inspire one another through creativity. All local artists are welcome to enter – experience is not required, only passion and creativity.

Ready to take part? Submit your Expression of Interest by 5pm, Monday 16 March.

Selected artworks will be showcased at the Plenty Ranges Art and Convention Centre, 35 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang, from Saturday 2 May to Wednesday 27 May.



Half-price cat and kitten adoptions in March and April

If you've been thinking about adding a furry friend to your family, now is the perfect time.

Adopting from the wat djerring Animal Facility means you're giving a cat or kitten a safe, loving home and you're helping our teams create vital space for the many animals expected during the busy breeding season.

What's included in your adoption?

- Desexing and microchipping
- Vaccinations
- Health and behaviour checks
- Council registration.

For more information visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/animalfacility



The City of Whittlesea Business Awards are gearing up for another exciting year of recognising local excellence.

The 2026 finalists will be announced on 14 April, and the awards will be presented at a celebration on 25 June.

For more information visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/businessawards

Locals guide future of Epping Cemetery

Five community members have been appointed to oversee and protect an important piece of Epping's local history.

The committee, which was selected following an expression of interest process, will work with Councillors Stow, Lappin and Gunn, who were appointed to the Epping Cemetery Trust providing valuable local knowledge and community perspectives to help ensure the cemetery is well managed, and respectful of community needs.

The cemetery holds strong historical and emotional significance for many families and provides a tangible link to Epping's past.

It provides a glimpse of the cultural and natural history of the region with historical graves dating back to the mid-1800s and nationally significant remnant grassland that pre-dates European settlement.

The cemetery was closed in 1967 to all except those holding deeds to sites.

Committee member Barbara said the cemetery plays an important role in connecting the community with local history.

"The Epping Cemetery is a pocket of history existing in a rapidly developing suburban landscape," she said.

"These remnants of our city's history are a valuable resource in the district, giving residents a connection to the past."

– Barbara

Fellow committee member Bruno said he was excited to preserve the cemetery.

"I'm looking forward to contributing to the long-term care of Epping Cemetery and working with others to keep it accessible and respected," he said.

The committee members will meet regularly to provide advice and community insight.



ABOVE Bruno Tassone, Barbara Miller, Sarvesh Soni and Tania Gook. Absent: Elisabeth Paglia.



Contacting us is just a click away

Need to report an issue, update your details, access your waste and disposal vouchers or make an application? You can do all this and more, at any time, online.

Our easy-to-use online Customer Portal is a one-stop shop where you can lodge requests such as potholes on Council roads, dumped rubbish or a missed bin pickup, request an update to your details and keep up to date with the status of your requests.

How to sign up

- Visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au and click on the *Customer Portal* link in the top right-hand corner of the home page or under *Quick Links* on a mobile.
- Select *Join* in the top right-hand corner of the home page of the portal.
- Add in your details, create a password and click *Create an account*.
- Enter the verification code sent to your email to finalise the setup.

How to lodge a request

- Access the Customer Portal, as above.
- Click on the *Make a request* button on the home page
- Select your request and add in the relevant details
- Once you have submitted a request, you can keep track of the status of this request via the *My Request* section in the Customer Portal.



Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au



BELOW Your voices help shape and inform a range of our upcoming projects and plans including the Draft Public Open Space Plan 2026-36.

Your feedback is helping shape our city

Over the past few months, our community have been providing valuable feedback on some important upcoming projects and future plans.

Draft Public Open Space Plan 2026-36

We received lots of great feedback on our draft plan for our public open spaces. This includes:

- 2,364 hectares of green parks and waterways
- 75 conservation bushland reserves
- 50 sports and leisure precincts
- 12 off-leash dog parks
- 256 play spaces
- as well as streetscapes, town centres, public art and heritage stone walls.

We are now finalising the plan based on the feedback received and will present it to Council mid-year for endorsement.

Council Budget and Community Action Plan

To help shape our annual draft Budget and the Community Action Plan 2026-27, we've been asking our residents to tell us what services and priorities matter most to you.

This included broad community consultation as well as engagement with smaller focus groups.

Your priorities have been considered in the development of our draft Budget and Community Action Plan, which will be available for your feedback in April.

Economic Growth Strategy 2026-2036

Businesses and investors in and around the City of Whittlesea have provided valuable feedback that will be used to inform the development of a strategy to grow and support our local economy.

The draft strategy will be open for community consultation in the coming months.

Lauries Field

Through three rounds of consultation, we listened to what was important to our community, and we are now finalising the Lauries Field Master Plan. The plan will be presented to a Council Meeting in the coming months.



Ashley Park Recreation Reserve

Residents recently provided their feedback on the concept plan for the reserve in Doreen. Utilising this feedback, the final design will be shared in mid-2026.

To find out more, scan the QR code or visit engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

What's on this season



Playgroup week pop-up event

Wednesday 18 March, 10am-1pm
Westfield Pop-up, South Morang

Unleash your creativity with your little ones with child-based activities, while gathering support and information from our local Early Years services and programs.

No bookings required. Facilitated by City of Whittlesea Children and Families Department.

Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/events

Celebrating Cultural Diversity Week

21 – 29 March

Join us as we celebrate Culture Diversity Week and Harmony Day.

Bring your family and friends and enjoy a range of events on offer including multicultural music, art, dance, cultural traditional clothing, and delicious food.

Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/cdw



These events may be subject to change. Please check whittlesea.vic.gov.au/events for the latest information.



Social Connection and Positive Ageing Programs

Various dates and locations

Explore a diverse and engaging range of programs to keep you healthy, and independent for longer and are a great way to stay active and make new friends. Designed for residents aged 50 and older in the City of Whittlesea.

Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/LEAP or call 9217 2170 and select option 4.



Women in Business 2026

Tuesday 5 May, 11am to 2pm
Elevate – Network, Connect, Collaborate

Guest speaker Lisa Gorman, founder of the iconic Gorman fashion brand and current creative director at kikki.K, will share how collaboration and creativity shaped her success and continues to inspire innovation.

Book now, limited seating available. Tickets \$59

Scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/womeninbusiness



PRACC Program

Celebrating 30 years

We're excited to launch the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre's 2026 Performance Program as we celebrate PRACC's 30th birthday!

Following the success of our 2025 debut, this year's program is even bigger – featuring a vibrant mix of music, comedy, children's theatre, visual art, workshops and dance. There's something for everyone to enjoy.

View the full show list and book your tickets at pracc.com.au



Wendy Stapleton Dusty, Morning Melodies

Wednesday 1 April, 11am
Cost: \$24 full | \$22 concession
20 for groups of 10+

The Dusty Springfield Show is Wendy's tribute to the songs and career of Dusty Springfield, Britain's greatest female pop singer. This outstanding show takes you on a colourful journey through all the hits of the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's that made Dusty a household name.

