

BUSHFIRE RECOVERY NEWS

Budgeree, Jumbuk & Yinnar South



WELCOME

Following the March 2019 fires in the Budgeree, Jumbuk and Yinnar South areas, members of the community were invited to establish a community recovery committee (CRC).

The committee includes representatives from Hancock Victoria Plantations (HVP), Latrobe City Council, Department of Health & Human Services, Latrobe Community Health Services, Gippsland Lifeline, Parks Victoria and the Department of Environment Land Water & Planning (DELWP).

The committee focuses on developing a recovery plan targeted to local community needs, including issues arising from, and seeking appropriate supports for:

- built and natural environment
- economic impact and recovery
- personal wellbeing

Over the past ten months a number of community-based events have been held to support the health and wellbeing of impacted community members, including community lunches, Christmas family movie night, yoga weekend retreats, and a school-based art therapy program.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the work on the long term recovery continues. We would like your suggestions for the recovery program. Please email BJYScommittee@latrobe.vic.gov.au

CURRENT PROJECTS

Water tank at Jumbuk

The CRC have successfully applied for a grant through Community Enterprise Foundation at the Bendigo and Adelaide Banks to fund the supply and installation of a 90,430 litre colourbond water tank to be located on the former Jumbuk Hall site. The tank will provide a large volume of water dedicated for firefighting purposes and will be installed in June.

Nesting boxes and bee hotels

With the loss of trees comes the loss of habitat in tree hollows for many of our local wildlife including Micro Bats, Laughing Kookaburra, Crimson Rosellas, Ring Tail and Brush Tail Possums. If you have access to timber and would like to complete any of these at home please contact us and we can email or post the templates to you.

Bees are responsible for pollinating a third of our food supply! Attracting and protecting bees into our garden can help the populations grow. You can build your own bee hotel at home to support the native bees. This provides them somewhere safe to rest and lay their eggs. Use untreated hard wood, bamboo, fallen tree branches or pruning off-cuts. Place out of the way of people, birds, or pets in a place in the garden near some bee friendly flowers, such as lavender, flowering gum or bottlebrush.

(Ref: Latrobe Valley Bee Keepers Association).



Protecting our Unique Koalas

Latrobe City Council and Landcare, together with the CRC, are exploring a project to help preserve and restore koala habitat and corridors.

Why is the Strzelecki koala population unique? For a number of years, the evidence has been building of the importance of the Strzelecki Ranges / Southern Gippsland koala population. It is one of the most genetically diverse and resilient koala populations remaining in south-eastern Australia. Locations of populations found in Latrobe City include the Morwell National Park linking to Jumbuk Road, Jeeralang and Billy's Creek.

A key focus will be to understand local interest in establishing a Landcare group to work together by information sharing, accessing grants and other resource support.

Types of activities might include:

- Undertaking koala surveys on your property
- Revegetating properties with habitat plants
- Working with neighbours
- Being part of a neighbourhood action group

Get involved

The committee welcomes new people to help bring these ideas to fruition. You don't need to be part of a community group, you just need to be passionate about where you live and be interested in helping others. We hold one meeting a month, on a Monday from 4.30pm, but due to the pandemic this is currently via video conference.

Get in touch BJYScommittee@latrobe.vic.gov.au or call Linda Snell on 0400 828 685.

BUSHFIRE SUPPORT SERVICES

Bushfire case support

With the summer fires in East Gippsland and New South Wales many of our local residents impacted by the March 2019 fires may be finding it challenging to cope.

A case support program is available for people significantly impacted by the 2019 fires through Windermere. Case support workers will help individuals navigate the various support services available including:

- financial assistance
- mental health services
- family violence supports
- services for repairing and rebuilding damaged properties and re-establishing livelihoods

To access the service, contact your local council or call 1800 560 760.

Dangerous trees/fallen trees

Council has engaged JR's Treemendous Landscapes to undertake a further tree assessment to determine the number of trees still posing a risk or concern to property owners, to seek appropriate disposal methods and potential costs. This will include trees that were dropped during the firefighting program. This data will be provided to State Government to determine what support may be provided to those who are still experiencing issues with fire damaged/impacted trees.



YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

There are signs that you, or people you know, may be experiencing that indicate that they are struggling to cope:

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Showing signs of physical signs of stress
- Experiencing vivid flashbacks
- Relationships are strained
- Using more alcohol or drugs
- Being physically or verbally violent
- Major changes in behaviour

Anyone who needs additional support can call the bushfire case support program on 1800 560 760.

Life in lockdown

At the time of writing it seems we will be in lockdown for some time to come yet. The uncertainty of when the pandemic will be over can cause stress and anxiety for many. But this extended period at home can also provide lots of opportunities for all those rainy day jobs, home and garden maintenance and a chance to use the time to learn something new. Keeping to your normal routine will help your mind and body cope better.

The social isolation can be difficult when you are not able to see your nearest and dearest face-to-face. Perhaps try some of the technology-based solutions like Skype, Zoom, Facetime, House Party or Messenger video calls so that you can see each other or call rather than sending text messages. Take the time to chat on the phone. Here is a selection of resources to help you stay happy and healthy.

Latrobe City Libraries



Whilst the libraries are physically closed there are still lots on offer digitally, including Online Storytime on the library Facebook page. You can also check out many RB Digital magazines; movie streaming through Kanopy or Beamafilm; and eBooks through Axis 360 or Borrowbox. Not a library member? You can join online here www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/library

There is a Home Library Service for older members

- Give the library a call on 1300 367 700 and staff will go through a list of questions about preferred genres etc, then staff will make book selections based on the information provided and books are delivered on the nominated day
- Customers can browse the catalogue themselves place items on hold, staff access the daily holds list, contact the customer to arrange drop off on nominated day
- Books available are only from Latrobe's collection.

Get Moving

It's important to keep moving during this time. Why not join an online class of something you'll enjoy? Remember to be aware of any existing injuries, health or balance issues you have and build up your exercise program slowly. Don't force your progress or continue exercises that cause pain.

There are lots of low intensity videos online for Pilates, yoga or chair based exercises if you are less mobile. If you're looking for rapid results consider some High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT). Overall, HIIT produces many of the same health benefits as other forms of exercise in a shorter amount of time. These benefits include lower body fat, heart rate and blood pressure. HIIT may also help lower blood sugar and improve insulin sensitivity.

(Ref: www.healthline.com/nutrition/benefits-of-hiit)

- YMCA – [Ythrive at Home](#) on YouTube

Mental health and wellbeing

- Guided meditation – Smiling Mind www.smilingmind.com.au
- Beyond Blue – looking after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak: www.beyondblue.org.au/
- Breathing exercises for Anxiety – simple breathing technique www.anxietyaustralia.com.au search 'slow breathing to decrease anxiety and panic'
- Department of Education and Training student wellbeing hub: fuse.education.vic.gov.au
- Mental Wellbeing Challenge for teenagers – great prizes to be won! www.biteback.org.au search Mental health challenge



YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Healthy eating

Now is a great time to cook from scratch using local, fresh ingredients. Plan your meals for the week and shop for what you need. This reduces food waste, saves money and will improve your health if you're limiting the amount of processed and junk food coming into your home. Why not check out a digital copy of The Australian Women's Weekly Food magazine from the library? Go through your old cookbooks for new favourites. Cooking from scratch is also a great way to teach children the practical uses for maths and science. This recipe for Magic Lemon Pudding will have the kids intrigued how the ingredients transform into a light sponge cake with a tangy delicious lemon sauce underneath! www.food.com/recipe/magic-lemon-pudding-164688

Find loads of fun ideas here for children, from Food for All Latrobe Valley:

- www.centralwestgippslandpcp.com/assets/files/food-security---covid-19-fact-sheet-series-1.pdf

Citizen science from home

While physical isolation guidelines are being implemented globally, this doesn't mean we need to feel isolated and powerless. Indeed, citizen science is all about the power and potential of 'scale' and that by working together we can do more.

Many in our community are finding comfort in continuing with their daily citizen science activities and the sense of connection and purpose it provides.

Whether that is recording species in our backyards, monitoring our rain gauges or helping to digitise records and images. We also want to share that sense of purpose with others in the broader community – especially those whose normal avenues of connecting are being restricted such as our senior citizens.

- www.citizenscience.org.au/2020/03/21/citizen-science-and-covid-19/



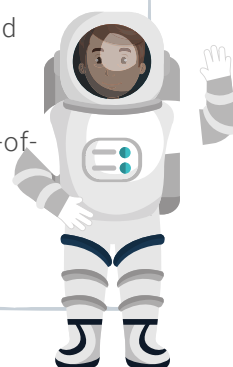
For entertainment

- Melbourne Zoo: Animals at Home – Live streaming from Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary www.zoo.org.au/animal-house/
- Take a virtual museum or art gallery tour (example Melbourne Museum from home: www.museumsvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum)
- 10 Virtual History Museums and Experience to explore from home: www.history.com/news/10-best-virtual-museums-tours-history-from-home

FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

This is a fantastic collection of virtual tours across the world, from NASA, the Arctic, museums and galleries, African safari, wild dolphins in the Bahamas or you could explore Venice all from home. The list includes links to online learning, music, geography, nature and history.

www.chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home



ORGANISATIONS HELPING RECOVERY

Wildlife Victoria and WIRES



Wildlife Victoria has provided the community with a Wildlife Emergency Response service for 30 years. The service receives about 80,000 requests for help a year and helps over 50,000 animals. Note that the WIRES fundraising support New South Wales.

Following the recent catastrophic fires WIRES was keen to pursue additional opportunities to help wildlife more broadly across Australia wherever possible, including partnering on projects to improve long-term outcomes for native animals. Wildlife Victoria is a registered charity, all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/about/about-us

Red Cross



Red Cross assists in registering people impacted by an emergency through the Register Find Reunite website www.register.redcross.org.au. The Red Cross also supports impacted community members.

Your donation helps Red Cross give people the support they need in disasters, whenever and wherever they happen.

Agriculture Victoria one-on-one farm consultations

Agriculture Victoria is continuing to support Gippsland landholders impacted by the Bunyip-Tonimbuk and Yinnar South-Budgeree fires in March, including on-farm one-on-one consultations by appointment and information resources on a range of post-fire agricultural recovery issues.

The on-farm one-on-one information sessions provide farmers with technical advice about pasture recovery, feed budgeting, grazing management, stock containment areas, weed control, erosion and managing farm water supplies.

Landholders can register their interest in an on-farm one-on-one consultation by visiting their website and completing a 'request for information' form (see the link below).

Completed forms can be sent to your case manager, emailed to Lindsay.hyde@agriculture.vic.gov.au or posted to:

Lindsay Hyde,
Agriculture Victoria,
4 Archer Drive, Mornington 3931

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/recovery/gippsland-upper-murray-fires/gippsland-bunyip-yinnar-bushfires-support-programs



Creative Recovery Artist Facilitator

Earlier this year, Baw Baw and Cardinia Shire Councils and Latrobe City Council supported the development of a Creative Recovery program of activities for communities impacted by the Eastern Fires of March 2019.

Nine artists from across the region (three in each municipality) will be contracted to take on the role of Creative Artist Facilitators, working with affected communities developing creative projects for their municipality and region. This project was in Phase 1 of a 3-phase process before the pandemic. Where the original plan was to meet members of your community face to face, you will instead receive information in your letterbox over the coming weeks.



ORGANISATIONS HELPING RECOVERY

Latrobe City Council Community Grants

Community grants are provided to support projects, events and improve facilities. Limited funds are available through a competitive process, with applications determined according to funding criteria and merit. Latrobe City Council has the following grant programs available to not-for-profit community groups, businesses and individuals operating or residing in Latrobe City.

Community Events

Assistance to conduct conferences, deliver special events or to develop an existing event. Events must include local and regional participation. This could include carnivals, festivals and cultural events. Up to \$5000.

Biodiversity on Rural Land Grants

projects on private and rural land within the municipality for actions aimed at protecting and enhancing existing native vegetation. Up to \$1500 per property. We encourage property owners impacted by the March 2019 fires to apply for these grants for replanting on their properties.

Community Development

Assistance to community groups for a broad range of community development programs, services, and activities. Up to \$5000.

Visit the Latrobe City Council website for opening dates and information on how to apply - www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/CommunityGrants