

# Towong Shire Community Recovery Newsletter

June 2021 | Edition 16



## COMMUNITY GRANTS

*Pictured: David Braniff, John Murphy, Steve Mandich, Karly McVean, Natalie Lebner, Emma Paton and Len Paton at one of Thowgla Hall's working bees.*

Mayor David Wortmann has congratulated all recipients of Round 3 of the Council's Community Recovery Grants Program.

Mayor Wortmann said he was delighted with the uptake in this round, which granted a further \$67,000 to community projects.

"The three rounds have now injected \$582,219 into the Shire's community organisations and the impact of these projects is making a difference," he said.

Round 3 successful applicants include:

- **Wyeboon Recreation Reserve committee, Mitta Valley Bowling Club and Tallandoon Tennis Club** – upgrades and equipment to maintain sporting facilities,
- **Corryong Tennis Club** – a day to introduce tennis to all ages,
- **Upper Murray Football Netball League** – an awards night for women in sports leadership,
- **Granya Cemetery Trust** – a new wall to house cremated ashes at Granya Cemetery,
- **Corryong Angling Club** – a fun family fishing day and BBQ at Corryong Golf Club,
- **Tallangatta Valley Public Hall** – a one-night music and comedy night,
- **Alpine Valleys Dairy Inc** – annual Dare to Dairy dinner in Corryong,
- **Mitta Valley Historical Society** – Archival Digital Record project,

- **Thowgla Hall Committee** – upgrade to kitchen appliances,
- **Corryong Neighbourhood Centre** – software development for an interactive community calendar,
- **Thowgla Valley Fire Brigade** – lockable storage containers for community fire equipment.

Council's \$750,000 Community Recovery Grants Program offers grants up to \$5,000 for not-for-profit organisations and community groups and is funded with \$550,000 from the Commonwealth Government's Bushfire Recovery Program and \$200,000 from the State Government's Community Recovery and Resilience Grants stream of the Community Recovery Package.

Details of Round 4 will be released at a later date.

A reminder to those who have received Community Recovery Grants, resources are available on Council's website to help you complete the acquittal process, including reporting on funded activities and expenditure of the funds received.

Further information and templates are available at [www.towong.vic.gov.au](http://www.towong.vic.gov.au), or contact Lizzie Star on 1800 518 222 or [grants@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@towong.vic.gov.au).



# Local Economic Recovery Grants awarded

Seven Towong Shire projects were successful in Round 2 of the Victorian Government’s Local Community Project Grants, funded by the Australian and Victorian governments’ \$68.6 million Local Economic Recovery (LER) program.

Mayor David Wortmann said, between them, this grant round would inject \$3,267,672 into the Shire’s community organisations.

“A lot of work went into the grant applications and those who were successful can be very proud of their efforts, which will have a lasting impact on our communities,” Mayor Wortmann said.

## Successful projects were:

*There’s a lack of local fresh food being grown in the area ... with Acres and Acres we’re trying to create resilience and make sure the community has access to the freshest food possible. This funding allows us to full steam ahead. By the end of this year we plan to have six people employed and in five years our goal is 10 market gardens, each producing up to 10 tonnes of food a year.*

**Josh Collings (Director)**

**\$500,000**

to support the growth of Acres and Acres, a not-for-profit social enterprise that aims to improve local food security via market gardens. The funds will support development of a tool library and initial paid positions. *(Pictured Above)*



*We are very pleased to receive this funding. It will be a great relief to all the affected landowners. Protecting the water quality and runoff will have significant public benefit, and the Landcare volunteers are eager to get started. The sooner we can revegetate the better.*

**Lyn Coulston (Secretary)**

**\$247,800**

to Upper Murray Landcare to restore fire-affected drainage lines and gullies.



*The hall is a community facility, and we try to keep the hire fees as low as possible to make sure that the community can use it. That means we don't always have excess funds for improvement. Getting a grant like this means we can do that, and it's not at the cost of the community. We are trying to protect and sustain a vital community asset that was built by the community for the community.*

**Sheril Wilson (Treasurer)**

**\$354,351**

for the continued refurbishment of the Corryong and District Memorial Hall



*I'm so excited that this park will finally be upgraded. It's central to bringing our community back together after the fires. It's not just for children, we all use it. The CFA, DELWP, Towong Shire, our local Community Recovery Committee and many different groups have all joined forces to help rejuvenate the town and make it a cohesive, safe community again.*

**Ingrid Sharp (Committee Member)**

**\$170,000**

to Cudgewa School Park Management Committee to replace infrastructure destroyed in the bushfires and install all abilities play equipment, gentle skills bike path and pump track.

*"This is a great opportunity for community growth and stabilisation. It gives us the opportunity to diversify business with potential growth for future employment in the region."*

**Chris O'Connor (Chair)**

**\$1.5m**

for Mitta Valley Inc towards construction of the second stage of the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park to support regional tourism with trails to suit riders of all abilities.

*This funding will mean that the bowling green will be more available to the public and also ease the burden on volunteers for upkeep, meaning that the bowling green will be available for use now and into the future.*

**Cathy Ross (Secretary)**

**\$244,600**

to replace the main green at the Corryong Bowls Club with synthetic grass and to construct a verandah

**\$250,921**

to upgrade the facilities at the Tallangatta Memorial Hall which was an evacuation centre and emergency services hub during the bushfires.



## Restoring our Waterways

In the summer of 2019-20 more than 430,000ha of land in the North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) area, 22 per cent of the catchment, was impacted by bushfires.

In response to this, NECMA is implementing a large-scale Bushfire Recovery Program on waterways across the Upper Murray, working with impacted landholders and communities.

Work is focused on restoring sites with Catchment Management Authority investment before the fires, helping to address threats to public infrastructure and the recovery of fish populations in severely impacted waterways.

Funded activities include fencing, revegetation, woody weed control, bank stabilisation and targeted in-stream habitat structures.

Timber is being used where possible as it is useful for reducing erosion on exposed waterway banks. It is designed to slow the flow of water against the bank, particularly during times of high flow when excessive erosion is likely to occur.

Timber can also provide fish habitat and is typically more cost effective than rock beaching. Like rock beaching, constructed log jams and timber are not permanent solutions to erosion and sites require other management techniques to be most effective in the long term.

When used in conjunction with stock exclusion and revegetation, effectiveness and longevity are significantly increased. If managed correctly the vegetation will become self-managing and require very little, if any maintenance.

Additional information on current projects can be found on the North East CMA's Bushfire Recovery webpage: <https://www.necma.vic.gov.au/Projects/Currentprojects/2020-21-Bushfire-Recovery-Program>

## Strategic fuel break works started

Work started this month to strengthen and improve 113 kilometres of strategic fuel breaks along roads in the Upper Murray.

The work is part of the Victorian Government's \$35 million investment in bushfire management to reduce the risk of bushfires.

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) crews and local contractors undertook works along Eskdale Spur Track, Cravensville Road, Avondale Road and Lockharts Gap Track as part of phase one of the program which involved mechanical removal of vegetation and treatment of hazardous trees.

FFMVic, Hume Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Aaron Kennedy, said the fuel breaks were critical to protect communities, catchments and the environment from bushfires by making it easier, faster and safer for firefighters to suppress fires and reduce fuel loads in key areas.

"The breaks will also provide greater protection for critical community infrastructure like water and power supplies in the event of a major bushfire," Mr Kennedy said.

The works in the Upper Murray district are the start of an 18-month project which will see new and existing breaks constructed and strengthened across north east Victoria.

The project is part of the Victorian Government's Safer Together initiative and is being delivered by FFMVic in partnership with Traditional Owners, CFA, local councils, Department of Transport and private landowners.

Visit the Safer Together website to better understand sharing responsibility and collaboratively managing bushfire risk across public and private land: [www.safertogether.vic.gov.au](http://www.safertogether.vic.gov.au)



## Focus on Berringama/Lucyvale CRC

Lucyvale has been dubbed the 'lucky valley' by some after escaping direct impact from the Black Summer bushfires.

"For us, it was the sustained adrenaline of protection over a two-week period," said Berringama/Lucyvale CRC Chair, Nicole Martin.

"While everyone else was in mop up mode, our valley was 'stay and watch' and defend from ember attacks as they came. Between locals and the CFA, we managed to save homes and do what we needed to do."

In the immediate aftermath of the fires, an invitation was extended to Berringama and the surrounding area to gather and debrief at the Lucyvale Hall.

Traditionally, the Lucyvale Valley has always been connected and 106 people turned up to that first meeting, including children who had moved away and returned to help.

"It's the historical behaviour of our community," Nicole said.

"But it was time for the next generation to step up, and it's my motto that if you aren't willing to step up then you forfeit the right to complain."

Until the fires, the Berringama and Lucyvale valleys had functioned quite separately, but Nicole says they have now been brought together.

"During the fires we were having every meal together and debriefs at the CFA shed most afternoons," she said.

"We wanted to capture everyone's thoughts before they were lost – what worked and what didn't and if you had a magic ball for next time..."

"We continued that process, but I realised that if we wanted to take advantage of grant opportunities, we would need to be a CRC."

Residents were asked to rate their priorities from the initial lists before they were collated, a top 10 determined, then the next 10 and the 'nice-to-haves'.

Since then, the top 10, all related to fire management, have been achieved and the committee is now working through the rest of their priorities.

The focus is on marketing the valleys to attract new families and visitors, preparing the hall for the next generation and repurposing two older tennis courts - one for tennis and the other as a multi-purpose kid's space.

Moving forward, Nicole says the energy and work now is acquitting the \$160,000 in grants received, and capacity building and training within the community.

"We're future proofing," she said.

"While our kids are in our care, we need to engage and work in that space.

"We have some new community members who are quite different to the norm, and we've made it work. We just accept we're all different."



## Towong Mailbox upgrade

Towong residents will soon have all weather access to their mailboxes with works to seal the pavement and bitumen surface around the mailboxes starting this week. This project was identified as a priority by the Towong Community Recovery Committee and is funded by Bushfire Recovery Victoria. Please take care while in the vicinity during construction.



## Grant writing workshops help build community capacity

Building capacity into the community is an important part of the recovery process and this month, Corryong CRC and Bushfire Recovery Victoria hosted a series of practical grant writing workshops open to all Upper Murray community members.

The workshops were hosted by Pat Grosse, founder of The Community Entrepreneur and with more than 30 years funding experience.

The series of three workshops were designed to help turn an idea into a compelling grant application and looked at how to get prepare for a grant, how to develop a draft business case by identifying the need, project concept, scope and timeline, consulting the community, matching potential funding opportunities, and how to write a compelling grant application.

The final topic was about managing the project, the budget and successfully acquitting the grant.



## Landline

ABC's Landline spent three days in the in the Upper Murray this month filming a segment about bushfire recovery, with a focus on the natural environment.

The segment screened on June 27 but if you missed it, you can still watch on ABC iView.



## Red Cross farm first aid training

Develop skills and improve farm and rural workplace safety by enrolling in the Red Cross Farm First Aid course delivered by an accredited First Aid trainer.

Participants are provided with the knowledge and skills to assist themselves, and others, to cope with accidents and injury both from a physical and mental wellbeing perspective. On completion of the course, participants receive a Statement of Attainment in Provide Basic Emergency Life Support (HLTAID002) – often required for insurance and employment opportunities. Training is free for primary producers, farm workers and farm contractors.

Monday 16th August 9am to 5pm - to be held at the Walwa Bush Nursing Centre (Max 20 participants)

Tuesday 17th August 9am to 5pm - to be held at the Corryong Neighbourhood Centre (Max 15 participants)

Wednesday 18th August 9am to 5pm - to be held at the Corryong Men's Shed (Max 20 participants)

To register contact Red Cross Recovery Officer Jessica Davison at [jdavison@redcross.org.au](mailto:jdavison@redcross.org.au) or 0439 634 601.



## Thowgla Hall refurbishment

The Thowgla Hall is looking splendid with much of its restoration work now complete. The completed hall will have a repaired and restored floor, insulation, new ceiling sheets, new paint, a functional kitchen, external shower block and off-grid capability.

Pictured are committee members Charlie O'Connor, Emma Paton (President) and Karly McVean.

# FOCUS ON GRANTS

## Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal

Grants up to \$10,000 are available through the Small & Vital Stream and up to \$25,000 in the Bushfire Recovery Stream.

The Strengthening Rural Communities program aims to give thousands of small rural, regional and remote communities across Australia an opportunity to access funding to support broad community needs and was expanded to support bushfire recovery.

Grants are available for a range of grassroots, community-led initiatives that directly and clearly benefit local communities.

Round 10 is now open and closes on August 24.

For more information and to apply, go to [www.frrr.org.au/funding/place/strengthening\\_rural\\_communities/](http://www.frrr.org.au/funding/place/strengthening_rural_communities/)

# COMMUNITY DIARY

To add your event to the Community Diary, email [recovery@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@towong.vic.gov.au) or call the Upper Murray Community Recovery Hub on 1800 518 222.

### SOCIAL CROQUET

Every Friday from 10am  
Corryong Bowls Club.  
Ph: Sylvia Montgomery 0428 762 356

### SOCIAL INDOOR BADMINTON

Every Tuesday from 7.00pm  
Corryong Memorial Hall.  
Ph: Wayne Potocky 6077 1201

### IT MENTORING FOR ALL AGES

Every Wednesday from 2pm  
Corryong Neighbourhood Centre  
No cost

### MEN'S SHED

**CHAT, CUPPA AND SOCIALISE**  
Every Wednesday 9am – 12 noon  
Corryong Men's Shed, Strzelecki Way  
Ph: Don 0418 892 520

### VISITING OPTOMETRIST, WODONGA EYECARE

Thursday 8 and 22 July 9.30am-3.30pm  
Corryong Neighbourhood Centre  
Ph: Wodonga Eyecare 1800 918 377

### PLAY WITH CLAY (PARENT AND CHILD)

Sunday 11 July 10am-1pm  
Corryong Health (top building)  
No cost

### CORRYONG FNC REUNION 2001

Saturday 17 July  
Upper Murray Events Centre

### ACOUSTIC MUSIC, POETRY & CAMP OVEN

Sunday 18 July from 3.00pm  
The Resting Place - Poets Paradise  
568 Murray Valley Hwy

### PLAY WITH CLAY (ADULTS)

Monday 26 July 6.30-9.30  
Corryong Health (top building)  
No cost

### JOEYS, CUBS AND SCOUTS

Thursdays 15, 22, 29 July  
between 5.00-8.00pm  
Corryong Memorial Hall  
Ph: Sam Byatt 0400 435 914

### CORRYONG FNC TRIVIA NIGHT

Saturday 24 July  
Bottom Pub

### RECOGNISING WOMEN IN SPORT GALA AWARDS

Saturday July 31 from 6.00pm  
Corryong Youth Club Hall



## PAINT BY NUMBERS

Monday 19 July 6.30-9.30pm  
Corryong Health (top building)  
No cost

# Recovery Contacts

## Support Hotlines and Websites

Speak to someone by calling:

**Bushfire Counselling** | 1300 514 811

**Corryong Health** | 02 6076 3200

**Tallangatta Health** | 02 6071 5200

**Family Violence 1800 RESPECT 24/7** | 1800 737 732

**Albury Wodonga Mental Health Triage**

**Line 24/7** | 1300 104 211

**Lifeline Bushfire Helpline** | 13 43 57

**MensLine Australia** | 1300 789 978

**Beyond Blue** | 1300 224 636

**Standby, Support after Suicide 24/7** | 0439 173 310

**Headspace** | 1800 650 890

Or visit:

**DHHS** | [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mental-health-resources-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mental-health-resources-coronavirus-covid-19)

**Australian Red Cross** | [www.redcross.org.au/stories/covid-19](http://www.redcross.org.au/stories/covid-19)

**Beyond Blue** | [www.coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au)

**Phoenix Australia Centre for post-traumatic mental health** | [www.phoenixaustralia.org/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.phoenixaustralia.org/coronavirus-covid-19/)

## Towong Shire Bushfire Recovery Team

### Upper Murray Community Recovery Hub

**Phone:** 1800 518 222 (Monday to Friday 9am-4pm)

**Email:** [recovery@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@towong.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.towong.vic.gov.au/bushfirerecovery](http://www.towong.vic.gov.au/bushfirerecovery)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/towong.shire.council](https://facebook.com/towong.shire.council)

### Local Area Recovery Officers

If you are yet to speak to your Local Area Recovery Officer, reach out directly:

**Tanya Aramini – Thowgla, Biggara** | 0457 726 595

**Kaye Nankervis – Walwa, Mt Alfred, Guys Forest, Pine Mountain, Tintalra, Corryong** | 0436 445 187

**Tony Irwin – Colac, Cudgewa, Berringama**

**Lucyvale, Nariel Valley** | 0427 869 019

**Shea Bloom – Nariel Valley, Towong** | 0457 726 595

### Bushfire Recovery Victoria

**Free Helpline:** 1800 560 760

**Email:** [connect@brv.vic.gov.au](mailto:connect@brv.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.brv.vic.gov.au](http://www.brv.vic.gov.au)

### Agriculture Victoria (Recovery)

**Phone:** 0428 975 728

## Get In Touch

We are continually reviewing and improving the recovery information we provide and how we provide it.

If you have feedback, or have a story you would like to share, call **1800 518 222** or email [recovery@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@towong.vic.gov.au).

## Subscribe Today

To subscribe to the digital newsletter, email [recovery@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@towong.vic.gov.au). For past editions of this newsletter go to [www.towong.vic.gov.au/bushfirerecovery](http://www.towong.vic.gov.au/bushfirerecovery).

**Please note:** All photos in this newsletter were taken in compliance with COVID-19 regulations.

## About This Newsletter

This monthly newsletter brings together the latest updates and information to support Towong Shire residents and businesses through bushfire recovery.

This newsletter is a joint initiative by Towong Shire Council and Bushfire Recovery Victoria, with thanks to community members and supporting agencies including DELWP, Agriculture Victoria, Environment Protection Authority Victoria, CFA, Regional Roads Victoria and Parks Victoria.