

Mallacoota District Recovery Update

DECEMBER 2020



Upgrade of Main Hall

MADRA, the Hall & Recreation Reserve Committee, Council and BRV have been working collaboratively around planning for the upgrade of the Main Hall.

The focus of this work is to clarify the needs and use of the Mallacoota Hall year-round, not just in an emergency. This also considers the other facilities in the precinct such as the Mud Brick Pavilion and new sports pavilion).

BRV is supporting this work with some funding for initial scoping and concepts based on the needs and use.

In the meantime, Council has been busy securing funding for some initial upgrades that won't impact on longer term planning for the building:

Initial risk and condition assessments

- Ember proofing to improve resilience during bushfire events
- Adapting electrical switchboard systems to accommodate backup electrical supply when mains electricity is lost
- Upgrading of telecommunication systems including AV infrastructure, WiFi capability and a resilient online connection
- Installation of skylights in the main hall and rear passageway that comply to BAL 40
- Upgrading of existing light fittings in main hall to LED

These initial upgrades are being funded by a Council project for improving the

resilience of community facilities at several locations across East Gippsland under the BRV Local Economic Recovery Program, the Safe Access Program and through the Commonwealth Government's STAND Program (Strengthen Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters).

The Commonwealth Government has allocated \$7 million to deliver up to 2,000 NBN satellite services to rural fire stations and relief centres across Australia to provide resilient communications during emergency events. East Gippsland is part of an early 'pilot' rollout of communication systems, one of which has been installed at the Mallacoota Hall as of last week. For more information, visit <https://www.communications.gov.au/phone/improving-resilience-australias-telco-networks>

Community facilities including public halls and recreation reserve buildings are essential to enable communities to remain socially connected, physically active and positively engaged with a broadrange of community activities and events. In times of emergency, these same facilities often play a critical role supporting communities to plan for, respond to, and recover from emergency events.

Community Conversations

The recovery team at Council, in partnership with emergency services

organisations, have been facilitating 'Community Conversations' in fire impacted districts to support residents and local emergency services personnel to have discussions about the 2019/2020 bushfires.

The conversations provide an opportunity to reflect on experiences and learnings, and to explore opportunities to strengthen planning, preparedness and resilience.

These consist of online and face-to-face opportunities for smaller groups to share and listen.

We are planning 'Community Conversations' for Mallacoota and surrounds in the first part of 2021.

LIMPs review

Reviewing and updating Local Incident Management Plans (LIMPs) is important, particularly following an incident.

These reviews have been taking place in several communities and districts across the region and will continue into the New Year, when Mallacoota district residents will be invited to participate in discussions.

Priority for LIMP reviews have been in districts that have the highest fire residual risk levels for the current/upcoming fire season.

Current LIMPs can be found on Council's website: https://www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/Community/Emergency_Management/Local_Incident_Management_Plans

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Memorial installed

Council's Works team have installed the wooden bushfire memorial that was gifted to the Mallacoota district by the Australian Defence Force, near the Main Wharf (in the centre garden).

A plaque is being added, and MADRA is planning more information and story boards to go around this memorial in coming months.

Survey now open

We are currently conducting our Community Perceptions Survey to assist in developing the Council Plan and encourage you to have your say on the future of the shire. There are three ways to complete the survey:

- Online through our YourSay website
- Pick up a hard copy from one of our Customer Service Centres
- For those who have difficulty completing the survey online or handwriting responses, you can contact our customer service team to complete the survey over the phone.

Submissions close Friday 29 January 2021. We appreciate you taking the time to provide your valuable feedback. By completing this survey you can go into the draw to win one of 10 \$50 gift cards.

All details and individual responses are confidential. If you have any questions about the survey or Council Plan process, please contact us.

More useful information

As individuals and communities mark (or have marked) the anniversary of the events of the 2019-20 bushfire season, which ran from November to February, we know this may be a difficult time for some people.

Mayor Cr Mendy Urie recently said our families, friends, neighbours, colleagues and visitors were all impacted by these events.

"The effects are deep and long lasting. Many people continue to do it tough. We need to look out for those who need extra time and extra care and we need to be kind to one another," Cr Urie said.

To read the Mayor's bushfire anniversary message, visit <https://bit.ly/2L2cSXH>

Useful links:

Beyond Blue – the first year after bushfire: <https://bit.ly/3qhxZp7>
Trauma and Grief Network – understanding anniversary reactions: <https://bit.ly/36we65O>

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