

Your City of Whittlesea news

Local

Regional sports centre gets under way Page 3

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Shop local this Christmas Page 8

# Carols and his mascheer

## Upcoming Council **Meetings**

**Tuesday 19 November, 6pm** Council Meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor Council Chamber, Council Offices 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang

Tuesday 17 December, 6pm Council Chamber, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang

Tuesday 18 February 2025, 6pm Council Chamber, Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang



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

For the latest information about Council Meetings, including how you can get involved, visit

(🖌) whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ councilmeetings



## Connect with us

(**Q**) Civic Centre, South Morang 25 Ferres Boulevard Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5pm Closed from 2pm, 24 December and reopens Friday 27 December. Closed also on New Years Day.

(**Q**) Whittlesea Service Hub 63 Church Street Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5pm Closed from 2pm, 24 December 2024 and reopens Monday 6 January 2025.

**(\)** 9217 2170 (including after hours emergencies) **National Relay Service** 133 677 (ask for 9217 2170)

- (🖾) Locked Bag 1, Bundoora MDC VIC 3083
- (@) info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au
- whittlesea.vic.gov.au





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## **Our new Council**

In October residents in the City of Whittlesea voted for a new group of Councillors. At the time of going to print the election result was unknown. You can visit (🖌) whittlesea.vic.gov.au/councillors to find out the election results as they are finalised. We look forward to introducing our new Council in the next edition of Local Scoop



(f) (in) (D)

خدمة الترجمة الشفهية الهاتفية المجانية Arabic Chinese Simplified 免费电话传译服务 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 خدمات مترجم شفاهی تلفنی رایگان Persian/Farsi Punjabi ਮਫ਼ਤ ਟੈਲੀਫ਼ੋਨ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਸੇਵਾ Turkish Ücretsiz telefonla tercümanlık servisi Vietnamese Dịch vụ thông dịch qua điện thoại miễn phí

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certified paper using vegetable inks.



ABOVE Whittlesea-based netballers Shanae and Tara are looking forward to having more courts in the area.

# Courts a net gain for the commily

The site of the future regional sports precinct in Mernda is undergoing a major transformation as earthworks progress in preparation for the construction of new sports courts.

Located on Plenty Road and Everton Drive in Mernda, the precinct will provide opportunities for residents to play sports such as netball and basketball closer to home.

The precinct includes an indoor stadium with four multi-purpose sports courts, outdoor netball courts with lighting, car park and shared paths. The preliminary earthworks are being completed in advance of Council calling for tenders in 2025 for the facility's construction.

City of Whittlesea CEO Craig Lloyd said the regional sports precinct would be a game-changer for residents across the region. He said the project represented Council's single largest investment in social infrastructure and the benefits would be felt for generations to come.

"The City of Whittlesea is committed to ensuring residents of all ages and abilities have the chance to play some of their favourite sports closer to home," he said.

The regional sports precinct is supported by funding from the Victorian Government.

"The regional sports precinct will provide modern, purpose-built facilities in a location that will be accessible by car, bus, bike and foot." - City of Whittlesea CEO. Craig Llovd



For more information scan the QR code or visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ regionalsportsprecinct

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.





## **Festive** family fun **Christmas events**

## the kids will love

## **Carols by Candlelight**

Friday 13 December, 6pm-9pm Terrace Lawns, Civic Centre, South Morang

Pop on your Santa hat, pack a picnic, bring your friends and family and come along to sing all your favourites with our Carols Community Choir. Enjoy the food trucks and fun activities or pick up those last-minute Christmas presents at the twilight market. Plus a special appearance from Santa!



## Whittlesea Christmas Festival

#### Saturday 14 December, 4pm-9pm Whittlesea Showgrounds, Yea Road, Whittlesea

Join in the festival of Christmas with music performances, a twilight market and interactive nativity, classic car show, kids activities and the famous Christmas Tree Extravaganza as well as special guests the Grinch and Santa!

This event is run by the New Horizons Church on behalf of the Combined Churches of Whittlesea and the Whittlesea Agricultural Society and is proudly support by the City of Whittlesea community grants program.

#### () nhchurch.com.au/festival

More Christmas fun on pages 8 and 9.



ABOVE Rakesh Raju, Cherian Peter, Biby Cherian and Pintu Mathew Karottu from Reach World Wide Australia

Leaching those in need

What began as a modest food pantry operating out of the Lalor Library, has now grown into a vital community support organisation providing much needed food relief for people in our community.

With the support of a community grant from the City of Whittlesea's Community Grants Program, not-forprofit organisation Reach World Wide Australia provides free food to vulnerable people across the municipality through the delivery of food hampers, community pantries and school breakfast clubs in partnership with local public schools.

"This hamper is such a gift. I am thankful not just for the food, but for the hope, compassion and empathy of the volunteers towards us. It has made such a difference."

#### - Family supported by Reach World Wide Australia

Reach World Wide Australia's President Cherian Peter emphasised the importance of the grant in sustaining these efforts and in ensuring these programs can continue.

"A significant portion of the funds are used to buy non-perishable and staple food items such as rice, pasta, canned goods, cereals and other basic groceries, as well as fresh vegetables and fruits."

The City of Whittlesea provided more than \$270,000 in community relief grants to a range of community support organisations this year. Community grants are also available to support our community to deliver programs, activities and events.

# **Community Grants Program** Apply now

For information on our Community Grants Program or to apply, visit () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/grants

For information on Reach World Wide Australia, visit 🕢 reachworldwide.au

## **Epping Hub** revamped

The Epping Community Services Hub at 713 High Street has been renovated, making it a comfortable and inclusive space.

With more than a dozen partner organisations, the hub offers a wide range of services for people seeking help and advice including employment services, family violence support, mental health support, financial counselling and support for people with a disability.

#### Thanks to a \$750,000

refurbishment co-funded by the City of Whittlesea and the Victorian Government, the hub now has three new consulting rooms, two breakout rooms, expanded office space, and a private waiting area.

Elaine Howard from Austin Child Youth Mental Health Service says the upgrades create a comfortable, private setting where clients feel more relaxed, with features like dimmable lights, cosy chairs and whiteboard tables for drawing.

"Our clients often experience stress so it's important to provide a comfortable room to help them relax and be able to talk."

- Elaine Howard



ABOVE Elaine Howard in one of the newly refurbished rooms

# //ew track for riders jump-starts fun

## Bike riders are jumping for joy after the opening of the municipality's first dirt jumps track in September.

Located at the Painted Hills Recreation Reserve in Doreen, the track features courses designed to cater to beginner, intermediate and advanced riders.

The sport of dirt jumps is similar to BMX in that riders jump off mounds of compacted soil. However, rather than racing, the goal is to perform tricks.

Dirt jumping has surged in popularity in recent years and a 1000-signature petition calling for jumps to be installed gave Council the confidence to proceed with a 12-month pilot program.

The purpose-built track was designed following close consultation with a number of passionate young, local riders to ensure it met their requirements.

The pilot program's success will be determined by how well the track is used and maintained by riders.

If the pilot is deemed a success, the jumps will be made permanent.

To assist riders in caring for the jumps, Council held a series of 'Learn to Dig' sessions on-site in the lead up to the track opening.

Eight-year-old Riley, of Doreen, tried out the track at one of the workshops in August and immediately gave it his tick of approval.

He said he was a fan of the "smooth" course and that it would be a great place to make new friends.

The Painted Hills Recreation Reserve dirt jumps project is funded by Council.



BELOW Riley puts his skills to the test at the new jumps track at Painted Hills Recreation Reserve in Doreen.



#### For more information scan the QR code or visit () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ dirtiumps

#### ABOVE City of Whittlesea Youth Council are raising awareness about the dangers of vapes

## **Youth Council** calls out the 'Bitter Truth' about vaping

The City of Whittlesea Youth Council is taking a stand against the rise in vaping among young people aged 12 to 25.

While vapes might taste sweet, they're hiding some nasty ingredients - such as toxic chemicals found in things like paint thinner and bug spray. Most vapes contain nicotine, which can impact brain development, affecting memory and learning.

"It's worrying to see so many of our friends vaping. We're here to make sure they know what's really inside and how it impacts their health."

- Youth Council Mayor Zachary Melvaine

To raise awareness, the Youth Council has used social media reels to expose the 'bitter truth' behind the flavours. Their message? Get the facts before you take a puff!

"Don't be fooled by the flavours. The risks are real, and we want young people to make smart choices about their health." said Youth Council Deputy Mayor Kaynat.

To watch the reels follow @CityofWhittleseaYouth on Instagram.

Learn more and get the facts at ✓ vapingfacts.org.au

# Let's keep our community clean

We all want clean and beautiful streets we can be proud of. We know that illegally dumped rubbish is a major concern for you – it's a priority for us, too.

Our officers regularly patrol our streets to quickly remove dumped rubbish and gather the key information we need to issue fines.

You can help too, by making sure your waste is disposed of properly.

Did you know that placing rubbish on the kerb without a booked hard rubbish collection is illegal? Don't risk a fine – use our services to easily manage your waste responsibly.

We offer easy options for all residents to get rid of unwanted items each financial year, including two free hard rubbish collections and 11 free

#### and discounted waste and recycling vouchers. These vouchers help you dispose of brick, rubble, green and timber waste.

By doing the right thing, you can help keep our community clean, protect the environment, reduce clean-up costs and make our neighbourhoods more enjoyable for everyone.

## Report dumped rubbish

Help us keep the City of Whittlesea clean; if you spot dumped rubbish you can report it to Council on 9217 2170 or via our website.

## What vouchers are available?

Each household has access to free and discounted waste and recycling vouchers via Council's website () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/wastevouchers





General waste 1 voucher

**Green waste** 4 vouchers

Timber waste Brick and rubble 4 vouchers 2 vouchers



For more information call 9217 2170, scan the QR code or visit our website.

whittlesea.vic.gov.au/waste





## What to do with unwanted items

ABOVE Drop off your e-waste at a recycling centre.

### Book a hard rubbish collection

You are eligible for two kerbside hard rubbish collections per year.

## Recvcle it Find your item in our A-Z

guide and learn the best way to dispose of it.

() whittlesea.vic.gov.au/a-zwaste





## **Create your** emergency plan

and prepare

home and property during an emergency.

will help you be ready for whatever summer brings.

## Prepare an emergency kit

One of the first steps to getting ready is creating an emergency plan. Talk with your family about what to do if an emergency happens, where to go, and how to stay in touch. Discuss how you can help your neighbours and learn about their plans too.



For residents in bushfire-prone areas, keeping your property safe is crucial. Clear your gutters, trim overhanging branches, and remove any flammable materials near your home. Pay attention to Fire Danger Ratings and warnings and know when to leave early if a fire threatens.



For information on preparing for emergencies visit () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/emergency





## Being summer-ready means having a plan to protect your family,

As summer approaches in the City of Whittlesea, it's important for residents to be prepared for the challenges that come with the season, such as bushfires, heatwayes and other emergencies. Taking proactive steps now

It's also important to prepare an emergency kit with essentials like a first aid kit, torch and important documents. Regularly check and update this kit to ensure it's ready when you need it.

## informed

Stay

Staying informed is vital when it comes to summer preparedness. Download the VicEmergency app, sign up for alerts from the Bureau of Meteorology, and listen to trusted news sources like ABC Radio for updates. By keeping yourself informed, you can respond quickly and effectively in an emergency.

## Upgrade boosts street appeal

A popular shopping strip along High Street in Lalor has undergone a significant facelift to boost its safety and appeal to shoppers.

The works on the strip included improving pedestrian safety by replacing sections of the footpath and installing a raised pedestrian crossing in Tramoo Street. We've also improved parking outside the shops on High Street and created new parallel parking spots in Tramoo Street.

To encourage extra foot traffic, new seats, bins and trees were added, while cyclists will find it easier to access the precinct through the installation of bike racks in Tramoo Street.

Vinnie Reddy relocated his sales and repair business, to the strip almost seven years ago.

"The facelift does make it look more presentable and appealing," he said. "It looks good, a lot better than it was before."



**ABOVE** Victorian Business Machines managing director Vinnie Reddy says the upgrades have boosted the visual appeal of the shopping strip.

The project was funded by Council and a \$200,000 contribution from the Victorian Government's Living Local Suburban Grants Program.

Shop locally for ("hristmas

Check out the online Business Directory

to discover your local shops and services.

whittlesea.vic.gov.au/

businessdirectory

You can explore local businesses in the

directory or, if you own a business, sign

up to, add or update your listing.

With more than 1,300 retail businesses, three big shopping centres, and many smaller local shopping areas, you won't have to go far for great food, clothes and services this Christmas.

Discover the convenience of smaller centres like Mernda Town Centre. Bundoora Square and Laurimar Town Centre. These neighbourhood spots make it easy to shop, dine and access services without leaving your community.

You'll find a range of unique gifts, fresh produce, and quality services that support local jobs and keep our community thriving.









## Looking for a unique gift?

Check out these local markets to uncover hidden treasures.

**Carols by Candlelight** and Market Friday 13 December 6pm-9pm 25 Ferres Blvd. South Morang

Laurimar Lakeside Market Sunday 8 December 9am-2pm Laurimar Wetlands, corner Hazel Glen Drive and

Whittlesea Monday Market -Christmas Market

Monday 23 December 8am-1pm 30 Yea Road, Whittlesea

Painted Hills Road, Doreen



# Your guide to celebrating sustainably this season

The festive season is a time for joy, gift-giving and enjoying delicious food with loved ones. It's also a great opportunity to minimise our impact on the environment. We've got some easy and fun ways you can celebrate sustainably, while still enjoying all the magic of the holidays.





Instead of material gifts, why not surprise a loved one with an experience or sustainable present? Think about giving a voucher for a fun activity, like a meal or activity at your favourite local spot in the City of Whittlesea (discover more on page 12). You could even make a hamper full of delicious handmade treats or give a beautiful plant propagated from your garden.

## -;¢-, Energy smart lighting

Making the switch to LED Christmas lights can save you energy. Turn them on only at night for short periods to reduce your power bill and environmental impact.

with a purpose Did you know Australians use more than 150,000 kilometres of wrapping paper every festive season? That's almost four times around the Earth! This year, try wrapping your gifts with reusable materials like a tote bag, tea towel or scarf. You could even use a recyclable box or a basket from your local op shop that your loved one can use again.

Donate unwanted gifts

If you receive gifts you don't need, donate them to local charities. It's a simple way to spread kindness and help those in need.





## Holiday season waste and recycling



Bins will be collected one day later on Christmas and New Year's Day

Collections will run one day behind schedule for the rest of that week. ou can check your collection day on our website.



Book your free Christmas pine tree collection for pickup on Monday 20 January.

Call 9217 2170 to book in advance



Free waste and recycling vouchers

See page 6 for details.

## Local facilities closures

Heidelberg Materials Australia Resource Recovery (formerly known as Hansons in Wollert)

Christmas Day and New Year's Day

Repurpose It 🗴 Christmas Day

EcoDynamics

Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

Find out more at (🔊 whittlesea.vic.gov.au/waste

## **Recycle smart this Christmas**

#### Do you have items in your cupboards that no longer work or you don't need?

You can drop off things such as mobile phones, printer cartridges, DVDs, medical blister packs and batteries to be recycled and given new life through one of our local recycling stations.



For more information, visit 🖌 whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ recycling-stations









BELOW Areal Property and First National Real Estate South Morang director Justin Sciola is pleased work has started on upgrading the Gorge Road shopping precinct.

# Makeover a **Gorge-ous win for** shopping strip

### A major revamp of the Gorge Road shopping precinct in South Morang will be a boon for businesses and their customers.

He said the revamp, which also includes

car park, will help the strip's businesses

because there is a lot of traffic and a lot

of history in this area," he said. "But it's definitely ready for an upgrade now."

The works are expected to continue until

The Gorge Road streetscape upgrade

the Victorian Government's Growing

is supported by a \$425,000 grant from

For more information scan

( whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ majorprojects

the QR code or visit

attract new clients and retain existing ones.

welcome improvements to the rear

"We saw the value of this location

mid-2025.

Suburbs Fund.

The project will breathe new life into the popular precinct by upgrading the streetscape and improving parking to make visits safer and more convenient.

Extensive planning, including consultation with business owners and shoppers, helped to set the vision, with work under way in late 2024.

Areal Property and First National Real Estate South Morang director Justin Sciola has been operating his business from the precinct since 2021.

"We look forward to it getting a fresh look that really complements the businesses we have along here."

> - Justin Sciola. business owner

## Become a community heart hero

Each year, more than 7,000 Victorians experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital. Using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) before an ambulance arrives can nearly double survival rates.

Register your AED with Ambulance Victoria so Triple Zero (000) can direct callers to it during emergencies.

The GoodSAM Responder App also alerts trained responders to nearby cardiac arrests and AED locations. Any adult familiar with CPR and with a smartphone can become a responder.

To register an AED with Ambulance Victoria call 1800 233 734 or visit () registermyaed.ambulance. vic.gov.au

Download the GoodSAM app at (⋆) heartstarter.com.au



## Sign up today

Keep up to date on City of Whittlesea news and events with our free e-newsletters:

- · City of Whittlesea monthly e-news
- Arts and events
- Business news
- Rural news
- Sustainability.



Scan the QR code to find out more.

# //ew cultural space taking shape

The new Aboriginal Gathering Place is taking shape at the Quarry Hills Parkland in South Morang.

Construction on the site began in July with spaces thoughtfully designed to honour and reflect the site's deep cultural significance.

The Aboriginal Gathering Place is fully funded by the City of Whittlesea and will feature indoor and outdoor multi-purpose spaces, including a large community events space for up to 100 people, consulting suites and meeting and quiet rooms.

It is a part of Council's ongoing commitment to reconciliation, which has recently been outlined in City of Whittlesea's Aboriginal Action Plan 2024-2029.

City of Whittlesea CEO Craig Lloyd said the plan provided a blueprint for supporting cultural, health, education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal residents in the local community.

The Aboriginal Gathering Place's building and landscape designs on Wurundjeri Country honour the ongoing cultural and spiritual connection the local Aboriginal community has to Country.

"We are proud to have one of the largest Aboriginal populations in metropolitan Melbourne and we will work closely with Aboriginal residents, the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and the community to ensure we achieve the plan's goals."

TOP Aboriginal smoking ceremony. BELOW Artist's impression of the future Aboriginal Gathering Place.



#### - City of Whittlesea CEO Craig Lloyd

Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group [WAGPAG] co-chair Karen Bryant said the site would serve as a centre for cultural learning, or two-way learning, where both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people could gain knowledge about local Aboriginal history, traditions and values.

Construction is expected to finish in mid-2025.



For more information, scan the QR code or visit () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ aboriginalgatheringplace



# explore <sub>city of</sub> Whittlesea

This holiday season is the perfect time to explore your own backyard or show your visiting friends the amazing arts, culture, heritage, events, food, drinks and nature that the City of Whittlesea has to offer.

Families, solo travellers or groups of friends can enjoy days out at local attractions or dive into the city's cultural experiences. There's something for everyone.

If you're looking for something new to do, why not Explore the City of Whittlesea – 'It's all here!'

For more inspiration on what to do and where to go, check out the new videos on our website that capture the beauty, energy and diversity of our city.







Stroll through Plenty Gorge Parkland, have a picnic at Yan Yean Reservoir, or explore Toorourong's scenic spots.





Savour delicious local flavours at our cafés and restaurants.



For more information go to () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/explorewhittlesea

**Kid-friendly** 

Check out the local playgrounds, game

theme park for a day of family fun.

and entertainment centres or an exciting

Leisure centres

and pools

Dive into the action at our leisure

centres and pools.

fun

## **Find your nearest** off-leash dog park in the City of Whittlesea

We encourage dog owners to make use of these parks, which also offer the chance to get some exercise, contribute to your own health and wellbeing, and meet other dog owners.

When you are out enjoying our dog parks, owners must keep all dogs under effective control and clean up after them. 'Under effective control' means:

- · the dog must return to its owner on command
- · the dog must not bother or worry other people or animals.



## Keep your pets safe this holiday season

As the holiday season approaches, a reminder for all pet owners to make sure your pet registration and microchip registry contact information is up-to-date so that your pet can be quickly reunited with you should they go wandering while you're away.

(🖌) whittlesea.vic.gov.au/petregistration

You can call the wat djerring facility if your pet goes missing on 8401 6200.

(A) whittlesea.vic.gov.au/animalfacility



ABOVE New playgrounds like Whittlesea Public Gardens are a community priority.

## Have your say

Did you know the City of Whittlesea has a website dedicated to capturing your thoughts and ideas on projects right across the City of Whittlesea?

You can view projects open for consultation or sign up to be notified when there are topics of interest to you by visiting (🛪) engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Recently we gathered feedback on what our community's priorities are to help guide our actions and activities over the

next five to 10 years. Thank you to everyone who had their say.

> Throughout December and January Council will be back out talking to people including a stall at the Carols by Candlelight event on 13 December. Drop by and share your priorities with us.

For more information visit  $(\mathbf{z})$  engage.whittlesea.

and activity centres)

We will also be running a series of focus

groups across the municipality in early

priorities of our community to help shape

You can submit an expression of interest to

February to further understand the

key plans.



when's on

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



## Summer school holiday fun

#### Various times and locations

Keep the teens entertained this January with plenty of activities happening in the City of Whittlesea. Council is offering an exciting range of low-cost or free activities for young people aged 10 to 25 during the summer school holidays. There's something for everyone.



() whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ youthevents

Scan the QR code or visit



#### Art exhibition

Friday 17 January to Friday 7 February **Plenty Ranges Art and Convention** Centre, Bluegum Room 35 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang

Each year Council holds an art exhibition to showcase and celebrate the work of artists who live, work or are connected to the City of Whittlesea.

The theme for the 2025 exhibition is Hope: Exploring the spectrum of possibility, with artists of all ages and diverse backgrounds invited to reflect on hope to create a range of different artwork, offering audiences a positive and immersive experience.



Scan the QR code whittlesea.vic.gov.au/ artexhibition



be a part of the Community Priorities focus groups by scanning the QR code below.

to your local community.

Supportive

Proactive

#### Immunisation sessions Various times and locations

City of Whittlesea provides a variety of free immunisation services to safeguard you, your family and the community against preventable diseases. You can now book your 2025 immunisation sessions.

For updated information and session times, scan the QR code or visit () whittlesea.vic.gov.au/immunisation

## City of Whittlesea Business Network

## **Empower** and inspire

## Speak at our 2025 Women in Business event.

We're seeking inspiring local female business speakers to present at our upcoming Women in Business event in March 2025.

If you have an impactful story to share or know someone who does, express your interest today and be part of this empowering event.

business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au **(\)** 9217 2170





ABOVE Clockwise from top: Zahraa Al Zabaydi, Message from the Past, oil on wood panel; Stephanie Mignanelli The Spirit of Hope (detail), acrylic on canvas; Rachael Charalambous, Vision of hope, acrylic on canvas.



**Civic Centre lawns, 25 Ferres Blvd, South Morang** 



🖉 whittlesea.vic.gov.au/carols

