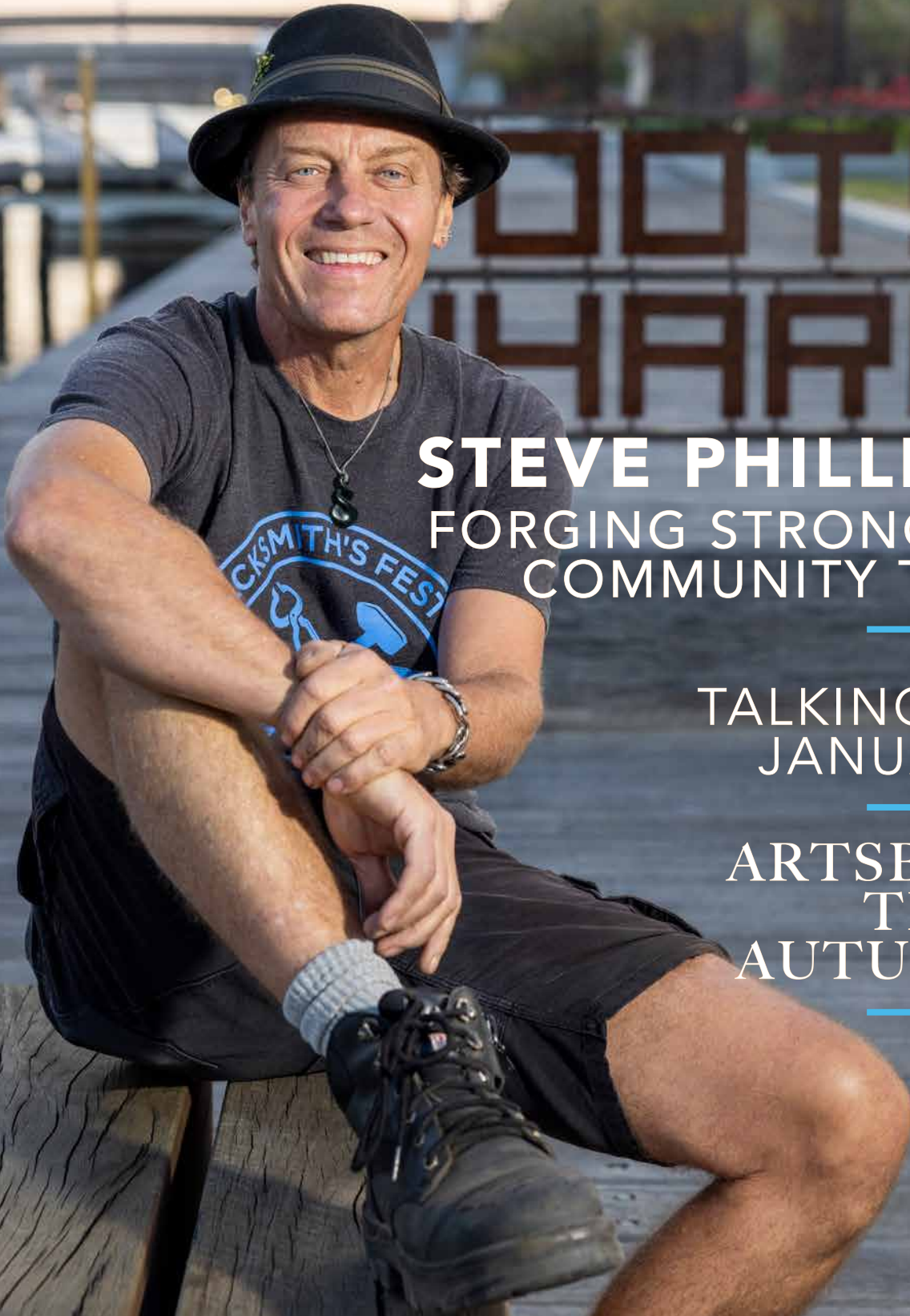


MARIBYRNONG

MESSENGER

Autumn 2023

www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au



STEVE PHILLIPS
FORGING STRONGER
COMMUNITY TIES

TALKING 26
JANUARY

ARTSBOX
THIS
AUTUMN

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Welcome to our first edition of Maribyrnong Messenger for 2023, which you'll find jam-packed with local stories and civic news to share.

The New Year started with a bang, with our first fireworks display at Footscray Park in three years, attracting more than 20,000 revellers.

The redevelopment works at the Footscray Town Hall also kicked off in January, with the demolition of the community wellbeing and civic offices well advanced. We're looking forward to welcoming our community to a revitalised civic precinct and community hub by the end of 2024. We're pleased also to be able to share more detail on the new community park on page 14.

As part of a more respectful acknowledgement of 26 January, Council again lowered the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, but in addition, for the first time hosted a Welcome to Country with a smoking ceremony ahead of our Citizenship Ceremony.

These changes are in response to a series of recommendations, shaped by community feedback and follow-up with First Nations Peoples, endorsed by Council in December. You can also read more on this on page 6.

International Women's Day is coming up on 8 March, celebrated annually worldwide to acknowledge women's achievements – while also marking a call to action for accelerating gender equality. There are a range of activities happening across the City, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/IWD

As Maribyrnong's Gender Ambassador, I'm delighted that Council is continuing to strive for positive change with a refresh underway on the Action Plan for our Towards Gender Equity 2030 Strategy to guide initiatives through 2023 and beyond.

As a footnote, a reminder we'll be looking for additional input from residents to support the development of the Proposed Budget towards the second quarter of this year. We look forward to continuing this important conversation.

Councillor Sarah Carter
Mayor of the City of Maribyrnong



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COUNCIL MEETING DATES

The meetings will be held at the Braybrook Community Hub, 107-139 Churchill Avenue, Braybrook.

MARCH

Tuesday 21, 6.30pm: Council Meeting

Tuesday 28, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

APRIL

Tuesday 18, 6.30pm: Council Meeting

Wednesday 26, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

MAY

Tuesday 2, 4.30pm: Enterprise Maribyrnong Delegated Committee

Tuesday 16, 6.30pm: Council Meeting

Tuesday 23, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

Meetings are live streamed via Council's YouTube channel, and community members can submit questions for public question time online before the Meeting commences.

Please note the meeting schedule is current at the time of printing. Visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/meetings or phone 9688 0200 for more information.



New grants program to boost this year's Festival and Events calendar

Grants of up to \$10,000 are now available to support new free festivals and events held in the City of Maribyrnong by the end of June 2023, helping cement our municipality as the Festival City and a 'go-to' destination for hospitality and entertainment.

The new 'Love Your West Grants Program' means this year residents and visitors alike can look forward to more local festivals and events than ever before, showcasing the rich cultural diversity of our community.

There are two grant streams available: Place-based Initiative Grants for small to medium-scale place-based activities that creatively activate business precincts and local neighbourhoods, including public spaces; and Night Time Diversification Grants for night time activities that will contribute to

the City's reputation as a night-time destination of choice.

Love Your West forms part of Council's recently adopted Maribyrnong Festivals and Activation Framework 2022-2026, updated in response to the changing landscape around festivals and events due to the pandemic and our City's rapid growth.

The previous Festival City Policy – initially developed in 2010 – had predominantly supported large-scale, single-day festivals in main streets or parks. In contrast, the new Framework increases support for smaller public events driven by the local community, which can be staged more regularly and within shorter timeframes.

The broadened strategic focus was developed in consultation with the community and industry who indicated

an appetite for more localised, authentic and contemporary events, especially after work hours to kick-start a robust night-time economy in the municipality.

For over a decade, Maribyrnong has built its reputation as a 'Festival City' with several popular public events, such as Yarraville Festival, Lunar New Year events, Eat Drink Westside, New Year's Eve Fireworks, St Jerome's Laneway Festival, and many more.

Last year more than 150,000 people gathered at local festivals and events, helping the community reconnect and businesses recover after the challenges of pandemic-related lockdowns and restrictions.

For further information about the Love Your West Grants Program, including how to apply, visit festivalcity.com.au

FORGING STRONGER COMMUNITY TIES

Environmental Scientist.
Blacksmith.
Unicyclist.

Long-time resident, Steve Phillips, is someone who has left an indelible mark on our City. You'll find it forged in iron on the boardwalk installed on the recently upgraded Footscray Wharf.

The sign and a new cantilever seat, both created at his river-side blacksmiths studio, are a testament not only to his passion for a forgotten trade but also his role in a resurgence that has put Footscray on the blacksmithing and metal artist map for the past decade.

Steve, who spent twenty years working as a hydrogeologist, discovered the ancient art of blacksmithing while on a midlife sabbatical in Belgium. It changed his life, fuelling a career change. As he will tell you, it 'lit his fire' – quite literally.

"I love the fire and muscle and sweat and smoke. And I also like that you don't need to be big and strong – so long as you have the right tools, anyone can transform metal into any shape or form they want just by heating it." Though, he adds, you do need to be patient while you "wait for the steel to get hot enough before you strike."

A resident of Melbourne's west for over 25 years, Steve and his wife own and run Waterside Metal Art Studios.

Established in 2011, it operates from a Council-supported arts space on the Maribyrnong River edge, at the historic Footscray Wharf.

The studio is equipped with ten coke-fired forging stations, including anvils, hand tools and vices.

Reflecting "the resurgence in blacksmithing, particularly from

the art side," Waterside has gone from offering a few classes to a comprehensive program of blacksmithing courses – from beginners to tool-making, joinery, artistic blacksmithing, and workshops on knife making.

Staying true to his scientific background, Waterside Studios offset any carbon emissions produced through a carbon neutral, high-impact reforestation project in the Yarra Yarra Biodiversity Corridor, in Southwest Australia.

Steve's blacksmithing journey has not only taken him all over the world, including into some of the remotest places on the globe, it also sparked the establishment of the now renowned Blacksmiths Festival – a free biennial event hosted in Footscray.

"After experiencing the blacksmithing festivals all over Europe, I decided to start one back here at home. I was welcomed into the smithing community overseas with open arms and was keen to replicate that experience here. I saw it as an important opportunity for local and international blacksmiths to come together and share knowledge."

The first Festival in 2013 was, he admits, very small – "pretty much just a little barbeque by the Maribyrnong River at the front of Waterside." But that's far from the case now. From that quiet beginning, the Blacksmiths Festival has grown to become one of the most celebrated events on both the metal artist and local community calendars.

There has also been a strong push towards encouraging women into the historically male dominated profession.



The most recent Festival, in 2022, attracted more than 4,000 attendees – including a team of 13 blacksmiths from around Australia working in teams to forge a sculptural cantilever seat – the Festival pièce de résistance, which is now a part of the public art landscape along the Maribyrnong River.

Designed by Will Maguire, one of Australia's premier blacksmith artists, the seat was hot riveted and forged on-site using power hammers brought in from La Trobe Valley over a jam-packed four days.

“The ground was shaking, and there was smoke and fire – it truly was a spectacle to behold!”

In a nod to the history of the area, the cantilever seat incorporates the original 60mm metal tie bars that once anchored the former wharf to the river bank in front of Henderson House. It was installed on the renovated Footscray Wharf just before Christmas, complementing the multi-million dollar upgrade completed in 2022.

For more information, visit blacksmithsfestival.com

Blacksmiths will gather on the banks of the Maribyrnong again next year to share their passion for fire and metal, during the 2024 Festival.

Supported by Council's Festival City Program, the family-friendly event also features a 'Kidsmith Zone' complete with little anvils, plasticine and presses, where children can get a little taste of blacksmithing by making their own pendants.



Most mornings, when Steve isn't busy teaching or creating metal art, you'll find him one-wheeling it along the Maribyrnong River with canine companion and blacksmithing workmate, Harry. Steve took up unicycling as a way to manage a chronically sore back, and to have a little fun! He loved it so much, in 2022, he started the Footscray Unicycle Club, which is dedicated to helping others get up on one wheel. They meet monthly at Footscray Wharf, for those who may be up for it.





TALKING 26 JANUARY

Conversations with the community shape more respectful acknowledgement

For the first time on 26 January in Maribyrnong, before taking their citizenship pledge, conferees were invited to join members of the community and First Nations elders in a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony – a traditional custom which involves burning native plants to produce smoke to cleanse and ward off bad spirits from the people and the land.

The Welcome followed a public flag lowering of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags as a tangible recognition of the grief and loss the day represents for many First Nations Peoples.

Both events, informed by comments from close to 4,000 members of the

community during engagement over a period of 18 months, were part of a commitment by Council to a more respectful way of recognising 26 January.

Callum from Scotland and Zala from Fiji were among the 54 new citizens welcomed on 26 January, along with Deborah from Wales, who also participated in the smoking ceremony prior to taking the pledge. Deborah noted that her new status as a citizen of Australia makes her feel accepted and more closely connected to the community.

“Today is a key milestone that marks my transition from a visitor to a genuine part of the community. The smoking ceremony was very beautiful and

meaningful, I really enjoyed being able to learn more about First Nations history and to have First Nations community with us here today.”

The 2023 program of events is an early step in the reconciliation journey locally. Council remains committed to continuing to engage, educate, and inform around the wider issues associated with Australia’s national day, particularly in respect to the experiences of First Nations Peoples.

In line with a resolution last December, letters have also now been sent to the Prime Minister and other ministers advocating to potentially change the date and include more First Nations information in Citizenship tests.

MARIBYRNONG FLOOD UPDATE

MOVING FROM RELIEF TO THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

Council continues to support residents and businesses impacted by the October 2022 flood event when the Maribyrnong River breached its banks.

This initial support has included assistance with accommodation, advice with the clean-up, access to financial and physical support, access to clean water and toilets, childcare, and rates relief. We also helped facilitate local co-working spaces for impacted home-based businesses.

Council has also cleared 150,000 cubic metres of materials from properties and debris from public assets – roads/nature strips and parks.

Following the removal of unsafe tree branches and flood debris, damaged playground equipment has now been repaired, and several recreation reserves and facilities have reopened to the community, including Burndap Park,

Coulson Gardens, Henry Turner North, and parts of Footscray Park.

Recognising the ongoing challenges associated with recovery for residents of the approximately 500 impacted properties, Council this month also endorsed the establishment of a Community Recovery Committee (CRC) as an Advisory Committee to Council.

This Committee will include representatives from the impacted area, providing advice on the needs of the local community to support a community-led response. It will operate for around 18 months.

Council also continues to advocate with external agencies on behalf of our community. We will be working with the State Emergency Service (SES) and community to ensure a greater understanding of risk, warnings and flood preparedness to address some of the issues identified by our residents post this event.

The Maribyrnong Flood Guide, which includes information about our flood history, how to prepare and respond, and who to contact in the event of an emergency, can be found on the SES website at ses.vic.gov.au

For more information on the flood response and recovery visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/flood

Melbourne Water Flood Review

Submissions for Melbourne Water's review into the October 2022 Maribyrnong River flood close on 17 March. You can find information on the process, community information sessions and how to lodge a submission at yoursay.melbournewater.com.au/maribyrnong-river-flood-review or by calling Melbourne Water on 131 722.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE



LIBRARY PLAN PROGRESSING

As our community changes, so must our libraries to accommodate a new demographic and different needs.

Recently these changes have included the adoption of new digital technologies which have supported the move

of an increasing number of services online. These self-service facilities became more important than ever during COVID-19.

Recognising the days when libraries were simply a place to borrow a book have well and truly gone, late last year we asked our community to help us develop a plan to help shape the future of our local libraries.

We received more than 4,000 individual comments from more than 1,300 community members, who told us while borrowing books and resources remains the most popular library service on offer, many also enjoy bringing children to the library and generally relaxing with a newspaper or magazine.

When looking to the future, we gathered suggestions for physical upgrades to existing library spaces with the potential also for new services, particularly after hours, and access to loanable technology and equipment, and a broader array of activities and games.

This feedback will inform the development of a draft Library Plan, which will be presented to Council in the first half of 2023. Once endorsed, we'll share it with the community for further comment.

For more information visit yourcityyourvoice.com.au/library-plan

FOCUS ON COUNCIL SPENDING PRIORITIES

Rates underpin Council's ability to deliver community services and infrastructure, and fund the maintenance of public assets to meet the needs of our community. This is to ensure our City continues to be a place people want to live, work and play in.

This includes things like roads, libraries, waste management, and parks and gardens.

This year marks our third year of extended engagement with our community on the Annual Budget that will inform Council spending for the coming financial year.

The conversation started last November when, along with inviting initial comments, we also asked the community to rank the various service categories Council delivers in order of importance.

Of those who responded, the top five categories were:

- > Open space
- > Sustainability and the environment
- > Cycling and pedestrian infrastructure
- > City amenity and safety
- > Community centres and libraries

This information is important in helping Council understand community spending priorities and will help inform the development of the Proposed Budget for the next financial year, which will be shared for feedback in April.

For more information visit yourcityyourvoice.com.au/budget

NURTURING NATURE STRIP THINKING

The strip of land between a property boundary and the kerb, excluding footpaths, can be a confusing piece of real estate.

Traditionally these areas, known as nature strips, consist of grass and sometimes one or two street trees chosen and maintained by Council. Along with enhancing street appeal, they can also increase biodiversity and reduce the heat island effect, reducing the impact of climate change.

Importantly, nature strips often house essential services, like communications, gas, stormwater, wastewater, electricity, and can also be used for waste collection.

Councils throughout Victoria adopt different approaches to nature strip management.

Here in Maribyrnong, residents look after nature strips outside their properties. They are also able to obtain a permit (at no cost) that allows certain plants and shrubs to be added, provided this does not impede pedestrians or impact public safety.

The Naturestrip Landscape Policy and Guidelines, which have been in place since 2014, outline both the process for obtaining a permit and the types of plantings allowed – currently this includes over 40 indigenous, exotic and native varieties.

As part of a review of the current guidelines, Council is keen to understand the community's views on the future of nature strips in Maribyrnong, including how well the permit system is working, for those who have obtained one.

Find more information and share your thoughts at yourcityyourvoice.com.au/nature-strips

We'll share updated draft guidelines for further comment before seeking Council endorsement towards the end of this year.



CREATING A PATHWAY TO A MORE WALKABLE CITY

Walking is something most of us have in common – it's one of the first things we learn, and it's something many people do on a daily basis, whether it's to catch a train, shop for groceries, wander with friends, or travel to school.

It's a type of exercise most people can do, albeit sometimes with a bit of help, and can be beneficial – not just for personal health – but also community wellbeing. As a mode of transport, walking supports a cleaner

environment, a healthier population, improves the local economy, and creates a safer, more connected community. It is also the number one form of physical recreation – we know you're out there hitting the pavement and trails! Recognising this, Council is looking to its community to inform the development of a new Walking Strategy to help create a more walkable City.

We want to understand how often people walk and why, and the types of barriers that stop residents from doing it more often, or at all - whether it's a need for better connections, better footpaths generally, or something completely different.

A 'Walking Strategy' postcard is also included in this issue of Messenger for you to share your thoughts and send back to us postage paid.

For more information, visit yourcityyourvoice.com.au/walking

ARTS & LIBRARIES

ArtsBox THIS AUTUMN

During April and May, Footscray-based crafter Kate Robinson moves into ArtsBox, the vibrant purple converted shipping container outside Footscray Library.

After years of working as a family violence lawyer, Kate turned to art to help deal with some of the trauma associated with her profession. She works with watercolour and acrylic paint, incorporating tactile, bright elements like sequins, Hama beads, pompoms, jewels and stickers in her paintings.

"For me, craft allows us to think with our hands and is as much about the process as the product. It's also a place where I could have a voice to be loud, sparkly and colourful."

During her six-week tenure at ArtsBox, Kate plans to create a huge watercolour map of Footscray to showcase the ever-evolving suburb at this moment in time.

"I have the most fun when I'm creating with others, so there will be times for locals to drop in and craft a postcard of their own favourite Footscray spots for display as part of a growing collection throughout the residency. Hopefully, we will also be able to make a community zine filled with all of the art."

Kate thinks ArtsBox is an incredible way to give local creatives the space and time to develop their artistic practice.

"When you are like me and have no formal arts training, it's tough to get a foot in the door, but ArtsBox recognises and celebrates art centred in community. I can't wait to get started!"

This year is a busy one for Kate, who will also be exhibiting her work at Mario's Studio with Arts Gen; judging the Footscray Art Prize for the Young Artist category; and co-creating an event inspired by her popular podcast "Being Biracial" as part of the Amplify program at Bluestone Church Arts Space. Be sure to head down to ArtsBox at Footscray Library throughout April and May to check out Kate's work and take part in creating your own postcard!

Expressions of interest for ArtsBox residences from artists are welcome year-round. For more information on how to apply, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture



Photo credit Matto Lucas



HIDDEN FOOTSCRAY

EXPLORE LOCAL CULTURE, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY THROUGH AN ARTISTIC LENS

Don't miss this fascinating exhibition of photography, installation, sculpture, model making, sound and text, which delves deep beneath the

cosmopolitan charm of Footscray to reveal hidden stories of lost heritage, unknown traditional cultural practices, forgotten memories, and much more. HIDDEN Footscray features works by six local artists and is open daily at Footscray Community Arts, until 26 March 2023. Entry is free. To learn more, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/HIDDEN

2023 FOOTSCRAY ARTS PRIZE

LAST CHANCE TO ENTER

Entries close on 20 March 2023 for the esteemed visual art Prize, which gives contemporary artists from across Australia the opportunity to showcase their work in the thriving cultural hub of Footscray, while sharing in \$33,000 in prizes across four categories.

Winners will be announced in July 2023 with shortlisted works on display at a Footscray Art Prize exhibition, opening on 15 July at Footscray Community Arts.

For more information, including application criteria, visit footscrayartprize.com

NEW PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY

If you're looking for stimulating and enriching activities for your child, Maribyrnong Libraries has a number of new programs on offer in 2023.

Toddler Time is a new program for ages 1-3, specially designed to engage toddlers in all areas of childhood development through singing, stories, movement, literacy,

language, and play. The new program runs at Footscray, West Footscray and Yarraville Libraries.

For primary school-aged children, you can join new after school and weekend programs including LEGO Robotics, Tuesday Techies and Kids Club.

These are in addition to existing popular programs such as Baby Rhyme Time, Story Time, LEGO Club, Code Club, Kids Knitting Club and more.

For more information, visit

maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/library/events

CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY WITH HARMONY FEAST

The community is invited to the dinner table at Harmony Feast, which brings together the melting pot of Maribyrnong cultures for the time-honoured tradition of breaking bread and sharing a meal.

More than 2000 guests are expected at the Maidstone Community Centre on Sunday 19 March for the much-anticipated return of this cherished community event after three years on hold due to the pandemic. Thirteen different cuisines from around the world will be cooked onsite by

a team of local volunteer chefs. There will be food that appeals to any palate, with those with dietary requirements also catered for with vegan, gluten-free and halal options amongst the 300-500 serves of each traditional dish cooked. Some of the offerings on this year's menu include Malaysian Curry Laksa, Maltese Macaroni, Thai Papaya Salad, Chilean Completos and Somalian Rice and Lamb. Nazish Fafique, who regularly volunteers at the Asylum Seeker Resource

Centre in Footscray as a community meals chef, is one of those looking forward to putting on her apron again for this year's event. She's aiming to delight those with a sweet tooth with the popular Pakistani and South Asian dessert, Halwa.

"In Pakistani culture, food is important not only as a basic necessity but as an essential part of every occasion. It brings us together.

"On special events like birthdays, Ramadan festivities, Eid celebrations and public gatherings, without any discrimination we share the food and the table. And we never forget the ones in need, so we give away food at every chance we get as sharing is caring," Nazish said.

There will also be a range of family-friendly cultural

activities and entertainment with live music, children's face and henna painting, French hair braiding, a 'Memory Archives of Food' art engagement project, and other outdoor fun.

The event provides a unique opportunity for residents to try new foods, share stories, make new friends and celebrate the many cultures that reside in our municipality. It has garnered enormous support from the diverse Maribyrnong community.

The return of Harmony Feast in 2023 celebrates Cultural Diversity Week, which is held annually every March to coincide with the United Nations Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Harmony Day (21 March).

For more information, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events/harmonyfeast



A YEAR OF EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS AND SAVINGS

Over the past financial year (2021/22) Council has made a dent in our greenhouse gas emissions through our participation in the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) – while also saving costs.

VECO provides participating councils with 100 per cent renewable electricity generated by two Victorian wind farms.

Maribyrnong is one of 51 participating councils who have collectively reduced emissions by 172,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂e), which is equivalent to powering up to 35,000 homes or taking 66,000 cars off the road each year.

For the City of Maribyrnong, we've contributed by reducing emissions by 3,097 CO₂e tonnes which equates to around 50 per cent of our annual electricity consumption and is equivalent to taking 1,188 cars off the road each year.

The first year's savings brings Council closer to achieving its goal of reaching zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy.

For more information about Council's participation in VECO, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/VECO



HOUSING NATIVE ANIMALS IN MARIBYRNONG

Maribyrnong is home to a range of native plants and animals who are part of a thriving urban ecosystem. To support and expand this community of plants and animals, we are rolling out a nesting box program across the municipality.

We've installed 50 of the nesting boxes across 13 of our parks and reserves, so far.

The boxes attract ringtail possums, brushtail possums and

micro bats, and can be installed on a fence or tree.

Recognising the survival of native wildlife in our City depends on native vegetation communities, this April, we're also offering up to 60 residents the opportunity to have a nesting box installed in their backyard (selection criteria apply).

Express your interest in a nesting box at your place by visiting maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/nesting-box-program



CIVIC PRECINCT COMMUNITY PARK DESIGN UNVEILED

Shade, seating, and a focus on soft surfaces and cultural and indigenous history are all elements reflected in the landscape design for a new community park on Hyde Street in Footscray, as part of the Civic Precinct and Community Hub project.

The new park, to be constructed where the civic offices once were, will feature a large open lawn area for gatherings, picnics and community events, and smaller lawn for more intimate get-togethers for smaller groups.

A terraced rock boulder garden incorporating a gathering circle will celebrate country along with the use of indigenous plantings in the garden areas.

- > A variety of trees will also provide shade, amenity and reduce heat island effects
- > Access will be via paths, ramps, and stairs
- > Feature walls will incorporate artwork.

The park plans also include water captured from the new civic building for reuse in irrigation.

This is the last piece of the design jigsaw that will see the 80-year old heritage Town Hall renovated, and a new civic administration building and community park developed, providing an environmentally friendly space for use by the community with a modern and sustainable operational workplace addition.

Outline Landscape has worked closely on the design with the lead Architects, DesignInc, an Australia-wide architecture and design practice focused on creating healthy buildings and people-centric environments.

Fencing was erected in December 2022 ahead of the start of physical on-the-ground works, which will take up to two years to complete.

Stay up-to-date at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/civic-and-community-precinct

WANT TO CHAT TO US IN PERSON?

During Footscray Town Hall redevelopment works, you will find Customer Service staff at Footscray Library, 56 Paisley Street, 10am-5pm, weekdays.

To make an appointment to talk to a planner – call **9688 0253** or email urbanplanning@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au. For Building Services or Environmental Health teams – call **9688 0250** or email email@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au. For everything else, you can still call us on **9688 0200** or get in touch via email@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

OPEN SPACE AND KEEPING ACTIVE

HENRY TURNER SOUTH PAVILION NEARING COMPLETION

The new multipurpose community pavilion, currently under construction at Henry Turner South Reserve, is expected to open to the public in the coming months.

The pavilion will include a large flexible social space, meeting room, commercial kitchen and four large change rooms with gender-neutral amenities.

The modern, universally designed facility will also enhance accessibility for users of all abilities, support local competitions, and increase player participation and retention.

The Henry Turner South Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment is funded in partnership with the Victorian Government.

For more information, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Henry-Turner-South-Pavilion

WESTERN LAWN WORKS UNDERWAY

Upgrade works to improve the condition of the Western Lawn, identified in the Footscray Park Masterplan 2011, are now underway and due to be completed by the end of the year.

Works include the excavation of the existing lawn, improvements to drainage and irrigation systems, turf laying, landscaping, and upgrades to power and services.

Originally scheduled as part of the 2023/24 capital works program, Council agreed as part of last year's Budget to fast-track the works, which require the temporary closure of the Western Lawn for up to 12 months.

The closure will allow the turf to properly establish, after the physical construction works, which will take around five months before reopening to the community.

Follow the progress of the project at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/westernlawn



GET READY, GET SET, GET ACTIVE! EXPO IS BACK FOR 2023!

Registrations are now open for the tenth annual Get Active! Expo, a free four-and-a-half week program jam-packed with 'come and try' style exercise sessions. Launching on Sunday 19 March with a Family Fun Day at Skinner Reserve Braybrook, there is something for all ages and abilities to enjoy, including women-only sessions.

Collect your Expo Passport at the launch event to redeem ten complimentary visits to RecWest Footscray. Register today at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Get-Active-Expo



POETS OF MAIDSTONE

A sweet cultural crossover

The local food scene became a little sweeter last December when dessert bar, Poets of Maidstone, opened its doors to satiate those needing a sophisticated sugar rush.

A sibling of the highly regarded café Jack B Nimble two shops down on Mitchell Street, Poets is inspired by the multicultural flavour of the colourful Maidstone neighbourhood.

Both establishments are co-owned by locals E-gene Soh and Timothy Heng. Timothy says the heart of the new venture is tied to the community.

"Instead of replicating another specialty café someplace else, we wanted to stay and further explore the definition of being a local here," he said.

Poets of Maidstone is an aggregation of local

stories, artistry and creativity delivered as artefacts of taste and design.

The menu is imbued with many of the cultural influences of the area, such as Thai, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Malaysian and Anglo-Saxon, in a way accessible to all palates.

Some of the most popular dishes are those containing cultural Easter eggs, such as the Mochi flavoured with Chrysanthemum Pu Erh tea (the kind served at Yum Cha), and the toasted Kaya (coconut jam) bun, which reflects a typical breakfast in Singapore and Malaysia.

There's also the popular Korean sweet treat Bingsu – shaved ice flavoured with red bean paste, topped with fruit and tteok (steamed rice cakes).

Poets of Maidstone
136 Mitchell Street, Maidstone.
Open Wednesday to Sunday
Instagram @poetsofmaidstone

For requests, comments and questions about Council services and programs, go to maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or call Customer Service on 9688 0200.

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You can also write to your Ward Councillor:
 c/- Maribyrnong City Council, PO Box 58, West Footscray 3012. If you don't know who your Ward Councillor is, please contact Customer Service on 9688 0200 or fax 9687 7793.

MARIBYRNONG CITY COUNCIL

Postal Address: PO Box 58, West Footscray, Victoria 3012

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After Hours/Emergency: 9688 0200

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NRS: 133 677 OR 1300 555 727

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