



# AGM

**Sunday 14 March 2021 at 12pm  
Buchan Recreation Reserve**

## Presidents Report

### **Committee Establishment**

The first 6 months of our committee establishing has required many administrative tasks including:

- Formation of a Community Organisation including the key purposes
- Incorporation Status
- Constitution Development
- Developing a Facebook Platform
- Creating an email access point
- ABN Number
- Tax file Number
- Operating account
- Establishing electronic banking arrangements

We have also developed a **communication strategy** which outlines the way in which we will communicate with the community and vice versa.

We also undertook a **Community Survey** which was distributed to every property across our district. 70 surveys were returned and gave us valuable insight into what people value about living here, what they would like the future to look like and what priorities are important to them.

Other notable outcomes and processes included;

- IGEM support and submission writing (Great response from our catchment)
- Establish multiple ways for community to connect to the committee
- Transition Volunteer Supports liaison role to BRV
- Support for Community Clean up and engagement with agencies.

## Advocacy

- Being the local community recovery committee, we have played a significant role in advocating not only on behalf of this community but the broader East Gippsland Community. Since we commenced, we have spoken with Ministers, CEOs, Mayors, Executives, Major Generals, Inspector Generals and a whole swathe of people that are decision makers in this recovery space. In the last year the committee and the various working parties we have established, have conducted in excess 60 meetings. While much of the conversation has been difficult to measure, we have prided ourselves being respectful, having constructive dialogue and keeping people accountable. But its not all intangible.
- We pushed really early on for our community to be supported with appropriate resources from Shire and the State government which resulted in us gaining our Place Manager Suzie and the Hub Manager Rebecca who have settled into our community and taken up the challenge with strength and compassion. We were also able to advocate for and gain some admin support which included local faces to assist with the recovery out of the hub and has ensured that we stayed responsive and equitable in the community during it's recovery. Some other successes have included getting services into our community - some slow – but eventually arriving such as administration support that took 6 months to achieve in our Hub so that outreach could be offered. Recently we have seen the addition of a play therapist for our local kids at our kinder and school. We have persevered with process and bureaucracy to ensure those that need to navigate the many systems, have had assistance along the way. We have asked our community what was important to them at different points and ensured the right decision makers are around the table for these discussions. Where possible we have gathered the community to deliver the message to the decision makers in person. Through these ongoing conversations we've confirmed that decision makers understand our context, at times told them they need to hurry up and catch up with where our communities recovery is at and we have done this by consistently applying a clear respectful and constructive narrative.
- We have and continue to consistently demand that a Place Based focus must be the way to do business, where departments and agencies learn about our needs and work to fulfill them. This ensures our context; our stories and our local people are heard. One such example has been the review of overarching systems that have been in place for many years but never been reviewed or interrogated. Our determination in working with the health sector service providers and BRV have assisted in a thorough analysis of the fidelity of provision and has seen the system respond re-orienting focus with a deep dive to tailor support structures specific to our community's needs.
- Recently the reimbursement for planning and rebuilding related costs through the Planning Rebate Program has been made available through a grants process. This achievement stemmed from discussions and strongly voiced logic through a series of our meetings, resulting in appropriate financial re-imburements now being made available to all of our comrades that have incurred significant costs in the re-build process across our catchment as well as those similarly impacted in other locations.

## **Funding**

- We have attracted a range of funding and support from local donors, interstate and international generosity. We have distributed significant funds across our district from donations received from individuals, community groups, business sector and philanthropic organisations. In addition to this we have connected our vulnerable community members to services such as food packs and other essential needs in those earliest days and we continue to work to support organisations to disperse resources to the ongoing recovery.
- Over the past 12 months we have supported and advocated on behalf of many of our fellow committees of management that have applied for funding. We know there has been a steady stream of funding that has come into this community, all of which has continued to improve our facilities, make our jobs as volunteers easier, and in some instances keep our community safer. We too have been successful in supporting three committees in upgrading their facilities with \$120,000 – the Gelantipy Hall in upgraded amenities, the Wulgulmerang Sports Ground – upgraded amenities, and the Buchan Hall and Rec Committee with a kitchen upgrade at the hall and the installation of a generator and larger air conditioners at the rec.
- We also worked with Council to submit an application into the Regional Stimulus Fund to get \$2.8million to spend in our main street to improve its amenity, traffic flow, parking and signage. An overdue inclusion in this application is the construction of a walking track from the main street into the campground at the Caves Reserve. This lit pathway will make it easy for pedestrian, bikes, and prams to stroll between the campground and the main street – something that will hopefully help our businesses prosper!
- We know there is more to do in attracting funding into our Community and we will continue to work on implementing our interim priorities and developing our Community Recovery Plan.

As a committee we feel we have worked consistently over the past year to address a recovery which presented as enormous and wide reaching in our catchment. Our organization whilst acknowledging the breadth of challenges at the outset, has constructively sort to address our priorities together in a targeted and constructive fashion. Many of our committee have commented on the on the apparent traction and tangible outcomes that are starting to come as we enter into our second year of operation. We encourage everyone to continue being persistent and communicating their needs and assisting our community to overcome some of the challenges and barriers we are yet to address and in some cases, identify accurately. Our community and its humanity when faced with what was a significant disaster is extraordinary and we look forward to the ongoing endeavor of renewal of our districts and are committed to achieving where possible not only recovery, but betterment.

Katie Hodge

Chairperson

Buchan Gelantipy and Districts Renewal Committee