

Recovery / Resilience Newsletter

April 2025

Welcome to the April 2025 Pyrenees Shire Council's recovery/resilience newsletter. I hope you had a good Easter and got to take some time off. I'd also like to reflect on Anzac Day and thank the AN-ZACs for their sacrifice and what they gave up to provide a brighter future for generations to come. One final heartfelt acknowledgement is for the first anniversary of the Bayindeen bushfires. During tough times, the communities of Pyrenees are very good at looking out for each other. Catch up with family, friends and neighbours and don't forget to look after yourself.



Landscape and wildlife recovery

The Mount Cole Pyrenees Nature Group is doing some great work in the recovery of the landscape, wildlife and rare species including the critically endangered Mt Cole Grevillea (photo to the right).



The group is running 'Haven is a Home' focussing on restoring habitat to increase the numbers of Brush Tailed Phascogales, Sugar Gliders and other arboreal mammals. The Group is doing this by identifying the locations of populations, monitoring, and installing nest boxes. Monitoring cameras have been set up to see what animals are around, as part of gathering data to upload into the iNaturalist app.

Learn how to help restore habitat for small animals. Join experts as they teach you how to make, install & monitor nest boxes for some of the endangered animals of Mt Cole.

Nestbox workshop 24 May 10am-2pm Raglan Rec Res

If you want more information on the Group, visit the website www.mtcolepyreneesnaturegroup.com
Or Facebook page
www.facebook.com/groups/1170362310219534



Photo: Ben from Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) speaking to locals



Safer Together—Bushfire Resilience Project

Council has commenced the Safer Together Project. This project includes developing a fire-wise planting guide, run landscaping workshops, establish a fire-wise garden, run an expo for fire-wise resilient building and develop community resilience plans for Moonambel, Amphitheatre and Snake Valley.

Claire-Marie Hodgkinson is the project officer and will be working with communities and organisations to deliver the project. Updates will be available on Council's website. If you want to know more about the project please contact Claire on 1800 797 363.

Emergency Recovery / Resilience Network

The Emergency Recovery/Resilience Network, consisting of community members and agencies, has been established to provide guidance regarding community recovery activities. With the health, wellbeing and safety at the core, the Network is eager to improve recovery and resilience building processes to ensure individuals and communities recover well after natural disasters. The Network is looking for community members from the north and south of the Pyrenees to represent their communities. If you're interested please contact Jane on 1800 797 363.

DFFH Utility Relief Grants

DFFH has Utility Relief Grants available to Victorians on low incomes who have experienced unexpected hardship. There are two grants, one for mains electricity, gas or water bills. The other is for non-mains energy or water bill including LPG gas, diesel and petrol (for a generator), firewood, metered electricity from an embedded network, carted water and cleaning of a septic tank (for homeowners). Information and how to apply can be found <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/utility-relief-grant-scheme> or by calling 1800 658 521.

On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Grants Program

There is still grant money available through AgVic's On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Grants Program. \$5,000 (excl GST) is available to implement reticulated water systems, irrigation system upgrades, grain and fodder storage, internal re-fencing and feed system upgrades. For information visit www.ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/on-farm-drought-infrastructure-grants.

Rural Financial Counselling Service is able to help with grant applications, plus other help for farmers/small business in Western Vic. Phone 1300 735 578 or visit <https://wswracs.com.au/>

Beaufort Office 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort Vic 3373 T: 1300 797 363

Avoca Office 122 High Street, Avoca Vic 3467 T: 03 5465 1000

E: recovery@pyrenees.vic.gov.au W: pyrenees.vic.gov.au

EVENTS COMING UP

Links to register for these events are found on Council's events and Activities Page

www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/Community/Events-and-activities

Talk the Talk

Talk the Talk is a free, practical workshop designed to help local communities build confidence to support farmers facing mental health challenges. In the three hour workshop you'll learn how to recognise signs of distress, use observation and listening skills and start meaningful conversations. Whether you're a service provider, supplier or neighbour—this workshop gives you the tools to make a difference.



Wed 14 May 12–3.30pm—Lunch provided
Raglan Hall

Wed 14 May 6pm–9.30pm—Dinner provided
Moonambel Recreation Reserve

Social Media Made Simple for Community Groups

Free workshop for anyone who would like to help navigate the changing landscape of social media. This workshop is great for volunteers/staff within community and sporting organisations that would like clarity and confidence to get messages out, promote events, and time saving ideas.

Lunch provided

Tue 13 May 10am–2.30pm
Beeripmo Development Centre, Beaufort

Connections Matter

Business 4 Beaufort invites you to a free networking event- Connections Matter: Bringing the Community Together

Supper Provided

Wednesday 21 May
6.30pm–9.30pm
Beaufort Community Bank Complex
RSVP by 12 May 2025 by email to: beaufortdevelopmentgroup@gmail.com



GOOD LISTENING

Here's couple of good podcasts to listen to.....

[After the Disaster](https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/after-the-disaster) presented by Kate Brady
www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/after-the-disaster

AgVic Podcasts that places agriculture at the heart of every story!

<https://agriculture.gov.au/support-and-resources/podcasts>

- AgVic Talk
 - My Rain Gauge is Busted
 - AgTech Innovators



SUPPORTING A YOUNG PERSON DURING THE RECOVERY PHASE AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

Young people are especially vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters due their first exposure, their developmental stage and their increased likelihood of high levels of exposure to graphic content, particularly via social media.

As much as possible, support young people to maintain regular routines and stay connected to regular activities such as sport, school, and spending time with friends. Headspace supports young people 12-25 years. Call

- * Provide stability
- * Encourage coping skills
- * Be a role model
- * Explain gently, create a shared story
- * Be available
- * Offer reassurance
- * Normalise, but don't minimise
- * Use the young person's strengths and likes

Call Headspace Ballarat on 5304 4777 for information and support.

More information is available via <https://headspace.org.au/explore-topics/supporting-a-young-person/natural-disasters>



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Emergencies can be disruptive and stressful, and the recovery process can take time. Whether you have been directly impacted, volunteering or supporting others, it's really important to look after yourself. Some great tips for self care are:

- Spend time with people who care
- Give yourself time
- Try to keep a routine going ie. eating, sleeping, work, study
- Set realistic goals that keep you motivated, but don't take on too much.
- Talk about how you feel (the ups and downs) with friends, family and health professionals, when you are ready.



More tips are available on the Beyond Blue website.

RECOVERY TEAM

Tony Grimme—Community Recovery Officer—0482 793 839
Gillian Matthews—Recovery Administration Officer (Flood)
Claire-Marie Hodgkinson—Recovery Administration Officer (Fire)
Kim Whytcross—Senior Project Manager—Flood Infrastructure
Jane Bowker—Manager Community Wellbeing & Partnerships—0400 503 917
Pyrenees Shire Council: 1800 797 363
Email: recovery@pyrenees.vic.gov.au

RECOVERY/RESILIENCE NEWSLETTER

This newsletter will be sent out quarterly. If you would like to receive an electronic copy of Council's Recovery Newsletter, please send your email details to the Recovery Team: recovery@pyrenees.vic.gov.au. Copies of the newsletter are also available in hardcopy from the Resource Centres, Council's Customer Service Centre or via the website www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

How are you going?

Ballarat Community Health has a Community Resilience and Recovery Program. The Team provides **free** support and advice to help residents get back on their feet after the 2024 fire. The team can make visits or residents can see the team at the Beaufort Resource Centre on Wednesdays. Contact the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760.



Do you need help with fencing?

Landmate is available to help with fence repairs. If you have fencing that needs repairing please contact the Recovery Team.

Do you need feed for livestock?

Need for Feed or Aussie Hay Runners can provide feed for stock. Please make contact via the details below:
Need for Feed Australia—
www.needforfeed.org
Aussie Hay Runners—0421 972 332



Do you need support with your farm or business?

The Rural Financial Counselling Service offers free and independent financial information, options, decision making support and referral services for primary producers and small rural businesses experiencing (or at risk of) financial hardship. Contact the Western Region office on 1300 735 578. Visit <https://wswrccs.com.au>

Would you like some help with your small business?

Business Victoria is offering advice and support for small business owners. Support includes financial counselling, business coaching and connection to providers/resources to improve business resilience. Contact 1300 55 66 77 or visit www.aigroup.com.au/services-and-advice/business-improvement/business-recovery-advisory-service-victoria/#EOI



Are you looking for some extra help?

GIVIT connects donations with those who need support to help after an emergency or disaster. This can be items such as vouchers, white goods, tools or fencing materials. Council is your contact to GIVIT so if you're looking some help please contact Council's Recovery Team. For information on GIVIT visit <https://www.givit.org.au>



Is there some support you need that's not listed here?

Council's Recovery Team is available at the Beaufort Resource Centre and Library on Wednesdays from 10am to 5pm, for people looking for information and support. Pop in and have a cuppa with Tony or Jane. You can also go into Council's main office in Beaufort during working hours 9am—5pm to see the Recovery Team. Alternatively, you can phone 1300 797 363 or email recovery@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

The team can put you in contact with agencies to support you in the following, and if something isn't listed contact the Team.

Could you use someone to talk to about farming life?



The National Centre for Farmer Health supports primary producers whose properties, livestock or crops were damaged or lost in the floods or fire. They deliver initiatives to boost farmer mental health and wellbeing. For more information visit <https://farmerhealth.org.au/>

Do you need help with the planning/building process?

Council has introduced the Bushfire Planning Support Program to help landowners navigate the planning process associated with rebuilding. Please contact Council on 1300 797 363 about the program.

Would you like to improve your phone and internet connections?

The Regional Tech Hub provides free independent advice if you have any concerns about your phone/internet connections and want to improve connectivity. Contact 1300 081 029 or visit <https://regionaltechhub.org.au>



Do you need some help with your insurance?

Disaster Legal Help Victoria provides information about legal issues experienced after a disaster. They can show you how to check your insurance policy and understand what it covers. They can also show you how to make an insurance claim after a disaster and ways you can escalate or resolve disputes. You can get free information and advice by calling Disaster Legal Help Victoria on 1800 113 432 weekdays 8am to 6pm. Information can be found on the Disaster Legal Help Victoria website.



Do you need a helping hand around your property?

Local service groups have offered to help residents with jobs they can't do themselves. Please complete the form on Council's fire recovery webpage or call the Recovery Team.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING WITH INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIRS?

Infrastructure Repair—Update after the floods

Council has finished submitting the final packages of work to finish the infrastructure repairs that was flood damaged. All packages of work have been approved by the State Government under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) for cost reimbursement. On the ground works have recommenced and a current list of works is available on Council's website.

Infrastructure Repair—Update after the fires

Council is also seeking approval from the State Government to repair the guardrail and signage that was fire damaged or destroyed. There is still signage out on Main Lead Road and Raglan Elmhurst Road due to the damaged guardrail caused by the fires. The safety signage will remain in place until the guard rail is replaced. As soon as approval is given this work will be completed.

A big thank you to community for your patience.

Key contacts for support

Organisation	What support is provided	Contact details
Pyrenees Shire Council Recovery Team	Clean-up, grants, psychosocial support etc. The Team is available at the Beaufort Resource Centre on Tuesdays and Wednesday and can be called/emailed at any time.	1300 797 363 E: recovery@pyrenees.vic.gov.au W: www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au
Victorian Government Recovery Hotline	Clean-up, temporary accommodation, financial support and mental health and wellbeing	1800 560 760 Open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)	Emergency relief payments, re-establishment assistance, utility relief grants	1800 226 226 https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program
Rural Finance	Financial assistance for those affected by a natural disaster, or a downturn in your business. Recovery grants, recovery packages and concessional loans are available	1800 260 425 https://www.ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs
Rural Financial Counselling Service	The RFCS provides free financial counselling to farmers and small businesses who are in, or at risk of, financial hardship. RFCS is assisting with drought grant applications.	1300 735 578 – Western Region https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/business-management/farm-debt-mediation/rural-financial-counselling-service
Agriculture Victoria	Provides information and support for the agriculture industry. They administer a range of funds, grants and programs.	0427 694 185 https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/floods/flood-and-storm-recovery-support-for-farmers
Insurance Council of Australia	Helps to navigate the insurance process if you are unhappy with a decision made by your insurer.	(02) 9253 5100
Uniting	Services, including alcohol and other drug services, counselling, emergency relief support, and homelessness and housing services.	03 5332 1286 www.unitingvictas.org.au/services/
Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC)	Delivers health, social, welfare and community development programs to local Aboriginal people.	03 5331 5344 www.badac.net.au
Rainbow Door	Connecting all LGBTIQ+ people to the services needed	1800 729 367 www.rainbowdoor.org.au/home
Centrelink	Support services and relief payments	Ballarat 1800 050 004
Australian Red Cross	Supports and visits people in communities and make referrals to other agencies.	1800 733 276 https://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/
Lifeline	Lifeline is a 24-hour telephone service that offers confidential support and advice to help you deal with stress and personal challenges.	13 11 14 https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/information-and-support/natural-disaster/
Beyond Blue	Expert organisation on mental health and wellbeing support.	1300 224 636 https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support
Kids Help Line	24-hour telephone service that provides a phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5–25.	1800 551 800 https://kidshelpline.com.au/
Disaster Legal Help Victoria	Provides free legal advice, assistance and referrals for people affected by a disaster.	1800 113 432 https://www.disasterlegalhelp.org.au/
Pyrenees Community Food Pantry	Provides temporary food relief to people within the Pyrenees region. Open every second Friday from 1pm at 13 Liebig Street, Avoca.	https://www.facebook.com/pyreneescommunityfoodpantry
Beaufort Food Pantry	Open Fridays at the rear of the Beaufort Community Resource Centre (72 Neill St). The Pantry provides free food to those who need it.	0457 469 097
National Centre for Farmer Health	Offers a range of programs, scholarships, safety fact sheets, health & wellbeing support and tools for farmers.	(03) 5551 8533 https://farmerhealth.org.au
Financial Counselling Victoria– National Debt Helpline	Financial counsellors provide free, independent and non-judgemental support to people in financial difficulty	1800 007 007 https://fcvic.org.au/disaster-recovery-financial-counselling/
CAFS Ballarat	Free financial counselling for people finding themselves in financial difficulties. They offer family support, family violence interventions and out of home care.	1800 692 237 E: welcome@cafs.org.au https://cafs.org.au
Wildlife Victoria	Provides a helping hand for wildlife in need.	(03) 8400 7300 or https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au