



# DIVERCITY

February 2026



FROM THE CHAMBER



CITY NEWS



ARTS IN FOCUS



SHAPE OUR CITY



SUSTAINABILITY



LIBRARY VISIT



COMMUNITY SPIRIT



WHAT'S ON



## Port Phillip in pole position for GP

Kick on after the Grand Prix just minutes from the track in St Kilda and South Melbourne, where some of Melbourne's most vibrant bars, restaurants and iconic venues are waiting to keep the energy going.

Soak up the post-race atmosphere on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 March from 5 pm with an exciting program of free live music, great dining and drinks, at popular venues along Clarendon Street in South Melbourne and Fitzroy Street in St Kilda.

The free live music program features an impressive lineup of acclaimed Australian artists, including Dallas Crane, Yolanda Be Cool, The Mavis's, Steve Wade (Little River Band), Proto Exotica & Sammy, Horns of Leroy and The Gnomes.



## Celebrating Australian Citizenship

Port Phillip's Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony was attended by 150 conferees from 41 countries at St Kilda Town Hall. Among them was "super excited" Port Phillip resident Rio Filgueira, 33, who arrived in Australia from Argentina in 2018.

"I came to visit friends and family and to study. I then met my partner and decided to stay," Rio said. "I'm very proud of becoming an Australian. I've travelled widely across Australia and love the land and culture."

Despite his extensive travels, Rio said Port Phillip was his favourite place to be. "I love being close to the water in St Kilda, this is such an interesting area. I came here as an adult and my Argentinian heritage will always be present but I have adopted the Australian lifestyle over the years. It's an honour to become a citizen of Australia right here at St Kilda."

Our Mayor Alex Makin presided over the ceremony which concluded with conferees socialising over a sausage sizzle.

## From the Chamber

As the year gets underway, we are continuing our work to support an inclusive, connected and thriving community.

The City of Port Phillip welcomes everyone, and we cherish our diversity. One of the greatest celebrations of our diversity is Midsumma Festival. I proudly led the City of Port Phillip March for Pride during Midsumma Festival and I thank the many people in our community who also participated in Midsumma.



I also accepted an invitation to participate in Plunge for Pride, where I abseiled down multiple storeys of the Victorian Pride Centre to reinforce our support for our LGBTQIA+ communities.

I thank the Victorian Pride Centre and JOY FM for extending this invitation, I was glad the harness was secured so I could continue my tenure as Mayor!

St Kilda Festival is also a major fixture in the February event calendar, the combination of sunny weather and amazing musical acts help draw record crowds of over 330,000 festival goers celebrating live music and the arts.

As we continue our work to support our community, our Council Meetings over this month endorsed several important initiatives that will help shape Port Phillip into the future.

Our Council reaffirmed its commitment to supporting older residents by endorsing a new Positive Ageing model. This includes increasing direct Council investment in aged care services, establishing a new Positive Ageing team, expanding the Linking Neighbours program and funding transport to help people access this program, as well as continuing both the Community Connector service and Council's hop on hop off community bus.

After many proud years of providing Commonwealth funded aged care services, Council also made the very difficult decision to step back from these programs because of national Aged Care reforms and the new Aged Care Act. This is regrettable, but demonstrates the challenges of federal legislation that did not fully consider the impacts on local government.

We will work closely with the Commonwealth and with our clients to ensure as smooth and supportive transition as possible into a qualified provider over the coming months.

The new Positive Ageing Model will allow more people in Port Phillip, including current clients able to participate, to take part in Council's aged care services as eligibility for Commonwealth programs will no longer be required.

We will also be exploring improvements to our community bus service over the coming months to help residents more easily reach key places across our city.

We also adopted the South Melbourne Market Strategic Plan 2026–30, a roadmap that will guide the Market's evolution while preserving its unique character. As a member of the South Melbourne Market Committee, I can confirm that the plan will help ensure the Market remains a thriving and authentic local destination.

Strengthening accessibility across our City also remains a priority. We endorsed the release of the draft Accessibility Action Plan 2026–30 for the next phase of community engagement underway now until 15 March 2026. This will provide a valuable opportunity for people with lived experience of disability, carers and service providers to contribute to a more inclusive Port Phillip.

We need to plan for the future, including our growing dog community. Council will be undertaking community engagement on several open spaces incorporating dog off leash areas, including Kirrip Park in South Melbourne and part of Clarke Reserve in Elwood.

These decisions reflect our continuing commitment to a resilient and welcoming City. I'd like to give a big shout out to everyone who provides valuable feedback in our community engagements to help us make Port Phillip a place where everyone can thrive.

Proudly Port Phillip

Cr Alex Makin  
Mayor, City of Port Phillip

# City News

## CCTV funding

Our advocacy during the 2025 federal election has delivered a \$1.5 million Australian Government grant to expand Port Phillip's public CCTV network.

Public Place CCTV is one of the tools we use to enhance safety, support police responses and encourage more people to enjoy our public spaces.

This funding allows us to begin planning the rollout of new CCTV cameras, with potential locations including Carlisle Street in Balaclava, Clarendon and Coventry streets in South Melbourne and Bay Street in Port Melbourne. We'll be seeking feedback from community members, traders and Victoria Police as part of the site assessment later this year and hosting community information sessions for each suburb in March.

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/news-and-media/more-public-cctv-for-city-of-port-phillip/>



## Porsche and Coffee

The hugely popular Porsche and Coffee Meet will again line South Melbourne streets from 8 am to 11 am on Sunday 1 March in the lead up to the Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix.

Come to see these amazing cars and stay for a coffee and tasty treat at South Melbourne's renowned shopping and cafe precinct.

This free event is proudly supported by our Council.



## Must-try Mexican

In the mood for tacos and margs in St Kilda and surrounds?

We've curated a list of must-try Mexican and Mexican-inspired spots offering everything from indulgent birria tacos to giant burritos.

These fabulous dishes and drinks are a true fiesta for the senses.

<https://whatsonstkilda.com/article/must-try-mexican-in-melbournes-southside>



## St Kilda Festival success

St Kilda Festival 2026 welcomed an extraordinary 360,000 visitors to the foreshore and

surrounding precinct over two vibrant days of music, culture and community celebration.

It opened with First Peoples First, attracting more than 30,000 attendees to honour and enjoy exceptional First Nations talent. This signature program continues to strengthen each year, driven by valued community partnerships that elevate First Peoples' voices and creativity.



Big Festival Sunday drew more than 330,000 people, transforming St Kilda into a lively showcase of music, food and local culture. Standout moments included Mental as Anything's first St Kilda Festival appearance in 25 years and a high-energy sunset performance from Sneaky Sound System.

[Find out more](#)

## International Women's Day 2026

You're invited to our annual International Women's Day Celebration at St Kilda Town Hall, 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm on Thursday 19 March.



Join us for inspiring speakers, a panel discussion on women leading the change through culture, place and community, nibbles and networking.

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1535999>

## Art in a skatepark

We're planning a brand new mural for the Port Melbourne Skatepark and want to hear from the people who use it most!



Artist Hayden Dewar will be creating the final artwork, and your feedback will help shape the design.

Whether it's colours, themes, styles or specific ideas — we want to know what you'd love to see on the walls.

For more information, contact Council's Visual Art and Activations Team.

## Pop-up shop database for creatives

Are you a creative looking for retail or studio space in City of Port Phillip?



Join our database to be connected with local property owners who have vacant spaces

available.

For more information contact our Events, Partnerships and Industry Development Team.

## Arts in Focus



### Democracy in action

In *Picturing Democracy*, artist Ross Coulter explores and poetically creates representations of democracy, democratic processes, community participation, and connections across the City of Port Phillip.

Running from 23 February to 15 May, the exhibition draws from 4,000 photographs held within the Port Phillip City Collection, plus the artist's own photographs, to re-imagine what democracy looks like, from the past and into the future.

This free exhibition is at the Carlisle Street Arts Space at St Kilda Town Hall.

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/explore-the-city/arts-and-entertainment/carlisle-street-arts-space/>



### Screen time

Screen creatives can apply to be considered for a new grant established by our Council and the family of the late Nigel Buesst in honour of the acclaimed film-maker and screen art curator.

The \$15,000 Nigel Buesst Screen Art Grant is available to creatives working across all screen mediums, from film and games to installation art, VR and AR.

It's aimed at providing opportunities for emerging creatives to develop their practice or for established artists to experiment and broaden their creative horizons.

Nigel Buesst's many accomplishments included being the first director of the St Kilda Film Festival, proudly presented by our Council.

<https://www.stkildafilmfestival.com.au>

## Help Shape our City

### Have your say

Visit our [Have Your Say website](https://haveyoursay.portphillip.vic.gov.au) at <https://haveyoursay.portphillip.vic.gov.au> for updates on projects which are open for community feedback. [Register there for our monthly community engagement newsletter](#) to keep up to date with how you can help shape your local neighbourhood.



## Projects open for feedback

- **Accessibility Action Plan:** We're creating a new Accessibility Action Plan to make our City fairer, more inclusive, and easier for everyone to use. [Share your feedback by 15 March](#)

## Project updates

We asked for your feedback on these projects. The engagement reports are now available - read about what we heard and what's next

- [Ripponlea Place Plan](#)
- [Building our Future: Community Infrastructure Plan](#)

# Sustainability

## Clean up crew

Care about keeping our beaches beautiful and litter-free? Want to meet new people and get outside?

Then register to join the City of Port Phillip's Clean Up Australia Day event on Sunday March 1 from 10 am to 11.30 am.

Participants will meet at Marina Reserve, St Kilda, at the Sun sculpture. Bring a hat, water bottle and wear weather-appropriate clothing and we will provide the rest.



## Library Visit

### An (Open) Day on the Hill

Pop along to Emerald Hill Library on 1 March from 8 am to 2 pm for an open day featuring fun, food, music, games and family festivities in South Melbourne.

You can continue the car theme from the nearby Porsche and Coffee event by experiencing the thrill of driving a race car in driving simulators.

There's also gaming sessions including Mario Kart, crafting stations, face painting and children's shows at this fun family-friendly event.



# Community Spirit

## Special delivery

South Melbourne Market traders have donated food and goods to support communities affected by the bushfires in and around Longwood in north east Victoria.

Two collections were coordinated by Robert Parke, a Port Phillip resident familiar with the Market through his volunteer work with Port Phillip Community Group.

Robert and his wife personally transported goods to the local Ruffly recovery team, pictured welcoming the donations and support, for the first delivery.



<https://www.southmelbournemarket.com.au/news/south-melbourne-market-traders-dig-deep-to-support-bushfire-affected-areas/>

## Housing hero

A housing advocate for older people with a strong Port Phillip connection is the 2026 Victorian Senior of the Year.

In early November last year, Bryan Lipmann AM, founder and former CEO of Wintringham, was named as the 2026 Victorian Senior Australian of the Year and subsequently became a national finalist on Australia Day.



The honour recognises Bryan's 36 years leading Wintringham and pioneering a new model of aged care for older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including a landmark facility in Port Melbourne.

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/news-and-media/housing-hero-is-victorian-senior-australian-of-the-year/>

## What's On



### See Yup Temple

South Melbourne's historic See Yup Temple has extended Lunar New Year



### Sea sirens

1 March, Port Melbourne



### Linden Art

26 Acland St, St Kilda

A landmark exhibition celebrating Linden New

opening hours for worshippers and visitors.

To welcome the Year of the Fire Horse, extended opening hours apply from 9 am to 4 pm every day until 6 March.

Over the same time, the "See Yup Temple: The Next 170 Years" exhibition explores the temple's significance, the devastating 2024 fire and recovery works and future plans in the wake of the fire.

After 6 March, normal opening hours apply: 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

The temple is at 76 Raglan Street.

Two professional mermaids will swim ashore at Lagoon Pier at 1 pm as part of the Mermaids Save the Sea conservation event.

They will engage young audiences with story-telling about marine life and how to protect under-the-sea friends.

This not-for-profit family friendly community event, running from 11 am to 3 pm, also features children's conservation activities and a beach clean-up and audit.

Mertopia Mermaids is holding this free event in partnership with Sea Shepherd Australia, Conservation Volunteers Australia and the Port Phillip EcoCentre.

Art's 40th anniversary is open from 26 February to 24 May.

"Time moves through these walls" positions Linden's historical legacy within its contemporary mission, highlighting its current commitment to supporting mid-careers artists whose practices span experimental, conceptual and medium diverse approaches.

Exhibiting artists: Fiona Abicare, Ernie Althoff, Carolyn Eskdale, Ry Haskings, Raafat Ishak, Mitch Mahoney, Callum Morton, Rosemary Nolan, Robbie Rowlands.

Further details are on Linden's website.

## Your Councillors



**Cr Rod Hardy**  
**Albert Park Ward**  
0425 409 483



**Cr Justin Halliday**  
**Alma Ward**  
0431 741 415



**Cr Libby Buckingham**  
**Balaclava Ward**  
0431 776 115





**Cr Heather Cunsolo**  
**Port Melbourne**  
**Ward**  
0466 227 014

**Cr Bryan Mears**  
**Lakeside Ward**  
0431 779 361



**Cr Beti Jay**  
**South Melbourne Ward**  
0431 776 230



**Cr Serge Thomann**  
**St Kilda Ward**  
0431 770 512

You are receiving this email because you subscribed to Divercity magazine mailing list.  
Want to change your details? [Update your details.](#)

[Contact us](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Accessibility](#)



This email was sent by City of Port Phillip, 99a Carlisle Street, St Kilda, VIC 3182, Australia to [divercity@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:divercity@portphillip.vic.gov.au)

[Unsubscribe](#)