

MITCHAM

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COMMUNITY NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2026

Sourdough journey a labour of love

St Marys residents Angela Belcaro and Vince D'Angelo are sharing their passion for baking through breadmaking classes at Eden Hills.

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Community Spring Fair returns to Belair

St John's Grammar School is set to welcome the community to its Spring Fair in Belair next month.

Supported by a My Mitcham Community Grant, the fair will be held on Sunday 11 October from 10am to 4pm at the school's Secondary Campus, 29 Gloucester Avenue, Belair. After its successful return in 2024 following a 10-year hiatus, the fair will bring the community together to enjoy amusement rides and activities, side show games, the

Bubble Man, face painting and a carnival-style canteen with a sausage sizzle and cake stall. There will be musical performances, pony rides, SES and CFS displays, a Rainbow Brick Road and petting zoo. For the grown-ups, there will be a market stall featuring over 40 vendors, food trucks and a Golden North ice cream van.

St John's Grammar Parents and Friends Association spokesperson Kimberlee Blyth said she was looking forward to another fun, family-friendly day. "The Spring Fair offers a fantastic opportunity for people of all ages to relax, connect with their community, and enjoy a wonderful day out together," she said.

Entry is free. For more information visit www.stjohns.sa.edu.au/community-spring-fair-in-belair



St John's Grammar School staff, students and parents, pictured with City of Mitcham Mayor Dr Heather Holmes-Ross, at the 2024 Community Spring Fair in Belair.



Mitcham Institute to host twilight recital

The Mitcham Institute is set to host A Kaleidoscope of Sound, a twilight recital for violin and piano, this month. Supported by a My Mitcham Community grant, the concert will be held on Saturday 26 September at 4.30pm. The concert features Mitcham Community Orchestra Concertmaster Ivan Skawronski on violin accompanied by Asja Suljic on piano, playing Russian composer Cesar Cui's Kaleidoscope. **The Mitcham Village Institute is at 103 Princes Road, Mitcham. Tickets are \$20 (children under 12 half price) and are available at the door.**

Mitcham City Brass celebrates 125 years

Mitcham City Brass is set to celebrate 125 years of music, community spirit and brass band tradition with its 125th Anniversary Concert this month. The concert, to be held on Sunday 27 September at 2pm, will be held at the SPF Hall within The Repat Health Precinct at 216 Daws Road, Daw Park. The Mitcham Band formed in 1878 and disbanded during the gold rush in 1887, reforming in 1901. Under the direction of Musical Director Steven Packer, the concert will feature British brass band melodies from the Mitcham City Brass and Mitcham City Brass Academy Band. Free parking is available by entering via Gate 8 from Goodwood Road, along Oxford Circus. Tickets include afternoon tea at interval and cost \$20 (adults), \$15 (pensioner/student), Companion Card Holder and children 13 and under free. Tickets at the door (cash or card accepted) or at www.trybooking.com/DOXUH **To find out more call 0419 032 312 or email secretary@mitchamcitybrass.org**





Sourdough journey a labour of love

Angela Belcaro and Vince D'Angelo are sharing their passion for sourdough through breadmaking classes at Eden Hills.

Sourdough is a labour of love for the couple, who both work full time – Vince in construction and Angela in office management.

They discovered a shared interest in the craft after attending sourdough making classes and baking loaves for family and friends.

"When we started we had a few hits and misses so we decided to troubleshoot and make sure everything worked," Vince says. "It's been a lot of trial and error and we're now very happy with our product."

Under the label Vincenzdough, launched in 2024, the St Marys locals have built a loyal following at the monthly Sunday Funday

Markets at Tonsley where they sell up to 100 loaves on market day.

They have expanded their range to include sourdough crumpets, cookies and pizza bases, along with focaccias and naturally leavened Panettone.

While making sourdough requires skill, patience and long hours at the oven, Angela says the rewards make the effort worthwhile.

"We have regular customers who come and tell us how much they love our bread, or our crumpets, or banana bread... and that's what keeps us going," she says. "I also enjoy the process – when you are making

bread you don't think about anything else, it all disappears."

Angela and Vince began their sourdough classes at the beginning of this year, hosting small groups at the Karinya Reserve Community Hall in Eden Hills.

The classes are designed for beginners and home bakers who want to better understand the sourdough process.

"We love sharing our knowledge with others – it feels good to give something back," Angela says.

Find out more at
www.vincenzdough.com.au

Book in for free green waste days

City of Mitcham residents are encouraged to dispose of excess green waste ahead of the bushfire season.

Bookings are now open for the Lynton Green Organics Drop-off Facility, where residents can drop off garden waste for free.

Following a review of the service, Council has decided to replace the previous mix of free and paid drop-off days with a full free service. The change responds to strong community support and aims to assist with

making the service easier to access while improving safety and reducing congestion at the site.

To help reduce waiting times and improve the customer experience, all drop-off days will use an online booking system. Residents will be able to book at a time slot

before arriving, helping manage traffic and keep visits running smoothly.

Free days are available on September 5 and 19, followed by five days in October, four in November, three in December and two in January, with the remaining six scheduled throughout the year.

To find out more and book, visit www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/garden-waste-drop-off-facility



Register now for our OCT 29th workshop @Mitcham

"Downsizing Is Not a Dirty Word: Choosing Your Next Life, Not Just Your Next Home."

Register via email to : danae@pinklion.au

Our August Downsizing Workshop was fully booked - so we're running another session for those who missed out and are thinking about downsizing, but not sure where to start?



0429398329

ACL 384784 RLA 301552



School tour highlights sustainable city initiatives

From recycled roads to solar powered buildings, Mitcham Primary School students heard about some of Council's sustainability initiatives as part of an excursion at Hawthorn last month.

Students heard about City of Mitcham's solar energy program, waste and recycling initiatives and its Brownhill Creek project.

City of Mitcham Engineer Will Brown talked about Mitcham's use of recycled materials in roads, footpaths, bridges and playgrounds.

"In our roads we often replace some sand with crushed glass; some of the bitumen, made from crude oil, is replaced by crumb rubber from old truck tyres and old roads, and

we also put old roads in, because roads are 100 per cent recyclable," he said. "By doing this our roads last longer, are stronger and use waste that would otherwise go to landfill."

Students heard tips on how to use a kitchen caddy to recycle kitchen scraps for the green bin and turn them into compost.

City of Mitcham Strategic Projects Engineer Rick Hennig spoke about Council's work to restore and landscape Brownhill Creek at the Mitcham Memorial Library, incorporating natural elements and native plants to stabilise the soil and increase biodiversity.

"We've installed paths and bridges to connect the library, reserves and community spaces," he said. "It's created a more active, welcoming and interesting place for people."

Students heard how solar panels and batteries across Council owned buildings powered the city's buildings and streetlights.

Tower Arts Centre to host The Crucible

The Blackwood Players are set to perform their latest production, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, at The Tower Arts Centre at Pasadena this month.

Director Greg Elliott will be joined by fellow former drama teacher Harry Dewar, who is taking the role of Deputy Governor Judge Danforth, and a crew of experienced and emerging talent from Blackwood and beyond.

Greg says the production, which reimagines the witch hunts of 1692, is set in a modern American context to highlight ongoing themes of mass hysteria, paranoia and false accusations.

"Superstition and fear are alive and well today, and there are still those who want to go back to a time when we lived in a male dominated society, and that's why the play is still so relevant," Greg says.

The Crucible is on at The Tower Arts Centre from Wednesday 2 September to Saturday 12 September. Tickets are Adult \$30, Concession \$20 and Student \$15. To book visit www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1598577



Above top: John Barron, Alison Reed, Andy McPharlin and Andrew Empen; The Division 4 Wednesday winning Pennant team.

Cobras on a roll at Colonel Light Gardens

The Colonel Light Gardens Bowling Club is reaching out to new and experienced players as it continues to rebuild ahead of its 2028 Centenary.

President Kevin Heath says the Club has tripled its playing base over the past five years and hopes to attract more players for the Wednesday and Saturday pennant competitions.

"We are tucked away and many local residents don't know we are here, so we're trying to raise awareness in the community," he says. "It's a great game that keeps you active, and it's good to be part of a team and club environment to enjoy the social connection."

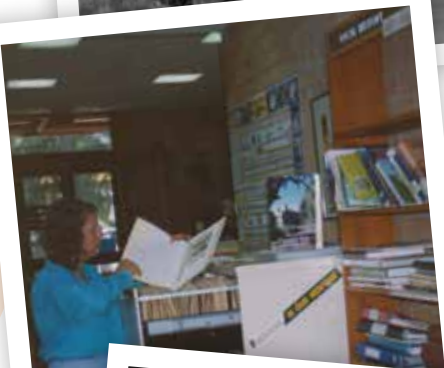
Alongside its mixed and men's pennant teams, the club runs a popular Night Owls social competition on Thursday evenings, which has grown to 23 teams, and last year won the Wednesday Division 4 Pennant Championships.

To find out more email clgbcinc@gmail.com

As part of its community involvement, students from Colonel Light Gardens Primary School trained at the club before winning gold, silver and bronze medals at the Southern District Interschool Carnival in February.

The resurgence at the Club has been underpinned by a number of improvements including the laser levelling of both greens, upgraded overhead lighting and renovated Clubroom amenities, funded by the Club and City of Mitcham.

Based at Reade Park Reserve on Flinders Avenue, the Club hosts practice sessions on Wednesday and Saturday at 1pm. New players are welcome to come along and try lawn bowls before the season begins on Wednesday 14 and Saturday 17 October.



From top to bottom: Colonel Light Gardens Primary School from Windsor Avenue taken in 1930; The Mitcham Institute at Mitcham Cultural Village, 1908; WA Thomas Bakers, Belair, from the Mitcham Local History Service photography archives; Historian Maggy Ragless working in the Mitcham Memorial Library in 1990; A Tour of the Mitcham Cemetery during South Australia's History Festival in May.



History Support Officer Francesco Di Zazzo and Local Historian Mark Winders.

Mitcham Local History Service celebrates 40 years

Established by the City of Mitcham in 1986, the Local History Service celebrates 40 years of preserving and promoting the history of the Mitcham district this year.

Based at the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre in the Mitcham Cultural Village, the Service is a valuable resource for anyone interested in local history.

Local History Officer Mark Winders said as the second oldest local government area, founded in 1853, Mitcham and its 32 suburbs had a long and fascinating history.

"It's so important to keep the knowledge and history alive not only within the City of Mitcham but South Australia as a whole, for generations to come," he said. "We are one of only three standalone history centres in metropolitan SA and we continue to build our collection every day."

Housed in a former police station, the local history collection and resources is vast and includes over 4,000 photographs, local

cemetery records and burial plot locations, Council minutes, correspondence and reports.

Other resources include rates assessments and building applications, records and histories about local schools and community organisations, family histories including letters and diaries, maps and plans and oral histories.

Local newspapers stretching back to 1952 are preserved, as are microfiche records and other databases, house history and suburb research and SA History Festival programs of events.

A Local History Reference Library, talks and tours are available to assist schools and the community.

In recent years the service has moved to digitise its collections including photographs.

Mitcham Local History Service, 103-105 Princes Road, Mitcham, open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9am to 1pm, visit www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/mitcham-cultural-village or phone 1300 133 466.



1980 The Mitcham Historical Society survey of historical collections in South Australian public libraries.

Council marked its **1986** sesquicentenary by appointing a part-time Local History Officer. Maggy Ragless, a hard-working member of the Mitcham Historical Society Committee with a passion for history and heritage was chosen for the role.

1996: MLHS organised a Heritage Weekend conference with neighbouring councils to raise community awareness of heritage to demonstrate how local history services could collaborate and develop ideas for celebrating the turn of the 21st century, the Centenary of Federation and Council's 150th anniversary.

2002: Community Historian Maggy Ragless received Council's Excellence in Community Service Award for her work with Flinders University's Dr Pam Smith on the Hills Face Zone project. Over the next three years, she supported students researching archaeological and cultural heritage sites.

2004: The Heritage Research Centre received a Heritage SA Edmund Wright Heritage Award commendation from Heritage SA for promotion and education through its history walk brochures. The brochures cover Mitcham Village, Colonel Light Gardens, Brownhill Creek, St Marys, the 'Abbotshall' Precinct, Blackwood, Belair, Saint Mary MacKillop in Mitcham and Tabling our Heritage.

2009 The service again outgrew its space and moved to the former Mitcham Police Station at the Mitcham Cultural Village, its current home.

1986

Much of the Society's material was held by local historian Pamela Oborn. In **1981** Mitcham Council helped ease the storage issue until a part-time Local History Officer was appointed.

The collection and Maggy's work eventually outgrew the library. In **1994**, she was given a dedicated room in the old Mitcham Primary School, now the Mitcham Community Centre opposite the Civic Centre, becoming known as the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre.

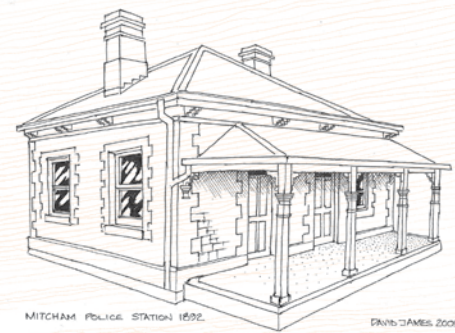
2001 The National 'Peoplescapes' project was activated by My Local History Service as a local exhibition integrated with the Centenary of Federation celebrations.

2003: To celebrate Council's 150th anniversary, the Heritage Research Centre team researched and built six picnic tables with ceramic-tile tops depicting the history of each Mitcham ward. Council organised public picnics featuring a Town Crier and bus tours for each ward.

2005 Participated in the State History Trust 'SA History Week' (now known as South Australia's History Festival) with walks, talks, bus tour and opening of OL Wilson Photographic Exhibition.

2012: In recognition of their contribution, volunteers received the prestigious 2012 SA Heritage Heroes Award for their work in conserving South Australia's heritage and recording its history.





CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

2012: Local Historian Maggy Ragless received the City of Mitcham's 2012 Citizen of the Year Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Mitcham community.



2012 Therese Willis took over the role of Local History Officer after Maggy Ragless passed away unexpectedly.



2017 Mark Winders was appointed as the Local History Officer after serving as both a volunteer and employee at the centre since 2000.



2021 Celebrated Colonel Light Gardens' 100-year anniversary. The Mitcham Local History Service held an historical paraphernalia and photographic exhibition to commemorate the centenary.



2024: Local Historian Mark Winders received the CCASA (Cemeteries and Crematoria Association of South Australia) Darren Leuders Customer Service Award for going above and beyond in delivering excellent customer service.



2026

2012: SA Government Heritage Minister Paul Caica posthumously presented Maggy Ragless with a special minister's award at the annual Heritage Heroes ceremony, recognising her valued contribution to conserving South Australian heritage and recording its history.

2015 Mitcham Village 175 years commemoration and celebrations. Mitcham Village was originally surveyed in 1840 as one of South Australia's earliest European settlements.

2017 Special Remembrance Day Commemorations featured a special 'Mitcham Remembers' historic event at Mortlock Park, Colonel Light Gardens honouring the 33,000 soldiers who trained at the historic World War I Mitcham Army Camp.

2023 Mitcham, Belair, and Blackwood railway stations marked their 140th anniversary, commemorating their opening in March 1883 with specialised exhibitions, guided tours, and community events during South Australia's History Festival.



Evolution of the Mitcham Local History Service

The service began when the Mitcham Historical Society faced a growing storage problem for its large archival collection of photographs and research material.

Much of the material was held by local historian Pamela Oborn, whose home became filled with folders and boxes.

In 1981, Mitcham Council provided a new four-drawer filing cabinet on loan, which helped ease the storage issue until a part-time Local History Officer was appointed.

The Society's 1980 survey of historical collections in South Australian public libraries remained at the Civic Centre but was not forgotten. After considerable lobbying, Council marked its 1986 sesquicentenary by appointing a part-time Local History Officer.

Maggy Ragless, a hard-working member of the Mitcham Historical Society Committee with a passion for history and heritage was chosen for the role.

With no public space available, Maggy was given a desk in the staff workroom at Mitcham Memorial Library.

Over several weeks, the accumulated research material at Pamela Oborn's house was reviewed before the collection and filing cabinet were moved to the library and placed in Maggy's care.

This important collection of more than 1,000 items, including many valuable photographs, was gifted by the Mitcham Historical Society to the people of Mitcham.

The collection and Maggy's work eventually outgrew the library. In 1994, she was given a dedicated room in the old Mitcham Primary School, now the Mitcham Community Centre opposite the Civic Centre,

becoming known as the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre.

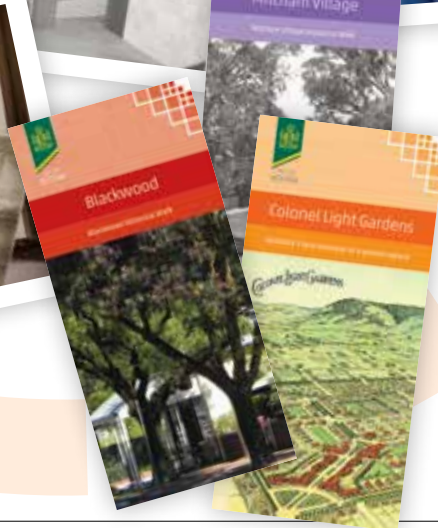
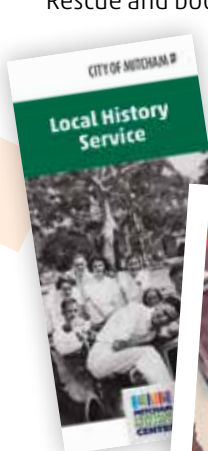
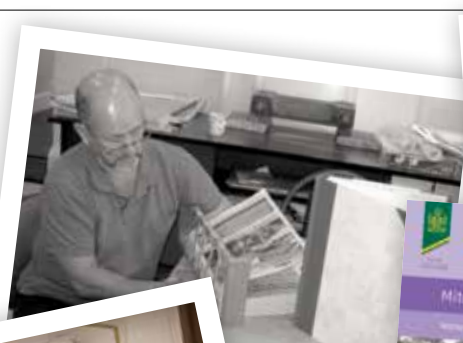
The service remained there until it again outgrew its space and moved in 2009 to its current home in the former Mitcham Police Station at the Mitcham Cultural Village.

Although the building is officially called the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre, the service is widely known as the Mitcham Local History Service.

Maggy served as Local History Officer until she passed away unexpectedly in 2012. Therese Willis held the role until 2017, when Mark Winders was appointed after serving as both a volunteer and employee at the centre since 2000.

Workshops and education

The Service has offered a range of community workshops, including: Heritage Writers, Photograph Focus, House History, Oral History, Record Rescue and bookbinding classes.



Guided walks and tours

Over the years, the Local History Service has offered guided history walks, tours and presentations for the community, local groups and schools, led by award-winning guides. Topics have included Brownhill Creek, Colonel Light Gardens, Clapham, Mitcham Railway Station, Mitcham Cemeteries, Mitcham Village Precinct, Lower Mitcham, Kingswood, Blackwood, Belair and St Mary's Church and Cemetery. Video versions of some guided history walks have been produced.

Volunteers the heart of the Local History Service

A group of dedicated volunteers support the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre by helping with research, guided tours and local history events.

Since its early days, the Local History Service has relied on the knowledge and dedication of over 100 volunteers.

"People with relevant skills, strong local knowledge or an interest in local history have always been welcome," Mark said. "As part of our 40-year celebration, we would love to hear from previous volunteers who have served with us over the years."

Volunteer Roger Ellmoos-West joined the service four years ago to help with the railway collection and is now helping catalogue maps and plans.

"I thoroughly enjoy it," Roger said. "I love maps and enjoy spending time with people here."

Mitcham local and history student Francesco Di Zazzo started as a volunteer with the service before taking on a casual role last year.

"I went on a tour and loved it and I offered to help out," he said. "I've enjoyed my time here, learning more about history and sharing that knowledge with people."



Volunteer Roger Ellmoos-West at work cataloguing maps and plans.

To become a volunteer, visit www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/volunteering or call 1300 133 466.



From left to right: Kate, Heath and Robert at Bedford Panorama.

A new chapter for Bedford Panorama

Bedford Panorama employees and staff have welcomed a transition to new ownership, paving the way for a secure future for South Australia's second largest disability employer.

The Disability Trust acquired Bedford Group following a period of voluntary administration in late 2025.

The new owner has committed to retaining over 800 supported employees and continuing services for more than 300 clients.

The Disability Trust Group CEO Karenza Louis-Smith said the focus was on stability and creating a positive future for Bedford employees and participants.

"For many people with a disability, having the opportunity to work in a supportive and inclusive environment can be life-changing –

not only for the individual, but also for their families and communities," she said.

At Bedford Panorama, employees take on a range of tasks including labelling and packaging products for local and interstate companies.

Brodie, who joined Bedford five years ago and transferred from Reynella to Panorama, said he enjoyed coming to work each day.

"I like helping out; it feels good helping out with the business and knowing that we are supplying dog treats for people to buy."

For Andrew, working at Bedford "keeps me off my computer at home".

"I come here and meet new faces every day," he said. "I've got really good supervisors as well – I love coming here."

A national not-for-profit organisation, the Disability Trust provides a range of services across Australia, including supported employment, accommodation, allied health and employment services.

Find out more at
www.bedfordgroup.com.au/panorama-learning-and-experiences

Parenting talks launched at Pasadena

Pasadena Community Centre is set to host a series of free parenting and caregiving seminars in October and November.

The seminars follow a 12-month pilot bringing together Flinders University College of Health and Enablement specialists and nursing placement students with parents and caregivers at Pasadena.

Flinders University Associate Lecturer Annette Barrie said the trial built on a partnership between Flinders University and the City of Mitcham and had been warmly welcomed by parents.

"We were able to offer multi-disciplinary health information to parents and offer our nursing students the chance to spend time with children and families," she said. "We're hoping to expand on the trial and explore new ways of offering services to people who don't always know where to start."

The free seminars will be open to City of Mitcham residents. Children are welcome to attend. Sessions include:

Understanding neurodiversity and navigating assessment pathways

Friday 2 October, 10am to 12pm

Sleep and settling, healthy sleep habits

Thursday 22 October, 10am to 12pm

Staying Calm while providing boundaries and consequences

To find out more and book, visit

www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/pasadena-community-centre

Thursday 29 October, 10am to 12pm

Managing 'Big Feelings' through positive communication, emotional regulation and validation

Thursday 5 November, 1pm to 3pm

Fussy Eating

Friday 20 November, 10am to 12pm



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Dr Heather Holmes-Ross

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hholmes-ross@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au



If the local government elections had been held this November as originally planned, Council Members' August articles would have been the last for the current term of Council.

This is because Australian governments and councils approaching elections enter what's known as a "caretaker period", during which there are restrictions on the decisions they can make and the way public resources can be used. Councils are not permitted to make certain financial decisions or use council resources to advantage a candidate or group of candidates. This affects things such as council publications and communications, staff assistance, equipment and other resources.

Following a request earlier this year from the Acting SA Electoral Commissioner for additional time to undertake the local government elections, the state government passed legislation moving the elections to April 2027. Consequently, our caretaker period will now begin in early February, so Council Members can continue to submit articles.

While moving the election date will significantly complicate the 2027 Council budget process, it also provides some opportunities. The longer lead time gives new citizens and young voters additional time to ensure they are enrolled to vote, businesses time to register for the supplementary roll, candidates time to campaign and residents time to get to know the people asking to represent them. Importantly, it also gives potential candidates more time to make that all-important decision to stand for election.

All Council Members are themselves members of our community. In fact, to stand for Council, a person must have a qualifying connection to the City of Mitcham, such as being a resident, landowner or business owner. However, as Council makes decisions on behalf of the whole community, it is important that our Chamber reflects the diversity of the community we represent.

Our decisions are better when they are informed by people with different capabilities, experiences and viewpoints. At Mitcham, the gender diversity of our Chamber currently reflects our community reasonably well, but other demographics are less well represented, including age, occupation and cultural background.

Being on Council is a fabulous experience. Council is responsible not only for delivering many of the services that affect the everyday lives of our residents, but also for providing civic leadership, setting the tone for our city, helping shape its future and inspiring others to participate in community life.

If you have an interest in leading your community, would like to make a difference or simply want to give something back, perhaps becoming a Council Member is something you should consider.

And if you have ever found yourself thinking, "Someone should fix that", maybe that someone is you.

If you would like to know more about how Council works, have questions about the role, responsibilities or expectations of Council Members, or simply have an inkling that you might like to stand and want to talk through what is involved, please feel free to contact me. I'm very happy to have a chat with any potential candidate and particularly encourage people from diverse backgrounds to get in touch.

The Park Ward

Cr Corin McCarthy

Telephone:
0435 717 210

csmccarthy@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au



The Park Ward encompasses the suburbs of Glenalta, Hawthorndene and parts of Blackwood, Belair and Upper Sturt.

Hello Residents, I am one of those people that has enjoyed the recent rains. Some of our blossom trees have even 'sprung' back to life – reflecting that 'miracles' can happen in nature. However, the family dog is especially looking forward to more walks in spring. Like my family, I hope you'll be able to get out and enjoy the better weather.

Stormwater systems and fire preparation

The recent rains have also highlighted the **need for better stormwater systems** and for preparations for climate change adaptation. This is one of our most pressing local issues, along with but perhaps less than better fire preparations to improve fire tracks and for removal of feral woody weeds. Fortunately, these are both initiatives in the current budget.

Better library and community centre services in Blackwood

Over my recent years, the **steady improvements in our libraries and community centres** have been highly valuable, delivering better community spaces and vibrancy – including to the heart of Blackwood. This is starting to unlock private investments for Blackwood too, with more foot traffic in our shopping precinct.

Last time I wrote I expected the Budget to identify funding to extend library hours until 5.30pm on Friday. My update is that due to compromises made, that was scaled back to 5pm on Friday. However, this still reflects a significant extension from 2pm and I wholeheartedly endorse the increase, on which I have advocated.

Budget processes and macro-outcomes

I am also providing some comments on the macro-direction of our Budget. There is some good news and some bad.

I can report that **Council's debt projections will be well within our debt policies now**, having been projected last year to exceed them. However, for context, this improvement on debt levels is primarily a result of limited state government election commitments for our Council area, given these are normally co-funded or often majority funded by Council. We had included a provision for expected election commitments in the Long Term Financial Plan, which then didn't happen, so the forecasts are better.

Still, there is some credit for Council in there being increasing restraint on new infrastructure too and a willingness at last for sales of surplus land.

I feel my advocacy for this has paid dividends for residents.

Council has also **made a generational leap forward in new infrastructure over the last two terms**, so arguably there are fewer pressing needs like there were in 2018 for new infrastructure. We also need to **ensure we have spare borrowing capacity in our bottom line** for climate change events and adaptation preparation (stormwater and possible fires). We've also seen recent unexpected ICT updates (TechOne) to upgrade rates-software to a modern, supported platform. These pressures are unavoidable.

Time for compulsory voting for Councils?

I believe we should consider compulsory postal voting for councils to better deliver mainstream councils, with less focus on single interests and more focus on the whole community. **Keen to hear your views.**

Craigburn Ward

Cr Darren Kruse

Telephone:
0487 697 074

dkruse@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au



Craigburn Ward encompasses the suburbs of Craigburn Farm, Bellevue Heights and parts of Blackwood, Coromandel Valley and Eden Hills.

Hello again, it's such a long time ago since I wrote for the May edition of MCN. Unfortunately, I was unable to write for the July edition. So much has happened, including Council's term being unexpectedly extended with **elections now rescheduled for April 2027**. We make multiple decisions at every meeting, so in 500 words I can only reference some.

On 16 June we voted to **increase the free Green Waste dropoff days** at Lynton from 12 to 22 free drop-off days annually. Of the 22 days, 16 are scheduled to support bushfire preparation, with the remaining six scheduled throughout the year. There is now online booking via <https://www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/garden-waste-drop-off-facility>

On 7 July we adopted the 2026/27 Annual Business Plan, with an average increase of \$151 per household, most of which was CPI at 4.3%. Of the many changes, I'm most pleased we **increased the library operating hours**. The new hours of operation are slated to begin in November after staff consultation is complete.

On 11 August we endorsed a new Leasing and Licensing of Council's Sports Facilities Policy which included setting fees and charges for use of the brand new **\$1.8m Hawthorndene Community Changeroom Facility**: \$15/hour for community and local residents; \$280.97 per year for community sporting club licence. It's then available for hire 7am to 10pm on weekdays and 8am to 8pm on weekends outside the any lease arrangements to the Coromandel Ramblers Cricket Club, without whom this facility would not exist. Their tireless pursuit of grant funding has enabled Council to build this new facility for all of us to enjoy. Thank you.

This fantastic facility will be opened to the public on **Saturday 12 September**. I hope to see many of you there. Bring your dogs, we even built a dog drink station into the side of the building!

The rollout of LED streetlights has been occurring Council-wide since 2018. However, in Craigburn Farm, Springfield and Urrbrae the replacement of the existing heritage character 'Kensington' style lights with modern equivalents has understandably been met with concerted opposition. Council has paused the rollout by our subcontractor SAPN until the full cost of doing a like-for-like replacement is known. It is likely to be several hundred thousand dollars. If so, a vote in the Chamber will likely be needed.

Also in August, Council again endorsed the 175th Anniversary Publication Project. Recording our history is important.

Finally, I know how hard it is to keep track of Council's many projects and decisions. To fully understand the arc of a project from the first vote to ribbon-cutting requires finding and reading multiple agendas and minutes, sometimes over years. To make it easier to surface these stories I've built with AI a tool that indexes the **~ 14,000 publicly available documents of Council** so that coherent timeline reports can be *automagically* created. I've called it [mitcham.counciltracer.app](https://www.mitchamcounciltracer.app) and have made it free for residents. Example sample reports show its surprising capabilities. I hope it's useful.

As always, please call me to discuss anything Council.

Kirsty's Artventure goes global

Colonel Light Gardens artist Kirsty Shadiac is teaching children around the world to draw and paint through her online art education classes.

Kirsty founded Artventure in 2012 after working as an Artist in Residence at primary schools around South Australia.

The idea began when she filmed herself teaching a sketch for students to copy.

"Instead of kids crowding around a table, I thought it might be easier for them to see if it was up on a screen," she said. "I realised that most teachers haven't been taught to draw and that this could help them – all they have to do is press play."

Demand jumped during the COVID pandemic and has continued along with the rise in home schooling and online learning.

Kirsty has developed a library of lessons aimed at primary students and worked



Kirsty Shadiac is teaching Artventure classes at Westbourne Park Primary School.

alongside her former high school teacher to develop a library for secondary students.

"There are 750 lessons, all linked to the Australian National Curriculum," she said.

"They are used by teachers around Australia and overseas."

Kirsty is passionate about sharing her knowledge with students and enjoys running face to face Artventure classes at Westbourne Park Primary School.

"When it comes to art, there's no right or wrong way: every child experiences success," she said.

Kirsty is a successful artist who has been commissioned for a series of private and public collections, including a mural for Prince of Wales Hospital in Sydney and a painting in the Women's and Children's Hospital in North Adelaide.

Find out more at www.artventure.com.au



Blackwood hosts major fire exercise

Fire crews from across the Mitcham hills descended on the former Blackwood Library and Karkoo Nursery site in a joint training exercise.

Eleven fire appliances, 60 fire fighters and 10 cadets from eight Sturt Group Brigades, along with the Upper Sturt Country Fire Service, used the two buildings to simulate an urban structure fire.

At the scene, crews wore breathing apparatus and PPE gear to navigate a building filled with artificial smoke.

Firefighters were tasked with sweeping through the building, searching for occupants, while others helped establish command points.

Belair CFS Lieutenant and Training Officer Craig Brooks said the site provided an ideal opportunity to conduct large-scale training.

"While our crews conduct regular training an operation of this scale only happens once or twice a year," he said. "Having access to a building that's not being used gives us the opportunity to really simulate a real incident, which is invaluable."

Groups involved included Belair, Blackwood, Eden Hills, Coromandel Valley, Cherry Gardens and Upper Sturt CFS, along with Sturt Group Operations Support and Sturt Group Cadets.

In the lead-up to the day, senior fire fighters, captains and lieutenants undertook incident control training for large urban incidents.

Photo courtesy Bob from Adelaide Emergency Media.

Equestrian volunteer recognised

Marion Riding Club committee member Helen Whittle has been recognised in the Good Sports Volunteer of the Year Awards.

A long-serving member of the equestrian club based at Shepherds Hill Recreation Park, Helen was named Runner-Up in the South Australian category for her contribution to the sport and the community.

Presenting her award, Member for Waite Catherine Hutchesson MP paid tribute to Helen for helping ensure the club remained a thriving place for equestrians in Adelaide to learn, train and compete and maintaining access to trails within the park.

"When the club faced significant challenges during COVID, Helen stepped up, reconnecting past members, rallying support, helping secure grants, advocating tirelessly and playing a pivotal role in ensuring the club's future," she said. "Congratulations Helen on

your years of dedication and service to the equestrian community."

As well as helping with administration, Helen mentors riders, trains officials and champions opportunities for young equestrians.

She is a Life Member of Horse SA, an Equestrian Australia A Level Judge, Judge Educator and Para Equestrian Judge and has also been recognised as Equestrian SA's Para Official of the Year.

Supported by a City of Mitcham Maggy Ragless Memorial Grant in 2024, Helen wrote and published a book documenting the history of the club since 1960, its connection to the SA Mounted Police and its contribution to the Australian equestrian community as the foundation training hub for the likes of dual Olympic gold medallist Gillian Rolton.





Above left: WRAG volunteers Hamayun Kamboh and Jacinta Fong, City of Mitcham Craigburn Ward Councillor Karen Hockley and WRAG volunteer Jacquie Wright. **Above right:** St Johns Grammar teacher Alyssia, students Angus, Hugh and Jack with City of Mitcham Open Space Volunteer Coordinator Felicia Carli.

Students dig in for nature trail planting day

Students from Eden Hills Primary School, St Johns Grammar and Concordia College along with Blackwood Scouts joined volunteers from the Woodlake Reserve Action Group (WRAG) for a planting weekend at Craigburn Farm last month.

Across two days, volunteers planted 800 rushes, sedges and grasses as part of Stage 1 of the Woodlake Reserve Nature Trail project. Launched in 2025, the project will see the creation of a 2km trail encompassing three nature reserves: Woodlake Drive Reserve, Wetlands Reserve and Highfield Drive Reserve, creating a biodiversity corridor for local wildlife.

WRAG Chairperson Angela Hills welcomed the support of Trees for Life, who helped raise the seedlings and prepare planting areas.

"We've had some fantastic support from the community again this year and it's great to see all the hard work paying off as these plants become established."

The weekend was supported by a City of Mitcham My Mitcham Community Grant, Blackwood Rotary, who ran a sausage sizzle, Bracegirdle's, who supplied hot drinks, and Green Adelaide.

The nature trail project is supported by a Green Adelaide Grassroots Grant.

Discover the Blackwood Tree Trail

A new tree trail is now open at Blackwood thanks to the Trees for Future Mitcham group, highlighting the importance of local trees in our community.

The 1km loop begins with a Grey Box eucalyptus tree at Tiwu Kumangka on Young Street and follows a route that takes in Station Avenue and Shepherds Hill Road.

Ten trees are highlighted with tree tags to educate participants about their characteristics and crucial roles they play within the local ecosystem.

A brochure charting each tree's location, common, botanical and Kaurana name, and unique features is available from Tiwu Kumangka.

The Blackwood Tree Trail project was supported by a My Mitcham Community Grant.



A 17.5 metre River Red Gum is one of 10 trees highlighted on the Blackwood Tree Trail.

Betty Long Gardens creek upgraded

A section of Upper Brown Hill Creek at Betty Long Gardens, Torrens Park, has been upgraded as part of the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Project.

The condition of the watercourse had been significantly impacted by high flow events in 2005, 2016 and 2023 which caused the erosion of the creek bed and undermining of channel banks.

As part of the project, care was taken to protect significant Kauri trees located along the top of the western bank.

New gabion walls have been constructed with limited disturbance to existing channel banks and are filled with sandstone quartzite stones to prevent erosion. The baskets are durable and flexible and will tolerate future ground movements. Landscape works will continue to be delivered in coming weeks.

Work is also underway to upgrade the channel at Hawthorn between Cross Road and Hampton Street, a known flooding hotspot, including the construction of a new culvert crossing at Hampton Street with new footpaths installed on both sides of the road.

The Betty Long Gardens project is jointly funded by the Australian Government through the Urban Rivers and Catchments Program and the Brown Hill and Keswick Creeks

Stormwater Board. The Board's contribution is funded by the South Australian Government's Stormwater Management Authority and the Cities of Adelaide, Burnside, Mitcham, Unley and West Torrens.

Find out more about the project at bhkcstormwater.com.au



Gabion walls have been installed at Betty Long Gardens, Torrens Park, to prevent erosion and flooding.