

MITCHAM

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COMMUNITY NEWS



APRIL 2024

Bringing colour to Mitcham's history

Images from the past brought to life in colour will be on display at the Mitcham Memorial Library and Tiwu Kumangka as part of South Australia's History Festival next month.

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Kelly Bonato from A Colourful History at Mitcham Cultural Village.

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**Message from
the Mayor****Dr Heather
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At the Full Council Meeting in March, I was thrilled that our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was unanimously adopted. The plan was initiated in early 2020, and is the first of the four RAP types; Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate, which allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. It is our hope that our Reflect RAP, based around the core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities, will lay the foundations to enable our organisation to sustainably and strategically take meaningful action to advance reconciliation by increasing economic equity, supporting First Nations self-determination, and working towards closing the gap.

Our reconciliation journey began in late 2019 when a community information forum involving a panel discussion on the Uluru

Statement from the Heart, was facilitated by community action groups, Blackwood Reconciliation Group (BRG) and A Better Boothby. From the floor of the meeting a motion was crafted calling for a voice to power in the Mitcham Council and for a RAP to be embedded at City of Mitcham. Elected members responded by requesting advice on how to implement a RAP and in March 2020 unanimously resolved to develop and implement a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

A RAP working group was established who undertook Cultural Respect and Safety training which emphasised the institutionally enshrined policies and processes which disproportionately disadvantage First Nations peoples. The group were encouraged to consider ways in which the cycle could be disrupted and from this starting position, with the initial assistance of a First Nations consultant, to now working collaboratively with Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation, have developed a plan to embed meaningful action right across the business of Council. While we have often engaged and collaborated with Kurna Community and implemented many positive activities our Reflect RAP will bring genuine purpose, structure, and consistency to these efforts, allowing us to enshrine the principle of reconciliation into

the heart of everything we do for everyone in the community.

Despite the outcome of last year's referendum, there is widespread support within our community for reconciliation with First Nations people. Overall, the City of Mitcham results supported the Voice and although some commentators have used the referendum result to question the validity of the RAP process, I believe its importance has increased post referendum. In being out and about, listening to our community, it is evident that no matter how they voted, most Australians want better outcomes for First Nations peoples. RAPs are a great way to represent tangible actions towards outcomes such as equity and self-determination. At time of writing, we are still awaiting the results of the South Australian Voice to Parliament election. I am excited by the prospect of testing the Voice proposal and I am looking forward to connecting and working with our local representatives. The SA Voice is a real opportunity to show that together we can take the necessary steps towards closing the gap between First Nations and non-Aboriginal opportunities and outcomes.

This article may contain personal views or opinions, and may not necessarily represent the formal position of the Council.



Blackwood & Community RSL Vice President John Gregory, Secretary Jackie Burton, Treasurer Robyn Davey and volunteer Sue Morgan.

New roof a welcome upgrade

A new roof is the first step in a series of upgrades at the Blackwood & Community RSL headquarters at Brighton Parade, Blackwood.

The roof was replaced last month with support from a \$24,000 My Mitcham Community grant.

Vice President John Gregory said the upgrade was long overdue and would ensure the longevity of a much-loved community club.

"The roof was leaking and we had pooling issues," he said. "We are so grateful for the support which means we can move on with other projects."

The Club has also secured a \$7,000 City of Mitcham grant and a \$45,000 grant from the Department of Infrastructure and Transport to replace toilets in five restrooms.

Established in 1937, the Club supports veterans and their families and is run by volunteers.

Funds are raised via a bar and bistro that is open to everyone with meals served every day except Sunday and Monday.

Highlights include live music on Fridays and lunch and jazz on the third Sunday of the month (jukebox on other Sundays). There are steak night specials on Tuesdays and half price kids' nights on Thursdays.

The major event for the year is the Club's Anzac Day Dawn Service, attended by thousands of locals on 25 April each year.

Local businesses have rallied to donate \$2,000 in prizes for the club's traditional Anzac Day raffle.

The Anzac Day service begins at 6am and is followed by a breakfast at the club. To book in to the Anzac service or for a meal, contact the Club on 8278 6253.

Concert honours veterans

Mitcham City Brass is set to present a musical tribute to service men and women at Belair Community Centre this month.

The Wartime Melodies Concert is held to commemorate Anzac Day and features a montage of music and songs from the war years.

The concert will be held on Sunday 21 April at 2.30pm at Belair Community Centre at the corner of Sheoak Road and Burnell Drive.

Tickets are available via www.trybooking.com/CQLRS or at the door and cost \$20 adult, \$15 concession, service men and women, Companion Card Holder and under 13 years free.

To find out more call 0419 032 312 or email secretary@mitchamcitybrass.org

Mitcham City Brass is supported by the City of Mitcham.



Centennial Park to host Anzac tribute

Centennial Park Cemetery is set to welcome students from Scotch College who will conduct a commemorative Anzac service on Thursday 11 April.

From 9.45am witness students and the school Caledonian Pipes and Drums Band walk through Derrick Gardens to the Cross of Remembrance.

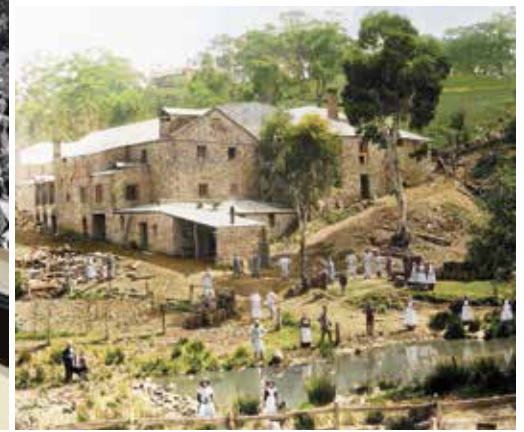
A reflective tribute will be held before the placement of around 4,500 flags on memorials of service personnel in Derrick Gardens.

On Anzac Day, Tuesday 25 April, the Centennial Park gates will open at 6.30am for those who would like to visit a loved one at dawn.

**Centennial Park,
760 Goodwood Road, Pasadena,
www.centennialpark.org**



Above left: Kelly Bonato at the Mitcham Cultural Village. **Above right top:** Her colourised image of Albert Street in Mitcham. **Above right bottom:** Her colourised image of the Murray Biscuit Factory, Coromandel Valley.



Bringing colour to Mitcham's history

A history buff with a knack for colourising black and white photos is joining forces with the Mitcham Local History Service as part of South Australia's History Festival.

Kelly Bonato, who runs the Facebook page 'A Colourful History', has infused colour into a series of photographs that will be displayed at the Mitcham Memorial Library and Tiwu Kumangka at Blackwood next month.

The photographs, depicting people and places from City of Mitcham's hills and plains suburbs, have been enlarged and printed for the temporary display.

Kelly started colourising photos during COVID-19 when she discovered some of her own family photographs dating back to the 1860s.

"My intention was to share them with family, but they were damaged, so I taught myself how to repair them in Photoshop," she said. "My son is a software engineer, and he wrote me a program so that I could colourise them. That gave me a foundation to start with."

Kelly spends six to eight hours working on each photograph, painstakingly 'painting' over colours. She sometimes visits places such as buildings to help her match colours.

Since its inception in 2021, her Facebook page has grown to reach nearly 1 million views a month.

"For me, it is therapeutic, but it has also sparked an interest in South Australia's history," she said. "I enjoy the research and I've looked into my own history – I didn't realise that my great grandfathers were early pioneers."

Kelly has enjoyed working alongside the History Service to trawl through some of City of Mitcham's historical records to find images that reflect the city's early days.

"My kids went to Mercedes College so I do feel a connection to Mitcham," she said. "It's such a historic area, and it's wonderful that you have a place here where these photos have been gathered and preserved and are accessible to residents. History holds a wealth of human experiences, accomplishments, and important lessons that deserve ongoing recognition."

**People and Places in Colour: Mitcham Hills and Plains Photo Exhibitions, 1-31 May.
Details on page 4.**



SUNDAY SERVICES

10am & 7pm

72 Coromandel Parade, Blackwood

thevillage.org.au

ph. 8370 0333

Email bhbc@bhbc.org.au



SA History Festival 2024

Join a bus tour to visit some of Mitcham's historic places across the hills or plains, see our past brought to life in coloured photos and visit our cemeteries during next month's History Festival.



Gone but not forgotten: Mitcham Cemeteries Tour

Take a guided walking tour through the heritage-listed Mitcham Anglican and General Cemeteries. Established in 1854, these cemeteries mark their 170-year anniversaries this year. Visit the resting of many of Mitcham's and Adelaide's earliest pioneers and identities and hear their fascinating stories.

When: Tuesday 7, 14, 21 and 28 May, 10am to 12pm

Where: Meet at the Rotunda, Mitcham General Cemetery, Old Belair Road, Mitcham

Cost: Free

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival



Mitcham Hills History Bus Tour

Join an informative bus tour through the scenic Mitcham Hills area including Blackwood, Belair, Eden Hills and more. Hear about the development of the district along with notable people and places that have formed part of its history and heritage. Includes light refreshments.

When: Thursday 9 and 16 May, 10am to 12pm

Where: Meet at Tiwu Kumangka (Blackwood Library and Community Centre), Young Street, Blackwood. Arrive 15 mins prior to departure.

Cost: \$10 per person

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival



Mitcham Plains History Bus Tour

Join an informative bus tour through the scenic Mitcham Plains area including Mitcham Village, Hawthorn, Colonel Light Gardens, St Marys and more. Hear about the development of the City of Mitcham, along with notable people and places that have formed part of its history and heritage. Includes light refreshments.

When: Wednesday 8 and 15 May, 10am to 12pm

Where: Meet at Mitcham Local History Centre, Mitcham Cultural Village, 103 Princes Road, Mitcham. Arrive 15 mins prior to departure.

Cost: \$10 per person

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival



Bedford Park: What's in a name

Hear about the history and stories of the suburb of Bedford Park and its surrounding area. Including the connection between the Bedford Group (Bedford Industries) and the old Bedford Park TB Sanatorium. Enjoy a talk and photo presentation from a local resident and Mitcham Local History Service volunteer.

When: Sunday 5 May, 2pm to 4pm

Where: Pasadena Community Centre, 47 Adelaide Terrace, Pasadena

Cost: Free

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival



People and Places in Colour: Mitcham Plains Photo Exhibition

Take a look back at the people and places of the Mitcham Plains in an exhibition of enlarged historical photos brought to life in spectacular colour.

When: Every day in May during Library opening hours

Where: Mitcham Memorial Library, 154 Belair Road, Hawthorn

Cost: Free

Bookings: Not essential



People and Places in Colour: Mitcham Hills Photo Exhibition

Take a look back at the people and places of the Mitcham Hills in an exhibition of enlarged historical photos brought to life in spectacular colour.

When: Every day in May during Library opening hours

Where: Tiwu Kumangka, Young Street, Blackwood

Cost: Free

Bookings: Not essential

A range of SA History Festival events will be held across the City of Mitcham in May, from walking tours and bus trips to a railway trip back in time.

For more information about the City of Mitcham South Australian History Festival events call the Customer Communications Team on 1300 133 466 or email sahistoryfestival@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au



Belair National Park: Off the Beaten Track

Tour Australia's second oldest national park in a minibus with a guide to sites of historic significance, including Old Government House. Walk in the bush to learn about native flora, fauna and pre-settlement use of the land. This activity involves short distance walks on rough tracks. Limited numbers.

When: Saturday 18 May, 11.50am to 5pm or Sunday 19 May, 8.45am to 2pm

Cost: \$35, includes morning and afternoon tea, park and Old Government House entry. Please bring a cut lunch and drink.

Bookings: Essential. Contact Anne Hazell, Blackwood Action Group, ahazellau@gmail.com



Travel back in time... by Train

Catch the train at Belair Railway Station to the Eden Hills and Blackwood stations. Learn about the development and challenges faced by the early railway network, first built 140 years ago, and its value to local districts and the state. Includes Devonshire tea at Blackwood station. Limited numbers.

When: Sunday 5 May or Sunday 25 May, 8.30am to 12.30pm

Where: Meet at Belair Railway Station

Cost: \$5 plus train tickets if applicable

Bookings: Essential. Contact Anne Hazell, Blackwood Action Group, ahazellau@gmail.com

Brownhill Creek Recreation Park Walk

Enjoy a guided walk through Brownhill Creek Recreation Park with Ron Bellchambers, Community Engagement Officer for Brownhill Creek Association and member of Mitcham Historical Society. Learn about the Shelter Tree preservation and conservation project.

When: Sunday 5 or Sunday 19 May, 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Where: Brownhill Creek Recreation Park

Cost: \$5.50 (children under 12 free)

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival

Ancient Legends (in a Modern World) Exhibition

Gallery One presents an exhibition of Indigenous works sourced locally, including paintings by 100-year-old Aunty Glenda Hayes. The exhibition culminates in a concert featuring Les Gitans Blancs on Friday 31 May with the opportunity to participate in a fundraising raffle to win 'Bush Tucker Dreaming' by Lilita Napurrula Tilmouth, valued at \$1150.

When: May 1 to 31 during Gallery opening hours

Where: Gallery One, 1 Torrens Street, Mitcham

Cost: Free

Bookings: www.galleryone.org.au



Belair East: Heritage Along the Ridge

Belair's history and its links to the development of the state will be shared and grand summer residences highlighted as we walk along Sheoak Road. Refreshments served at the heritage listed Belair station. Limited numbers.

When: Friday 10 May or Saturday 27 May, 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Where: Meet at corner Sheoak Road and Francis Street, Belair

Cost: \$5

Bookings: Essential. Contact Anne Hazell, Blackwood Action Group, ahazellau@gmail.com



Centennial Park Pioneers Tour

Centennial Park's history of progression, innovation and passionate pioneers will be the focus of 90-minute walking tours. Tours include visits to the resting places of prominent South Australians. Each attendee will receive a copy of 'At the End of the Road' by Robert Nicol, a book covering 160 years of cemetery progression in South Australia.

When: May 1 to 31, various dates

Where: Centennial Park, 760 Goodwood Road, Pasadena

Cost: Free

Bookings: www.centennialpark.org

Ellison's Gully (Brownhill Creek) Guided Walk

Join Councillor Andrew Tilley, whose family has lived in the area for five generations, on a walk that starts at the old manure pits in Brownhill Creek. This Mitcham Historical Society tour takes in the scenic beauty of Ellison's Gully, an historic stone bridge and disused silver mineshafts. See the 140-year-old Mitcham water works that once supplied Unley and Adelaide.

When: Sunday 12 or Sunday 26 May, 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Where: Meet at the manure pits on Brown Hill Creek Road

Cost: \$5.50 (under 12 free)

Bookings: Essential via www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/history-festival

Babbage Ward**Cr Aidan Greenshields**

Telephone:
0448 150 003



agreenshields@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

Babbage Ward encompasses the suburbs of Bedford Park, Pasadena, Panorama, Lynton and parts of Clapham, Eden Hills, and St Marys.

Council has adopted a Sustainable Living Subsidy Program to encourage our community to embrace sustainable living practices, emphasising waste avoidance, reduction, and reuse. Residents can now apply for rebates on a variety of reusable items, including modern cloth nappies, menstrual and incontinence products. For more information, google Mitcham Sustainable Living Subsidy Program.

The Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA) is SA's independent economic regulator and advisory body and has been given the task by the State Government of reviewing projected financial performance of all SA councils. Mitcham recently received advice that our performance is 'sustainable' in all categories, the highest possible rating, a testament to the sound decisions being made.

The contract for stage 2 of the Dorene Street upgrade has been awarded and construction will be starting soon. The works to improve St Marys/Pasadena are coming along nicely.

Budget discussions for the 24/25 fiscal year are ongoing and there are some tough decisions to be made, with improved services weighed against increased rates. Decisions that have already been taken account for a 1% rate rise already, the necessary upgrades to the Pasadena Community Centre building, and resourcing said facility accounting for the lion's share of these costs. Several very worthwhile increases in services may not be able to be achieved this year with the staggering cost of living changes that everyone is experiencing.

A new tree maintenance team would improve Council's ability to proactively prune our tree stock, instead of constantly reacting to resident requests. It comes at the cost of approximately \$400,000 per year, or a rate increase of 0.61% to residents. This will have to happen sooner rather than later, as Council has seen a 55% increase in requests for tree maintenance since 2020, with recent climactic events having a significant impact.

One of the most frequently raised requests is an improved standard of street sweeping. Council could run a new street sweeper vehicle at a cost of \$215,000 per year, or a rate increase of 0.33% to residents.

Park and reserve maintenance could be maintained better! An extra mowing crew could be formed to increase the frequency of mowing, but this costs \$333,000 per year or 0.51% rate increase to each resident. Footpaths and roads could similarly be better maintained with a new paving maintenance crew added for \$319,000 or 0.49% per resident per year.

Each of these projects is highly valuable but together will cost \$1.3 million per year or a rate increase of 2.02%. There are dozens of other projects that hold merit but come at a cost. Inflation means that running Council's current services will cost an estimated 4.3% rate increase per year and when 1% of current decisions have already been made plus the long overdue upgrades to Mortlock Park which will be made on the 26th of March, the number can balloon very quick. Tough decisions need to be made about what's necessary, and what's not.

St Marys oval is now being watered using storm water runoff from Oakland wetland.

Gault Ward**Cr Pia George**

Telephone:
0488 277 010



pgeorge@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

Gault Ward encompasses the suburbs of Hawthorn, Westbourne Park, Lower Mitcham and parts of Colonel Light Gardens, Clapham and Kingswood.

As we approach 18 months into the term of Council, I have reflected on my experience since the election in November 2022 and whether my expectations for the position are consistent with the reality. My reflections may have been prompted by discussions with my nine-year-old, who has been learning about democracy – specifically in local government – and what the role of councillor entails. They have been valuable conversations for both of us and certainly helps her to understand the nature of what I do on Tuesday nights and on other occasions during the week.

Our role as the representative for a specific ward and the function which this requires at council meetings is well understood, but the position is more comprehensive than this. I am also a member of several Council sub-committees, including the CEO Performance Review Committee, the Grants Committee and the Australia Day Awards Selection Committee, which don't require us to perform the role as an advocate for a specific ward, but more broadly on behalf of the entire Mitcham community.

As councillors, we attend functions in an official capacity – such as the upcoming events for ANZAC Day – and head along to informal get-togethers with residents at events such as Australia Day street parties. We respond to inquiries by email, phone call, text messages (social media ones too) and attend face-to-face meetings. These occasions to network and engage are an intrinsic part of our role as advocates for the community and ensure that we remain accountable to the community that endorsed us as their local councillor. In the coming months, Council will host 'Community Conversations', which will provide residents with another opportunity to engage with local councillors, in a revised format from the previous 'ward forums' – more to come on this soon!

Mortlock Park

Mortlock Park in Colonel Light Gardens is an exceptional open space, which is loved by the community for recreational use while also being used by the nearby schools and local sporting teams. Successive State and Federal Governments have committed funding towards the upgrade of the Gil Langley Building at the park, which has facilitated an extensive planning and consultation process that has spanned many years. In 2023, the Council received more than 630 responses to the YourSay consultation survey, with 63% of the responses from 'nearby residents' demonstrating a high level of engagement with the project.

I expect that the Council will make decisions about the future of Mortlock Park in late March, including the planned upgrade to the Gil Langley Building, the licence over the grassed areas, replacement of the oval lights and baseball infrastructure and the proposed demolition of the Guides Hall. This has been a complex project, which has taken a decade to come to fruition (and several terms of Council). Thank you to the residents and representatives of the sporting clubs who have engaged with me personally about this project. I am hopeful that the outcome will ensure that Mortlock Park continues to serve our community for many decades to come.

Boorman Ward**Cr Joanna Wells**

Telephone:
0403 197 071



jwells@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

Facebook: Joanna4Boorman

Boorman Ward encompasses the suburbs of Brown Hill Creek, Mitcham, Netherby, Springfield, Torrens Park, Urrbrae and parts of Leawood Gardens, Belair, Crafers West and Kingswood.

Naa marni everyone.

It's been a busy couple of months in Boorman Ward with lots of exciting road projects on the go. The work at the Belair triangle is now in the home straight and once completed will enable DIT to undertake studies on changes to traffic flow on Old Belair and James Roads. This commitment came from the community campaign run to both save the hundreds of nationally endangered grey box slated for removal and get a working solution that actually delivers community needs.

Roadworks are recently or imminently to be completed in Haig Street and Smith-Dorrien Street (where new storm-water infrastructure is also being installed). It's been great to see Treenet inlets being installed as well; these play an important role in ensuring we have cool streets to maximise active transport all year around.

Those of you who use the pedestrian crossing on Princes Road, between the shopping centre and the gym will be pleased to see those works completed. There will now be clarity about right of way, making the crossing safer for all road users, both pedestrians and drivers.

I was privileged to be able to attend a Mayoral forum at Tiwu Kumangka last month, to hear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates who live in Mitcham and have nominated for our State's Voice to Parliament. The professional experiences they outlined were nothing short of impressive and it will be great for Council to be able to access advice from this body once established.

It's also been great to see Rozelle's, the new restaurant and function centre finally open at Carrick Hill, where it is nestled into the hillside, retaining much of the bushland between it and the more formal areas of the garden.

Lastly, if I may stray from Boorman Ward for a moment, I've been fortunate to spend time online with councillors from across Australia, taking part in Climate Emergency Australia's "Governing in the Climate Emergency" pilot programme. It's been truly inspiring to hear from others about what they're doing, the barriers they're coming up against and how they are negotiating them. This has underscored not only the importance of collaboration with other councillors, but has also served as a reminder of the invaluable work done by countless volunteers across the community.

I love to hear from a diversity of people and encounter a diversity of views, as the vast majority of us are motivated by leaving the world a better place than we found it, making this an enjoyable process.

Please feel free to contact me either by email or mobile if there are issues you'd like to discuss.

jwells@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

0403 197 071

Ngaityalya,
Joanna

Overton Ward**Cr Kamal Bhagat**

Telephone:
0430 923 310

kbhagat@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

Overton Ward encompasses Clarence Gardens, Cumberland Park, Daw Park, Melrose Park and parts of Colonel Light Gardens and St Marys.

This is the first time I've been able to speak to you through the Mitcham Community Newsletter in 2024.

How time flies! No sooner had we celebrated Christmas and New Year we are now celebrating Easter. I sincerely hope you have a great Easter!

Councillors have had a very busy start to the year as we tackle many issues on the agenda. One of the biggest, if not the biggest, is working on plans for the 2024/2025 budget. Council is reviewing four strategic priorities that will influence the way we divide the budget during this current term. They are lessening the impact of climate change mitigation and resilience, natural environment, placemaking and good governance.

Also, my concern is how we juggle the management of debt and at the same time, ensure ratepayers' money is wisely spent on current and future projects.

At the moment the Mortlock Park development and associated licences and leases have been a major talking point at Council, where several deputations have been expressed. After the community consultation feedback, Council will decide on options for Mortlock Park at the Special Full Council meeting on the 26th of March.

The unfortunate cancellation of last year's Carols at Kingswood Oval, due to bad weather, is allowing more funds to be spent on other Council initiatives. This includes My Mitcham Community Grants. The Council is now reviewing applications received before the February closing date. If you have an idea for a community-run event, put your idea forward. The next round of applications will close on 29 August. You will find the full eligibility criteria and funding conditions in the Grants Policy and the My Mitcham Community Grant Guidelines on Council's website.

While we are now cherishing the cooler weather, Council is looking towards next summer. The City of Mitcham is considering offering community centres, or other facilities, as a place of refuge for residents and their pets during extreme heat days. A survey is underway, and Council would like to hear feedback from you on the idea. This survey will be closing at 5pm Tuesday 30 April 2024.

Shortly after the last Council elections, Overton Ward residents raised concerns about traffic problems on a number of our streets. Concerns included vehicle numbers, speed, and parking. The Local Area Traffic Study, which began early last year, is still ongoing. I am happy to say that the results are expected to be available within the next few weeks.

The Easter season and school holidays are right around the corner, feel free to visit the City of Mitcham libraries and community centres for family-wide fun and activities all without having to spend a single dollar. To partake in these activities, book now on the City of Mitcham website, if you have any further queries or any issues, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0430 923 310 or email me through kbhagat@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au.

The Park Ward**Cr Tom Morrison**

Telephone:
0490 075 955

tmorrison@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

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

Footpaths are the most commonly raised topic with me during doorknocking.

Conversations with residents tend to go in two directions:

1. Residents who do not have a footpath, would like one.
2. Residents who have a footpath, have trouble using it due to tripping hazards, debris etc.

There is a level of irony in the two positions raised above. We should be encouraging and facilitating more people to walk around their neighbourhood, whether this is to school, the shops or for general fitness / recreation.

Council's rollout of brick pavers over bitumen paths has brought both negatives and positives. Brick pavers were chosen for several reasons that I will touch on in an article at a later date. We are however, far enough down the brick paver path, that it would be difficult to change now. One area that does irk me considerably, has been the replacement of often reasonably good bitumen footpaths with brick pavers, also a topic for another day.

Not every road needs a footpath (or two if you live down the hill). Given the topography of my local area, it is often impossible/prohibitively expensive to construct new footpaths. This means there must be a focus on planning and delivering key walking routes through the hills. A Hawthorndene Footpath Study kicking off soon will be looking at exactly this.

I do a lot of walking around my local area and footpath maintenance is a genuine problem in my opinion. Issues ranging from pushed up pavers presenting tripping hazards, overgrown vegetation and debris all hinder their use. As it currently stands, there is no scheduled footpath sweeping maintenance in Mitcham. While there is a footpath sweeping machine, this tends to only work in the flatter areas. For anything else though, particularly for areas in the hills, a manual cleanup tends to be required, often due to the narrowness and slope of the paths. A massive thank you to those residents who look after the footpath outside of their home by giving it the occasional sweep.

In the 22/23 financial year, Council attended to 317 of footpath defect requests. While 'urgent' requests get attended to within two weeks, most requests fall under 'high'. 'High' rated requests are fixed within 90 days. Including scoping of the problem, **this means it can take approximately 1/4 of a year to get a 'high' rated defect fixed.** Personally, I do not believe this service level meets community expectations anymore, hence the issue being raised so frequently with me.

Getting footpath defects fixed quicker either requires an additional team or the re-allocation of an existing one. There is a budget option this year to improve footpath and road maintenance (pothole) response times. Given our expanding footpath network, there will be an increasing amount of work for the same number of workers. If you would like to see improved footpath maintenance, please tell your local councillor. Also, make sure to report footpath defects via the Council website:

<https://www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/our-services/report-an-issue-or-request-a-service>

Craigburn Ward**Cr Karen Hockley**

Telephone:
0423 919 080

khockley@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

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

It's a Saturday morning, breezy and cool but the sun is shining brightly. For many it's a relief not to be battling to stay cool after our recent late blast of hot summer weather. Staying inside with the air-conditioning on is often the most attractive option on those really hot days. But what if it's an extreme or catastrophic fire day?

It seems like a long time since we've had a catastrophic fire day but we have had some extreme days this year, including two over the recent long weekend. The CFS advise that, on an extreme fire day any fire that starts will be extremely dangerous and that, unless you and your home are prepared to the highest level, you should leave early and move to a safer location. This is often easier said than done!

Council received a large petition calling for community centres in safer areas to be open to hills residents and their pets on extreme and catastrophic fire days. It noted that "suitable facilities already exist, but the needed access is not currently allowed". I know from my personal experience of living in the hills how disruptive, inconvenient, and expensive it can be to leave the area if you don't have family elsewhere to accommodate you. However, I worry about the people who either have no choice, or feel that they have no choice, about leaving the area.

People with young children, the frail, the elderly, the disabled, and those with pets. Many people in these cohorts have told me that they just don't have anywhere to go. They don't have relatives in Adelaide, their friendship and/or family networks are in the hills and a day at the movies or in a shopping complex just doesn't work.

On receiving the petition, I moved a motion asking for Council to consult the community about how it would value having a community centre available on these days for residents and their domestic pets. Council staff have published a survey to ascertain community expectations and needs and I encourage you to get involved and have your say. If there is little response or a response that indicates that the community doesn't support the proposal, nothing will happen. The survey is available on the Council website until 30 April 2024.

Speaking of surveys, the Council is currently consulting on the draft Dog and Cat Management Plan. A previous consultation has informed the draft, however despite this demonstrating a need in the community for more dedicated dog parks and off leash areas, the plan does not adequately address how this will be achieved. The first draft specifically said 'no further dog parks'. Hills Councillors rallied together to have this removed from the draft but there is still more to be done.

If you would like to see another dedicated dog park or better off leash areas, please complete the consultation survey. It will be on the Council website until 10 May 2024.

Please call me anytime on 0423 919 080.



Grey Box Community Group Communications Officer Marina Louter ties a ribbon around a Grey Box tree at Tiwu Kumangka, Blackwood.

Ribbons highlight Grey Box Day

Yellow ribbons are set to appear on Grey Box trees across Mitcham this month to raise awareness of their importance in the lead-up to Grey Box Day 2024.

Organised by the Grey Box Community Group Inc, the day aims to encourage City of Mitcham residents to grow plants from the Grey Box Eucalypt (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodland threatened ecological community.

This year's event will be held on Sunday 5 May at State Flora nursery, Belair National Park.

Native plant species found in the Grey Box Grassy Woodland Community, including sheoak, wattle, ground covers and grasses, will be available for sale at State Flora at a subsidised cost of six tubestock for \$20 or 20 for \$60.

This year, the first 100 customers that purchase a package will receive a free tubestock narrow-leaf bitter pea plant, which

provides food for the native golden pea bee. This bee is found in Belair National Park but not many surrounding suburban gardens.

Grey Box Community Group President Greg Johns said it was encouraging to see so many locals passionate about Grey Box Grassy Woodland, a habitat that once covered large parts of the Adelaide plains and foothills.

"We had a fantastic turnout last year and we hope for another great day with support from the community who are helping improve biodiversity and preserve our natural habitat."

Local musicians the Fiddle Sticks will perform and there will be some food and drinks available on the day.

Grey Box Day, Sunday 5 May, 10am to 4pm, State Flora Nursery, Belair National Park (no entrance fee required if only visiting nursery).



Mitcham retains Tree City of the World title

City of Mitcham has retained its Tree City of the World title for the fifth consecutive year.

This recognition highlights the city's commitment to caring for its trees and urban canopy.

The aim of the Tree Cities of the World initiative, led by the Arbor Day Foundation, is to connect cities around the world to share and adopt best practices in managing trees and forests. City of Mitcham joins nine other cities in Australia with the prestigious title.

"Mitcham joins cities around the world that have taken steps toward robust and healthy city forests," Arbor Day Foundation president Dan Lambe said. "Trees clean our air and water, provide shade, and beautify the places we live and work. This designation signifies Mitcham's commitment to being a healthier, happier city."

As part of Mitcham's Tree Strategy 2016-2025, City of Mitcham has increased its tree planting program to plant 1,800 trees annually by 2025, up from 1,100 in 2017. The City has also implemented measures such as increased street tree audits and an annual Arbor Day community event.



Glenalta resident Lesley Mackness and Mayor Dr Heather Holmes-Ross.

Mitcham launches Tree Plan

City of Mitcham has launched a Tree Plan to help guide the delivery of its Tree Strategy 2016-2025.

The plan outlines the range of species and locations of the City's 75,000 trees comprising 55,000 street trees and over 20,000 in reserves and open spaces.

It also provides insights into the City's approach to planting, including considerations for precincts and tree character areas.

City of Mitcham Mayor Dr Heather Holmes-Ross said the plan set out the benefits and potential impacts of trees along with policy and legislative constraints and was in line with Council's 2019 declaration of a climate emergency.

"The City of Mitcham is committed to ensuring the sustainability and diversity of our urban forest and preserving our cherished green spaces for generations to come," she said.

"Our City is home to some of the remaining stands of remnant Grey Box grassy woodland,

including patches classified nationally as an endangered ecological community."

Other important remnant trees in the Council area include Cup Gum, Drooping Sheoak, Manna Gum, Native Apricot, Native Cherry, Native Pine, Pink Gum, Red Gum, SA Blue Gum and Stringybark.

Many of the City's suburbs have a distinct tree character or feel, which is represented in Tree Character Precincts outlined in the Strategy.

All new planting in City of Mitcham will be based on a precinct approach where tree species selection and planting reinforces the character of each area.

The plan also sets out the frequency and methods used in tree risk audits and how street tree data is captured in an online map updated every five years.

To view the plan, visit www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/trees