

From Council:

Community Recovery Update

Autumn 2025

For all enquiries or requests, contact Council on 1300 666 535.

Grants Initiatives Bring Communities Together

Our Community Flood Recovery and Resilience Grants program, promoted in the last edition of this newsletter, received 46 applications from across the shire. A partnership between Council and the state and federal governments, the grants program supports events, training and other initiatives with grants of up to \$10,000 to eligible not-for-profit community organisations.

A number of applications have been funded to date, including the Rochester Senior Citizens 'Christmas Bells' event, Colbo Community Autumn Fest, Torrumbarry Community Christmas Event, Njernda Acceptance Tree Community Sculpture and Rochester Songs at the Silos. While diverse in nature, these events share the common goal of fostering social connectedness and community belonging among flood-impacted communities.



Senior citizens of Rochester enjoying their Christmas Bells event.

Inflatable Fun In The Sun

Local families had heaps of fun and kept cool in the Summer heat at the temporary inflatable splash park installed at the Rochester Racecourse Recreation Reserve during the January school holidays.

The idea for the splash park came from Rochester Secondary College students as part of the Rochester Change Agents Day organised by Council's Youth Development team in 2024. Bringing the idea to life, Council's Aquatic team set up the splash park, complete with an inflatable water slide and zorb balls. The splash park ran for three days a week in January, providing



(l-r) Cr Paul Jarman, students Georgie Acocks and Blake Kyne, and Cr Tony Marwood at the pop-up inflatable splash park in Rochester.



a fun and safe water experience for community members and visitors alike.

The initiative was a wonderful collaboration between Council and Rochester Secondary College and

highlighted the vibrant community spirit of Rochester. To capture the fun, some of the Rochester Secondary College students, along with Campaspe Shire Councillors Paul Jarman and Tony Marwood, created a video for social media.

Rochester Flood Study Update

The Rochester Flood Study is progressing well with extensive survey work and meticulous documentation carried out over the past few months. This work has included sorting more than 200 sets of flood photographs submitted by the community as well as surveying:

- more than 160 flood marks and 2,900 floor levels across the Campaspe flood plain, between Eppalock and Echuca
- 1,730 buildings in Rochester
- 100 road and railway bridges and major culverts
- 1,000 GMW drainage structures and channel banks plus river cross sections.

All these details have been incorporated into the computerised flood model. Calibration of the model, so it accurately reproduces surveyed flood marks from the 2011, 2022 and January 2024 floods, is well underway. Calibrating the model is the most time-consuming part of the study. However, the model's accuracy is critical to understanding how proposed flood mitigation works will perform in the future.

At the Flood Study Community Reference Committee meeting in February, flood engineers HARC (Hydrology and Risk Consulting), presented maps showing depths and extents of water inundation produced by the computer as compared to surveyed flood marks. Graphs of river heights versus time at the gauging stations were also presented and compared to those produced by the computer. The committee was of the view that the modelled results well matched the actual flood records.

HARC is continuing to improve the model's accuracy, taking into account the committee's advice. Following verification by HARC, the final draft calibration modelling of the 2011, 2022 and 2024 flood events will be presented to the wider community, along with trial 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (100-year flood event) mapping, for further review. This is scheduled to occur mid-March to April 2025.



Rochester Flood Study project manager John McCartney and North Central Catchment Management Authority manager flood plain Camille White in July 2024. Photo by Aidan Briggs courtesy of MMG/Riverine Herald.

If you'd like to stay up-to-date on the Flood Study, you can subscribe to updates on Council's website at
www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/rochesterfloodstudy .

The Rochester Flood Study Report, documenting behaviour of the existing flood plain under various design flood events (for instance, from 20% AEP, or 5-year event, through to in excess of 0.1% AEP, a 1,000-year event), will then be presented for community review.

Investigation of mitigation options will start after the design events are completed. Ideas and suggestions will be sought from the community to supplement options identified by the engineers. All options will be assessed, including the findings from the Eppalock Technical Assessment.



This is expected to start mid-year and be completed by December 2025. The mitigation options will also include an assessment of the costs to raise or floodproof all existing buildings in Rochester.

Get Ready for Ripple Fest!

When: 22–25 May

Where: Events will take place on river banks in Echuca and Rochester

Planning for an exciting new arts, cultural and community festival is underway. Spanning four days, Ripple Fest will transform the towns of Echuca and Rochester into a living canvas, featuring large-scale art installations, live performances and interactive workshops.

Funded by the Victorian Government, Ripple Fest promises to be an immersive experience and a fusion of nature, art and culture. The program of events and activities has been developed by Creative Co-Design groups based in Rochester and Echuca, with members from Campaspe and further afield. For more details, visit www.ripplefest.com.au.



Members of the Rochester Creative CoDesign Group at their February meeting.

Changemaker Workshop – Rochester

When: Thurs, 13 & Fri, 14 March, 8.30am to 4.30pm

Where: Rochester Community House, 43–45 MacKay Street, Rochester

Want to make change happen in your community? Then this free, two-day Changemaker Workshop could be for you. You'll learn how to become a changemaker, as well as how to manage setbacks and work collaboratively with others. For more information, contact the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation website via email info@rural-leaders.org.au.

Rochester Mural Festival



When: 29 March–5 April, various times

Where: Mural Park, Moore Street, Rochester

With a theme of 'Life, Love and Music', this year's festival will be another visual spectacular as eight talented mural artists ply their extraordinary skills across six days.

Karting Victoria Event

When: Sat, 22 & Sun, 23 March

Where: Rochester Kart Club, Quarry Road, Rochester

Rochester Kart Club is hosting round 2 of the Golden Power Series. This series attracts 200+ competitors each round, making it one of the most popular karting events in Australia.

Anzac Day

When: Fri, 25 April

Where: various locations

A full list of Anzac Day commemorative services across Campaspe Shire is available via the Events Directory on Council's website at www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/eventsdirectory. Events are listed in date order.

Lockington Vintage Rally



When: Sat, 26 & Sun, 27 April, 9am–4pm both days

Where: Lockington & District Living Heritage Complex, 2–10 Market Street, Lockington

Enjoy a great day out exploring vintage tractors, engines, trucks, motorcycles, cars and farm machinery. Free entry for primary-school-aged children and free entry for rally exhibitors (proof of insurance required).

Do You Know What To Do In The First 72 Hours Of A Crisis?



Council's 'The First 72 Hours' Community Resilience Program is designed to help people and communities plan, prepare and respond effectively in the first three days after a crisis, whether it be a personal situation or external event. The program translates the emergency management pillars of Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery into simple and practical actionable steps. Going beyond the more common fire and flood situations, the program will equip people with knowledge and skills to think critically, seek the right information, and make decisions to protect their interests and wellbeing. For more information, visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/thefirst72hours.

What are you going to do?

You can handle any emergency better if you are prepared!



First 72 Hours Resources

We invite you to visit a Council customer service centre to receive a free 'First 72 Hours' USB stick or key ring. This resource will help you to develop your own disaster preparedness plan. Plans can also be downloaded from Council's website at www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/thefirst72hours.

Fire Danger Period Reminder



Did you know that burning off isn't the only activity restricted during the CFA-declared Fire Danger Period? Outdoor cooking, using a fire pit, welding, chain-sawing and operating farm/road machinery, are among the many other outdoor activities that have restrictions placed on them during this period. To find out the full list of activities and their restrictions, please visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/fire-bans-ratings-and-restrictions/can-i-or-cant-i.

Please note that the declared Fire Danger Period will end in Campaspe Shire on Thursday, 1 May 2025.

Recovery Hub Services

Council's Recovery Hub provides a range of services, including case management, financial counselling, wellbeing support and legal advice. Located at 48 Mackay Street, Rochester, the hub is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm. Drop in and see us or call 1300 666 535 and press 2, or email shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au.



Campaspe Shire Council's Flood Recovery Program is generously funded by the State of Victoria through Emergency Recovery Victoria's Recovery Hubs Program in response to the October 2022 flood event which impacted Victorian communities in the Shire of Campaspe.