



Merri-bek
City Council

Merri-bek Community News

February 2024

↓
**Apply for a
community
grant today**

**Our home
library service
brightens lives**

**Love living local:
everything you
need in Merri-bek**

**Kindergartens,
footpaths,
community centres
and more – our
biggest capital
works spend ever!**

Merri-bek family Cesur, Leyla, Mavi and Amy look forward to their children's centre being upgraded.

Meet the Mayor	2
Capital works program	3
Your Merri-bek calendar	4
See you on the trail	5
Home library service	5
New parents in Merri-bek	6
Works in your area	7
Community grants	8
Keep your home cool	8

Merri-bek Language Link

Italiano	Italian	9280 1911
Ελληνικά	Greek	9280 1912
عربي	Arabic	9280 1913
Türkçe	Turkish	9280 1914
Tiếng Việt	Vietnamese	9280 1915
पंजाबी	Nepali	9280 0751
普通话	Chinese (Simplified)	9280 0750

National Relay Service:
13 36 77 or relayservice.com.au

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03 9240 1111 merri-bek.vic.gov.au



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Meet the Mayor

Cr Adam Pulford

Merri-bek Councillor Adam Pulford was elected as Mayor last November, for the term running through to October this year. Learn a little bit more about him and what he has in store for the coming year.

What's the best thing about living in Merri-bek?

I love calling Merri-bek home. We have such a diverse community, with residents hailing from all over the world, bringing the richness of culture, experiences and stories that make our city so great. There is always something new to do, see or learn – including our incredible cafes, pubs and restaurants, as well as art exhibitions and gigs. I also love how welcoming, caring and compassionate our community is.

When you're not busy being the Mayor, what do you like to do in your free time?

When I'm not working, I'm usually catching up with friends or on the couch, watching re-runs of my fave shows, like Parks and Rec.

Over the past year, I've regularly gotten to Brunswick Baths. I've learned how important exercise is for my mental and physical health. I love the community at Brunny Baths – if you see me there, please don't hesitate to come and say hello! I also enjoy bouldering and maintaining my 800-day and growing Italian Duolingo streak!

Where would you say is your favourite spot in Merri-bek?

Hands down it has to be Merri Creek. We are so lucky to have Merri Creek running alongside our city – it is deeply valued by our community and has been an important local site for millennia, beginning with the Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. The creek is what it is today because of the vision and hard work of our community, over decades, to protect and restore it.

I also love A Minor Place for coffee and food, and for delicious pizza, drinks and a game of pool with my partner Nicco, Hotel Lombardo is a new fave.

What do you hope to achieve as Mayor?

I want to help make our streets greener and safer for everybody, whether you're walking, riding, rolling or driving.

The reality is the climate crisis demands we reshape our neighbourhoods to stop making the crisis worse, and to deal with climate impacts – including rising heat and more extreme weather events, like flooding. Imagine if we used this as a chance to build more pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and plant more trees! We could make our city safer, greener and better for all of us.

Our largest capital works program ever!

Our 4-year Council Budget 2023-27 provides \$217 million for capital works to improve services and facilities across Merri-bek.

This is our largest investment in capital works ever.

Our goal is to ensure that whatever stage in life you're at, you can know we are investing in infrastructure and assets that will make your life in Merri-bek safe, healthy and happy.

Through our Capital Works Program we're putting \$123 million into projects including building more public toilets, renewing roads and footpaths, tree planting, redeveloping Fawcner Leisure Centre, transforming Brunswick's Saxon Street Arts and Community Hub and delivering bigger and better kindergartens.

More space for children to learn, make friends and play.

Expanding kindergartens – such as the Turner Street Kindergarten in Pascoe Vale South, Oak Park Kindergarten, and the Derby Street Children's Centre in Pascoe Vale – mean a better environment for more younger Merri-bek residents to learn, make friends and play.

In addition to our contributions to Merri-bek kindergartens, the Victorian Government has generously contributed \$10.7 million for us to deliver up to 329 new kindergarten spaces by 2029.

Improvements to the Pascoe Vale kindergarten include a rebuild of the existing 4-year-old kindergarten room and providing an additional kindergarten room to allow another 27 yearly enrolments.

There will also be a new office, therapy room, staff room, planning room, accessible toilet and kitchen.

Merri-bek family, Amy, Cesur, four-year-old Mavi and one-year-old Leyla, attend the Derby Street Children's Centre and kindergarten. Now enrolled in the kindergarten program, Mavi has attended the centre's child care program since he was 20 months old.

Works to expand the centre are currently underway and expected to be completed mid-July 2024.

Mavi's mum Amy says the children are excited about the works.

"Mavi likes watching the workers and big machines out the window. The staff even bring in cardboard and shoe boxes from home so he can build his own buildings and robots in the centre!"

"The kids have also been asked through the process what they wanted to see in the outdoor play area. It's great. They're excited about the construction."

Learn more about our 4-year Council Budget 2023-27 at merri-bek.vic.gov.au/recentbudget

Help shape our budget

Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas for Stage 1 of the Community Budget Ideas 2024/25 engagement.

We now have 32 ideas Council could include as part of the 2024-25 Budget.

Now we need your help to decide which ones might be included!

To vote for your 3 favourite ideas, visit conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/community-budget-ideas-2425



If you need help to vote call us on **9240 1111**

Voting opened on Thursday 15 February and closes Sunday 10 March.

FESTIVALS



Brunswick Music Festival

The much-loved local festival presents an eclectic line-up of international and local music across Brunswick and beyond.

🕒 3 to 11 March

📍 Various venues in Merri-bek

For more info visit

➡ brunswickmusicfestival.com.au



Glenroy Festival

Join us for FREE entertainment, vibrant community stalls, mouth-watering food, and interactive workshops as we come together to celebrate the heart of our Glenroy community.

🕒 Sunday 5 May, 11am to 3pm

📍 Glenroy Community Hub and Bridget Shortell Reserve, Glenroy

Find out more at

➡ merri-bek.vic.gov.au/glenroyfestival

FREE LIBRARY EVENTS



Storytime

We hold storytime sessions in a range of community languages including Italian, French, Spanish, Greek and more. Find out more through the below link.

➡ bit.ly/merribeklibraryevents

FREE LIBRARY EVENTS



Chatty Cafe

Come along to the library and have a good chat over a cuppa. These social sessions are open to everyone!

📍 Coburg Library

🕒 2pm Wednesdays

📍 Glenroy Library

🕒 11am Fridays

No booking needed.



Art Connection

The Art Connection is a program designed to build social connection for people with disability through art practice.

📍 Coburg Library

🕒 2pm Fridays

📍 Glenroy Library

🕒 2pm Mondays



Spanish Conversation Club

¡Ven y únete a nosotros! Practice your Spanish at our monthly Spanish conversation club.

🕒 10.30am first Saturday of every month

📍 Brunswick Library

Book your spot online

➡ merri-bek.vic.gov.au/libraries or call ☎️ 9389 8600

YOUR BINS IN 2024



Our bin collection calendar

Head to our website or pop into your local customer service centre for a personalised bin collection calendar.

Note: Good Friday (29 March) and ANZAC Day (25 April) are 2 upcoming public holidays that will impact your bin collection. All bins will be collected 1 day later than usual.

Visit ➡ merri-bek.vic.gov.au/waste-calendar24

PETS



Cat desexing program

We've partnered with wat djerring Animal Facility, The Lost Dogs Home and The Cat Protection Society to offer a special program. Your pet can be desexed, microchipped and registered for the current year (first-time registration only):

💰 **FREE** for Merri-bek residents with Concession Cards

💰 **\$50** for Merri-bek residents without Concession Cards.

(The standard cost for this service is usually more than \$300.)

Find out more at

➡ merri-bek.vic.gov.au/safecat

Do you have feedback on Merri-bek Community News? Email us at:
 ➡ info@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



LOVE MERRI-BEK trails

See you on the trail

Got weekend plans? There's plenty to do in Merri-bek. Our 4 trail maps are packed with exciting places to go and things to do all across the municipality. Here's a rundown of each map that you can download to be ready to explore.

➔ lovemerri-bek.com.au

BREWERIES+DISTILLERIES

From mainstays to the best-kept secrets located down side streets, we've rounded up a bunch of breweries and distilleries.



LIVE MUSIC+RECORDS

On any night of the week across Merri-bek, there are live music gems to discover and explore. Prefer a night in? Independent record stores abound, full to the brim with new and secondhand LPs in every genre.



AT YOUR LEISURE

Whether you're looking to cultivate a new hobby, get active, shake up your routine, find a like-minded community or just have some fun, this map has you covered.



ART GALLERIES

Immerse yourself in Merri-bek's lively art scene, home to more than 20 galleries presenting collections by local, Australian and international artists.



Our home library service, brightening lives

Meet Glenroy resident Mr Kevin White.

Mr White has been a Merri-bek home library service customer for the past 4 years and has generously offered to share how much the service means to him. Mr White says:

"I am 95 and live alone after losing my wife Pat several years ago. I became depressed and very much disillusioned with life and on the advice of a friend I contacted the Glenroy Library about their home book delivery service."

"Sarah (home library service librarian) understood my situation and arranged a monthly book delivery of my favourite stories of 17th and 18th century westerns."

"For someone living alone – and there are many of us – the opportunity to be able to read a book helps in many ways to overcome the loneliness that comes in our old age."

"This is a wonderful service for those who need it the most."

Find out more about our home library service at ➔ merri-bek.vic.gov.au/homelibrary

Lifting the lid on public toilets

It's important that people can use and feel comfortable using public toilets right across Merri-bek.



In March and April we will be asking the community what you think about public toilets, including what you need and where you need them.

Find out more about how to join the conversation by calling us on ☎9240 1111 or head to ➔ conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/public-toilets

From home visits to new parent groups, we are dedicated to making sure our youngest Merri-bek residents and their families stay happy, healthy and connected.

Our Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service is a free, voluntary, confidential and professional health service available to all Merri-bek families of children from birth to school age.

Our MCH service is run by nurses who hold specialist qualifications in maternal and child health, and the service also links families up with a local network of other health and support services.

Get help from Monday to Friday across our 16 centres by appointment. Two locations are also open once a month on a Saturday.

Access our services: Call our bookings line on ☎9240 1111 (press 2) or get in touch with your local Maternal and Child Health Nurse.

Learn more at ☎merri-bek.vic.gov.au/newparent

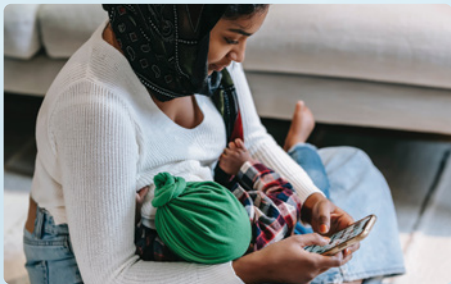
You can access a range of groups and services across Merri-bek! Here are just some you can join:



Sleep and settling support – help for the whole family

We can support you to make sense of your unsettled baby and their sleep needs. Let's work together to get your family on the path to a good night's sleep.

Merri-bek families can also ask the centre nurse for specialist sleep support, and we offer home visiting and community sessions on weekdays and Saturdays.



Breastfeeding support

Are you looking for support with feeding your baby?

We offer twice-weekly dedicated sessions at 2 Merri-bek locations. We help families with all feeding concerns.



Dads' group

Are you a local dad and want to connect with other fathers on the same parenting journey? Regular meet-ups occur online and in person at local parks and cafes. There's also a WhatsApp group for support.

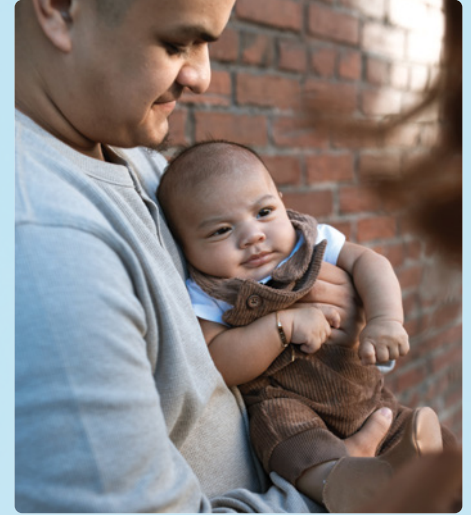
Contact your local MCH centre for details or visit ☎dadsgroup.org for more information.



Infant program

This nurse-led program helps families encourage healthy eating, reduce screen time and build active play. Topics also covered include introducing solids, tummy time, fussy eating and parent wellbeing.

Group sessions are online or face-to-face and run during the week as well as on some Saturdays.



اردو Urdu

کیا آپ Merri-bek میں آنے والے نئے والدین ہیں؟

ہماری زچہ و بچہ کی صحت کی سروس گھر آکر خدمات مہیا کرتے ہیں والدین کے گروپوں کی میزبانی کرتے ہیں اور آپکو مقامی صحت کی خدمات کے ساتھ منسلک کرتے ہیں۔

مزید معلومات کے لیے، مہربانی کر کے 9240 1111 پر کال کریں اور ایک ترجمان کو طلب کریں، جو آپ کی زبان میں ہماری کسٹمر سروس ٹیم میں سے کسی سے بات کرنے میں آپ کی مدد کرے گا۔

Turkish Türkçe

Merri-bek'te yaşayan yeni bir ebeveyn misiniz?

Anne ve Çocuk Sağlığı servisimiz ev ziyaretleri sağlar, ebeveyn gruplarına ev sahipliği yapar ve size yerel sağlık hizmetlerine yönlendirir.

Daha fazla bilgi için lütfen 9280 1914 numaralı telefonu arayarak kendi dilinizde biriyle konuşabilirsiniz.

Nepali नेपाली

के तपाईं Merri-bek मा नयाँ आमाबुबा बन्नु भएको छ?

हाम्रो मातृ र बाल स्वास्थ्य सेवाले तपाईंको घर भ्रमण सेवा उपलब्ध गर्दछ, अभिभावक समूहहरू सञ्चालन गर्दछ र तपाईंलाई स्थानीय स्वास्थ्य सेवाहरूसँग जोडिदिन्छ।

थप जानकारीको लागि नेपाली भाषामा कसैसँग कुरा गर्न कृपया 9280 0751 मा फोन गर्नुहोस्।

North East Ward



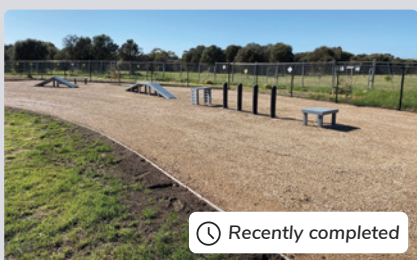
In Progress

Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment

The Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment is taking shape! The outdoor 50-metre and play pool shells are in place and tiling has commenced. The new extension to the gym and group fitness space is built and is now being fitted out.

The project is on track for completion by next summer.

Find out more at conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/fawkner-leisure-centre-refurbishment



Recently completed

Moomba Dog Park, Fawkner

Following community guidance and voting on park location, we recently built a new fenced off-leash dog park for all to enjoy. The new park features shade trees, a shelter, plenty of seating, drinking fountains, agility equipment and different surface materials for dogs to explore.

North East Ward



Mayor Cr Adam Pulford
0417 835 793
APulford@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Sue Bolton
0417 583 664
SBolton@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Annalivia Carli Hannan
0418 263 525
ACarliHannan@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Helen Pavlidis-Mihalakos
0409 200 418
HPavlidisM@merri-bek.vic.gov.au

North West Ward



Recently completed

New fitness equipment at ATC Cook Reserve, Glenroy

We recently installed new fitness equipment stations following community feedback. The new equipment includes units aimed at cardio, strength and flexibility. On the opposite side of the path we have also installed a new accessible drinking fountain with a dog bowl and platform seat with shade trees. A further new set of fitness equipment aimed at seniors is also being installed, along with a new shelter.



Recently completed

Kingsford Smith Ulm Dog Park, Glenroy

After the community voted on location and feedback about park design, we recently built a new fenced off-leash dog park for all to enjoy. The new park features a dedicated small-dog area, agility equipment, shelter and seating, a sand pit and more.

North West Ward



Cr Helen Davidson
0403 709 948
HDavidson@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Monica Harte
0437 019 401
MHarte@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Angelica Panopoulos
0417 854 518
APanopoulos@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Oscar Yildiz
0413 850 357
OYildiz@merri-bek.vic.gov.au

South Ward



In Progress

33 Saxon Street, Brunswick

Redevelopment of the cultural and community precinct at 33 Saxon Street is well underway.

This will create space for leading First Nations contemporary arts organisation Blak Dot, artists, creative industries and Maternal and Child Health services.

The site will also feature community meeting rooms and new green space.

The project is on schedule for completion by November 2024.

➔ conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/33-Saxon-Street



In Progress

A park close to home at Frith Street, Brunswick

We're building a new park at 14 Frith Street. Following community feedback, we're making sure there are plenty of native trees and plants, a basketball half-court and much more. For updates head to ➔ conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au

South Ward



Deputy Mayor Cr Lambros Tapinos
0433 419 075
LTapinos@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr James Conlan
0409 279 335
JConlan@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Cr Mark Riley
0499 807 044
MRiley@merri-bek.vic.gov.au



RIMERN board members and active volunteers: Keith, David, Susie and Jo.

Community grants program – applications now open

Our community grants program works in partnership with community groups and individuals to create a sustainable, healthy, inclusive and empowered community. This year we are dedicating more than \$900,000 to the community grants program.

The following 2 grant streams are currently open for applications:

Community Participation Grant (for both individuals and groups)

Individual grants are for Merri-bek residents who want to pursue an achievement in their field of expertise. Grants of up to \$750 are available.

Community group grants support groups and organisations needing funding for programs and activities designed to build participation in the community. Groups and organisation can request funding of up to \$3,000 per application.

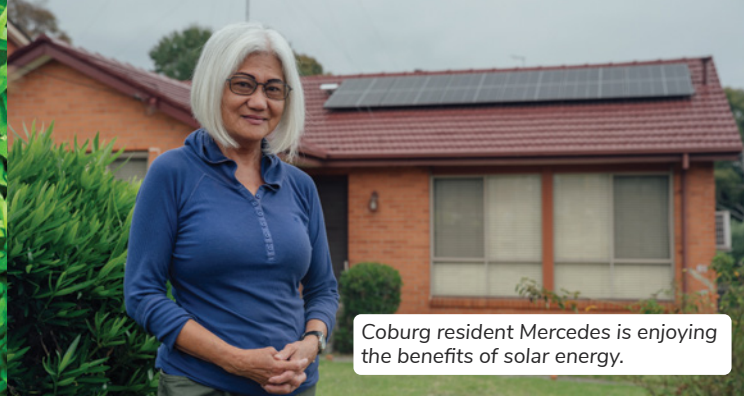
Membership Activity Grants

These grants support Merri-bek-based incorporated community groups to promote active community involvement. We're offering funding up to \$3,000 per year for 3 years.

Local group Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network (RIMERN) recently received a community grant to help set up their business. RIMERN's Chair Susie says:

"We're part of the circular economy, we get donations from households and businesses and then pass them on to help people in need to furnish their homes."

To find out more, including conditions, and to apply for a community grant, visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/community-grants



Coburg resident Mercedes is enjoying the benefits of solar energy.

Keep your home cool with help from Merri-bek!

Mercedes and her husband recently had solar panels installed on their Coburg home. They knew the cost and environmental benefits of solar but were concerned about the up-front cost. Mercedes asked if the Merri-bek Solar Program could help fund solar panels in their home.

With our support and reputable supplier partners, Mercedes has already enjoyed the benefits of solar energy.

"Installing solar has helped us a lot. Now we know about climate change, and we are doing something about it. Solar helps us with bills, but it also helps the environment, reducing the electricity we use," Mercedes says.

"It's a small way that our household plays its part to save the world. Every little thing helps."

Merri-bek City Council has 2 offers to help low-income households save money on electricity bills. Eligible households can receive financial support from Council for 1 of the following upgrades:

Merri-bek Solar Program

We could pay up to \$3,000+GST towards installing solar on your rooftop. Combined with other government rebates, you may be left with only a small, or even no payment, to make.

Merri-bek Energy Upgrades

We could pay up to \$2,000+GST towards upgrades to make your home more energy-efficient. These upgrades include installing insulation and sealing up gaps around your doors and windows.

For more information or to see whether you are eligible, contact our Energy Officer on ☎9304 9717 or ✉zerocarbon@merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek, and pays respect to their Elders past, present, as well as to all First Nations communities, who significantly contribute to the life of the area.



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