



Somers Residents Association Inc.

SRA 2023 AGM PRESIDENT'S REPORT

During 2023 your Executive and Committee have been principally focused on the 4 key matters which we mentioned at last year's AGM, namely:

- i) Completion of the Camp Hill Road footpath
- ii) Somers Community Park
- iii) Recycling Initiatives in Somers
- iv) Community Groups and Events

Camp Hill Road Path - At this time last year the Southern section of the Camp Hill Road path had been completed however the Council funding for the second Northern section had "expired" so we were concerned that the path would remain half built for a long time. The SRA had always stated that the Northern section, due to being in a higher speed limit zone and having no other realistic bicycle options was more needed than the Southern section. Therefore we delighted when Council include sufficient funds in its works program in its current Budget to allow the Northern section to be constructed. Thanks to Councillor David Gill in this regard.

We trust this will make travelling to school and into and out of Somers onto the Sandy Point Road bike path safer and easier for cyclists and pedestrians.

Somers Community Park - During the year, the council also released its Mountain Bike and BMX Strategy including references to the Somers Community Park project. As Council has its own funding model to fully fund the bike park the SRA made a decision to refund all community donations to the SCP. We offered donors 4 options – a refund / School donation / Jenny Bryant Wildlife carer donation / MP Koalas donation. I am pleased to report that as at now we have either refunded or reallocated almost 90% of those funds.

The SRA will continue to liaise with Council to ensure that this important initiative focused on our younger Community members, is implemented by Council as soon as possible.

Recycling – The SRA has continued to fund and support recycling initiatives in Somers. Principal among these is the Terracycling / recycling station operated by Lou Taylor at her home and at SGS. We would like to extend the Community's thanks to Dean & Zoe of SGS for allowing the recycling station to be located at

the side entrance to the Somers Store. We would also like to thank Western Port Automotive Services owned by John and Andrea Houben for their corporate sponsorship of part of the recycling campaign. I understand that so far Somers has recycled almost 100 Kilos of oral care / dental products / medicine containers / blister packs etc. There is a range of other household items / rubbish which can be ethically disposed of at the Recycling station.

We also booked the Council's Recycling Trailer twice during the year and many kilos of electrical goods and small household appliances were able to be removed and recycled.

Community Groups and Events – During the year, the SRA has supported and engaged with the following community activities:

- Clean Up Australia Day [NB this year on Sunday 3 March] support
- Earth Day
- Anzac Day service at Balnarring
- Somers Arts Fair – prizes and sponsorship / Somers Primary School (we note that the School received an allocation of approximately \$1Million of funds to cover over its basketball courts / outdoor area following representations made by the SRA in conjunction with the School to both political parties prior to the most recent State Election)
- Coolart Community Garden donations for new wicking beds
- Mornington Peninsula Koalas donations
- Jenny Bryant Wildlife carer donations
- Somers Neighbourhood Watch – “Coffee with a Cop” events
- Hastings Police
- Somers CFA donations and support at events
- Maintenance of the SGS Defibrillator and replacement Battery
- Purchase of a portable square reader (mobile pay device) available for use by Somers Groups when required.

Further the SRA has issued regular Facebook and other social media updates and regular printed Newsletters with Community information. Thanks to our Editor Libby Moore and her Committee helpers and Local MP Paul Mercurio for the printing assistance. We have also engaged where required with the MPSC and DEECA.

During 2024 your SRA will be focusing on issues raised with us by the Community, however we currently have the following priorities:

1. Parks Vic ceased to be the manager of the Somers Foreshore Reserve on 30 June 2023. Since then DEECA has been the manager, however, the SRA

is concerned that attention to track maintenance / indigenous planting / attach on weeds and rabbits etc has significantly declined under Parks Vic and now DEECA. We will be advocating to DEECA for a local group to be properly funded to reassume responsibility for the Foreshore Management in the first instance.

2. We will continue to liaise with MPSC to seek to have the Somers Community Park project green-lit for construction as soon as possible and for it to contain the indigenous garden area noted in the initial designs.
3. We will continue the existing recycling initiatives and look for other opportunities to assist the Community with recycling opportunities and education.
4. We will continue to engage and support other Groups and Events in the Community as we have always done – providing donations / support / sponsorship etc.

Finally I would like to thank all of our members for their ongoing support / also the support and work of the Committee and Executive and in particular Vice President Libby Moore and Treasurer Debbie Lever.

Please remember that we are all volunteers, all of us with many other work and family commitments. Please never hesitate to contact any if us to discuss anything of concern or interest to you in our wonderful Community.

Ross Millen
Hon. President
Somers Residents Association Inc.