

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2025

# yarralife



## 50 amazing years at Cubbies

Your guide to summer in Yarra

Revealed: Yarra's top dog names

## Your Councillors

To find more about your Ward Councillors visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au/Councillors](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/Councillors)

Below are contact details for your Ward Councillors.



### BOULEVARD WARD

**Cr Sharon Harrison**

[sharon.harrison@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:sharon.harrison@yarracity.vic.gov.au)  
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### CURTAIN WARD

**Cr Edward Crossland**

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### HODDLE WARD

**Cr Sophie Wade**

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### LANGRIDGE WARD

**Cr Evangeline Aston**

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### LENNOX WARD

**Cr Andrew Davies**

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### MACKILLOP WARD

**Cr Stephen Jolly**

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0437 856 713



### MELBA WARD

**Cr Meca Ho**

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0419 844 362



### NICHOLLS WARD

**Cr Kenneth Gomez**

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0407 571 295



### YARRA BEND WARD

**Cr Sarah McKenzie**

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0427 052 602

You can also reach your Councillors by calling **9205 5055** or sending a letter to **c/o PO Box 168, Richmond VIC 3121**.

**On the cover:**

Children playing at Cubbies playground.

## Our new mayor and deputy mayor

Council extends its thanks to outgoing Mayor Cr Stephen Jolly and Deputy Mayor Cr Sarah McKenzie for their service over the past 12 months.

Our Councillors are electing a new mayor and deputy mayor for the City of Yarra at a special meeting at Richmond Town Hall on Wednesday 12 November. The successful candidates will serve a one-year term.

Visit the 'News' section on our website or keep an eye on our social media channels for the results.

## Holiday service changes

Some of our services will operate on an adjusted timetable during the festive season. Public holidays fall on **Thursday 25 December** (Christmas Day), **Friday 26 December** (Boxing Day) and **Thursday 1 January 2026** (New Year's Day).

- **Customer Service Centres:** Richmond Town Hall and Collingwood Town Hall will close at 2pm on Wednesday 24 December, and will be closed on public holidays. Keep an eye on [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au) or our social media pages for any other changes. You can make payments, report incidents, or submit requests easily 24/7 at our website on the 'Services' page.
- **Libraries:** For changes to opening hours at our library branches, visit [library.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://library.yarracity.vic.gov.au)
- **Leisure Centres:** Find changes to opening hours and class timetables at Fitzroy Swimming Pool, Collingwood Leisure Centre and Richmond Recreation Centre at [leisure.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://leisure.yarracity.vic.gov.au)
- **Bin collections:** There will be slight changes for residents in zones 7 to 10 due to the public holidays.  
≈ **Zones 7 and 8:** No collection Thursday 25 December, bins to be collected on Friday 26 December.  
≈ **Zones 9 and 10:** No collection Friday 26 December, bins to be collected on Saturday 27 December.  
To find your bin zone, visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au/bincollection](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/bincollection)
- **Recycling:** Our Clifton Hill Recycling Centre will be closed on the three public holidays. Check our operating hours before you visit by searching 'Recycling Drop-Off Centres' at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

## Latest news

### EV charging and community battery coming soon to Collingwood

Collingwood Leisure Centre is about to get a clean energy boost. A new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station and community battery will open soon, helping locals power up sustainably. Construction wraps up in October, with public access expected from November. These upgrades support Yarra's climate goals and make it easier for residents to switch to electric transport. Some ramps, footpaths and parking spots were temporarily affected during works. Thanks for your patience! We're excited to welcome you to the improved site.

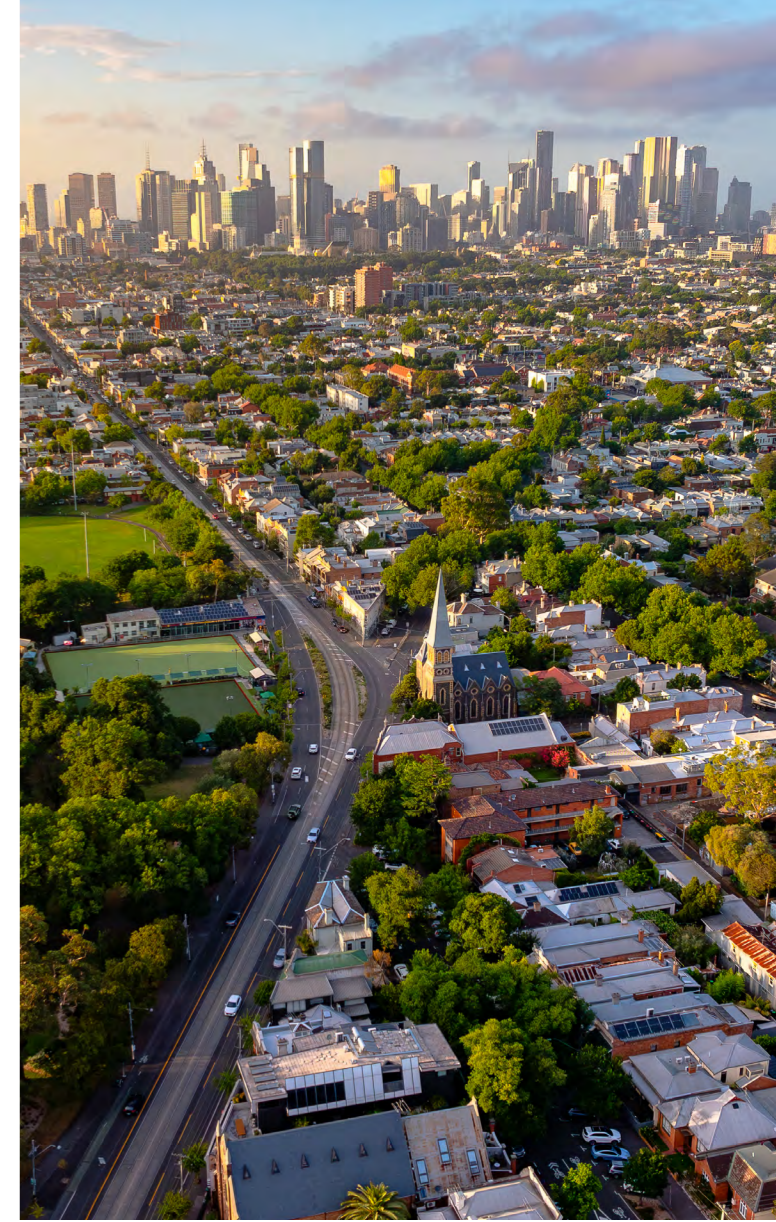
### Council reaffirms commitment to inclusion and safety

Yarra Council has unanimously endorsed a motion to strengthen its stance on inclusion, diversity and community safety. With 29 percent of residents born overseas, Yarra's diversity is a source of pride — not division. The motion condemns racism, far-right extremism and disinformation, and calls for urgent collaboration across government to protect social cohesion. Council also reaffirmed its support for First Peoples, truth-telling and justice. In Yarra, everyone deserves to feel safe, seen and valued.

### Yarra Libraries Benchmarking Results 2024/25

Yarra Libraries has once again been recognised as Victoria's top-performing library service, with benchmarking data published by Public Libraries Victoria for 2024/25 confirming we hold the highest combined volume of visits, loans, and memberships relative to our population.

This achievement reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality, inclusive, and community-led services. Our libraries continue to attract interest from neighbouring and interstate councils eager to learn from our innovative approaches to service delivery, including the Open Library initiative and our diverse suite of learning programs and events.



Find out more at [yarracity.vic.gov.au/news](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/news)

## Council Meetings

Meetings take place at Richmond and Fitzroy Town Halls. For upcoming Council Meeting dates, and if you would like to attend, please visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au/meetings](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/meetings) for details. All meetings are live streamed at [webcast.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://webcast.yarracity.vic.gov.au)

- Tuesday 16 December, 6.30pm  
Fitzroy Town Hall

Council meetings will resume monthly in early 2026.

# The top dog names in Yarra revealed!

Did you know there are more than 6,300 dogs registered in the City of Yarra? Many have some great names: Ritzy Coco, Playdough, Burrito, Princess Yum Yum and Chancy Be Smooth are just some of the dog names on our books.

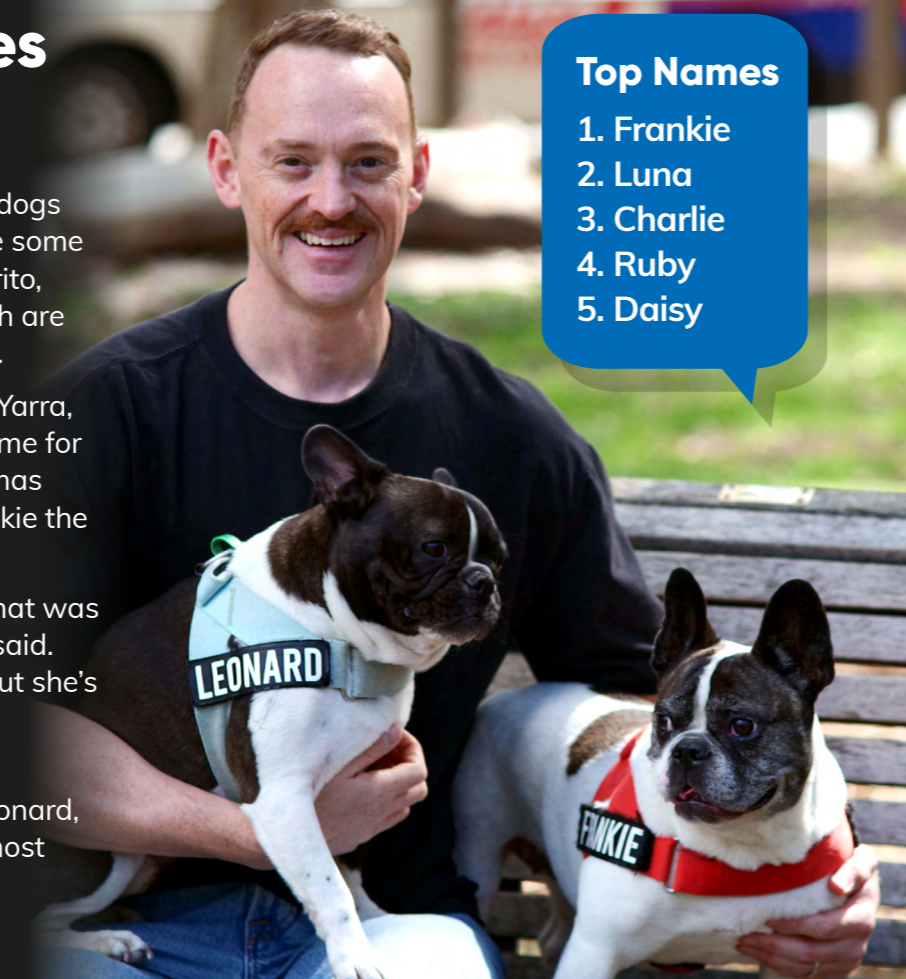
Frankie is the most popular dog name in Yarra, with more than 70 owners picking the name for their four-legged friend. Richmond's Thomas Albert (pictured) is a proud owner of Frankie the French bulldog, who is seven years old.

"I wanted her name to start with F, and that was the first name that came mind," Thomas said. "She's very French, she's a bit of a snob but she's a very independent dog, and she loves her food and cuddles as well."

Thomas said his other French bulldog, Leonard, was very jealous of Frankie sharing the most popular dog name in Yarra.

## Top Names

1. Frankie
2. Luna
3. Charlie
4. Ruby
5. Daisy



# Advocacy as we head towards the State Election

The Victorian Government has set the City of Yarra a target to grow by 44,000 dwellings over the next 25 years. Council understands the need for more housing in the inner city and will work with the community and the State to play its part. However:

- Yarra has limited land, ageing assets, and an existing need for more open space and community infrastructure.
- Yarra's community members are calling on the Victorian Government to be involved in decisions that affect them.

The next State Election is in November 2026. This presents Council with a unique opportunity to make specific requests of the Victorian Government and candidates that will benefit our community.

We've begun our campaign calling on the Victorian Government to:

- Ensure that Council and our community remain deeply involved in planning processes that will guide the future of our City.
- Provide funding and release land to deliver more open space and community infrastructure to match our City's growth
- Support and invest in an innovative affordable housing project for key workers.
- Champion live music and protect the industry by establishing live music precincts, fit for purpose regulations and support for artists, audiences and industry.

Find out more by visiting our 'Advocacy' page at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

## Keep your dogs out of Alphington Wetlands

Following recent sightings by local laws officers, we wish to remind the community that dogs are banned from the Alphington Wetlands. The area is a dedicated conservation and resource zone under the Yarra Planning Scheme, and intended to be a safe haven for local species including a range of waterfowl birds and frogs. Powerful Owls also use the area for hunting and roosting.

Officers may issue fines under Yarra's Local Laws if you are spotted taking your dog/s into the area.



## New plan puts pets first in Yarra

Yarra Council has adopted a new Domestic Animal Management Plan, shaped by more than 600 community responses. The plan puts the needs of both pets and people front and centre — promoting responsible ownership, safer shared spaces and clearer information for residents. It also supports better education, improved enforcement and a more pet-friendly experience across Yarra. Council thanks everyone who contributed their feedback and helped shape the future of animal management in our City.

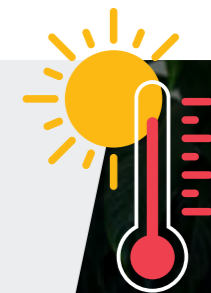


## Making a difference with Climate Safe Rooms

Council is committed to supporting at-risk residents to prepare for extreme weather events through its Climate Safe Rooms and Yarra Home Energy Upgrade programs.

This year's pilot program helped improve the lives of concession card holders who had a health condition that put them at risk from extreme heat or cold. Council provided subsidies to 54 households for energy upgrades to improve thermal comfort, install solar or electrify a room in their homes.

More than 80% of program participants reported that their health and ability to manage their health on cold days improved following the energy upgrades. The final report from Victoria's Upper House Inquiry into Climate Resilience has called on the Victorian Government to expand the roll out of Climate Safe Rooms to vulnerable people across Victoria.





# Summer in Yarra



## Safe swimming with Yarra Leisure

Our swim school holiday program is great for kids aged three-and-a-half and up, as well as young people and adults who want to practise swimming, build confidence, learn how to stay safe in the water, or just have fun!

**Program 1:** 12 to 16 January 2026, at Collingwood Leisure Centre

**Program 2:** 19 to 23 January 2026 at Fitzroy Swimming Pool and Collingwood Leisure Centre

Our pool facilities have Platinum Pool accreditation by Life Saving Victoria, the highest standards in aquatic safety. Our lifeguards are expertly trained, ensuring hazard-free environments and offer guidance on pool depths.

Enrolments for Safe Swimming Program open on Monday 8 December.

### More safe swimming tips:

Here's some handy tips for pool users of all ages to remember when heading into the water.

- Don't swim alone
- Kids under five must always stay within an arm's reach
- Kids under 10 must be constantly and actively supervised
- Check safety signs before swimming – stay in your depth when near the deep end
- No alcohol in the pool
- Always swim where lifeguards can see you



Scan the QR code or head to [yarracity.vic.gov.au/holiday-program](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/holiday-program) to book your child's spot.



## Open Library: after-hours access for everyone

Yarra's Open Library program makes it easier to visit when it suits you. Upgrade (or join free, then upgrade) to access selected branches outside staffed hours — up to 10pm in most of our branches. It's ideal for quiet study, borrowing, free Wi-Fi, and a calm, air-conditioned cool space as the weather warms. A short in-person induction is required, so book in now to be set for summer. Learn more by visiting the 'Open Library' page at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

## Great summer events in Yarra

Council is proud to be supporting several annual summer events in our city — save these dates in your diaries for early 2026:

### Victoria Street Lunar New Year Festival

Sunday 1 February  
Victoria Street, Richmond

### Victoria's Pride Street Party

Sunday 8 February  
Gertrude and Smith Streets, Fitzroy

### Johnston Street Fiesta

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 February  
Johnston Street, Fitzroy (between Nicholson Street and Brunswick Street)

### Fairfield in Feb

Sunday 1 February and Sunday 15 February  
Fairfield Ampitheatre, Fairfield



Keep an eye on our 'What's On' page at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au) and our social media channels for more details.

## Take some shelter from the summer sun?

Need a break from the heat? When Yarra's temperatures soar, know you have a safe place to hide from the heat. We will provide you with cool air-conditioned spaces to rest during severe and extreme heatwaves.

The heat can be dangerous for older adults, children, those with poor insulation and for people who don't have a place to call home.

This year, we are expanding the number of Council venues available with extended opening hours to include:

- Richmond Library
- Bargoonga Nganjin North Fitzroy Library
- Collingwood Leisure Centre
- Fitzroy Swimming Pool
- Richmond Recreation Centre

When the Bureau of Meteorology declares severe and extreme heatwaves, the hours of these facilities will be extended to offer the community a safe place to stay.

# Climate Emergency Plan

## One year in

We are wrapping up a successful year delivering on Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030.

Together with our community, we've made meaningful progress towards a more climate-resilient and sustainable Yarra. Some key highlights from the first year include:

- 692 advanced indigenous trees and 588 advanced Australian native (non-indigenous) trees in open spaces and streets.
- 3,007 people attended climate emergency events and programs delivered by the Climate Emergency Team.
- Council provided targeted support to 54 participants in the Climate Safe Rooms and Yarra Home Energy Upgrades programs, creating climate-safe, thermally comfortable homes. This provides equitable energy transition for those most at risk from climate impacts.

We're currently preparing our first annual report, which will provide a deeper look at the actions taken, outcomes achieved and what's next in our journey to create a safe and just future where people and nature thrive.

Stay tuned for the next edition of *Yarralife* for a more detailed look at Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan annual report.



Sign up to the **Yarra Environment eNewsletter** for updates about environment and climate related news, events and stories.



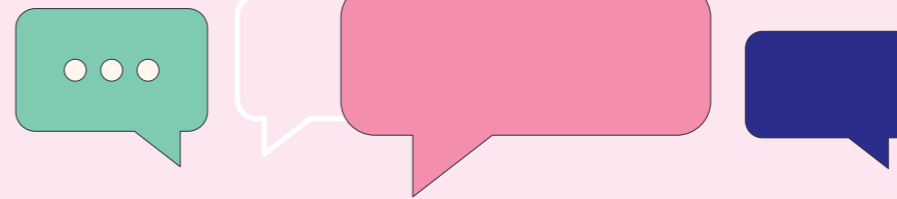
## Take the Yarra Food Waste Challenge!

Yarra's food waste challenge is back for another year — it's a 12-week online program to help you reduce your avoidable food waste in your home.

Most of us throw away more food waste than we think, and a lot of this can be easily avoided. By reducing avoidable food waste, you can save money and time and reduce emissions which contribute to climate change. Keeping our Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) bins clean of plastics and other rubbish is critical as contamination costs us money and reduces the quality of the compost.

Upon sign-up to the challenge, you'll be emailed fortnightly tips and a choice of two challenges to undertake to reduce your avoidable food waste, one step at a time.

At a time when over-catering is common and lots of leftovers can go uneaten, take the Yarra Food Waste challenge this festive season to reduce your bin contents and your impact on the environment. Search 'Be Food Smart' at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au) for more information and to sign up.



YOUR SAY  
YARRA

## Tell us how you want us to engage with you over the next four years

Yarra City Council's Community Engagement Policy needs a refresh. We have reviewed and put together a new draft Policy that:

- outlines our principles and approach to engagement
- identifies when we will seek feedback from the community, and
- sets clear standards for how we engage, promote opportunities to participate and report back to the community.

Tell us what you think of the new draft Policy so we can engage the way you want us to and ensure the community are at the heart of decision-making.

To have your say visit [yoursayyarra.com.au](http://yoursayyarra.com.au) Feedback closes by 9am 15 December 2025.

Visit the Your Say Yarra website to stay up to date on other projects that impact you.

## Park upgrades consultation

We're currently reviewing your feedback from our recent consultation exploring future upgrades to three of Yarra's local parks.

This was the first stage of consultation to gather ideas for improvements you would like to see at:

- Annettes Place in Richmond
- Edwardes Place in Fitzroy North
- Garryowen Park in Fitzroy

We want to ensure these spaces continue to meet the needs of current and future residents, people who work nearby and visitors.

Your feedback is being used to inform the draft Concept Designs for each park, and we'll share these with you for more feedback at a later stage.

You can follow the project and register for alerts at [yoursayyarra.com.au](http://yoursayyarra.com.au)



# Happy 50th birthday to Cubbies!

One of Yarra's most loved adventure playgrounds has notched up 50 years of providing an outlet for fun for children throughout our City and beyond.

Cubbies, located at the Atherton Gardens in Fitzroy, was first established in 1974 by a group of locals and has been run by volunteers ever since. It has been a vital facility for generations of children who have lived or grown up in the nearby housing commission buildings. A celebration was held to mark Cubbies' 50th birthday on Saturday 18 October.

Council has provided funding to playground operators The Venny until the end of 2026 to run free after school adventure play activities. The sessions encourage children and young people develop skills and build resilience. They provide opportunities for unstructured child-led play, creativity and connection.

You can visit Cubbies at 165 Napier Street, Fitzroy, next to Atherton Gardens Housing Estate. Entry is on Condell Street. For more information visit [thevenny.org.au](http://thevenny.org.au)



## Visit our youth services centres!

Yarra Youth Services offers free weekly programs and one-on-one support for young people aged eight to 25 across Fitzroy and Richmond. From now through to Friday 19 December, you can get involved in music, art, sport and study help or just hang out in a safe, inclusive space.

Programs are welcoming to all, with a strong focus on young people from diverse cultural backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and those living in public housing. Most sessions are casual and drop-in friendly, with youth workers available if you want to talk or need support.

During Term 4, we have activities and programs held after school each week where you can learn new skills, including:

- **Fitzroy:** Fashion Club, Screenprinting, Animation, DJ Skills and Music Production.
- **Richmond:** Homework groups, Helping Hoops (Basketball), Wednesday Wind-Down and Pascel Youth Soccer.

We also have programs to help you with your studies and your future career pathways, or to cook and share food, chill out and meet new people.

If you've never been before, you can visit our centres for a tour anytime during staffed hours. Our friendly team members will be happy to show you around and the things we have on offer. We've also recently installed some shade sails in the front courtyard at our Fitzroy centre, just in time for summer!

Connect with us on Instagram by following [@yarrayouthservices](https://www.instagram.com/yarrayouthservices) and [@richmondouthhub](https://www.instagram.com/richmondouthhub).



Scan the QR code or head to the 'Young people' page at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au) for more information and to view our program timetables

## More access to kinder in 2026

From next year, a number of Victorian Government initiatives will make kindergarten more affordable and accessible for families in Yarra.

Eligible families will be able to access an extra 10 hours of four-year-old kinder (up to 25 hours per week) if their child or family:

- is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- has a refugee or asylum seeker background
- has had contact with Child Protection services at any time, including through family support or family violence services (you don't need to share details when enrolling)

Free kinder will continue to be available at standalone (sessional) kindergartens. At long day care centres, a gap fee subsidy of up to \$2,050 will help cover costs for children aged three and up, giving them up to 15 hours of free care each week.

To register for 2026 and learn more, visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au) and search 'Kindergarten.'



## Celebrating International Day of People with Disability - 3 December

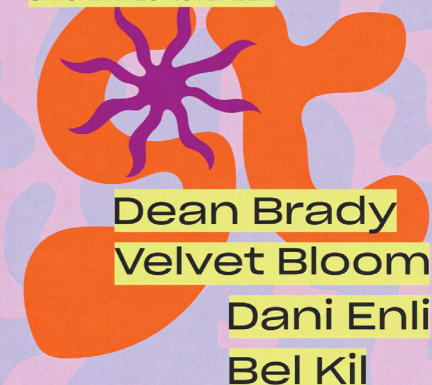
### Accessible live music in Yarra

Council is proud to again support Groove Tunes – an annual inclusive mini festival designed to be enjoyed by all live music fans and their companions. This year's event will be held on Saturday 29 November at the Corner Hotel in Richmond with performances from local soul-pop and R&B acts Dean Brady, Velvet Bloom, Dani Enli and Bel Kil.

The event will also include Auslan interpreters, lyric videos, a sensory space and more to provide an inclusive experience in one of Melbourne's best and most iconic live music venues.

For more information and to get your tickets, visit [groovetunes.com.au](http://groovetunes.com.au) or [cornerhotel.com/gigs](http://cornerhotel.com/gigs)

GROOVE TUNES AT THE CORNER HOTEL  
SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER



# What's on

## Festive Decorations

**Monday 1 December to Saturday 3 January**  
**Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond Town Halls**

Yarra's Town Halls are getting into the festive spirit and will each feature a decorative display of lights and colours curated by Vin Tágé throughout December and into the first few days of January.

## Carols in the Park

**Thursday 11 December, 6pm to 9pm**  
**Burnley Park, Burnley**

Our annual free, family-friendly carols celebration is back for another year! Enjoy special performances by Casey Bennetto and band, local school and community choirs and other fabulous performers. There will also be an appearance from Santa and food and drink stalls with tasty items available for purchase.



Visit [yarracity.vic.gov.au/events](https://yarracity.vic.gov.au/events) for more information and discover other events happening near you.

## New Year's Eve

**Wednesday 31 December, 4pm onwards**  
**Edinburgh Gardens, Fitzroy North**

Ring in 2026 with free movie screenings from our pop-up cinema, which includes a special early film for kids. You can also get a spot on 'Hipster Hill' for one of the best views of the city's fireworks displays!



## Wurundjeri Acknowledgement

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra.

We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra.

We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

## Stay connected with Yarra

- Online at [yarracity.vic.gov.au](https://yarracity.vic.gov.au)
- Sign up for our community engagement e-news and have your say on projects at [yoursayyarra.com.au](https://yoursayyarra.com.au)
- Follow us on Facebook or Instagram ([@cityofyarra](https://www.instagram.com/cityofyarra))
- Register for our monthly e-news at [yarracity.vic.gov.au/yarralife](https://yarracity.vic.gov.au/yarralife)

## Speak your language



If your language is not listed below, please call our interpreter service on **9280 1940** and quote REF 20476.

Italiano	9280 1931
Español	9280 1935
中文	9280 1937
العربية	9280 1930
Ελληνικά	9280 1934
Tiếng Việt	9280 1939