

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for the Coordination of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning – COVID-19
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for Water



Friday, 6 November 2020

MORE COMMUNITY RECOVERY PROJECTS IN BUSHFIRE-AFFECTED AREAS

Councils and community groups across Victoria's bushfire-affected areas will share in over \$1 million in grants to support seven more projects that are vital for recovery, resilience, service delivery and community pride.

Father Mitchell Porter is Parish Priest at the Anglican Parish of Corryong – one of the recipients of the *Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities* and the *Bushfire Recovery Grants for Local Government Authorities and Community Service Organisations* announced today by Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville.

"To be able to repair our church hall floor without placing a strain on our parish finances is a real blessing," Father Porter said. "It will mean church and events can take place, debutantes can practice, funerals and weddings go ahead, and we can continue to provide a place for the community at large to use – it's a real Godsend."

Recipients community service organisations grants include AgBiz Assist Ltd – a not-for-profit working with farm owners in the North East of Victoria – who received \$550,000 for the organisation's Reseeding the Upper Murray Farms Recovery Project, supporting farmers to re-seed properties and improve farm productivity and sustainability.

Other successful applications for the community service organisations grant include:

- \$375,252 for the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund to develop a new technology and operating platform to help expand their important work
- \$44,000 to the Southern Grampians Shire Council to support an all-weather art space that can be used for market stalls, cafes and pop-up events.

Groups to receive a grant for community facilities include East Gippsland's Great Alpine Gallery, opened over 20 years ago by local artists living in Swifts Creek and Omeo. The gallery is also a thriving community centre and was a safe haven after the bushfires to give locals and emergency response teams a place to visit and connect with others.

The Great Alpine Gallery will use the funds to refresh the building's exterior and ensure it is more energy efficient. Work will be undertaken by local tradespeople.

Other successful applications for the community facilities grant include:

- \$50,000 to repair surfaces at Clifton Creek Tennis Club and for multi-use line markings for different sports
- \$37,450 for a back-up power supply to the Corryong Youth Hall to support the community in an emergency
- \$7,000 to repair the Anglican Parish of Corryong's church hall.

Further funding is available under the two grant streams, jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments as part of the \$86 million Community Recovery Package. To see more or apply, see the community grants available at www.br.vic.gov.au/financial-support.

The Australian and Victorian Governments are also funding the \$68.6 million Local Economic Recovery Program to back both big projects to boost the regional economy, and smaller, local projects. Grants of up to \$5 million and \$2 million are available in the program. Applications opened on October 29 and can be viewed at www.br.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville

"People in smaller towns turn to rec reserves, church halls and galleries to provide a sense of place and community. These grants – and others like them – are helping these facilities become more comfortable and resilient."

"In regional areas, councils and community organisations go above and beyond to deliver key services for their community, and these grants are helping them do just that."

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