



# Hello Buninyong

Community Bank · Buninyong

## Chair's message



SparkTank is back and that's good news for local people doing great things in our community.

We know that the best ideas often start at grassroots level. That's why we're again offering up to \$50,000 to support community-driven projects through our SparkTank event. It's an opportunity for local

groups to pitch their ideas, connect with others and secure funding to make things happen.

Last year's event was full of energy, fresh thinking and genuine community spirit. We're proud to bring it back again, not just because of the ideas it funds, but for how it brings people together. I encourage you to get

involved – apply, attend or support it by coming along in August. This is community investment in action.

In this edition, we're also sharing more community impact stories from helping young people build mental health skills through Live4Life, to backing The Hidden Orchard with a new shed to share local produce. Plus, we've launched a brand-new company website, introduced after-hours lending appointments and supported events like the Smart Living Expo and Corporate Bowls. It's all part of our commitment to strengthening this community in meaningful ways.

**Ian Corcoran, Chair**



## Meet Matt – our local business banking expert!

Say hi to Matt King, our business banker for Community Bank Buninyong. With 20+ years in financial services, Matt knows his stuff when it comes to business – but more importantly, he's all about building strong relationships and helping local businesses set themselves up for success in the long term.

Born and bred in Ballarat, Matt's a proud local, dad to two teenagers and a big fan of footy and cricket (though his playing days are slightly behind him now).

To see how Matt can help, call the branch on **5341 8066** or email us at [buninyong.mailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au](mailto:buninyong.mailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au)





Up to  
**\$50,\*\*\*\***  
community funding  
in one night!  
**sparktank.org.au**



## Our Future Shaper taking charge

Meet our 2025 Committee for Ballarat Future Shapers - Community Leaders Scholarship Recipient 2025, Emma Taylor. Kelly recently caught up with Emma to learn a little more about her and what she hopes to gain from the program this year.

An educator, wellbeing advocate and leadership facilitator, Emma is passionate about creating spaces where people feel safe, seen and empowered. With a background in Sport and Exercise Science and a Master's in Teaching, she's built a career that weaves together her love for education, inclusion and the outdoors.

From coaching future leaders at the University of Melbourne, to driving diversity and accessibility through Climbing QTs, to developing evidence-based wellbeing programs, Emma brings energy, empathy and a solutions-focused mindset to everything she does.

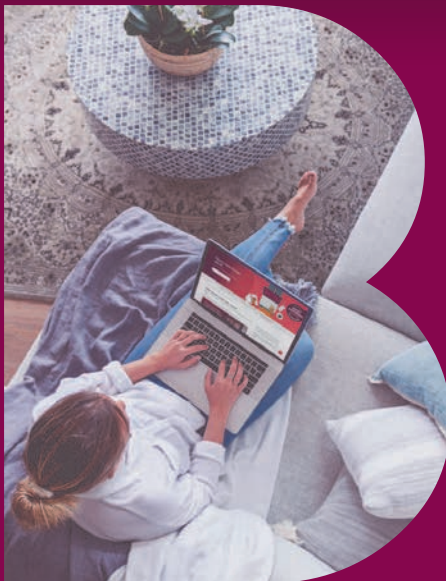
A proud community member of the LGBTQIA+, disability, and neurodiverse communities, Emma is currently project managing a 'Disability and Inclusion Climbing Handbook', helping open up even more pathways for participation.

Congratulations Emma! We can't wait to see where this adventure takes you.

Community Investment

Emma is our 2025  
Future Shaper

IMPACT  
STORY



## How healthy is your home loan?

With the current cost of living, there's never been a better time to review your home loan.

We'll look at your rate, term, repayments, and equity, giving your loan a full check-up to make sure it's still right for you and your current needs.

**Enquire online at [bendigobank.com.au/healthcheck](https://www.bendigobank.com.au/healthcheck) or visit your nearest branch.**

📍 Community Bank - Buninyong 5341 8066

**Bendigo Bank**  
The better big bank



# Community impact stories

Here's a great story: we've put well over \$2,250,000 back into local community projects!

Yep, that's at last count and it's always growing. Over the last 14 years, we've distributed over \$2,250,000 to local organisations, causes and projects throughout the Buninyong and Ballarat districts. We are extremely proud of this and the amazing stories that come about because of this support.

We love telling stories of the projects we've funded and how they've enriched our local area and contributed towards a thriving community. After all, that's the aim.



Image: City of Ballarat

## Empowering youth and saving lives

When it comes to mental health, knowledge saves lives. That's why we're so proud to support Youth Live4Life, ensuring more local young people, schools and families have access to Teen Mental Health First Aid training.

Thanks to our funding, Live4Life has trained two new instructors, meaning even more young people will have the skills to:

- Recognise when a friend is struggling
- Have safe, supportive conversations
- Help connect them to professional support.

In 2024, this project managed to achieve:

- 2,345 Year 8 and 10 students trained in Teen Mental Health First Aid
- 10 Ballarat schools involved in the program
- 36 young people trained as Live4Life Crew (peer mental health ambassadors).

City of Ballarat Youth Services Coordinator Stacey Oliver said "This year we will see the program reach more than 5,500 young people who have been trained in Teen Mental Health First Aid".

"Naturally, we are excited to see this program continue to grow, educate and spread awareness in ways we can all support positive mental health and wellbeing for each and every young person. We plan to engage two more schools in the program in 2025", she said.

Mental health is a community issue and together with this project, we're creating impact in a space it's needed.



Image: Courtesy The Hidden Orchard (Ballarat Permaculture Guild)

## We're helping make space for good things to grow!

The Hidden Orchard has been bursting at the seams with equipment – you name it, ladders, trolleys, fruit pickers, workshop gear. They've got the tools, the passion. and the people... but until recently, not quite enough space to keep it all safe and accessible.

So, we said "yes" to doing something about that.

We're proud to have funded a brand-new shed for The Hidden Orchard to help streamline their harvest operations. Now, their team have a central, secure hub to pick up and return gear anytime, day or night. And with a carpark right out the front, it's as easy as load and go.

The new space will make it easier for volunteers to do what they do best – sharing produce with the community and charity groups who need it most.

Massive shout-out to volunteers Jill, Michael, Ellen, Michael (yes, another one!) and Karen, who rolled up their sleeves and built the shed on a hot summer's day.

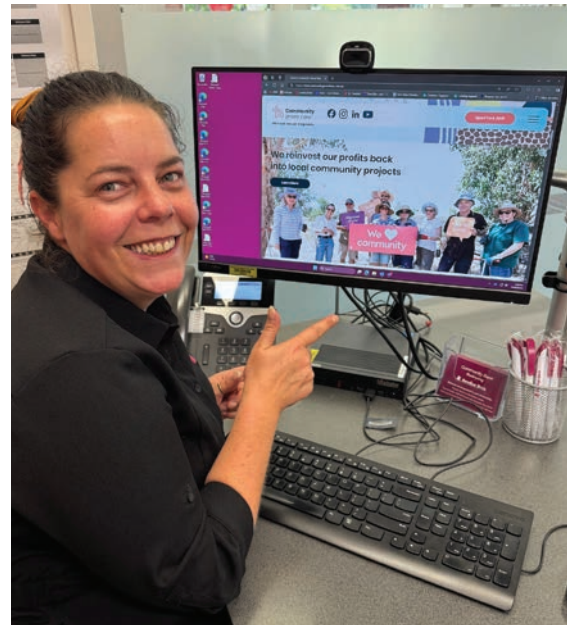
The Hidden Orchard President Ellen said, "The new shed, generously donated by Community Bank Buninyong, will make it very easy for our harvest leaders to pick up and return harvesting equipment from a central location 24/7, and there's a carpark right in front of the shed for very easy loading and unloading."

We love seeing community-powered projects like this take shape and we're so glad to help make the fruit flow a little more freely.

You can find out more at <https://hiddenorchard.org>







## You're the difference

Ever wondered what difference your banking makes in our community? We took three customers and actually showed them the difference they're making!

From wildlife rescues to local schools and grassroots initiatives, we showed Wayne, Bianca and Katrine how their support is backing significant change locally.

And ... we captured it all for a new feature video that's currently being produced!

We can't wait to show you, but in the meantime here's some behind-the-scenes pics that Sam grabbed as we were going around!



## New website

We've given our community company website a fresh new look and we're loving it!

Now it's easier to:

- Apply for Community Investment funding
- Learn about Community Gold and boosting local business
- Read a library full of local community impact stories
- Meet our volunteer directors working behind the scenes
- Learn about our Social Traders Certification.

And to top it off, we are loving our gorgeous new custom illustrations by the very talented Jacinta at @PictureThinking.

**[www.communitygrowshere.com.au](http://www.communitygrowshere.com.au)**

Jump on and check it out – because community grows here (and now it looks even better!).



## After hours lending appointments

We get it, life is busy! And that's why we're offering out-of-hours lending appointments, giving you more flexibility to chat with us at a time that suits you.

Starting Thursday 10 April, you can book a one-on-one appointment with Peita:

- Thursdays – 5:30pm and 6:30pm
- Saturdays – 1:00pm and 2:00pm
- Bunyong Community House, 407 Warrenheip Street

Be sure to book at least 24 hours ahead!

Regardless of your requirements, we're here to help ...on your schedule.

Book now by calling the branch on **5341 8066** during business hours or email Peita directly on **[peita.mcnaught@bendigoadelaide.com.au](mailto:peita.mcnaught@bendigoadelaide.com.au)**



## Senior citizens celebrate 50 years

Our Branch Manager Randall joined the Buninyong Senior Citizens Club at the Town Hall to mark 50 years of friendship and community.

The celebratory afternoon included live music from Sing Australia, afternoon tea, and plenty of conversation.

A big congratulations to the Club on reaching this milestone, your commitment to bringing people together has made a lasting impact on many lives over the years.

We're proud to support local groups just like the Senior Citizens which is why we said a big 'yes' to putting on their party. It helps remind us what community is all about.



## Rowers go next level with tech-powered wins!

When you're slicing through the water in a tight race, every second and every stroke counts. That's why we were thrilled to back Ballarat High School Rowing with a Community Investment Grant to purchase new Cox Boxes and GPS units for their rowing crews.

The results? Three bronze medals and a whole new level of insight and precision for crews and coaches alike!

The new tech made its debut at the State Championships, where the senior boys division 2 and year 10 boys division 1 crews both took home bronze medals in the B and C grade men's divisions. Meanwhile, the year 9 girls division 1 crew also grabbed a bronze at the Head of School Girls Regatta.

But it's not just about medals (although we love those too). These devices have brought:

- Better communication between coxes and crews
- Real-time data to help rowers refine their technique
- Powerful feedback tools for coaches to level up the training experience.

Ballarat High School Rowing's Robert Simmonds summed it up perfectly. "These new units have been a game changer for our rowers and coaches. These will be a great help going into pre-season training next year."

We're proud to support young athletes in their pursuit of excellence on the water and beyond. Here's to even more wins (and even better teamwork) in the 2025/26 season!



## Kelly runs grant writing workshop

Our Community House held a free grant writing workshop run by the Ballarat East Neighbourhood Centre with our very own Community Partnerships Lead, Kelly, the key presenter.

From SparkTank funding to our Community Investment grants, Kelly shared her insights on writing successful applications that get results. Plus, there was plenty of time to ask questions, share ideas and enjoy a cuppa!

If you missed this one, more free workshops are on the way thanks to the Community Group Governance Project, a partnership between the City of Ballarat and the four Ballarat Neighbourhood Houses.

## Kind words

It's the everyday compliments we receive from customers and the community that mean the absolute world to us. It's why we do what we do. Thank you so much Robert, Geoff and Michelle, for taking the time to share your thoughts with us.

Comments like this reinforce our commitment to making a positive impact in the local community we operate in. With over \$2.25M returned to impactful community projects, we're still just getting started...

‘

The service here is amazing! The best experience I've had in ages.



Robert, Buninyong

‘

How do we give Community Bank Buninyong 5 stars, we are so rapt with the service you provide.



Geoff, Buninyong

‘

We are so very lucky and grateful to have a lovely little local bank and have nothing but good things to say about the Buninyong branch.

Michelle, Garibaldi



## Can we support your community group?

We're here to back the projects, events and initiatives that make our community better for everyone! If your community group or organisation is looking for support, whether it's funding for a new project, resources to help you grow or a partnership that makes a difference, we'd love to hear from you.

Chat with Kelly our Community Partnerships Lead, to explore how we may be able to help. Email [partnerships@bdfsl.au](mailto:partnerships@bdfsl.au) to find out more. Check eligibility and apply online, visit [www.communitygrowshere.com.au/investment](http://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/investment)

Want to see the impact of our support in action? Visit our **Storybank** for inspiring community stories! [www.communitygrowshere.com.au/story-bank](http://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/story-bank)



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## Peita knows nothing about jousting sticks

### But Peita knows banking

Peita shares her knowledge of banking so you can achieve what you want from life.

And, she can meet you when and where it suits you; at the branch, over the phone, or via video call.

**If you need help with your banking, call Peita McNaught, Home Loan Specialist on 5341 8066 or search Bendigo Bank Buninyong.**



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## Let's be friends!

Jump on your socials and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @communitybankbuninyong for local impact stories featuring your clubs, organisations and the community.

### Direct delivery

If you'd like to ensure you get our news delivered directly to your inbox each quarter, then make sure you're on the list. Jump on the web address below.

<https://wkf.ms/4anZAfF>

## Talk to us today



**Randall Dreger**  
Branch Manager  
**5341 8066**  
randall.dreger@  
bendigoadelaide.com.au

### Community Bank · Buninyong

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[www.bendigobank.com.au/buninyong](http://www.bendigobank.com.au/buninyong)



/communitybankbuninyong



/communitybankbuninyong

### We're open:

9.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday

### Our Leadership Team:

**Chair:** Ian Corcoran **Company Secretary:** Scott Sherritt

**Treasurer:** Richard McDowell **Directors:** Ron Delaland,

Joanne Innes, Brett Jones, Andrea Mason, Omaru

Maruatona, Debbie Rybicki, Graeme Benn.

**Community Partnerships Lead:** Kelly Bevan

Buninyong & District Financial Services Ltd

401B Warrenheip St, Buninyong VIC 3357

P 03 5341 8066

ABN 63 137 673 388



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All loans are subject to the Bank's normal lending criteria. Fees, charges, terms and conditions apply. Please consider your situation and read the Terms and Conditions, available online at [www.bendigobank.com.au](http://www.bendigobank.com.au) or upon request from any Bendigo Bank branch, before making a decision. Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited ABN 11 068 049 178 AFSL 237879 (2083101-2126290) (02/25)