

# Riversdale Ward

April 2023



Riversdale Ward Cr Susan Biggar with members of the Swinburne Chorale, recipients of a City of Boroondara Community Strengthening Grant.

## Cr Susan Biggar

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 **BOROONDARA**  
*City of Harmony*





## A message from your Councillor

I lost my back lawn during Covid. Well, 'repurposed' is probably a more appropriate word. But the twin crises of Covid and the increasingly clear climate crisis caused me to rethink what matters to me and my family.

We all enjoyed our lawn, but in recent years I questioned whether it was really pulling its weight. Our property, though not large, has always had a farm 'vibe' which included fruit trees and chooks. I yearned to relieve the pressure on my squashed tomato plants and crowded pumpkins while providing a more biodiverse space.

Now, after several slow years of planning and executing, we have wandering paths between native plants, plentiful small fruit trees, and vegetables spreading gracefully abundant in their wicking beds. My family and I couldn't be happier. Birds, bees and butterflies are drawn in, the space is renewed and coming to life, and with new places to sit, no one misses the lawn. Not even our ever-active dog.

Of course, I'm not alone in making changes. Residents across Boroondara are reconsidering their outdoor spaces to increase biodiversity, including those involved in Boroondara's Backyard Biodiversity program ([www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/backyard-biodiversity](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/backyard-biodiversity)). Others are installing solar power, switching their gas appliances to electricity, buying electric vehicles, and riding bikes and walking more. You might like to check out this month's *Bulletin* article about Boroondara's new neighbourhood goats (pictured above), helping us keep on top of the weeds around Gardiners Creek!

We can and must work together to limit our impact on our planet. My lawn's demise proved to me that such changes can be as exciting and rewarding as they are important and sustainable in this changing world.

**Cr Susan Biggar**

## A step closer to a renewed streetscape

We're closer to realising the exciting plans to improve our local shopping strip on Glenferrie Road.

The draft Glenferrie Place Plan is our roadmap to gradually enhance the precinct, with the Glenferrie Road streetscape upgrade at the heart of the plan to revitalise this local area.

We will invest in making Glenferrie Road a better, more accessible place for everyone to visit, shop, and spend time in. We will deliver more greenery and seating as well as better footpaths – all aimed at increasing vibrancy, improving movement and elevating the retail experience.

To help revive Glenferrie, so it works for all of us, we want to hear what you think is the best approach as we make space for these improvements. So, get involved by going to [engage.boroondara.vic.gov.au/glenferrie-placemaking](http://engage.boroondara.vic.gov.au/glenferrie-placemaking) to find out more and share your preferences in the consultation.





## What you can do to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions

As a Council we've achieved some significant changes to deliver on our Climate Action Plan, including reaching net-carbon neutrality as an organisation, and progressing more than 40 actions to reduce emissions in Boroondara.

Did you know that Council is responsible for less than 1 per cent of Boroondara's greenhouse gas emissions? This means the greatest opportunity is with you – our community – to help all of Boroondara become carbon neutral by 2035 (a key target in our Climate Action Plan).

As we head into the cooler months, why not start by improving your home's thermal performance? Heating and cooling accounts for about 40% of household energy use. Improving the thermal performance of your home will reduce emissions and energy costs. You can do this by:

- employing a professional to check and


top up your insulation – this is the most effective way to keep heat in during winter and out in summer

- double glazing your windows to allow good solar heat gain while preventing heat loss
- installing draught sealing to prevent winter heat loss by fitting dampers to chimneys and flues or blocking them off if unused, ducting exhaust fans and installing non-return baffles, and installing draught-proofing strips between doors and frames, at the door base and between the openable sash of windows and frames.

You can check for cold spots at home using a thermal camera from one of Boroondara's libraries.

Book a thermal camera at one of our libraries or online at:  
[www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/save-home-energy](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/save-home-energy)

For more tips and to track progress on our Climate Action Plan, visit:

 [climateactionplan.boroondara.vic.gov.au](http://climateactionplan.boroondara.vic.gov.au)

## Connect and learn new skills

Have you visited Hawthorn Community House before? With Neighbourhood House Week coming up this May, now's the time to rediscover the opportunities awaiting close to home.

Hawthorn Community House is a hidden gem, beloved by loyal residents in the know. The community house operates from 2 locations: one location on Glenferrie Road, beside Hawthorn Library, and a second spot on Henry Street, next to Central Gardens.

Everyone is welcome at Hawthorn Community House and encouraged to take part in the wide range of classes, workshops and exercise programs on offer. You can also join the popular weekly drop-in lunch or come and tend the community garden.

Find out more and plan your visit at:

 [hch.org.au](http://hch.org.au)

## Meet your Cr

Get to know your Ward Councillor Susan Biggar this autumn at:

**Monday 3 April:** 10 am, Finders Keepers Cafe, 87-89 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn

**Monday 1 May:** 10 am, Whiplash Cafe, 226 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

**Thursday 20 April:** 4 to 5 pm, Kurtosh, 673-681 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn

**Saturday 20 May:** 9 am to 12 pm, Boroondara Farmers Market





## Local organisations benefit from Community Strengthening Grants

Each year Council provides important funding for new and one-off projects and activities that help strengthen our community.

If you are involved with a not-for profit community organisation or group with an idea you'd like help to kick-start, you can apply for grants of up to \$10,000 under 6 streams:

- Active Community
- Creative Community
- Sustainable Community
- Healthy Community
- Life-long Community
- Vibrant Retail Precincts

In 2022-23, 46 community organisations, clubs and groups shared in more than \$232,000 across our Annual Community Strengthening Grants program.

In the previous round, Camberwell Baptist Church and friends received funding to support a project to build landscaped garden beds at local public housing estates in Hawthorn East. It will involve the residents, local community organisations, Camberwell Baptist Church kindergarten children and teachers, volunteers and businesses.

Swinburne Chorale (pictured above) received funding to support an expansion of the choir and delivery of 5 outreach workshops around Boroondara for older people to provide uplifting, community-building events and socialisation.

These grants will support participation in a range of community development projects and activities including social inclusion, community wellbeing, positive ageing and accessible recreation and cultural innovation within the Boroondara community.

### Information sessions

To help you put your best application forward, we are hosting information sessions at our Council office in Camberwell in late-April and May. We can help you plan your project or activity, identify the most appropriate stream, and meet the funding and program priorities.

Applications open on Monday 24 April and close on Sunday 28 May.

For more information and to apply, visit:



**[www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/annual-community-strengthening-grants](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/annual-community-strengthening-grants)**

## Updates on private developments

Two major projects continue to progress in Hawthorn. Neither of these are Council projects but we're noting them here as they're significant to the local community.

At the Homes Victoria site on Bills Street, the social and affordable housing works continue, and an independent advisory committee hearing has been scheduled for the proposed development of the University of Melbourne's former Hawthorn campus on Auburn Road.

Thanks to Council's advocacy, we have secured more public and social housing on Bills Street than the Victorian Government initially proposed.

The developer of the Auburn Road site, Hamton, has asked the Minister for Planning to change the Boroondara Planning Scheme to allow for a residential complex with multiple apartment buildings on the site. This request was lodged directly with the minister following Victorian Government changes to the planning process in 2021, designed to fast-track large-scale development applications.

Council has worked to ensure the community can participate in the planning process, which led to the Minister holding an advisory panel hearing. The Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee on 20 March will hear public submissions and consider Council's position before making recommendations to the Minister on how to proceed.

We have heard community concerns about the scale of the proposal and the need for more affordable housing on this site and Council will continue advocating on these issues wherever possible. We will continue to update the community as information becomes available.