

YOUR CITY OF MELBOURNE MAGAZINE

MELBOURNE

SUMMER 2025



SUMMER FUN AND FITNESS GUIDE
COOL POOLS, CLASSES,
FREE PARK FITNESS

SAFETY BOOST FOR CITY STREETS
COMMUNITY SAFETY
OFFICERS ON PATROL

GREENING OUR GARDEN CITY
PICK A FAVOURITE
FLORAL EMBLEM



CITY OF MELBOURNE

[MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au)



Lord Mayor Nick Reece (centre)

Like me, you may be eyeing off mince pies and Christmas puddings at your favourite Queen Victoria Market stall – another reminder of how fast this year has flown by!

It's hard to believe it's been a year since I was elected as your 105th Lord Mayor of our great city. It's been the greatest honour and privilege of my life.

As we prepare to farewell 2025, now's the perfect time to reflect on everything we've achieved together and the exciting adventures the new year will bring.

There have been so many incredible moments this year, but close to my heart is the creation of the M2050 Vision and our team's first Council Plan.

It was a truly collaborative process, and I'm so grateful to everyone in the community who helped shape these incredible roadmaps for our city's future, making Melbourne the best and fairest city it can be.

I'm also thrilled to see our beloved Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre back in action. From swimming to yoga, a relaxing coffee to hitting the gym – it's great to see so many of you enjoying these new facilities.

As you start wrapping presents, filling stockings and untangling Christmas lights, we're decking the halls to celebrate the festive season in style across the city.

Get ready to experience the closest thing to Santa's workshop with our sparkling Christmas-themed installations including thousands of new lights, pic-worthy projections at iconic landmarks and dazzling decorations that would make Rudolph proud.

New Year's Eve promises to be a night to remember as we fill the city sky with fireworks and step into the new year together with a renewed sense of hope and excitement.

Please enjoy this edition of *Melbourne Magazine* – it always makes me smile to see the many ways our community is thriving and making a difference.

I hope you all have a fantastic festive season with your loved ones, and I look forward to achieving even more together in 2026.

Nick Reece
Lord Mayor

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2,000 generations. We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

FEATURES

03 CITY SAFETY BOOST

Safety officers on patrol

06 MEET OUR COUNCILLORS

Hear from city leaders

07 CITY SQUARE RETURNS

Iconic public space comeback

08 SUMMER FUN AND FITNESS

Free outdoor fitness and \$2 swims

13 MELBURNIAN OF THE YEAR

Beauty store founder Jo Horgan AM

14 GARDEN CITY

Vote for our floral emblem

REGULARS

10 EVENTS CALENDAR

Fill your diary with Melbourne moments

18 YOUR COUNCIL

Find contact details for councillors

COVER

Jess and Michael with their children in the pool at Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre



Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur. City of Melbourne does not guarantee that this publication is without flaw or wholly appropriate for your purposes. It and its employees expressly disclaim any liability, for any loss or damage, whether direct or consequential, suffered by any person as the result of or arising from reliance on any information contained in the publication.

© All applicable copyrights reserved for City of Melbourne. Except for any uses permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), no part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner or in any medium (whether electronic or otherwise) without the express permission of City of Melbourne.



SAFETY BOOST WITH COMMUNITY OFFICERS ON PATROL

Elissa is one of the new community safety officers ready for patrol

Community safety officers are now patrolling the city, supporting vulnerable people and helping make the city safer and more welcoming.

In an Australia-first initiative, a team of 11 community safety officers are on duty 7 days a week, 11 hours a day, providing a visible safety presence on Melbourne's streets.

Working in pairs, the new team patrols hotspots in the CBD, Southbank, Carlton, Docklands, Kensington and East Melbourne. They identify and respond to behaviours of concern, support vulnerable people, and coordinate with Victoria Police when needed.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece said the program responds to community feedback, noting that while Melbourne remains a safe city by the data, recent incidents have left many people feeling uneasy.

"Our community told us they want to feel safer and more supported in the CBD - and we've listened. These officers will make a real difference to safety across our city," the Lord Mayor said.

The program follows a 6-month pilot, during which security officers accompanied local laws officers, spoke with more than 1,500 people and helped 50 connect to specialist services.

The program is a big investment in both city safety and community support,

according to Councillor Rafael Camillo, portfolio head for Safety and Cleaning.

"Our CSOs will connect vulnerable community members with support pathways - improving wellbeing, reducing reoffending and forming a key part of our record investment in keeping Melbourne safe," Cr Camillo said.

All officers have completed training in trauma-informed engagement, mental health awareness, cultural safety and substance abuse, and family violence awareness.

Empathy is key for team leader Elissa Howard. She said the new recruits are "going into interactions without judgement and listening actively."

"Everyone has the right to feel safe, and safety isn't just about policing. It's about people feeling confident to move around, enjoy their day, and know there's support if they need it," Elissa said.

The program is part of a wider strategy to make Melbourne safer and more inclusive. We're making the biggest-ever investment in safety in 2025-26, including upgrades to street lighting and our safe city camera network, along with measures to address homelessness and social disadvantage.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT melbourne.vic.gov.au/protecting-streets-staff

LOOKING OUT FOR EVERYONE



Here's how our 11 community safety officers help to keep Melbourne streets safe.

- ✓ Identify and respond to behaviour of concern using de-escalation and negotiation
- ✓ Issue fines or directions under local and some state laws
- ✓ Connect people in crisis to specialist support services
- ✓ Assist Victoria Police when necessary

What they cannot do

- ✗ Investigate crimes
- ✗ Carry weapons beyond standard equipment
- ✗ Act as police or Protective Service Officers

**CITY
FLASHBACK**



This candid street scene was captured outside a legendary West Melbourne record shop, circa 1983. *Saturday afternoon rockabilly outside Hound Dog's Bop Shop* is one of 200 photographs by Viva Gibb generously donated to the City Collection.

Join a free tour of our Art and Heritage Collection to see more artworks and ephemera at Melbourne Town Hall. Search for 'art and heritage' at whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au to book your place.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Explore the city's top Christmas highlights with our new Christmas map. Visit participating locations to collect festive stamps – once you've gathered them all, uncover the secret word for your chance to win an amazing prize. Visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/christmas to explore the full Christmas Festival program.

Head to Queen Victoria Market to stock up on stocking fillers and ingredients for festive feasts. The open-air car park has a new exit from Queen Street, improving traffic flow in the busy festive season. And the underground car park features 500 spaces. Find out more at qvm.com.au/parking



NEW PORTRAIT FOR TOWN HALL

A portrait of former Lord Mayor Sally Capp AO is the latest to join the City of Melbourne's art collection. Painted by Melbourne artist Kristin Headlam, it's the first Lord Mayoral portrait to show its subject outdoors – set against the greenery of Carlton Gardens. View the artwork online in the City Collection.

citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au



MELBOURNE NEWS, YOUR WAY

Read the latest city-shaping news and celebrate community champions online at melbourne.vic.gov.au/news and subscribe to receive updates direct to your inbox. You can also subscribe using this QR code. The print magazine can be found at local libraries, community hubs and cafes. If you'd like to receive a copy in the post, please email melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au



We'd love to hear your feedback about *Melbourne Magazine*. To share your thoughts with us, write to melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Parking made easier and more available across the municipality

PARK, DASH, DONE: MELBOURNE'S FREE 15-MINUTE PARKING

A citywide shift to 15-minute free parking aims to boost business.

Running quick neighbourhood errands in Melbourne just got easier, whether you're dashing into a cafe for coffee, or grabbing olives for tonight's dinner.

All metered parking bays on streets in the City of Melbourne now offer 15 minutes of free parking through the EasyPark app.

You can use the free 15 minutes more than once a day, as long as you park in a different EasyPark area each time. Find the EasyPark area number displayed with the applicable parking sign.

Since the initiative began in the CBD in 2023, city drivers have enjoyed more than 15 million minutes of free parking and saved a total of more than \$1.3 million in parking fees.

FREE PARKING MEANS BUSINESS

The move has received a big thumbs up from the small business community.

"It's a simple idea with a big impact," Sylvia Hungria said. She's the President of the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association.

"The ability to park easily for 15 minutes can be the difference between someone deciding to stop and support a local business, or driving past."

"Anything that makes it easier for people to support their local traders is a win for our small business economy," Sylvia said.

Some locals have really made the most of it. According to anonymous data, one particularly efficient Melburnian notched up around 1,100 free sessions in a single year, averaging about 3 quick stops in the CBD a day.

GRAB ESSENTIALS FOR DINNER

In the foodie haven of Lygon Street, drivers can make the most of free 15-minute parking to stop quickly and gather supplies for a dream dinner.

"They can pre-order it from their office and grab it on the way home, so they've got dinner ready for the family," said Phillip Mansour, Executive Officer of Carlton Inc.

"You might get some Sicilian olives, some nice little cuts of meats. You'd get some fresh, handmade pasta. Then get some glorious Italian sweets and chocolate cannoli for dessert."



Phillip Mansour from Carlton Inc

"We really want to make sure that people know about the 15-minute free parking, because there aren't too many precincts outside of Melbourne that allow that," Phillip said.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF AREAS

It's also time to bid farewell to P5, P10 and P15 signs. The old P signs are being replaced with 'No Parking' signs – which do come with an upside for drivers.

Here's an inside tip from Victoria's road rules: in areas marked No Parking, drivers may in fact park for 2 minutes for pick-up and drop-off, provided they remain within 3 metres of their vehicle.

To make the message clear, 'Pick Up & Drop Off' signage will be added to all No Parking signs.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/parking-and-transport

GET TO KNOW OUR COUNCILLORS

Melbourne City Council comprises a Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and 9 councillors. Find more councillor profiles and read the full stories at melbourne.vic.gov.au/news



COUNCILLOR

DAVYDD GRIFFITHS

Portfolio head, Environment
Portfolio deputy, Community, Health and City Services

A former publican, teacher and public servant, Councillor Griffiths now runs an online beer and media business. He's also a keen bowls club member.

Re-elected in 2024, Cr Griffiths said the City of Melbourne can be a leading city on climate action.

"Circular economy precincts, such as those at Queen Victoria Market and in Kensington, demonstrate that leadership."

He finds many connections between his 2 portfolios.

"People experiencing food insecurity are often also experiencing energy poverty, and in some cases in our municipality, this also overlaps with communities at risk of flooding."

He believes green spaces will help to support the physical and mental wellbeing of our growing population.

"I'm a big believer in encouraging all members of the community to enjoy this amazing place."



COUNCILLOR

RAFAEL CAMILLO

Portfolio head, Safety and Cleaning
Portfolio deputy, Infrastructure

Councillor Camillo moved to Melbourne from Brazil as an international student. He joined Council last year to give city residents a greater voice.

"I wanted to get the basics right, such as clean streets and safety."

Cr Camillo heads the portfolio that oversees record spending on community safety, graffiti removal and street cleaning.

We now deliver 24/7 street cleaning and graffiti management throughout the municipality.

Through the Infrastructure portfolio he advocates for a robust economic climate that attracts international and interstate investors.

"By 2040 City of Melbourne's population will rise by 100,000 people. We're looking at what infrastructure we will need to balance the demands of residents, students and visitors," Cr Camillo said.

MAKING MELBOURNE THE BEST AND FAIREST CITY



We're making sure Melbourne is a city where everyone is excited to live, work and visit.

Melbourne has always been a city that imagines boldly and plans carefully. From the Hoddle Grid to Federation Square, we've never been afraid to rethink what our city could be.

This year, we asked our community what they love most about this city, and to share their hopes for how life might look and feel in Melbourne in 2050. Thousands of people shared their ideas.

These aspirations became the foundation of 2 major plans now endorsed by Council - the Melbourne 2050 Vision (M2050 Vision) and the Council Plan 2025-29.

The M2050 Vision shows the big picture of where we're heading and documents our community's aspirations for the city.

The Council Plan maps our first steps on the journey as we make good on our long-term commitment to a liveable Melbourne, where we are growing stronger together.

Together, they map out how we can ensure Melbourne is a diverse, vibrant and magnetic city for decades to come.



SEE HOW WE'LL MAKE IT HAPPEN
melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan-vision



City Square returns to the people this summer

The big reveal: a new era for City Square

Get set to make new memories in City Square, as a much-loved public space returns to the people.

Melburnians are preparing to make the most of their favourite open-air living room.

After almost a decade behind barriers as Town Hall Station took shape deep underground, City Square has been upgraded to a welcoming civic space as part of the Victorian Government's Metro Tunnel Project.

The revamped public space includes native trees, raised garden beds, seating and areas for ceremony and events. The project features new public art, such as *Mnemonic Flow*, which puts a digital spin on an old favourite – the Mockridge Fountain.



Line-wide artwork by Maree Clarke

City Square will serve Melbourne for decades to come: a sunny spot to eat lunch with a work bestie, a new social meet-up point for friends, an important capital city space that will attract events of international, national, state and local importance. Festive pop-ups herald the return of memorable events and activations to City Square during the Christmas Festival.

TOWN HALL STATION

Blending the familiar with the epic, the new Town Hall Station at City Square is crowned with a soaring glass canopy made up of 118 interlocking glass panels, each weighing between 600 and 850 kg.

Town Hall Station is one of 5 new stations built by the Metro Tunnel Project to connect Melburnians with the wider public transport network. As the site of the main entrance to the new station, City Square is expected to attract thousands of commuters to the heart of the CBD every day.

CLEANSING, CONNECTION AND CULTURE

A cultural focal point at City Square is a hand-crafted bronze Smoking Ceremony dish, co-designed with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin and surrounded by seating and inscriptions in Woi-wurrung language.



Bronze sculpture for Smoking Ceremonies

The dish features designs inspired by the beloved manna gum, a locally native tree that is central to Wurundjeri identity as Traditional Owners of the land on which City Square now stands. It will be used by Traditional Owners for Welcome to Country ceremonies at the start of significant events and gatherings.

This striking bronze sculpture is a welcome addition to City of Melbourne's Art and Heritage Collection.



READ THE FULL STORY AT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/news

FREE OUTDOOR FITNESS CLASSES



Book now to join free outdoor community fitness classes

Bust a move at zumba, find your flow with tai chi, stretch out at yoga, act fast in a boxing class and spend time outdoors this summer – all for free.

We're making it easier to stay active with free monthly outdoor fitness classes in parks, gardens and public spaces across the City of Melbourne.

Running once a month until April, these free sessions will each focus on a different open space and neighbourhood, and a different activity led by experienced recreation centre staff.

Sample some of the classes at our 5 Active Melbourne facilities and explore different open spaces across the City of Melbourne, including our glorious parks and gardens.

More than half of all adults in the City of Melbourne report not getting enough exercise, so we're creating simple, accessible ways for everyone to get healthier, stronger and happier.

Along with the feel-good endorphins that come with exercise, studies regularly show that people who spend time in green spaces often report lower stress and improved mood.

And regular exercise is one of the most effective ways to lower the risk of chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes and heart disease.



Getting to know your neighbours can also reduce feelings of loneliness and increase community belonging. You might even find a new fitness buddy, which is a great way to stay motivated.

Whether you're new to exercise or already active, these free monthly outdoor classes are open to all fitness levels.

Join us after each session for free refreshments and giveaways, meet City of Melbourne councillors and have a chat with other participants.



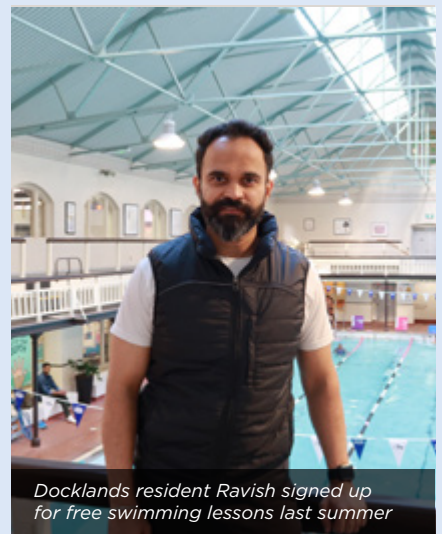
BOOK NOW
melbourne.vic.gov.au/freefitness

\$2 SWIMS AT OUR OUTDOOR POOLS



Stay cool and save money as \$2 swims make a comeback this summer at our outdoor pools. The weekday entry fee is just \$2 in summer for residents on weekdays, excluding public holidays, from December to February at Carlton Baths and North Melbourne Pool.

FREE SWIMMING LESSONS



Docklands resident Ravish signed up for free swimming lessons last summer

Learn to swim and be safe around water, as a popular program returns with 600 free swimming lessons for residents in January. Adults and children aged 3 and over can apply for this free 5-day intensive at Melbourne City Baths or Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre. The program helps residents develop essential water safety skills.

Find out more about free swimming lessons for residents in January and \$2 swims at our outdoor pools in summer at melbourne.vic.gov.au/2-dollar-swims

CORE VALUES: THE REAL GAINS OF EXERCISE WITH FRIENDS



Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre

The weights may be shinier and the floors springier at the new-look Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre, but the laughter is louder than ever as fitness buddies step back into the building.

For retired academic Kate Kennedy, weekly exercise sessions with old friends are good for more than core strength. They also strengthen the neighbourhood she's lived in for more than 30 years.

"It's more than just an exercise class. Some of us have been training together for more than a decade. We didn't want to lose momentum while the gym and the pool were closed, and we wanted to keep the gang together," Kate said.

So while the centre received a much-needed makeover, the gang picked up its swiss balls and steppers and moved into a nearby hall.

Instructor Bo would wheel the weights trolley into the makeshift training space every week and keep the momentum up with this group of mostly older women.

They shared the hall with all sorts of community organisations.

"One day you'd come out of class and walk into the graduation for the seeing-eye dogs, and the next it'd be rehearsals for *Tarzan the Musical*," Kate said.

Now that the refurbished gym has opened its doors again, Kate is relieved her close-knit group never missed a beat.

"The gym is where people meet and talk. It's like a community funnel. Yes we go there for exercise, but now we can sit down and have a coffee in the cafe after class, like we did before the renovation.

"We're coming back together, rejoining old friendships and making new ones."

EXPLORE THE NEW REC CENTRE

Kensington's new-look recreation centre features a 24-hour gym and 3 full-sized courts in the multi-sport stadium, along with group fitness spaces, a cafe and community meeting room.

In the first month after the centre reopened, there were:

- 30,000 visitors through the doors
- 4,000 attendees at group fitness classes
- 200+ recovery zone bookings
- 200+ gym induction sessions.

At the heart of the new centre is an 8-lane indoor pool, a learn-to-swim pool, children's splash pad, water play zone and family change spaces.

Accessibility features include pool ramps and hoist, and a Changing Places facility.



Training nearby during the renovation

FEELING GOOD, GOING GREEN

The modern new facility in Kensington is all-electric, helping to tackle climate change, reduce emissions and support a greener future. Features include:

- Roof mounted solar panels
- Efficient heating and cooling systems
- High-efficiency pool filtration system
- 80,000 litre rainwater harvesting tank
- High-performance building facade
- Demand-control ventilation
- Glazed windows to maintain ideal temperatures



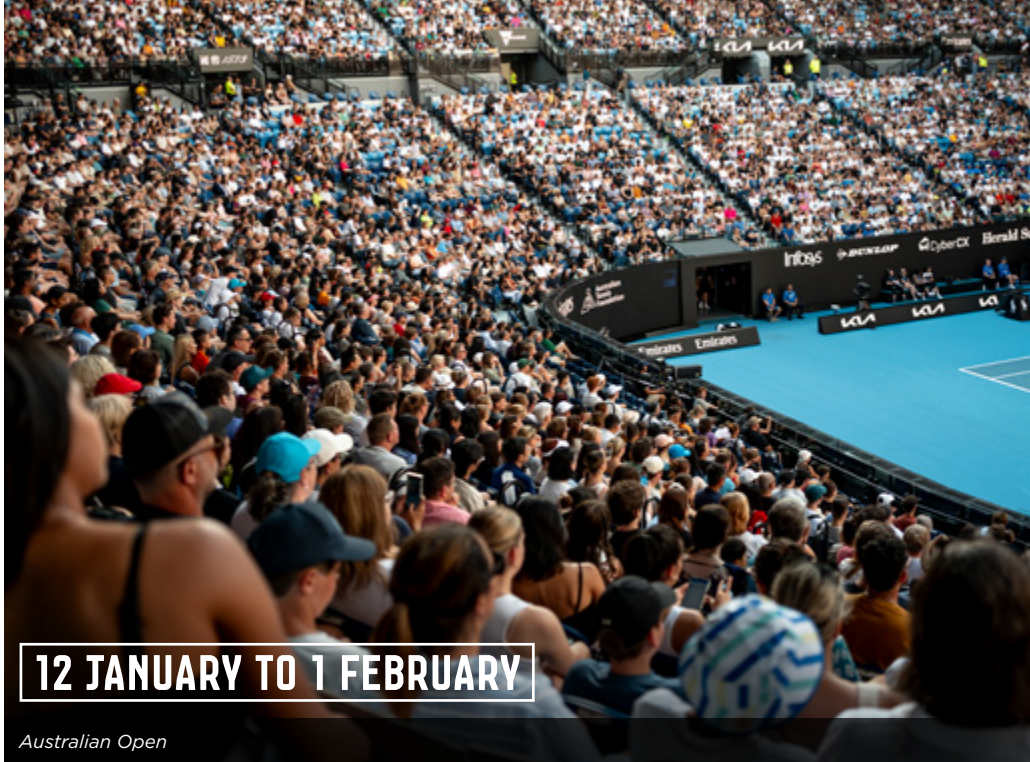
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
kensington.ymca.org.au

EVENTS CALENDAR

WHAT'S ON ONLY IN THE CITY



Event dates and details may change. For updates, visit @WhatsOnMelb or whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au



12 JANUARY TO 1 FEBRUARY

Australian Open



Christmas Festival

UNTIL 25 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

See the city light up with dazzling decorations, joyful events and family-friendly fun. See the giant Christmas tree at Fed Square, the Christmas River Show in Southbank, the Myer Christmas Windows and more.

whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/christmas

4 TO 7 DECEMBER

ASIA STREET FOOD FESTIVAL BY THE YARRA

Take your tastebuds on a culinary adventure with authentic street foods, from sizzling stir-fries to smoky skewers. Enjoy traditional music, contemporary beats and performances that celebrate an array of cultures. In Alexandra Gardens.



New Year's Eve

31 DECEMBER

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Celebrate New Year's Eve in the city with rooftop fireworks and laser displays. Visit official Celebration Zones for 9pm fireworks and the midnight moment. Or book to enjoy many venues and events across the city.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/nye

5 DECEMBER

DISABILITY SPORT AND RECREATION FESTIVAL

Celebrate inclusive, active lifestyles. Try accessible sports, meet Paralympians, explore activity zones and cheer on teams in the Corporate Wheelchair Challenge. At Crown River Walk.

13 DECEMBER

KOORIE KRISMAS

Culture, creativity and Koorie Klaus return for a free, fun-filled event featuring First Peoples dance, music, DJs, storytelling and film. Go Krismas shopping at a curated market stocked by First Peoples artists and makers. At Fed Square.



Koorie Krismas

13 DECEMBER

VIETJET MELBOURNE VIBING

Browse the curated market for books, art and treasures by local talent. Hear stories from diverse writers, artists, visual artists and performers. And sample global street food. At Ron Barassi Snr Park in Docklands.

26 TO 29 DECEMBER

BOXING DAY TEST SUMMER FEST 2025

The energy spills beyond the boundary as the Boxing Day Festival returns to Yarra Park - turning the precinct into a celebration of cricket, community and Aussie summer.



18 JANUARY TO 8 FEBRUARY

Midsumma Festival



22 FEBRUARY

Chinese Lunar New Year Festival

10 TO 16 JANUARY

NGV KIDS SUMMER FESTIVAL

Spark imaginations and inspire artistic exploration in young visitors at this free annual festival. Featuring hands-on workshops, live performances and storytime sessions. At NGV International.



NGV Kids Summer Festival

10 TO 11 JANUARY

VIDA MELBOURNE LATIN SUMMER FESTIVAL

A weekend of flavors, aromas and Latin experiences. Savour street food and sangria. Head to the family area for face painting, maraca workshops, poetry, puppetry and magic shows, and dance sessions.

12 JANUARY TO 1 FEBRUARY

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Come see for yourself why AO Hits Different, as world-class tennis arrives at Melbourne Park, along with live music, experiences and summer energy.

12 TO 23 JANUARY

SIGNAL SUMMER

Free creative arts workshops and events await young creatives aged 12 to 25. Try street art, songwriting, crafting and clay creations. And join the closing party and exhibition with performances and DJs on 23 January.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/signal

18 JANUARY TO 8 FEBRUARY

MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL

Melbourne's own LGBTQIA+ arts festival serves over 3 weeks with performances, exhibitions, parties and free celebrations, including the iconic Carnival in Alexandra Gardens.

10 TO 14 FEBRUARY

SIDNEY MYER FREE CONCERTS

Join the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for 4 free concerts under the stars, as this quintessential summer tradition returns to Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

14 FEBRUARY

NONGKRONG PRESENTS: PASAR SENJA

Experience Indonesian culture at a free, family-friendly twilight fair. Enjoy live music and dance, food stalls, an Indonesian makers' market and craft workshops at Fed Square.



Nongkrong presents Pasar Senja

14 TO 28 FEBRUARY

PAYPAL MELBOURNE FASHION FESTIVAL

Experience fashion as a spectator sport. See all-Australian designers in the Premium Runway Series. Meet up at the free Fashion Forecourt, supported by City of Melbourne, for food, drinks, entertainment and street style all evening.

20 TO 22 FEBRUARY

RAMADAN NIGHT MARKET

Enjoy global Iftar dishes, traditional sweets and drinks, and experience the warmth of shared traditions with a dedicated prayer space and vibrant evening atmosphere.

22 FEBRUARY

CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL

Welcome the Year of the Horse in Chinatown with an iconic dragon parade, spectacular lion dances, live performances, food stalls and family-friendly activities.

28 FEBRUARY TO 1 MARCH

ANTIPODES FESTIVAL

Sample Greek culture with live music, traditional dance, Greek food, cooking demonstrations, a Zorba competition, exhibitions and entertainment for all ages.



Antipodes Festival

SUMMER WITH MELBOURNE LIBRARIES

Turn pages all summer long with top reads and summer reading suggestions for grown-ups and the Big Summer Read for Kids. And bring the little ones to Christmas storytimes. Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries for more.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

SMALL AND MIGHTY: AWARD-WINNING SMALL BUSINESSES

Among the winners in this year's Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards are a design firm with heart, a day stay program for new parents and a cafe serving skills to young First Nations people.

Good design can also be a force for social good, as Small Business of the Year Seesaw Studio has consistently shown over 20 years in the trade.

"We really believe that creativity can be a catalyst for change," co-founder Anita McArthur said.

Chances are you've seen Seesaw's work: bold graphics for the Victorian Pride Centre, app design for Smiling Mind and branding for CERES Environmental Park.

For this team of proud Melburnians, being awarded Small Business of the Year is a moment to cherish.

"This city has shaped us, and in return, we are grateful to have contributed culturally and economically."



Lord Mayor Nick Reece with Seesaw Studio co-founders Anita and Matthew

Innovation Award: early parenting day stay program



Dr Amber Hart

Through its innovative Day Stay program, this Parkville team is reimagining the early days of parenting with a blend of knowledge and empathy.

Founding Director Dr Amber Hart said the clinic was born from a gap in the system.

"New parents are being discharged early from hospital with minimal support. We're seeing rising postnatal anxiety, depression and isolation - and knew it had to change."

Day Stay gives families access to a wide range of professional services they may need in early parenthood.

"Following our day stays, women are more confident, more receptive to therapy and better connected with their community," Amber said.

"Our goal is to make this the standard of care in Australia. It shows that clinical excellence and compassionate design can sit side by side."

Small Social Enterprise Award: Ngarrgu Djerring cafe

When young people sling coffees at Ngarrgu Djerring cafe in Alfred Place, they're also learning to leap over life's hurdles just like their mentor, Olympian Kyle Vander-Kuyp.

His cafe, Ngarrgu Djerring, offers employment, training and support to young people who are facing adversity.

"If someone starts off in the hospitality space and learns how to pour some coffees and meet people across the counter, that skillset will lead on to other areas," Kyle said.

While young people learn their way around the kitchen, the social enterprise behind the cafe - Killara Foundation - works with each young person to create stability elsewhere in their lives.



Founder Kyle Vander-Kuyp (second from right) with the Ngarrgu Djerring team



FOR MORE ABOUT THE AWARDS, VISIT melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards



Melburnian of the Year Jo Horgan AM

BEAUTY EMPIRE FOUNDER WINS CITY'S HIGHEST HONOUR

Entrepreneur and beauty retailer Jo Horgan AM from MECCA is this year's Melburnian of the Year.

As sunlight streams through arched windows on the top floor of the world's largest beauty store, MECCA founder and co-CEO Jo Horgan leans forward to share the secret to her success.

"One customer, one moment, one act of care and obsession at a time," Jo said. She is the Melburnian of the Year for 2025, the highest Melbourne Awards honour.

The MECCA beauty revolution began 28 years ago, when Jo opened her first store in a tiny Melbourne shopfront south of the river. It has since grown into Australia's leading prestige beauty retailer, with 110 stores and 7,000 staff welcoming 4.5 million customers every year.

"Melbourne is my home, and it's been MECCA's home since the very beginning. To be recognised as Melburnian of the Year by the city that has shaped and supported us from day one is so meaningful," Jo said.

Around her, the flagship MECCA superstore in the Bourke Street Mall is abuzz, as makeup artists match each customer with the right product from more than 200 beauty brands.

Fragrances are upstairs, along with jewellery and eye-wear. Elsewhere: hair and nail salons, brow and lash sculpting, ear piercing, a skin clinic, an apothecary and fresh flowers.

"We've not only created something extraordinary ... we've put Melbourne firmly on the global beauty map," Jo said.

She describes MECCA as a "playground for the spirit" that helps people to look, feel and be their best.

Through MECCA's social change movement MECCA M-POWER, she advances gender equality by educating and elevating women and girls.

"I've seen firsthand the transformative power of education - how it builds confidence, self-belief, and a foundation for people to truly flourish. That's why education has been woven into MECCA's culture."

Jo was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2023 for her contribution to retail and women in leadership. She also serves on the board of the National Gallery of Victoria Foundation.

MELBOURNE AWARDS WINNERS

The Melbourne Awards are our city's highest honour. They celebrate the people who make our city an inclusive, creative and forward-thinking place we can all be proud of. Thank you to our major partners: Airbnb, 3AW Melbourne and EY, and our event partners: ArchitectureAu, Committee for Melbourne, JOY Media and Showtime Entertainment Group.



Dr Belle Lim

Read about our other Melbourne Award winners, including our Young Melburnian of the Year Dr Belle Lim, at melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourne-awards



PICK THE PERFECT FLORAL EMBLEM FOR MELBOURNE

Dr Kylie Soanes facilitated an expert panel to choose the flowers for the shortlist

Which local native flower do you think best represents our city's unique biodiversity and character?

We're choosing a floral emblem for Melbourne and we want you to cast your vote for one of the flowers hand-picked by our expert reference group.

Whether it's a floral favourite, or a bloom that's new to you, we want to know which flower fits best with your idea of Melbourne.

Each of our floral finalists has unique characteristics that could represent this city of ours. Maybe it cleverly adapts to our wild weather, or hides underground from the heat, or flourishes in a rain garden to help prevent flooding.

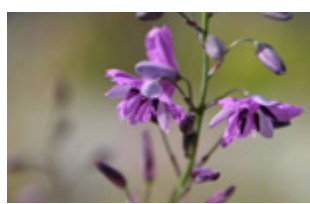
Your choice may be swayed by other factors, but no matter the reason, we're calling on you to vote for a floral emblem you think is worthy of representing our wonderful city.

Voting closes Sunday 15 February 2026, and Melbourne's floral emblem will be announced soon after.

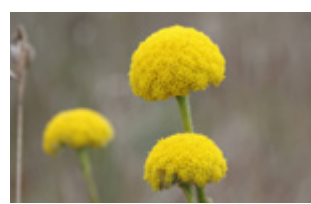
 [VOTE FOR OUR FLORAL EMBLEM participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/floral-emblem](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/floral-emblem)



Experts pick flowers for the shortlist



Chocolate lily
Arthropodium strictum



Common billy buttons
Craspedia variabilis



Rounded noon-flower
Disphyma crassifolium



Purple coral pea
Hardenbergia violacea



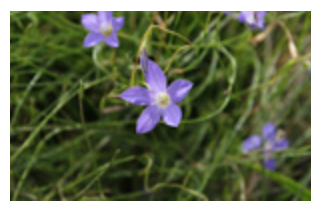
Yam daisy, murnong
Microseris walteri



Austral storksbill
Pelargonium australe



Kangaroo grass
Themeda triandra



Tall bluebell
Wahlenbergia stricta



Swamp everlasting
Xerochrysum palustre

GROWING OUR GARDEN CITY

Two acclaimed experts are joining us to help establish Melbourne's identity as a Garden City: First Nations Garden City Ambassador Margaret Parisi and Garden City Ambassador Paul Bangay OAM.

They will share their expertise and passion for gardens, greening and Country. They will also promote visionary projects, advocate for green spaces big and small and inspire a greener future for Melbourne.

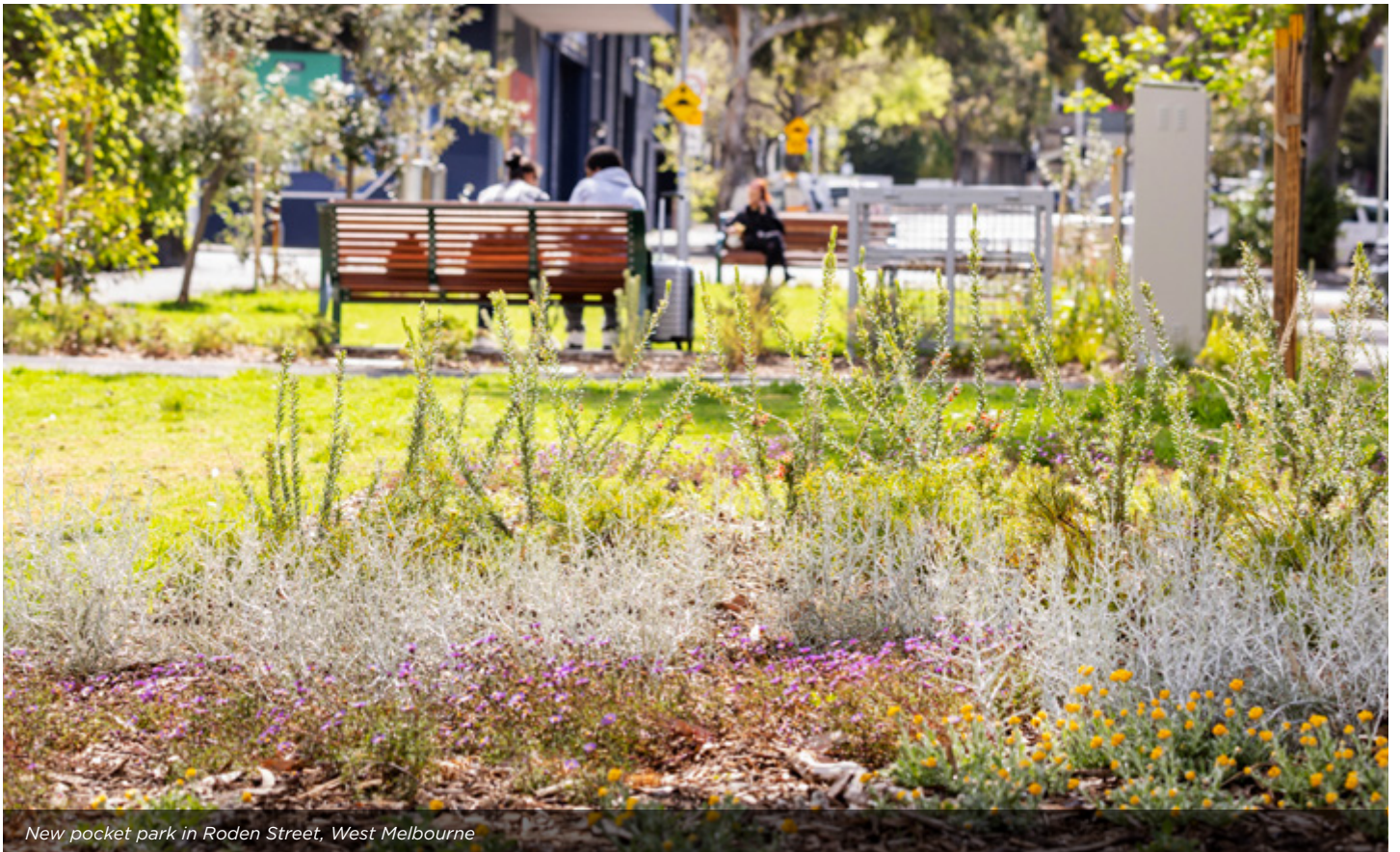
In the context of climate and biodiversity crises, it's more important than ever to be a green, resilient, sustainable and nature-based city.

Here are more ways we're tending to the Garden City so nature is always close by:

- investing \$44.3 million in open space, streetscapes and greening in 2025-26
- fast-tracking open space and greening projects
- providing matched funding grants for new greening projects on private property.

 [FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT melbourne.vic.gov.au/garden-city](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/garden-city)

POCKET OASIS FOR THE INNER WEST



New pocket park in Roden Street, West Melbourne

Green space is growing in West Melbourne, where we've reclaimed an under-used section of road and converted footpaths into a local oasis.

Now buzzing with native birds and beneficial insects, Roden Street boasts more than 1,000 m² of green space and gathering spaces for locals of all shapes and sizes.

The garden beds are full of colourful flowers that attract pollinators and keep the garden lively and full of food all year round.

More than 40 new trees grace the street, including the hardy pincushion hakea, selected to replace older callistemons that were succumbing to invasive pests.

The well-timed replacement of trees in decline will also help keep our streets cool as the climate changes – which is a focus of our Urban Forest Strategy.



Everlasting daisies in Roden Street

An accessible path network, lawn and new park benches invite local residents and passers-by to find a spot in the dappled shade and relax with friends and family.

One West Melbourne resident, Melisa Lewins, took some time to come around to the idea of the new linear park, but she's now a big fan.

"Look, originally when I first saw what was happening, I wasn't very happy, but I have to eat my words. It is looking absolutely fantastic," Mel said.

She regularly walks through the new linear park with her aptly named dog.

"Miss Daisy thinks the new park is pawesome," Mel said.

"We've got the birds back. We've got magpies, which I don't think we've had too many of before. And the park benches are absolutely being used. It's fantastic. Good job, Melbourne!"



West Melbourne locals Mel and Miss Daisy

The lush streetscape now stretches from King Street to Spencer Street. It features water-sensitive urban design to reduce stormwater runoff, and traffic calming measures that create a safer street.

Our Urban Forest Strategy and Open Space Strategy address climate change and protect against future vulnerability by planning for the evolution and longevity of our urban green spaces.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/greening-rodan-street

PURR-FECTLY HAPPY AT HOME: FROM STREET KINGS TO COUCH ROYALS



New rules for cat owners help to protect our wildlife and keep our furry companions safe.

If you've ever watched your cat stalk a sock, ambush your ankles, or dramatically pounce on a toy mouse, you already know cats are natural-born hunters.

When those instincts spill outside, it's not so cute. Roaming cats are one of the biggest threats to Australia's native wildlife.

That's why we're stepping in with new rules for responsible pet ownership, designed to give our native wildlife a fighting chance at survival and keep cats safe.

WHAT ARE THE NEW RULES?

- **Night-time curfew:** cats must stay on their property from 6pm to 8am.
- **Desexing:** all cats must be desexed.
- **Sensitive areas off-limits:** cats cannot roam freely near waterways, rivers or certain parks and gardens unless in a carrier or on a harness or leash.

These new rules were introduced in October through our Domestic Animal Management Plan. It's part of a long-term commitment to animal welfare and protecting our urban wildlife.

TRUTHS ABOUT CATS AND WILDLIFE

Australia's wildlife is unique and fragile. Many species found around Melbourne are vulnerable to cats, including superb fairy-wrens, blue-tongue lizards, red-rumped parrots and ringtail possums.

- Roaming pet cats kill on average 110 native animals each year.
- Nearly 80 per cent of cats hunt when they are outside.
- Globally, cats are linked to the potential extinction of at least 360 species of reptiles, birds and mammals.

Studies show cats only bring home about 1 in 6 of their kills. Even if your kitty seems harmless, odds are they're just keeping a low profile.

KEEPING CATS SAFER

Cats are safer indoors, according to animal behaviour consultant Jade Currie.

"Containment reduces risks from cars, fights, disease and going missing, and generally helps cats live longer, healthier lives," Jade said. She's also the Animal Program Manager at the Lost Dogs' Home in North Melbourne.

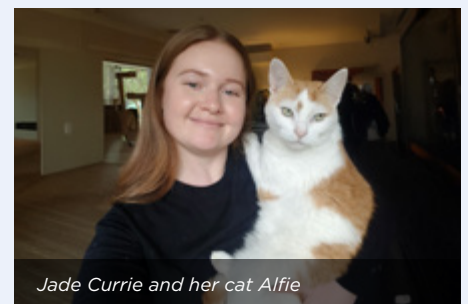
Preparation is key when transitioning your cat from outdoors to indoors.

"Catify your home with vertical spaces, hiding places, scratch posts, wildlife observation spots, predatory play opportunities, and adequate food, water and litter spread throughout the home," Jade said.

Harnesses and outdoor enclosures are a great way to keep cats safe but stimulated.

"You can begin by associating your cat's new harness with mealtime, or by engaging your cat with their favourite toys during a visit to their enclosure.

"When introducing something new that has the potential to be scary, it's important not to force your cat and move at their own pace."



Jade Currie and her cat Alfie



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/cat-containment



Artist Sean Barker at The Torch Gallery

Art on the inside: from prison to gallery walls

See how artworks made in prison help artists dream of the future.

During a long stretch in prison, proud Kamu man Sean Barker turned up at an arts workshop to pass the time. It soon became his calling.

Paintbrush in hand, Sean was transported to a childhood spent on Country in the Daly River region in the Northern Territory, before he moved to town and got caught in a 20-year cycle of crime and punishment.

“Prisons are full of anxiety. It doesn’t matter whether you can handle yourself. The only time I felt free inside jail was when I was painting,” Sean said.

Now adjusting to life outside prison, Sean looks back at the ways that painting changed his perspective.

“When you’re doing a piece, you escape everything: all the worries, all the concerns, all your thoughts. Everything except for what you’re thinking about for the painting you’re working on,” Sean said.

Watched over by arts mentors from The Torch – which receives a multi-year arts grant from the City of Melbourne – Sean would spread out his materials in the prison rec room and set to work.

Wiradjuri woman and arts mentor Clare Williams was quick to encourage Sean’s talent as a landscape painter.

“I started showing him photos of artworks by famous landscape painters such as Albert Namatjira and gave him a little push in the right direction,” Clare said. She’s an Indigenous Arts Officer at The Torch.

Every month, Clare and the team visits 15 prisons across Victoria, providing mentoring and art workshops for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are incarcerated. They also support artists after their release with mentoring and art packs filled with paintbrushes, paints and canvases.

The artworks are then listed for sale and exhibited at The Torch Gallery in Carlton, with 100 per cent of the artwork price going directly to the artist.

This allows artists to buy necessities or comforts while incarcerated and helps to build savings for life after release.

“When Clare came in and told me that I’d sold my first painting, I was euphoric. And it’s an ego boost, a way of identifying

when you’re in prison as an artist, as an Aboriginal artist. The Torch is huge in jail – massive – especially for Indigenous artists,” Sean said. The money Sean earned from arts sales while inside is helping him to start over as a civilian.

“Every other time I’ve gotten out of prison, I’ve had to go back to my old ways because, without having the means to buy clothes or feed yourself, life is pretty hard.

“Having that money from sales of my paintings at The Torch is phenomenal. It put me in a place where I could re-establish myself as a human being on the outside,” Sean said.



Indigenous Arts Officer Clare Williams



READ THE FULL STORY AT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/news

YOUR COUNCIL



Lord Mayor Nick Reece

Portfolio head for Infrastructure | Portfolio deputy for Finance, Governance and Risk, and Aboriginal Melbourne

P : 9658 9704
E : nicholas.reece@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Dr Olivia Ball

Portfolio head for Aboriginal Melbourne
Portfolio deputy for Environment

P : 9658 9086
E : olivia.ball@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Davydd Griffiths

Portfolio head for Environment
Portfolio deputy for Community, Health and City Services

P : 9658 9056
E : davydd.griffiths@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Philip Le Liu

Portfolio head for Creative and Arts
Portfolio deputy for Planning

P : 9658 9630
E : philip.liu@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Kevin Louey

Portfolio head for City Economy and Business

P : 9658 9170
E : kevin.louey@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Mark Scott

Portfolio head for Tourism and Events
Portfolio deputy for Creative and Arts

P : 9658 8580
E : mark.scott@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell

Portfolio head for Planning
Portfolio deputy for Tourism and Events

P : 9658 9043
E : roshena.campbell@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Rafael Camillo

Portfolio head for Safety and Cleaning
Portfolio deputy for Infrastructure

P : 9658 9010
E : rafael.camillo@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Dr Owen Guest

Portfolio head for Finance, Governance and Risk
Portfolio deputy for Education and Innovation

P : 9658 9038
E : owen.guest@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Gladys Liu

Portfolio head for Community, Health and City Services
Portfolio deputy for Safety and Cleaning

P : 9658 9636
E : gladys.liu@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Councillor Andrew Rowse

Portfolio head for Innovation and Education
Portfolio deputy for City Economy and Business

P : 9658 9051
E : andrew.rowse@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Postal address for all councillors

City of Melbourne, GPO Box 1603, Melbourne VIC 3001

IN BRIEF

MELBOURNE IN 16 LANGUAGES

Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au and click the translate item in the top left corner to find and share the information you need in 16 languages – from paying rates and applying for permits to booking a hard waste collection and reading local stories in Melbourne News.

HEAT HEALTH

Be prepared for days of extreme heat in summer. Look for Heat Health Alerts on our social media. Get practical tips for dealing with the heat, and find Cool Places near you when there is a heatwave.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/heatwaves

ACCESSIBILITY IN MELBOURNE



Discover accessible accommodation, entertainment, and places to eat and drink. Move around Melbourne with ease using our interactive mobility map, find Changing Places and accessible toilets.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/accessibility-melbourne

PARKS AND GARDENS

Explore Melbourne's beautiful urban parks and gardens. Find the perfect place to relax amid 480 acres of green space in the City of Melbourne, including heritage gardens, leafy local parks, native grassland, riverside terraces and wetlands.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/parks-and-gardens

WHAT GOES IN WHAT BIN?

Get it right on bin night with our A-to-Z guide to recycling and waste. From cardboard and food scraps to chemicals and e-waste, know how to recycle or dispose of common items using our kerbside bins, collection services, drop-off locations and more.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/a-z-waste-guide

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

DECEMBER

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Future Melbourne Committee | Tuesday 2 December | 5.30pm | Melbourne Town Hall |
| Council | Tuesday 9 December | 5.30pm | Melbourne Town Hall |



View all meeting dates and locations at melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil

PEOPLE WE MEET IN MELBOURNE



DR VICTOR HURLEY
Peregrine falcon expert

“This Melbourne city peregrine falcon nest site is very reliable, with a high percentage of eggs hatching – 87 per cent hatching compared to the Victorian average of 66 per cent.”

For more than 30 years, the city’s famous peregrine falcons have taken up residence on a tiny ledge, high above the CBD. Normally cliff-dwellers, they’ve adapted brilliantly to this Collins Street skyscraper.



NAJIA NABIL
Skilled migrant and researcher

“I realised that becoming a refugee was linked to what was happening in Afghanistan, and that was all about politics. My struggles were linked to politics. And that interested me in politics.”

A pilot internship program creates a soft landing for talented refugees like Najia who are looking for work, through a collaboration between City of Melbourne and AMES Australia.



ZOE AND MICHAEL
Street furniture designers

“What I really want to do is change people’s feelings towards composting, making it very easy to use, very beautiful and social, so people feel proud of it.”

Zoe and Michael are redefining public composting and tackling food waste with Worms at Work, which pilots the idea of street furniture that also turns food scraps into compost. They won the 2024 Fishermans Bend Digital Innovation Challenge.



Learn more about Victor and the city peregrine falcons, Najia, Zoe and Michael at melbourne.vic.gov.au/news

CONTACT

melbourne.vic.gov.au/contactus
03 9658 9658

NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE

Teletypewriter (TTY) users phone 13 36 77 then ask for 03 9658 9658
Speak & Listen users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 03 9658 9658

IN PERSON

Melbourne Town Hall, Administration Building
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Business hours, Monday to Friday

CONNECT

- facebook.com/cityofmelbourne
- instagram.com/cityofmelbourne
- linkedin.com/company/city-of-melbourne

POSTAL ADDRESS

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3000

FEEDBACK

To provide feedback, contact the City of Melbourne or email melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au

ONLINE VERSION

Read and subscribe to Melbourne News at melbourne.vic.gov.au/news

AUDIO VERSION

To hear an audio version of *Melbourne Magazine*, visit the Melbourne Library Service on SoundCloud, or contact Vision Australia on printaccess@visionaustralia.org or 02 9334 3524



INTERPRETER SERVICES

We cater for people of all backgrounds. Please call 03 9280 0726.

- 03 9280 0717 廣東話
- 03 9280 0719 Bahasa Indonesia
- 03 9280 0720 Italiano
- 03 9280 0721 普通话
- 03 9280 0722 Soomaali
- 03 9280 0723 Español
- 03 9280 0725 Việt Ngữ
- 03 9280 0726 عربي
- 03 9280 0726 한국어
- 03 9280 0726 हिंदी
- 03 9280 0726 All other languages



HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



Let's work together to keep each other safe and our city clean on New Year's Eve and beyond. Report street cleanliness issues and more using the QR code, or anytime online at melbourne.vic.gov.au/reportanissue



CITY OF MELBOURNE