

Bellarine Neighbourhood

Providing support for our community that supports us



BELLARINE POLICE

This issue: Easter and School Holidays, special visits to our local kindergartens, community messages, Daylight Savings, and a whole lot more.

A LETTER FROM THE OIC

It has now been ten months since I commenced as Officer in Charge, and I can genuinely say I am enjoying both the challenge and opportunity that comes with the role. The Bellarine is a unique and proud community, and it has been a privilege getting to know many of you during this time.

From a staffing perspective, we have recently filled a number of vacancies, which has strengthened our ability to deliver frontline policing services. This has allowed us to increase our visibility across the community, including deploying dedicated patrol cars targeting driver behaviour, as well as expanding our bike patrol presence in key areas.

I have also made a commitment to improving accessibility to the station. We are now open for public enquiries between 10:00am and 6:00pm every Tuesday and Thursday, with additional days available when staffing permits. I encourage community members to drop in with any concerns or queries.

Finally, I want to address what is becoming a significant national issue – young people riding illegal and modified e-bikes in a dangerous manner.



Senior Sergeant
Dean PARRELLO

This is not something we can simply police our way out of. It is a shared responsibility that starts at home. Parents and guardians must take an active role in ensuring their children are using safe and legal equipment.

If your child is riding a modified or illegal e-bike, the choice is simple: remove access to the bike and dispose of it. If you would prefer, I am happy to accept these bikes at the station if you wish to sign them over for destruction.

We also need the community's support. If you are aware of young people riding these bikes dangerously, please report it to Crime Stoppers either via their website www.crimestoppersvic.com.au or by calling 1800 333 000. Reports can be made anonymously and will come directly to me. Providing an address at a minimum, and ideally a name or description, allows us to follow up directly with responsible adults and take appropriate action.

Working together, we can continue to keep the Bellarine a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.

ROAD SAFETY – EASTER AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

With the conclusion of a highly successful long-weekend road policing operation under Operation Nexus across the Bellarine.

Portarlington Police members conducted a preliminary breath test (PBT) site on Jetty Road, Clifton Springs. The first vehicle intercepted returned a positive PBT and was subjected to an evidentiary breath test (EBT) at the site. The driver recorded a **BAC of 0.216** and was issued with an immediate licence suspension.

While awaiting the impound tow, a second driver was intercepted and returned a positive PBT. Subsequent EBT analysis recorded a **BAC of 0.191**, resulting in a further immediate driving ban. Both vehicles were conveniently impounded on the same tow truck.

These results build on earlier enforcement activity over the weekend, with Bellarine and Portarlington processing four drivers for EXPCA offences on Friday and Portarlington Police members processing an additional driver on Saturday.

Police are reminding the community that drink driving remains one of the leading causes of serious injury and fatal collisions on our roads.

Choosing to drive after drinking not only puts your own life at risk, but also the lives of your passengers and other road users.

This Easter period has shown that enforcement will continue, and those who make the wrong choice will be detected. Plan ahead, arrange a designated driver, or use alternative transport. There is no excuse for drink driving.



ANZAC DAY BELLARINE

On Saturday 25 April, many members of our community gathered at ANZAC services held across the Bellarine to honour and remember those who have served our nation.

As the sun rose and the sound of the bugle echoed through the morning air, we paused in quiet reflection, acknowledging the courage, sacrifice and enduring spirit of our ANZACs who have given so much for our country.

Services were held throughout the Bellarine, including in Leopold, Drysdale, Portarlington, St Leonards, Barwon Heads, Ocean Grove and Queenscliff, with strong community attendance at each location.

Representing Victoria Police, Bellarine members Senior Sergeant PARRELLO attended the morning service, where he paid their respects and laid a wreath in honour of those who have served.



Senior Sergeant PARRELLO



Ocean Grove Dawn Service and March



Drysdale March and Service



HOME PROPERTY SECURITY: SIMPLE STEPS TO STAY SAFE THIS AUTUMN

As we head into the cooler months across the Bellarine Peninsula, it's a good time to think about home and property security. With daylight savings settling in and our days getting shorter and more people spending time away during school holidays and weekends, opportunistic theft can become more common.

The good news is that a few simple steps can make a big difference in protecting your home and belongings.

One of the most important things residents can do is lock up consistently. Many thefts from homes and cars occur when doors are left unlocked. Always ensure your house, garage, and vehicles are secured even when you're home or just stepping out briefly.

Outdoor lighting is another effective deterrent. Motion sensor lights at entry points or along driveways can discourage unwanted visitors and make it easier for neighbours to notice unusual activity.

If you're going away, consider ways to make your home look lived in. This might include asking a neighbour to collect your mail, putting bins out and in, or using timers on lights. Small details can help prevent your property from appearing vacant.

We also encourage residents to be mindful of parcel deliveries. With online shopping more popular than ever, unattended packages can be an easy target. If possible, arrange delivery to a secure location or have parcels sent to a workplace or collection point.

Don't forget about sheds and garages, which often contain valuable tools, bikes, and equipment. Make sure they are locked and consider marking or recording serial numbers for valuable items.

Finally, strong communities are one of the best crime prevention tools we have. If you notice anything unusual or suspicious in your neighbourhood, report it to police. Looking out for one another helps keep the Bellarine a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

Police 131 444

Save 000 for emergencies

Victoria Police officially launched a 24-hour police assistance phone line and online reporting service for the community to connect with about non-urgent crimes and events. All Victorians are encouraged to contact the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 or visit the Victoria Police Online Reporting service to report non-urgent crimes and events.

The Police Assistance Line and Online Reporting service will take reports or give advice at any time on non-urgent crimes and events anywhere in the state, including:

- property damage
- lost or located property
- theft
- absence from residence registrations
- PartySafe registrations
- other general non-urgent police enquiries

The Online Reporting service is available through the new look Victoria Police website, which improves the way police information and services are found and understood online

The Police assistance Line calls are taken by civilian staff at a contact centre in Ballarat, under the supervision of police.



THE VICTORIA POLICE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

Pictured below we have Aaron Alexander alongside Senior Constable Paul DAIS from Victoria Police K9 Unit and his companion MACK.

It has been a pleasure having Aaron attend our station through the Work Experience Program. He has had an opportunity to observe and facilitate in everyday policing and who knows we may see him return in uniform next time.

The Victoria Police Work Experience Program provides a fantastic opportunity for high school students considering a career within Victoria Police. Students are placed at participating police stations and department units where they will have the opportunity to observe and learn from our Police Officers, Protective Services Officers, Protective Custody Officers and VPS personnel.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I tried donating blood today...NEVER AGAIN!!!
Too many stupid questions. Who's blood is it? Where did you get it from? Why is it in a bucket?



Victoria Police is made for ambitious people looking for a career with **more challenges, excitement, purpose and possibilities.**

- Opportunities for career progression.
- Be paid from day one of training.
- Nine weeks leave a year.

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



BELLARINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT REGISTER

Recent promotions at two “Coffee with a Cop” events at Leopold’s Gateway Plaza and Brown Shugar Café at St Leonards, and the Bunnings Leopold Easter Event has resulted in new registrations on our Register database.

Amid the chatter within Brown Shugar Café, one lady listened intently as S/C Luke Wigmore explained to her the service the Register offers. It was hearing that she could register that she owned a pet and the knowledge that her pet would be cared for in the short term if something was to happen to her, that she completed the registration form immediately.

It is simple things like this that can provide peace of mind to residents on the Bellarine, particularly those who live alone.

When registering with us, you can record your next of kin contact details, your spare key location and your GP, all of which could be important information for Police in the event of an emergency.

Visit our website <https://bellarineregister.org.au/> to register online, or download a registration form.

Is there someone you know who may benefit from this service?



BELLARINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT REGISTER

New computers

New larger, touch screen computers were installed recently, thanks to funding received from the City of Greater Geelong Equipment Grant and a donation from Portarlington Drysdale Lions Club.

The new computers provide our office staff with up to date technology and are a joy to use.

Volunteer Elizabeth and her son in law, David, sourced the computers and set up in the Office where Bay IT facilitated the installation.

Appointment of Assistant Volunteer Co-ordinator

We are pleased to announce (with much fanfare) that Elizabeth De Trafford has been appointed the new Assistant Volunteer Coordinator at Bellarine Community Support Register.

Congratulations Elizabeth!



BELLARINE COMMUNITY EVENT



Come along and hear from our expert speakers about Safety on the Bellarine

MONDAY 16 MARCH	CUPPA WITH A COPPA	10.00 AM - 11.30 AM	SHUGAR BEACH CAFÉ ST LEONARDS
SATURDAY 18 APRIL	SAFE PLATE DAY	9.00 AM - 12 NOON	KINGSTON VILLAGE OCEAN GROVE
TUESDAY 21 APRIL	CUPPA WITH A COPPA	10.00 AM - 11.30 AM	BLAX COFFEE GATEWAY PLAZA LEOPOLD
WEDNESDAY 27 MAY	POLICING ON THE BELLARINE	1.00 PM - 2.30 PM	SPRINGDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE DRYSDALE

Stay for a coffee, ask questions, and share what's on your mind

Building Connections between Police and their Local Community



BELLARINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT REGISTER

“The Long Way Home”

Helen used to measure her days in small, manageable pieces. Breakfast. Medication. A short walk if the weather held. Lunch. Rest. Dinner. Bed. Since Arthur’s diagnosis of early dementia, routine had become her anchor. Predictability helped her cope.

Arthur still insisted he was “fine to drive.” And for a while, Helen let him — short trips only. The local shops. The pharmacy. Familiar roads. “He’s still himself,” she would tell their daughter. “I don’t want to take everything away all at once.”

But underneath, there was a constant hum of worry. One Tuesday morning, Arthur picked up his keys. “Just ducking out,” he said casually. “Where to?” Helen asked, trying to sound light. “Oh... just a drive. Something in her chest tightened. “Arthur, maybe I’ll come with you.”

“No, no,” he waved her off. “I’ll be ten minutes.” The door closed before she could answer. Ten minutes passed. Then twenty. Helen stood at the kitchen window, watching the empty driveway. After forty minutes, she called his mobile. It rang out. After an hour, her hands began to shake.

She called again. This time, he answered. “Helen?” His voice was thin, uncertain. “Arthur! Where are you?” A long pause. “I... I don’t know.” Her stomach dropped. “What can you see?” “Trees. A road. There’s... a sign but

I don’t recognise the name.”

“Stay where you are,” she said quickly, forcing calm into her voice. “Don’t go anywhere. I’ll come get you.” But she didn’t know where “there” was.

For the next hour, Helen stayed on the phone while trying to piece together clues — a passing truck company name, a glimpse of a street sign he couldn’t quite read, the sound of traffic in the background.

Her mind was racing, but then she remembered. They were registered with the Bellarine Community Support Register.

With shaking hands, Helen called the police and explained the situation. The officer immediately understood the situation and Helen stayed on the phone with Arthur while police went about their work.

Eventually, he was located several suburbs away. By the time Helen reached him, Arthur was sitting in the car, confused and exhausted - a police vehicle nearby. “I was just going for a drive,” he said, as she helped him into the passenger seat. “I thought I knew the way.”

The next day, Helen received her weekly call from the Bellarine Community Support Register Volunteer and explained what had happened.

‘I’m so tired,’ Helen explained as a bone-deep exhaustion from always being alert, always anticipating and always holding everything together, crept in.

Shortly after ending the call, Helen considered the discussion with the volunteer and made another to a local carer support service seeking help.

If you know of anyone who might like to receive a weekly social call, contact the Bellarine Community Support Register on 5255 3968.





NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH BELLARINE

March was a busy month for our Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine team with a number of activities and events including –

- Coffee with a Cop Brown Sugar Café St Leonards – a great morning of community connection and chat.
- Neighbourhood Watch Meeting at Springdale Neighbourhood Centre -
- Bunnings Leopold Easter Family Event
- Camp Safe / Sausage Sizzle at Portarlington Holiday Park – a theft reduction initiative aimed at keeping campers bikes and scooters safe – partnering with Bellarine Bayside.

The first **Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine Newsletter** has been issued and is available on our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/nhwbellarine> . This will be issued on a monthly basis.

It is with great pleasure that we acknowledge the support of Neville Richards Real Estate St Leonards and Portarlington and Harcourts Drysdale who will print hard copies of the newsletter. These will be available at IGA St Leonards, General Store Indented Head and various locations across the North Bellarine, including Drysdale, Clifton Springs and Curlewis.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MEETING

The March meeting of NHW Bellarine saw police and neighbours come together to discuss community, concerns and solutions.

Some points from the meeting –

- Police Station counter Ocean Grove will be open 10-6 Tuesday and Thursday and Monday, Wednesday, Friday where possible.
- Mobile policing service is the priority.
- Police will continue to collect after hour contacts for Bellarine businesses.
- Report hoon driving activity when it's occurring – call Triple Zero 000

Our membership continues to grow and sees many of our volunteers involved in the events held. If you would like to get involved feel free to email us at nhwbellarine@gmail.com or go online and complete a Neighbourhood Watch membership form - go to <https://nhw.com.au/membership-application/>

As we grow, we look forward to being proactive across the Bellarine.

NEXT MEETING: 30 April, 1.30pm, Portarlington & St Leonards RSL Club, Cnr. Fenwick & Harding St, Portarlington.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **18 April** Safe Plate Kingston Village Shopping Centre carpark 9am -12 noon
- **20 April** Staying In Portarlington Safety, Senior Citizens Centre, Portarlington
- **21 April** Leopold Gateway Plaza, Coffee with a Cop 10.00 am
- **7 May** Bunnings Leopold Mothers Day event
- **27 May Policing on the Bellarine** Springdale Neighbourhood Centre 1pm – 2.30pm

Can you help shape the new Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine? We welcome your input. Email us at nhwbellarine@gmail.com

Stay Safe

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH BELLARINE

SCHOOL AWARDS

Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine will present an award at the end of each term to a student at both St Leonards and Portarlington Primary Schools. This initiative, which originated with Neighbourhood Watch St Leonards, seeks to acknowledge a student who displays a positive attitude to their school's values and school community.

The Term 1 St Leonards Primary School award was presented to Hudson for his high level of respect and responsibility as he carried out his role as Sports Equipment Monitor for Term 1.



The Portarlington Primary School award was presented to Ruby for overall safety and compassion at school and in the wider Portarlington neighbourhood. Well done to Hudson and Ruby – great neighbours



Locking up might feel like a small thing...

But when we all do it, it makes a big difference.

Every time you lock your car, your door, or put your keys away, you're helping protect your home and your neighbours too!

**Lock your
car. Lock
your home.**

When we all lock
up,
we help make our
neighbourhoods
safer.

 **Neighbourhood Watch**
Let's watch out for each other



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH BELLARINE

Neighbourhood Watch BBQ Promotes Safety on the Bellarine

A community-focused initiative brought families together on Wednesday, 8 March, as eight Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine volunteers teamed up with Bellarine Bayside Park manager David Spelman to host a successful BBQ during the busy school holiday period.

Blessed with beautiful weather, the event attracted many visiting families, with children arriving on bikes and scooters to enjoy a free BBQ sausage. A key focus of the event was promoting bike safety and raising awareness about protecting personal property from theft.

Young attendees learnt practical tips on keeping their bikes secure. Children received stickers and home safety-themed pictures to colour, helping reinforce important safety messages in an engaging way

Parents were also well catered for with one way number plate safety screws, personal alarms, anti-scan safety pouches for electronic car keys and invisible marking pens available for purchase. These pens allow owners to discreetly mark bikes, scooters and other valuable equipment at home - making it easier for police to identify and return stolen items if they are recovered.

In addition, a range of informative brochures covering home, car, school, and business safety were provided, ensuring families left with valuable knowledge to help keep their households and communities safe

The event highlighted the strength of community collaboration and the ongoing commitment of local volunteers to promoting safety across the Bellarine region.

If you would like further information about Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine email Rhonda at nhwbellarine@gmail.com



A MESSAGE FROM OUR HIGHWAY PATROL

Senior Constable DUNN and Senior Constable ELSWORTHY from our Highway Patrol Unit were working on a night shift.

At approximately 9:37PM on Tuesday the 7th of April, they have detected a motorcycle travelling south on the Princes Hwy, Lara, travelling at 160km/hr in a 100 zone.

The Highway unit has followed the motorcycle through the Geelong CBD before Police helicopter took over, who assisted in following as an arial platform. Police helicopter-maintained observation on the motorcycle where it has reached speeds exceeding 280km/hr whilst touring most of the Bellarine. At one stage was detected near Wallington at **312km/hr.**

The motorcycle was followed to a Leopold address where the male rider was arrested by Highway Patrol unit for Reckless Conducted Endangering Life. The motorcycle impounded for 30 days at a cost of \$1305. Male charged and bailed to Geelong Magistrates Court.



CRIME STOPPERS VICTORIA

Crime Stoppers is an independent not-for-profit organisation that partners with the community, media and police to encourage people to prevent crime and to confidentially share what they know about unsolved crime or suspicious activity.

Crime Stoppers believes everyone has the right to feel safe from crime. We share practical advice on how you can protect your community, and the people and things that are important to you.

When you make a report, you don't have to leave your personal details with us, your call isn't recorded and, if you make a report online, your IP address isn't stored. You are in control of the reporting process – you choose how much information you share and whether you want to remain anonymous.

Since its start in Victoria in 1987, they have received over 1.33 million tips from the community, resulting in over 27,600 arrests and the recovery of more than \$406 million worth of drugs, property and cash.

BELLARINE NEIGHBOURHOOD UNIT

On Tuesday 14th of April, our Bellarine Police members, Leading Senior Constable HOARE and Sergeant CONNOLLY attended at Lifestyles Ocean Grove along with Louise SMILLIE from the Bellarine Community Support Register, Neighbourhood Watch Greater Geelong Co-ordinator, Rhonda Rotherham, Crime Stoppers Geelong Manager, Kelly Taylor for an information session.

Police provided the community members with information, strategies and resources specifically aimed at helping you stay safe.

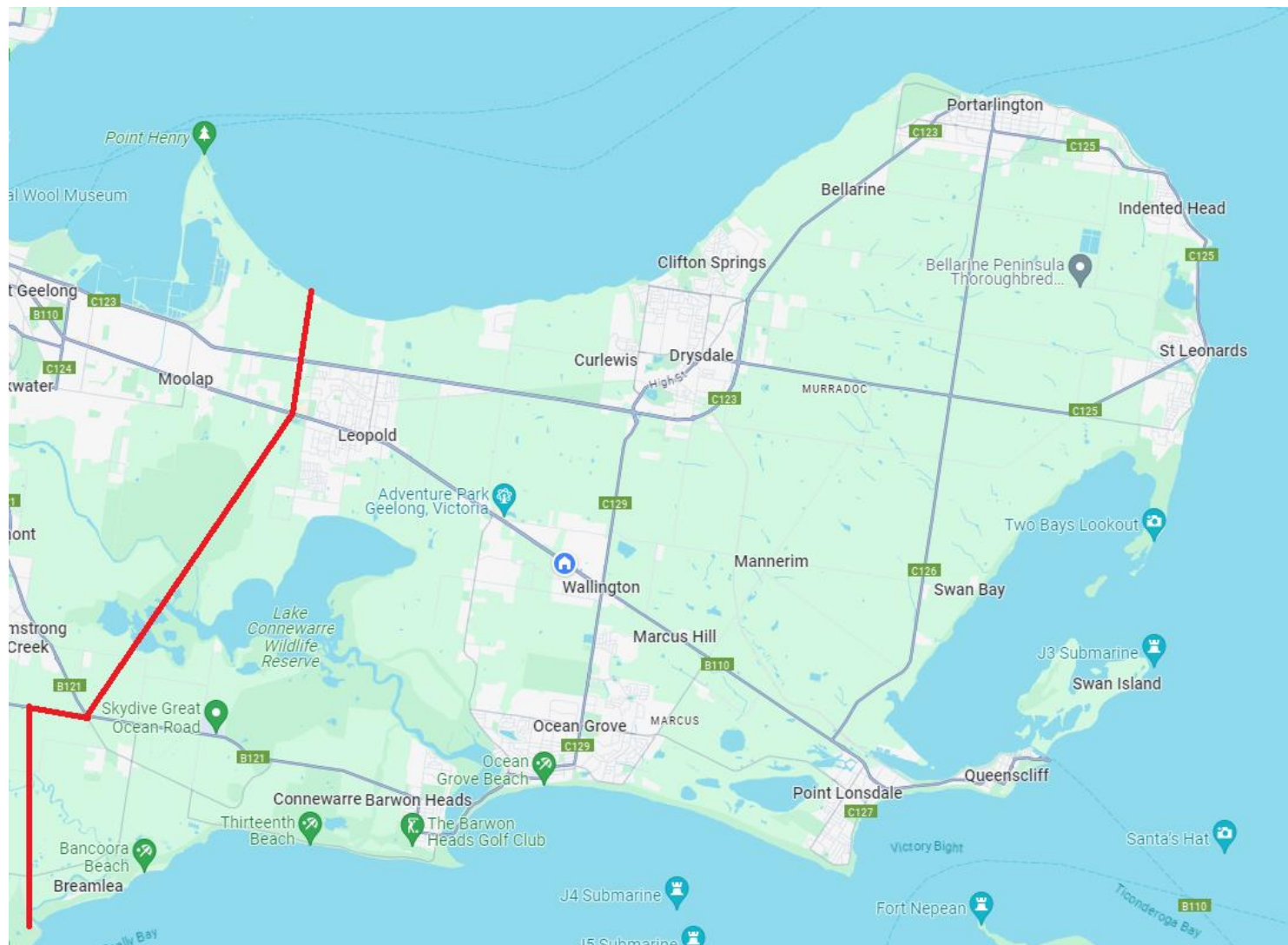
The Bellarine Police Neighbourhood Unit has been conducting information sessions such as these to schools, community groups and businesses to provide an active, visible presence in the community.

Kelly TAYLOR, manager of Crime Stoppers Geelong, spoke about how to make an anonymous report to Crime Stoppers.

The day continued with an opportunity to have morning tea with these fantastic organisations and have a Cuppa with a Coppa.



BELLARINE POLICE COVERAGE MAP



Have something you would like to say?

Have an article to contribute to our newsletter to be distributed to our community groups?

Have a community event you would like to add?

Anything else? Email us at:

BELLARINE-NEIGHBOURHOOD-MGR@police.vic.gov.au

Disclaimer: This newsletter is produced and published by the Bellarine Police Station. All content has been authorised for publication by the Officer in Charge, Bellarine Police Station. The intent of this publication is for enhancement of police community connection and not for commercial nor political messages. If you have any feedback, please email

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