



Clare O'Neil MP

Winter reflection

Image: Opening of Noble Park Community Centre's accessible garden

Dear resident,

How good have the Olympics and Paralympics been! My family and I have loved cheering on our incredible Aussie athletes while rugging up this winter.

In this edition, I look at what's been going on across Hotham. The reality is, though, for many it's been a really challenging time. Helping you with the cost-of-living is my number one priority. I want to ensure you're accessing everything available to you, so please take a look at this newsletter which shares our cost-of-living measures.

It's also been a big few months of grants awarded to our community. One I want to highlight is the Community Language Schools Grant program that was announced by the Albanese Labor Government. In Hotham, 10 Community Language Schools were successful. From Somali, Mandarin and Polish, to Dari, Japanese and Greek (just to name a few!), these language schools are a key part of what makes this community unique and beautifully diverse. They don't just teach kids a new language, they also help build communities for families of similar backgrounds and connect to elders in their lives. So, congrats to these schools!

Also make sure you read the story on our Hotham NDIS Forum where I was joined by The Hon Bill Shorten MP – the Minister for the NDIS. The NDIS is important to so many in Hotham. Thank you to those who came along and those who shared their stories before the event, during and since.

Finally, from a federal and ministerial perspective, I've been appointed to the Minister for Housing and Minister for Homelessness portfolios. I got into politics to change people's lives for the better. Nothing is more fundamental to the health and welfare of Australians – and those across Hotham – than secure, affordable housing.

As always, stay in touch on your news too.

– **Clare**

Federal Member for Hotham



Moorabbin Area Toy Library

GRANT NEWS

Volunteer-driven organisations are the heart and soul of Hotham. Twenty-four of them were recognised under the 2023-24 Volunteer Grants – including the Moorabbin Area Toy Library in East Bentleigh.

The library offers a playful solution to sustainability and cost savings. My daughter – AKA Baby G - and I popped down to meet the team and lend a hand packing up (and borrowing!) toys.

Thanks to President Hayley, Manager Megan and the team for showing us around.



Hotham NDIS Forum



NDIS is making an incredible difference in the lives of many in Hotham and their families and communities.

Last month, The Hon Bill Shorten MP – the Minister for the NDIS – came to Springvale for our Hotham NDIS Forum.



It was a chance for our community to hear first-hand the changes already made and those planned. It was also an opportunity for many in the audience to share their stories and ask a question. Thanks to those who came along.

Remembering our ANZACS



ANZAC Day took place after our last issue went to print. We reflected on all those who have served in our name, and all who continue to serve. It was an honour to join my community at the Oakleigh Cenotaph for a moving dawn service hosted by Oakleigh-Carnegie RSL. Also to join everyone there for a cuppa and a chat after.

Hotham Highlights



Local Mayors in Canberra

Four local councils cover Hotham – all led by a strong, phenomenal women leaders. Thank you to Mayors Cr Jenna Davey-Burns (City of Kingston), Cr Lana Formoso (City of Greater Dandenong), Cr Anne-Marie Cade (City of Glen Eira) and Cr Nicky Luo (City of Monash) for catching up in Canberra.



Raising bowel cancer awareness with Never2Young

I caught up with locals Peter and Jo at Parliament House while they took part in Never2Young, a Bowel Cancer Australia initiative. Peter was diagnosed with bowel cancer at 28 and Jo was 30 – both too young but, sadly, not uncommon. These two are playing a huge role in helping younger Australians understand their bowel cancer risk.



The Noble Park Community Centre's accessible garden is open!

With Frank as team leader, the garden is blooming! NPCC runs workshops for garden lovers of all ages and abilities. The accessible garden project was supported in the Federal Government's Stronger Communities programme.



Strong communities don't just happen – Springvale's story

I was thrilled to be part of the launch of the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute's latest research on social cohesion (called on 'Strong communities don't just happen'), this time focusing on Springvale.



Raising funds for breast cancer

I spent a lovely afternoon with wonderful people raising funds for the Breast Cancer Network Australia. Thanks to Oakleigh Amateur Football Club and South Oakleigh Bowling Club for hosting another successful event.



Breaking news! And breaking ground!

Home to Oakleigh Cannons FC and Chisholm United, the Jack Edwards Reserve Pavilion upgrade is now underway. This was made possible by an incredible team coming together: the leaders and members at the club, as well as federal, state and local government funding.



A safe place to call home

Thanks to team at the City of Kingston (and also Jodie for welcoming into her home) for showing me some of the innovative ways you're providing social housing solutions to our local community.

Opening Oakleigh Grammar's cafeteria – aka The Caf!

I loved officially opening The Caf and seeing all the people that made this incredible social and nutritious hub possible. This new café was part of the School Upgrade Fund.



Supporting you with the cost of living

We're well into a new financial year and, with that, more cost-of-living support for our Hotham community has begun. Helping to relieve the financial pressures many in our community are facing is my number one priority.

Now....



Every taxpayer in Hotham is receiving a tax cut

(that's around 86,000 people across our community).



Every household is getting \$300 off their power bill

(also eligible small businesses will receive \$325 rebate on their electricity bills – that's around 19,667 small business in Hotham).



We're freezing the cost of PBS medicines

(if you have access to PBS medicines, then you're set to save even more thanks to our freeze on the maximum cost of a PBS medicine – with pensioners and concession card holders in Hotham not paying more than \$7.70 for their PBS medications for the next 5 years).



Those on award wages are getting a pay rise

(for instance, our incredible Early Childhood Education and Care will be getting a 15% wage increase from the Albanese Labor Government. To be eligible to receive funding for the wage increase, ECEC services won't be able to increase their fees by more than 4.45 over the next 12 months).



We've added two weeks to parental leave

(and Labor will keep expanding paid parental leave until it reaches 26 weeks in 2026).



We're making student debt indexation fairer

(which includes for more than 23,000 people in Hotham. This is part of our plan to wipe \$3 billion in student debt and fixing indexation).



The first back-to-back increase to Rent Assistance in more than 30 years has been implemented:

(that's helping more than 5,500 Hotham locals who will be getting extra help with rent).



Seniors & Pensioners Kit

We have a fresh batch of Seniors & Pensioners Kits in my office - one of the most sought-after info packs we have here.

Make sure you pop in and collect one - or give my office a call and they can send it out to you.



Nathan Ephraums - Local legend and Olympics star

Olympian and Kookaburra's team member Nathan and his family are familiar faces around Hotham. Check my website (details below) for a full interview with Nathan, where he shares his fond and lasting memories of his time playing in local and grassroots clubs.

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Do you live in our Hotham community?

You can contact me for help with Federal Government services – like Centrelink, aged care and the NDIS – using the contact information below.