

GUNGAGHLIN SMOKE SIGNALS



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#Love30 for Safer Streets
The ACT Planning System
The Planning Bill Consultation
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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

GCC public meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Meetings are held regardless of any pandemic restrictions - when permitted, we meet at the Gungahlin Eastlake Club otherwise we meet online using Zoom. In either case, we stream and save video of our meetings on the GCC Facebook page (facebook.com/gungahlin) Further details, agendas, and how to register for online meetings can be found at gcc.asn.au/meetings

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Message from the Editor:

Over the next three or four years, the population of Gungahlin will stop expanding. However, it needs to expand its community facilities to the same standard as the older parts of Canberra. This edition of Smoke Signals points out some areas and welcomes contributions from readers. Please send your ideas to gunsmoke@gcc.asn.au.

KEVIN COX



Gungahlin Community Council

President: Peter Elford - president@gcc.asn.au

Vice President: Henley Samuel - vicepresident@gcc.asn.au

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Gungahlin Community Council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, at 6:30pm at EastLake Gungahlin, 51 Hinder Street. When possible, meetings are streamed live via Facebook.

We are grateful for the financial support provided by the ACT Government.

From the President

PETER ELFORD



The formal response from the ACT government in response to the GCC's campaign to improve the planning and development of the Gungahlin Town Centre concluded with the government's response to the Assembly Planning Committee Inquiry into Draft Variation 364 in late February 2022. The Inquiry's report was critical of many aspects of the town centre planning process, eg.

- "the Draft Variation is not fully formed and that the technical documents don't serve to realise the objectives of the town centre plans"
- "The Committee is concerned by the methodology used to determine the demand for commercial land within the town centre and the subsequent decrease in land reserved for commercial use."
- "It was clear from all evidence before the Committee that mixed use development and the planning settings are very broad and not necessarily achieving the outcomes the Government, community or developers are wanting."

Unfortunately, the report's eight recommendations were narrow in scope and impact. The Planning Minister has adopted a minimalist approach in responding to them, agreeing to implement just three ("agreeing in principle" to the others). This is an utterly underwhelming response to a long-standing issue important to the more than 85,000 residents of Gungahlin. We can only hope the place-based consultation being undertaken on the remaining portion of the town centre leads to better outcomes.

Other activities related to the Town Centre include the government's active travel feasibility study, a mesoscopic traffic flow analysis, the commencement of the functional scoping of the Community Centre, and the completion of repairs to the 50m swimming pool, now scheduled to open in August. Staff from Defence Housing Australia have moved into their new building. Stage 4 of the Gungahlin Marketplace has commenced construction ... but there continues to be no start date on the construction of the cinema due to the impact of the COVID pandemic on movie attendance.

The ACT Government's recently published Assessment of Community and Recreation Facilities in Gungahlin highlights the chronic lack of facilities in Gungahlin – an issue raised frequently by the GCC. Of the 28 types of community facilities identified in the assessment, 57% (16) are either not meeting demand (9) or require further investigation regarding demand (7) (over the period being considered, ie. out to 2045). It should be noted that some of the analysis could be improved, but the assessment is very important because "This report will inform further consultation, identification of priorities, and decision making by the ACT Government on a range of community and recreational facilities" (more in this issue).

The GCC continues to advocate on a wide range of issues and provides forums for residents to engage in consultation and government processes. The Federal Election Forum the GCC hosted provided a unique forum to hear from (almost) all candidates for the seat of Fenner and the ACT Senate. We look forward to working with the new government on issues such as an APS smart work hub. Our persistent advocacy regarding the ubiquity of access to the NBN in Gungahlin looks to have resulted in Casey Stage 1 receiving technology upgrades from Fibre to the Node to Fibre to the Premise.

The ACT Planning System

PETER ELFORD

The Gungahlin Community Council (GCC) agrees with the ACT government that the ACT Planning System needs reform.

For more than five years (starting in December 2016), the GCC has advocated for changes to the ACT Planning System to ensure that the Gungahlin Town Centre meets the expectations of Gungahlin residents. The GCC has learned that the current Planning System cannot be trusted to “do the right thing” and that community-initiated changes to the System are extremely difficult. We have also learned that for Planning to be effective, it needs to be enforced when it's implemented in the real (commercial) world.

The GCC had hoped the Reformed Planning System would identify, enshrine, and defend the needs and interests of the community against the expertise, resources and commercial intent of the development industry and (potential) short-term decision-making by the government. Further, to restore trust, we hoped the reform process would be collaborative, allowing the community to understand and be part of the change, rather than being a victim of it – “Building trust in the Planning system should be a priority” (Stakeholder Series Report). Unfortunately, despite a promising start (the Community Engagement Workshops in May 2019), this is not how the reform has unfolded to date, with most “consultation” taking the form of notification.

The consultation on the new Planning Bill is consistent with our concerns. Hundreds of draft legislation have been provided, along with an overview document and a series of Fact Sheets. A very high level of assumed knowledge is required to consider the material provided, and it's clear that any stakeholder that might wish to respond to the consultation would need a strong background and/or expertise in ACT legislation and planning.

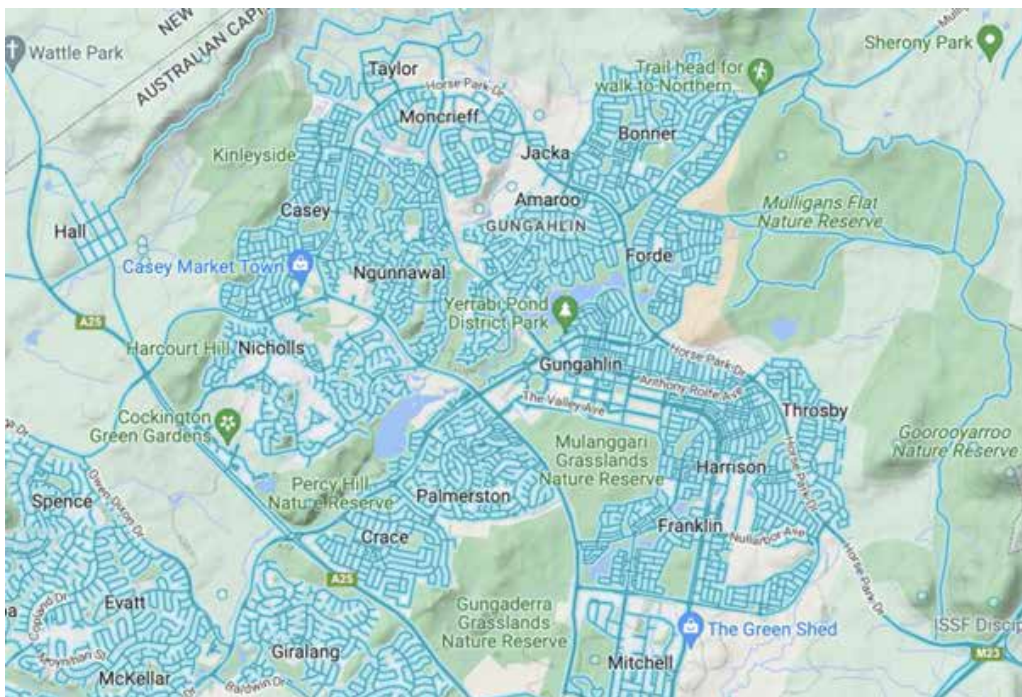
The Planning Bill is almost impossible for the average citizen to comprehend, and the Directorate has made no serious attempt to make it “relevant” to the general public. The Planning Bill has been presented without the new Territory Plan or District Strategies which might have made it clear “what goes where” and “how things will work”. The GCC lacks the legislative and planning expertise that many of the other Community Councils have access to, and consequently, our feedback and recommendations are ambitious.

The GCC lacks the legislative and planning expertise that many of the other Community Councils have access to, and consequently, our feedback and recommendations are at a quite high level. We encourage the government to place significant weight on the feedback from all Community Councils, all of whom place the interests of the residents of Canberra first.



Specifically, the GCC **does not support**:

- a) The removal of Pre-DA consultation – If the Planning Directorate believes that Pre-DA Consultation is ineffective, it needs to be fixed. Pre-DA consultation has proven to lead to better outcomes in several instances in Gungahlin and consistently ensures that engagement is early and informed.
- b) The notion that the Principles of Good Consultation are at the whim of the Minister – These principles should be a mandatory part of the act and genuinely co-developed with the community and industry (not proposed for comment).
- c) The suggestion that the compliance and enforcement powers are fit for purpose and comprehensive – In the past decade, there have been several compliance issues in Gungahlin, and there is widespread community perception that there is little enforcement and what there is has little impact or consequence on the infringing proponents.



The GCC **recommends** that the ACT Government:

- Fund an independent review of the proposed Planning Bill by an external (non-ACT government) legal counsel to validate the objectives of the Bill are correctly and validly drafted.
- Take up the offer from the Chair of the Legislative Assembly's Planning Committee to provide additional scrutiny of the Planning Bill and/or Reform, ideally through an Inquiry.
- To build trust in the Reform process going forward, establish a substantive panel of relevant community and industry stakeholders that are given the necessary training to interpret the Planning Bill (and the Reform more broadly), and to genuinely contribute to the co-development of the new Territory Plan and District Strategies.
- To build trust in the District Strategies, fund a representative group for each District group/forum to inform and oversee the development and implementation of the District Strategies. Such a group might include relevant MLAs, representatives from different community sectors (e.g. Business, Sporting, Aged, Youth) and community representatives, perhaps chosen by ballot from interested volunteer candidates.
- Provide specific examples of how "outcomes-based" works when compared to the current Planning System.
- Work with the Gungahlin community to explore how the recommendations from the consultancy on mixed-use planning might be implemented in the new Territory Plan and/or Gungahlin District Strategy.

Gungahlin Community Facilities Report

PETER ELFORD

On 19 April 2022, the ACT Government released the **Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment—Gungahlin District** (yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/download_file/view/6096/2373). The contract for this work was signed in December 2020 ([RiotACT-the-riotact.com/study-to-probe-gungahlin-community-and-recreation-needs/432800](https://riotact-the-riotact.com/study-to-probe-gungahlin-community-and-recreation-needs/432800)) as part of the **Community Facilities in Gungahlin** (yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/gungahlin-community-facilities), including the

- Gungahlin community centre,
- Casey land release, and
- Future planning.



The report highlights the chronic lack of facilities in Gungahlin – an issue **raised frequently by the GCC** (gcc.asn.au/community-and-recreation-facilities-in-gungahlin). Of the 28 types of community facilities identified in the assessment, 57% (16) are either not meeting demand (9) or require further investigation regarding demand (7) (over the period considered, i.e. out to 2045).



This report will inform further consultation, identification of priorities, and decision-making by the ACT Government on a range of community and recreational facilities.

The report reviews all the previous studies done in this space (7 of them, going back to 1998!). The conclusion from the executive summary states:

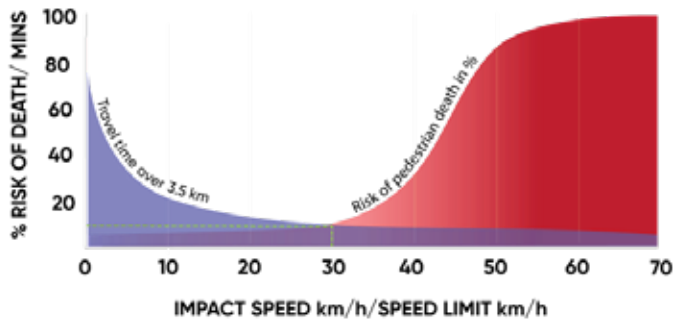
Additional community and recreational facilities that may require further investigation for provision in Gungahlin include:

- *Public primary schools and public colleges*
- *Community centres and neighbourhood halls – which could be delivered as part of the proposed community centre in the Gungahlin Town Centre*
- *Flexible meeting rooms/spaces – which ideally would be co-located with the proposed community centre or co-located with other facilities*
- *Residential aged care facilities and places and aged day care centre (respite)*
- *Dedicated arts space – potentially part of the proposed community centre*
- *Dedicated space for youth activities and programs – potentially part of the proposed community centre*
- *An indoor sports court centre*
- *Outdoor sports courts facilities – additional courts that can be used for netball/basketball (noting that these have different size requirements).*

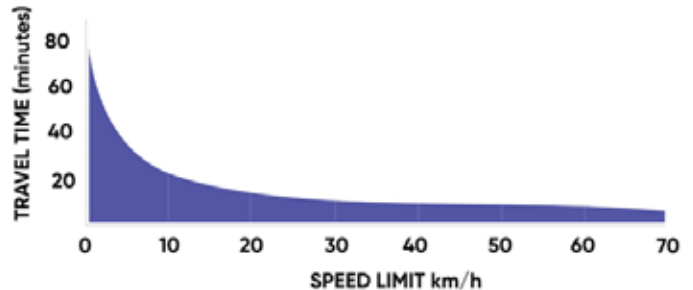
The August public meeting had some good news on Community Services planning. It is an ongoing issue that residents need to advocate for, so please send your thoughts to president@gcc.asn.au

#Love30 for Safe Streets

Determining optimal speed limits in urban areas



Travel times for a 3.5 km journey in urban areas



Sources - Cities Soffer by Design 2016, <https://www.soffer.com/publication/cities-soffer-design/> / ADAC Tempo 30 Pro-Contra 2016

Source - ADAC Tempo 30 Pro-Contra 2016

The ACT Government have a consultation on Active Travel at YourSay: yoursayconversations.act.gov.au.

at 30 km/h – 1 in 10 will die



at 50 km/h – 5 in 10 will die



at 60 km/h – 9 in 10 will die

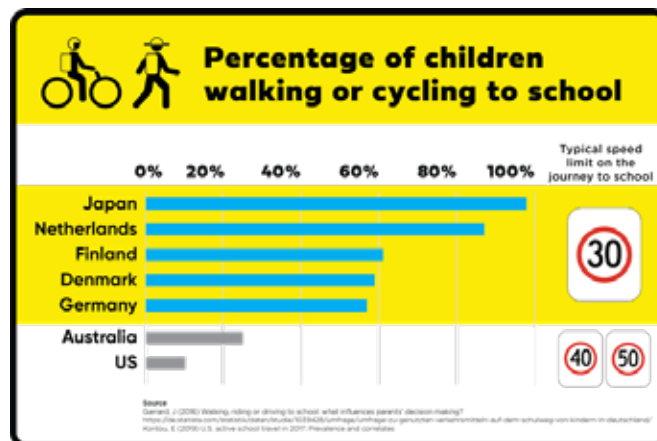


Living Streets livingstreets.org.au in its submission emphasises a speed limit of 30 km/hour for all suburban streets without footpaths and those around schools and shopping areas. Dropping the speed limit to 30 km/hour will save lives and encourage more people, particularly children and the elderly, to walk more. The cost in time to drivers is a few seconds on most journeys. The benefits to drivers are safer and quieter streets in which they live.

The Community wants safer streets. The Heart Foundation found in a survey conducted in 2020 that:

- Two-thirds (67%) of Australians back a diversion of some government road funding for local walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport.
- Two-thirds (64%) also support lower speed limits in local streets to make them safer for people.

Australia and Canberra are not doing well in encouraging pedestrian-safe streets, which shows in the statistics for children walking to school compared to the speed limit. You can do your bit by filling out the survey at YourSay and joining,



Living streets livingstreets.org.au and Safe Streets to School in Canberra me.getup.org.au/petitions/safe-streets-to-school-in-canberra and its Facebook page: facebook.com/SafeStreetsToSchoolCanberra

‘CELEBRATE GUNGAHLIN’ RETURNS IN OCTOBER

There's a lot to celebrate about Gungahlin – the incredible cultural diversity of our community, the many individuals, groups and organisations committed to building resilience and connection in the region, our spectacular natural environment, and so much more.

This year, Celebrate Gungahlin Festival aims to celebrate it all through a COVID-safe series of three-weekend events in October. Each event will focus on a particular strength of the Gungahlin community – a community picnic, a cultural showcase and a sporting expo. These three major events will feature performances by local artists and community groups, children's activities, local food stalls and vans and opportunities to connect with local clubs and organisations.



These events will be supported by a suite of creative activations in the town centre throughout October, showcasing the talent of the region's visual artists.

Across these events and activations, the festival will feature more than 40 performers and 70 stallholders connected and committed to the Gungahlin region, spanning every genre, age group and subject you can think of.

The festival celebrates the talents and ideas of local people, and there will be something for everyone to enjoy, with opportunities to participate and learn and avenues to connect with other people in the local community and build friendships and networks.

The festival is produced by Gungahlin Arts, alongside a collective of organisations deeply embedded in the Gungahlin community, including Northside Community Service, Communities@work and Gungahlin Community Council. It is also supported by a community reference group comprised of a diverse range of individuals from the Gungahlin community.

Discover more about the festival at www.celebrategunghalin.com.au





Photos by Andrew Sikorski

CELEBRATE GUNGHALIN EVENTS

CELEBRATE GUNGHALIN SPORTS AND WELLBEING EXPO – Presented by Northside Community Service

Saturday 8 October, 11am-3pm, Gungahlin Enclosed Oval.

Sport is the glue that holds our community together and is a great way to deepen your connection to your region. Get active, have fun at the Celebrate Gungahlin Sporting Expo, and connect with the sport or club that will bring you joy! This is also an excellent opportunity to meet local sporting personalities and check out demonstrations by some of our local experts in action.

CELEBRATE GUNGHALIN CULTURAL SHOWCASE – Presented by Communities@work

Saturday 15 October, 11am-3pm, Gungahlin Town Square

Gungahlin is a vibrant cultural melting pot and home to people who have arrived here from all over the world. Travel the globe without leaving home with this mini multi-culture spectacular that highlights the sights, smells, sounds and tastes of Gungahlin's diverse community.

Purchase products from local artists, and enjoy a world of performances and activities right in your backyard.



CELEBRATE GUNGHALIN COMMUNITY PICNIC - Presented by Suburban Land Agency

Yerrabi Pond District Park

Saturday 22 October 11am-3pm

The community picnic is a relaxed and friendly chance for families and friends to soak in the atmosphere of one of Gungahlin's most loved natural areas while connecting to community groups, family services and environmental organisations. Bring a picnic or treat yourself to scrumptious food and refreshing beverages from local vendors. There will be plenty of live entertainment, activities to keep the kids entertained (not to mention the adventure playground and flying fox) and opportunities to forge deeper connections with your local community.

Find out more detail about festival events at www.celebrategungahlin.com.au



BE PART OF THE CELEBRATE GUNGAHLIN COMMUNITY EXHIBITION

Celebrate Gungahlin Festival celebrates the culture, community spirit and resilience of the Gungahlin region. As part of this year's festival, artists of all ages, backgrounds and abilities who live, work or play in the Gungahlin region are invited to create an artwork that expresses what is most important to them about being part of this wonderful community.

Artworks can be created in any medium – including but not limited to painting, drawing, photography, digital, collage or three dimensions. However, all artworks must be submitted as a digital file or a photograph of the original artwork.

All entries will be professionally printed and displayed as A3-sized poster prints as part of a community exhibition at Gungahlin Marketplace throughout October to coincide with the Celebrate Gungahlin Festival.

Prizes will be awarded in three categories – under 12 years, 13-18 years, and open (19+). Winners are chosen by a people's choice vote, which will be announced at the conclusion of Celebrate Gungahlin festival.

Entries will open on 1 August, and all the details will be published on www.celebrategunghalin.com.au





CONNECTING MORE DEEPLY WITH THE COMMUNITY

This year, over 110 applications have been received from local community groups, performers, artists, sporting clubs, food stalls, businesses and organisations that are part of the Gungahlin community. The festival team is currently immersed in building a program that celebrates and includes as many of these as possible, and it will be a glorious month of celebration.

The festival working group is also being supported by a community reference group this year, which comprises ten members of the Gungahlin community with diverse backgrounds, experiences and areas of expertise to bring to the festival. The working group includes local business owners, artists, performers, staff from key community organisations and people passionate about building community.

The festival team is deeply grateful to the community reference group for their support of the festival and for sharing their expertise and connections. This depth of knowledge is so essential in continuing to build the festival and create an event that is fun, engaging, inspiring, relevant and inclusive for everyone who is part of the Gungahlin community!

Find out more about the festival at www.celebrategunghalin.com.au





Meet Our Local Representatives in the ACT Legislative Assembly

RALITSA DIMITROVA

Part 2: Suzanne Orr MLA

Did you know Gungahlin has five Members of the Legislative Assembly, also called MLAs? Did you know who they are? Did you know their names? Have you ever met them? Did you know they are our representatives, but before that, they were members of our Gungahlin community?

In each edition of our magazine, I will introduce a local member of the Legislative Assembly. I decided to ask them several questions aside from the daily politics and give them an opportunity to tell us about themselves—what they enjoy, what their experience is, and what they think is good for the constituents to know. Because regardless of their stand on the political spectrum, our MLAs, as our representatives, are there to listen to us and assist us.

In this edition, I introduce Suzanne Orr MLA. Suzanne represents the ACT Labor Party in the Yerrabi electorate. She was first elected in 2016 and re-elected in 2020.

Suzanne, what is the aspect or part of your job as an elected representative that you most enjoy?

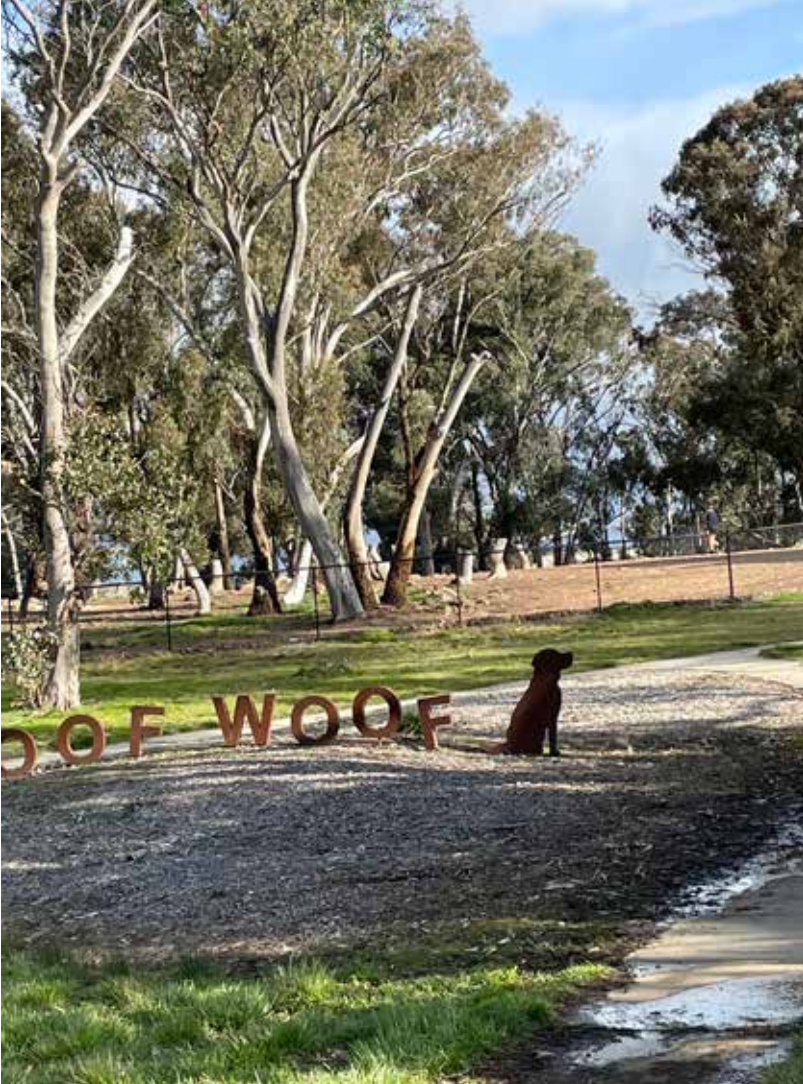
One of the things that first inspired me to run as a member of Yerrabi was the ability to help do good things for people and to improve their lives and wellbeing. For example, I recently passed my Carers Recognition Act, which I spent most of 2021 working towards. Now that it has passed as legislation, all the work I have done and all people I worked with to get it to this stage has finally paid off. I know that passing this bill will help improve our community for all carers.

Another aspect of my job that I enjoy is the work done to bring the community's views into local infrastructure projects, such as the Franklin Dog Park or the Casey Community Park. Working alongside the community to ensure their perspective is represented right from the very beginning, and ensuring that these spaces reflect what our community wants, are all enjoyable aspects of my job.

Lastly, as an elected member, I can make real change that affects not just the people in my electorate but everyone in the ACT. I am currently proposing new legislation that will make period products, like tampons and pads, free in the ACT and work towards removing the stigma associated with periods. This legislation will require the ACT Government to provide period products, without prejudice and free of charge, at designated and accessible places across the ACT.

Periods are a normal bodily function, yet they are still heavily stigmatised in society, making people uncomfortable talking about their periods. Asking friends when needing a tampon or asking a boss for time off because of period pain are common actions often associated with shame.

Once my bill is passed, we will be the first jurisdiction in Australia to introduce this legislation. You can learn more about it here suzanneorr.com.au/campaigns/period-poverty/



Who or what keeps you grounded in life, and how?

A good combination of my friends, my family, and my cat helps to keep me grounded in life. After a long, busy, or stressful day, I can always count on my friends to debrief and help me relax. Portia, my cat, is always a joy to come home to. My family has always been there to inspire me to make Yerrabi a better place while encouraging me to do better.

What are your pleasure flow moments outside of your elected role?

There are two things that I enjoy doing outside of work: yoga and balcony gardening. I have been doing yoga a couple of evenings a week after work. I find it a great way to wind down and help switch off from work. During lockdown this year, I was pleased to be able to continue doing yoga virtually at home. I also spend some time tending to my balcony garden, which has a few different vegetables growing. My grandmother was an avid gardener, and it brushed off on me. There is just something great about digging up the dirt and growing things!

What should all residents know about engaging with elected members to get assistance and help they need for their everyday lives?

That we are approachable. I speak with many people who say they didn't realise they could raise any issues with me or speak to me about something else. It is what I am here for, and I try to make it as easy as possible. My staff can provide support or help by email or over the phone. If you want to speak to me directly, they can help arrange that. I also try to ensure I frequently have stalls around Yerrabi as an opportunity for people to meet me face-to-face. Please feel free to call or email the office or say hi at one of my stalls. The best way to see when I am doing a stall is to keep an eye on my Facebook at [facebook.com/SuzanneOrrMLA](https://www.facebook.com/SuzanneOrrMLA).

What is your message to our Gungahlin community?

For the longest time, we've been the new kid on the block, but now as a region, we are entering a different phase, almost like going from childhood to adolescence. Our infrastructure and community have grown considerably and will continue to grow and improve. We have developed into a great, thriving community, so let's make sure we continue to encourage and celebrate this.



Find out more about Suzanne Orr at [suzanneorr.com.au](https://www.suzanneorr.com.au)

Community Batteries for Gungahlin

Corporations, not the Jacka Community, will own Jacka Community Batteries. Unfortunately, Corporate Ownership will not reduce the electricity price for Jacka residents. Corporations will require financial support from the government, while Community Ownership of Batteries with the same financial support will reduce the price of electricity.



The Australian Energy Market is a Corporate Investment market in energy assets. For consumers, its performance over the past few years has been dismal as prices have risen, while its performance for Corporate investors has been excellent. However, the advent of distributed energy sources of solar and wind energy allowed communities to reduce the cost of electricity by bypassing the energy market.

Despite the Australian **success** in **rooftop solar**, all governments have continued to provide incentives to the corporate sector. **Governments have given fossil fuel energy assets away** to international corporations, and the thanks from the corporations have been **to want more profits and to blackmail governments** into giving them more.

Australian rooftop solar is an economic success that leads the world. The cost in Australia is lower than in most other countries. It has come about by **government support** in investment but more importantly in support **of standards, building up the workforce and developing research capabilities**.

Australia can learn from its success. It can **stop incentives to mainly overseas corporations** and **incentivise consumers to Rewire Australia** by encouraging community investments in energy technologies like Community Batteries.



Corporate Providers of Community Batteries

Instead of giving a commercial advantage to corporations, a **community of users on the same low voltage line** can use **Capital** from consumers and the government to purchase Community Batteries. The consumer Capital providers will get a good return on investment. Rather than stagnating in the business, the Capital released by consumer investors will move to the consumers to invest in ways to reduce energy consumption and cost.

An even better approach is for Governments to supply long-term low or zero-interest loans to the Community to purchase Batteries that last a long time. The money earned by the Batteries will go into renewable assets to benefit the community that paid for it.



In a fair democratic society, consumers should own Community Batteries, not cashed-up Corporations.

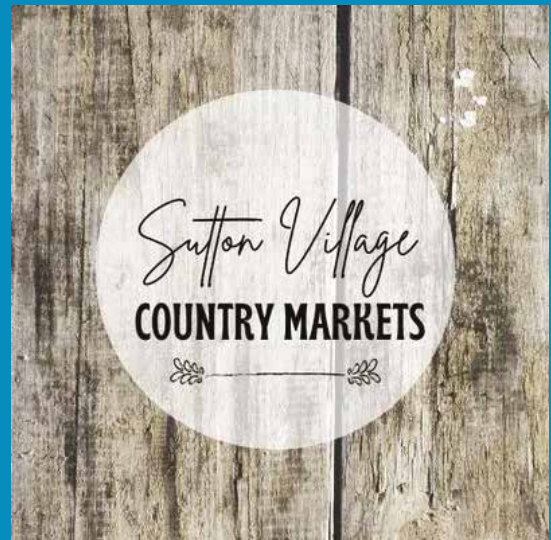
Sutton Village Country Markets

RALITSA DIMITROVA

Have you been thinking about what you can do and where else you can go than our district of Gungahlin on the weekend? Have you craved a change in your Sunday scenery? The new Sutton Village Country Markets starting on 4 September 2022, is your chance.

Canberra Dragon Dance, the largest Asian performing arts academy in Canberra, will perform the Lion Dance at 1230 for the markets' good luck as part of the entertainment.

The Country market is an opportunity for Gungahlin residents to visit the opening and say Hello to our neighbours over the border in NSW. The market focuses on local makers, growers, and producers selling delicious food, fresh produce, handmade crafts, food vans, children's activities, and unplugged music performances. Families can enjoy the atmosphere of a country village, farm fresh foods, and happenings.



Dates: Save the following market dates for 2022

September: 4th and 18th

October: 2nd, 16th and 30th

November: 13th and 27th

December: 11th



Timings: The market will be open from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Location: The centre of Sutton Village, corner of Camp and Victoria Streets
(opposite the Little Sutton Bakehouse).

Parking: Free parking is available surrounding the oval.

Pet Friendly!

The organisers seek expressions of interest from artists, foodies, makers, food producers, and entertainers who would like to participate in the upcoming markets.

Stallholders, please contact the Country market organisers at:

Website: suttonvillagecountrymarkets.com.au

Email: contact@suttonvillagecountrymarkets.com.au

You can follow the Country market at:

Facebook: Sutton Village Country Markets

Instagram: [suttonvillagecountrymarkets](https://www.instagram.com/suttonvillagecountrymarkets)



SEE-Change Gungahlin

SEE-Change Gungahlin is a group of local volunteers committed to providing opportunities for our community to interact with and learn about the plants and animals with whom we share our environment.

SEE-Change is a local not-for-profit organisation supporting the Canberra community to create a more sustainable society, environment and economy. Find out more about SEE-Change events and sign up to our newsletter by visiting seechange.org.au or scanning the QR code:



Mulligans Flat Echidna Walk and Talk Saturday 17 September 2022, 10 am-12 noon.

The Gungahlin SEE-Change group invite you to join us in discovering the secret lives of the echidnas of Mulligan's Flat. Expert speakers will show us how to be active citizen scientists and environmental defenders of these remarkable native creatures.



Visit events.humanitix.com/mulligans-flat-echidna-walk-and-talk to register.



Sutton Village Country Markets Every Fortnight

2022 Market dates:
September – 4th and 18th
October – 2nd, 16th and 30th
November - 13th and 27th
December – 11th

suttonvillagecountrymarkets.com.au



Date : Second and Fourth
Sunday of every month
Time : 10am till 2pm

Where : Parking lot between Winyu House and Eastlake Club Gungahlin
Off The Valley Ave and Hinder Street