

Bellarine Neighbourhood

Issue 2, 2024

Providing support for our community that supports us



BELLARINE POLICE

This issue: Meet The team at Bellarine Police Station. Information on local crime trends, events, community messages, concerns and a whole lot more.

BSAFE – BELLARINE

PARLIAMENT INQUIRY INTO ROAD SAFETY

Last year the Parliament's Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee, investigated the impact of road safety behaviours on vulnerable road users with a specific focus on the time during and after the pandemic.

As chair of the committee, I have learnt a great deal about our current driving behaviours. Studies have shown that drivers are more likely than before to take risks on the road such as speeding, using their mobile phones and running red lights.

Police and drivers are suggesting these poor road behaviours had continued since the pandemic, as they observed more anxious and distracted drivers and more incidents of speeding, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and not wearing seatbelts.

The committee's role is to consider the impact these changes have had on vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorcycle riders, children 7 and under, older people and mobility device users. And in doing so, recommend to government initiatives that may assist the reduction of injuries and fatalities.



I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to be able to hear from a wide range of witnesses.

Road safety is something we all have a part in. As drivers and road users, we make decisions that can have real life and death consequences. It is our responsibility to not engage in risky behaviour.

I look forward to being able to share the outcome of this parliamentary inquiry with you in the near future, when the final report is released.

By Alison MARCHANT MP



DECIMINALISATION OF PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS

On the 7th of November, 2023, the Victorian Government has decriminalised public drunkenness. The Department of Health are the lead agency in relation to this in favour of a health-based response.

Over the past decade or so Victoria Police has changed its approach to dealing with public drunkenness. This resulted in the steady decline of the number of affected people arrested in Victoria.

In the 2013-2014 financial year there were 11,089 drunk and disorderly offences. In the 2022-2023 financial year there were 2,952. That is a significant drop of 73.4%!

There were several targeted actions over this time which led to these results. The provision of support services, a focus by Police and Protective Services Officers diverting drunk people to friends and family and organising transport to a safe location.

Police are highly skilled at de-escalating aggressive behaviour, diffusing volatile situations and utilising move on powers. The continuation of these skills will be vital when dealing with drunk and antisocial behaviours moving forward.

Police will be able to divert drunk people to informal support services such as their friends or family. New outreach and sobering services have been set up and are available to be offered to drunk persons.

Public drunkenness will only be responded to by police where there is significant health and/or risk to the individual or to others.

By LSC Anthony SHEEDY



PORTARLINGTON POLICE OIC



Hello to all,

There are eight police members working at Portarlington Police Station of which I am the Sergeant in Charge. We cover the Portarlington, Indented Head, St Leonards, Drysdale, Clifton Springs and Curlewis area. We work very closely with Bellarine Police Station to ensure the community always has Police available.

We are coming to the end of our busy summer period where we saw the population more than double. It's great to report we had some large events such as New Year's Eve and the Mussel Festival without any incidents.

We have been focusing heavily on road traffic over the summer period and this will continue. Our results have been a little disappointing with more than 60 penalty notices issued during December and January with most of those being for speeding (more than 15 kmph over the speed limit).

Road trauma has a huge impact on individuals, families and the community so it is up to the whole community to work together, be patient and drive to the conditions at all times.

If you have any issue, concerns or feedback feel free to contact us at Portarlington.

Regards, Jane ARNOLD

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

DID YOU KNOW?

Victoria Police has a museum that is open the public? Take a tour of Victorian history through 300+ historical police objects, including:

- Australia's largest collection of Kelly Gang armour
- information about Melbourne's most notorious crimes
- police uniforms and equipment, forensic evidence and technology
- hundreds more police and crime-related artifacts.

You can view, learn about, and interact with our exclusive collection. It is open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday and entry is Free!



Olive "Ollie" Philips joined Victoria Police in 1949 and served for over 35 years. In the 1950s she moved to Geelong to establish the areas first Women Police Division. In this photograph she is pictured with another policewoman "Barbara".

Victoria Police Museum



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 CRIME, WHERE ARE WE AT?

For the month of February, there was a large problem with ebikes/scooters being stolen. We had 43 thefts during the last month however, we have also seen some results!

Our biggest problem has been deceptions. With 21 reports taken during February, it is posing a real concern for our community and awareness around personal security to keep your assets safe. February 2023 there was a total of 4.

Bellarine Neighbourhood offers educational presentations on SCAMS. It is urged if you are part of a group/organisation and can benefit from police attending and providing education around this topic, contact us on this email as spots a filling fast! BELLARINE-NEIGHBOURHOOD-MGR@police.vic.gov.au

GRAFFITI!

(By LSC Anthony SHEEDY)



LSC Kevin HOARE, Bellarine Police Member responsible for the investigation, arrest and process of 9 of these major graffiti offenders.

Graffiti is an issue that generates widespread community concern, the Bellarine Peninsula being no different. As we are all aware, graffiti can have a negative impact on community perceptions of safety and public amenity. Finding ways to effectively address graffiti is a long-standing issue.

Unfortunately for us, graffiti seems to be maintaining its popularity, particularly ‘tagger’ graffiti. But we, as police, have had some wins catching these vandals. One in particular having a ‘tag report count’ of 697!

Member’s at Bellarine Police’s success in recent times can be attributed to the amount of effort, knowledge and skill exerted where they have brought numerous offenders before the Court in answer to their offending over the last few months. In excess of \$200,000 damage was caused by one ‘tagger’ who targeted Ocean Grove and Leopold areas including the office of Bellarine MP, Alison MARCHANT.

At least 8 other major ‘taggers’ on the Bellarine Peninsula have been arrested and faced Court over the last few months with in excess of \$200,000 of combined damages recorded. That’s a total in excess of \$400,000 in damages!

The presence of graffiti is perceived to be indicative of a general decline in the quality of public space, however, this is not the case. In working together, we can bring this type of offending under control. Police have targeted patrols on these public areas where we are seeing such ‘tagging’ and we are getting results!

POLICE ASSISTANCE LINE



All Victorians are encouraged to contact the Police Assistance Line on [131 444](tel:131444) 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.





**Are you looking for a career with more?
More opportunities?
More purpose?**

Police Officer Role

Right across Victoria, from the heart of Melbourne to the most remote country towns, police officers carry out a range of duties that are diverse, rewarding and challenging to help keep the community safe.

The Benefits

- Paid from day one of your 31 week training program at the Victoria Police Academy in Glen Waverley
- Generous leave entitlements including 9 weeks recreation leave per year, as well as shift penalties on top of the base salary
- After completing typically 2-4 years of general duties, you can apply for a specialist police role

Application Tips

- Check you are eligible by reading the suitability checklist
- Check your spelling and grammar, re-read your application before submission
- Disclose ALL prior history including traffic infringements, driving offences, unpaid fines, and all police involvements
- Act on document requests quickly to ensure your application process runs efficiently

To speak to someone about applying please contact the Victoria Police Recruitment Team by phone (03) 8335 5003 or email AAT-ENQUIRIES-MGR@police.vic.gov.au

Quick eligibility and suitability check for Police Officers

- Are you 18 years of age or over?
- Are you an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident?
Note: New Zealand citizens must have a Special Category Visa and live in Australia to submit an application.
- Are you able to undertake shift work (morning, afternoon and night shift), 10 days per fortnight? This includes working on weekends and public holidays.
- Are you willing to carry and use a range of tactical policing options to perform policing duties?
- Are you fit enough to fulfill the physical fitness requirements?
- Do you meet the minimum medical requirements?
- Are you willing to work across different Victorian locations, as per operational needs?
- Do you have a solid understanding of the recruitment process assessments?
- Are you ready to be considered for a role as a police officer?

Attend a Victoria Police Careers Event

The Recruitment Team at Victoria Police run a series of information sessions, fitness test trials, and seminars to provide you with all you need to know about the recruitment process and how to put your best foot forward when applying.

SCAN HERE



🔍 police careers



COFFEE WITH A COP BELLARINE

(By LSC Anthony SHEEDY)

INSPIRING SAND SCULPTURES

(By LSC Anthony SHEEDY)



FC Lauren La SPINA, Kathryn JOHNSON, LSC Tracey MONTEITH

Tuesday, 20th of February, 2024, members from Bellarine Police attended 'Coffee with a Cop' with a big thanks to Blax Leopold, for hosting the event.

There was a great turn out and it was awesome to meet some of Leopold's locals. Kathryn JOHNSON, pictured above, identified herself as an ex member of Victoria Police having served some years ago. It allowed an opportunity to reminisce on her working days.

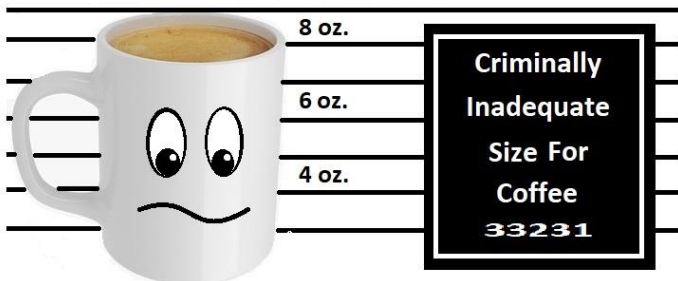
Many locals had the chance to relay their concerns within the community, however, the main concern being with youths hanging around parks and shopping centres causing trouble.

Police have been heavily patrolling Leopold areas including Leopold Memorial Reserve skate park as a result of several calls for concern at the park.

On one occasion police have been called to the park for an explosion. Youths have created a 'bomb' by taping together a number of aerosol cans before setting them alight. This resulted in a huge bang sending flames into the air in excess of 5 meters in height. The incident was caught on CCTV and it is extremely fortunate no one was injured as a result of this stupidity.

Police will continue to focus on this area and also within Gateway Plaza with thefts currently on the rise. Roving foot patrols will also ramp up at the shopping complex to endeavour to combat this offending.

MUG SHOT



This amazing sand sculpture of King Neptune was located by local police at Barwon Heads beach late Feb as have others in recent times. Other sightings have included an elephant and gorilla but there have been more! The Geelong Advertiser showed interest after this encounter where it made the front page of Saturday edition.

Leading Senior Constable Kevin HOARE and Constable Jack BRITAIN spoke to the local artist, Ian, about this creation. Ian creates such art along Ocean Grove to Surf Coast. But the artist states that sand at this location (referring to Barwon Heads) sets it apart from others and is his preferred location.

Keep an eye out for these inspiring creations along our beach fronts as the detail is incredible. With the waves of water certain to erase these sculptures and etchings in the sand, they don't last long but certainly are a sight to see.



Constable Jack BRITAIN and LSC Kevin HOARE

EYEWATCH GEELONG

If you're a user of Facebook, Victoria Police Eyewatch Facebook pages are another avenue and opportunity to connect to your local police and the community. The use of this site can help assist with crime prevention, neighbourhood safety and solving crimes in your area.

Eyewatch operates in 54 regions around Victoria at the moment. These pages empower Victorians to be active participants in making their community safer.

www.facebook.com/eyewatchgeelong/

Head over to this link to interact with our local Eyewatch, ran out of Geelong, to take part. Or just search for Eyewatch – Geelong Police Service Area.



SCAMS

Scams cost Australians millions of dollars each year. Anyone can be targeted!

Scams are a common way that cybercriminals compromise your online accounts. Scammers' goal is to trick you into paying money or giving away your personal information. They will use email, text messages, phone calls or social media, and often pretend to be a person or organisation you trust.

Knowing what the common types of scams are, and what to look out for could save you from becoming a victim.

Bellarine Neighbourhood will be providing in depth presentations to organised groups throughout 2024. Contact us anytime via our email at BELLARINE-NEIGHBOURHOOD-MGR@police.vic.gov.au to make it happen within your Group.

SCAMS
TARGET YOU
PROTECT YOURSELF

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

(By LSC Anthony SHEEDY)

For over 100 years, female police officers have played vital roles in Victoria Police.

We celebrate and honour the women that have made historical changes in Victoria. They have paved the way for women in Victoria Police today.

On 28 July 1917, Victoria Police employed our first women as 'agents', Madge Connor and Elizabeth Beers.

In July 2017, we commemorated the milestone of 100 years of women in Victoria Police. Our Victoria Police Museum presented a major exhibition in honour of this milestone.

The exhibition explored major breakthroughs and landmark events within Victoria Police. They showed a series of stories through the context of social changes and milestones in the wider community.

The stories highlighted the struggles and discrimination women faced, and how this has shaped equality and diversity in Victoria Police today.

Bellarine Peninsula has a number of female officers playing vital and pivotal roles within our region. Their contributions to our area are invaluable.



LSC Tracey MONTIETH and LSC Lynn QUINLIVAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



The Great Safe Plate Blitz

Do you know that the number one item stolen from cars is number plates? Crooks want your number plates so they can affix them to stolen cars, in turn using that car to commit a variety of other crimes.

Affixing tamper proof or one-way screws to your number plates is a simple and worthwhile way to prevent crime. Having "Safe Plates" offers several benefits:

- 1. Deterrence:** The presence of tamper-proof screws sends a clear message that the plates are secured and tampering with them is difficult. This can act as a deterrent for potential thieves who may be looking for an easy target.
- 2. Reduced Theft:** Tamper-proof screws make it more challenging for thieves to steal license plates. The added difficulty may dissuade individuals who are looking for quick and easy targets, reducing the overall incidence of theft.
- 3. Prevention of Misuse:** Stolen license plates are sometimes used in the commission of crimes, such as robberies, hit-and-runs, or other illegal activities. By securing plates with tamper-proof screws, the likelihood of such misuse is diminished.
- 4. Cost Savings for Vehicle Owners:** When license plates are stolen, vehicle owners may face costs related to replacing the plates, reporting the theft to authorities, and dealing with potential legal issues arising from the misuse of the stolen plates. The use of tamper-proof screws can help mitigate these costs by preventing theft in the first place.

- 5. Enhanced Security:** One-way screws are designed in a way that makes it easy to install them but difficult to remove. This ensures that the plates remain securely attached to the vehicle, providing enhanced security against tampering.
- 6. Removal:** If you wish to remove the plates – perhaps on the sale of your vehicle or to fit personalised plates, you can remove the screws with a special removal tool. Most police stations will have this tool as do some of our Neighbourhood Watch Groups. Call us for more information.

To help Victorians protect their plates, Neighbourhood Watch Victoria is running The Great Safe Plate Blitz. We are visiting 30 locations to affix one-way screws to number plates – and it's free.

Come along to our Safe Plate events in Greater Geelong:

- Torquay Bunnings April 21 – 10am to 2pm
- North Geelong Bunnings May 18 – 10am to 2pm

For further information and a complete list of all locations please visit:

www.nhw.com.au

POLICE HUMOR

Two lady police officers are out on patrol...

They observe a car with an old couple driving erratically and speeding...

The old couple get pulled over and...

a lady police officer states - "Produce your license please sir.."

Old man - "Ugh, what did she say?"

Old wife - "She needs to see you license and registration dear."

The old man hands it to the lady police officer and...

Lady police officer - "Oh, I see you are from Shepparton. I used to have a lover from Shep, he was the worst lover I ever had."

Old man - "Ugh, what did she say?"

Old wife - "Nothing dear, she thinks she used to know you."



BELLARINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT REGISTER

YOU DON'T NEED TO FEEL ALONE ON THE BELLARINE - WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

The Bellarine Community Support Register continues to offer its services to the community.

If you, or a family member, friend, neighbour or relative may benefit from added peace of mind and a sense of safety and security, you can register your contact details and next of kin information on a secure data base at the Bellarine Police Station that can be accessed by police in an emergency.

We will provide you with an ID card with your registration number to carry in your purse or wallet, a key tag, a window sticker and a fridge magnet. A regular care call to you can also be organised on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, to check in with you regarding your welfare or simply for a chat.

Our Register is not just for older Bellarine residents. It covers residents who feel vulnerable or isolated. This could mean people who live alone, or whose family or close friends live a long distance away. Or it could be a person who is a carer for someone who is disabled or temporarily incapacitated. Or it could be a person who is disabled and lives independently.

You don't need to feel alone here on the Bellarine. This is a free service. For all ages. You can register online or contact us to obtain a registration form or for further information.

Our contact information is as follows:

<https://bellarineregister.org.au>

Email: bpsupportregister@bigpond.com

Phone: (03) 5255 3968 or 0480 228 674

Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/bcsrinc/>

ADDRESS

Bellarine Community Support Register
PO Box 819, Ocean Grove, VIC, 3226

Volunteers are Vital

Seeking a volunteer role in our community? We welcome new volunteers to join our Register to undertake administration duties and care calls on a weekly or monthly basis. The choice is yours. If you are interested, please contact us.

PROTECT YOUR eSCOOTER FROM THEFT! (By LSC Anthony SHEEDY)



Unfortunately, electric scooters are not invincible to theft. As more people use electric scooters, scooter theft has also become more common. However, this doesn't mean that you can't protect your electric scooter. To protect your electric scooter from theft, this quick guide offers ways to keep your electric scooter secure in public and leave you with peace of mind.

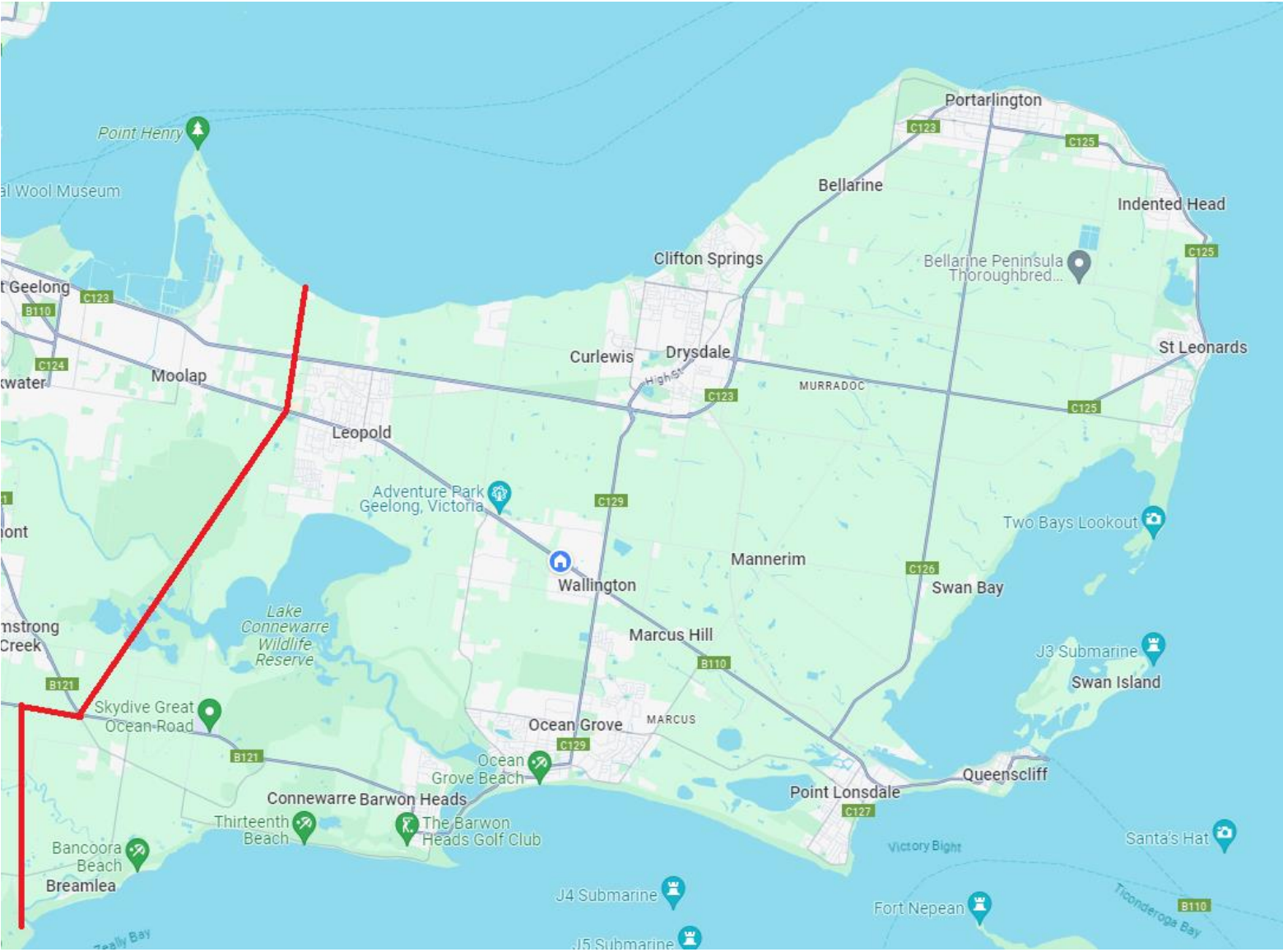
Follow the tips below to avoid losing your electric scooter:

- Avoid leaving your electric scooter outside.
- Leave your electric scooter beside your desk, inside a large locker, or between gaps, instead of parking it outside. Keeping it near you will help you watch over it without any worries.
- In cases where you must leave your electric scooter outside, ask a friend or an employee to keep an eye on it. Have someone guard or look after it while you away. The best way to protect your electric scooter from theft is prevention.
- Use an electric scooter lock. Electric scooter locks are similar to bicycle locks. Using locks will not only keep your electric scooter in place but also make it difficult for thieves to steal your e-scooter.
- Install a tracking device. Installing a GPS tracking system will help you and the authorities locate your electric scooter in case of a theft. Some tracking devices also alert the owner once someone touches their electric scooter, which allows the owner to prevent the theft from happening.
- Find a safe place to park.

If you are planning to buy an electric scooter, it's best to go with a light, compact, and foldable electric scooter, so you can bring it in public transit, inside buildings, and anywhere you go.

In the last month alone, Bellarine Peninsula has had 22 reports of theft of eScooter/eBikes. A complex syndicate was unravelled which has resulted in search warrants and the arrest of 4 individuals. The eScooters recovered as this point only stands a two. Be smart and protect your assets!

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

LSC Anthony SHEEDY