

Bellarine Neighbourhood

Providing support for our community that supports us

BELLARINE POLICE

This issue: Message from the OIC, Coffee with a Cop, Upcoming dates, and a whole lot more.

A LETTER FROM THE OIC

With online marketplaces making it easier than ever to sell vehicles, I want to remind our Bellarine Community to take a few simple precautions to protect themselves from opportunistic offenders.

Think twice before posting photos of your number plates.

When advertising your vehicle online, consider obscuring the registration plates in photographs. Offenders can use images of genuine number plates to create cloned plates and attach them to other vehicles, often to conceal their identity while committing offences. Unfortunately, this can have significant consequences for innocent vehicle owners and prospective buyers. People may find themselves receiving speed camera infringements, toll road notices or being linked to other offences, including theft, involving a vehicle displaying their cloned plates.

Be cautious when arranging test drives

If someone expresses interest in buying your vehicle, take precautions before handing over the keys. Always check their driver's licence, confirm their identity and ensure you are comfortable with the arrangements. Insurance companies generally do not cover you if you do not accompany a person test driving your car, so ensure you check with them before allowing someone to test drive your car unsupervised. It could be a costly mistake if there is a collision or your car is not returned. If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts. It is better to miss a sale than risk losing your vehicle or becoming involved in an avoidable accident.

Buying and selling vehicles online can be convenient, but a few simple precautions can make a real difference. Please share this advice with family and friends to help keep our Bellarine community safe.

Senior Sergeant Dean Parrello.

BELLARINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT REGISTER INC.

Feel safe. Feel secure. Have peace of mind.

The Bellarine Community Support Register celebrated 20 years of service to local residents with a celebration held to the day on 6 October 2026.

In attendance were representatives from sponsors, local and state government and community organisations as well as former and current volunteers.

Among the guests were Ann Nichol OAM, the organisation's inaugural Chair and Gail Rodgers, its longest serving Chair.

Sergeants Jane Arnold and Shane Connolly added to the celebration with Jane explaining how Bellarine police use the register in their day-to-day work. Also in attendance was Police Chaplain, Rev. John Minotti who was a member of the Interim Committee when the Register was set up in 2006.

As a fitting tribute to the many Bellarine residents who have benefitted from its service, current BCSR Chair Gary Coombes recounted his time as the Officer-in-Charge of the Bellarine Police Station when the register was first set up.

He thanked all in attendance as well as those not able to do make it and made special note of the support from At the Heads, Benefit Geelong, City of Greater Geelong and Geelong Connected Communities for their assistance with the event.

BCSR volunteers personally congratulated Sgt. Connolly on his 35 years of service to Victoria Police and on his active promotion of the Bellarine Register to our local townships.





Neighbourhood Watch
Let's watch out for each other

PROTECT YOUR PLATES

Ever looked at the screws holding your number plates on? Most of us haven't. 🛠️

For Crime Prevention Month (October), we're starting with one small thing that can make a difference: swapping regular number plate screws for one-way anti-theft screws.

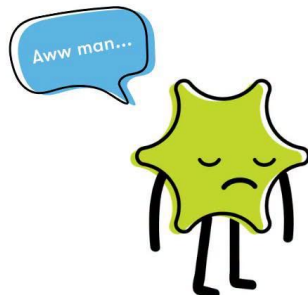
With support from RACV, you can order free anti-theft screws through Neighbourhood Watch Victoria. Order yours here: nhw.com.au/cars-and-vehicles/protect-your-plates

A small step to help protect your plates, and one less thing to worry about 💚

Plates are the #1 stolen item from cars in Victoria

30,000+ were taken last year

They don't just disappear.
They end up on other cars,
petrol drive-offs,
and dodging police...



while the fines land on you.

Order your screws
online for free and it'll
be delivered straight
to your doorstep



Order here

nhw.com.au/cars-and-vehicles/protect-your-plates/



GOOD NEIGHBOURS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE ♥

From bringing in the bins and keeping an eye on parcels, to checking in over a cuppa, it's often the little things that help make our neighbourhoods feel safer and more connected.

How many things in the Good Neighbour Starter Pack can you tick off?



Knows all the
local pups



Always up
for a cuppa



Your bin-day
backup

The Good Neighbour Starter Pack



Your parcel
protector



Shares the
backyard
harvest



Keeps your
plants alive



Just
checking in



SMART NEIGHBOURHOODS: everyday tech working in your favour

From video doorbells to our How Safe Is My Place tool, everyday technology is turning ordinary neighbours into an active line of defence against crime.

We talk a lot about how criminals use technology. Less about how the same tools are making Victorian neighbourhoods safer, often without residents realising just how much of a difference they make.

Video doorbells and smart cameras have become one of the simplest, most effective deterrents a household can have. Visible cameras put off opportunistic offenders before they even approach a property, and when an incident does happen, footage gives police a genuine head start.

NHW Victoria has been building digital tools to help Victorians learn the simple tactics that prevent crime. Our How Safe Is My Place questionnaire (versions for a house, apartment, farm, vehicle and business), developed with RACV, lets residents and small business owners run a simple, guided check of their own security setup and get tailored, practical recommendations. No jargon, no sales pitch. It's the kind of assessment a security consultant might once have charged for, now free and done in a few minutes.

None of this replaces good fundamentals. Locked doors, trimmed sightlines, sensor lighting and knowing your neighbours still matter more than any single piece of technology. But used well, these tools multiply the effectiveness of a community that's already paying attention, giving residents better information, faster, and an easier way to act on it together.

If your street or group hasn't tried our How Safe Is My Place tool yet, it takes only a few minutes and could highlight a gap worth fixing this week. Go to www.howsafeismyplace.com.au

Good neighbours make stronger communities.

Take the next step and join
your local Neighbourhood
Watch group.

Find out more on our website.



Crime
Prevention
Month | Oct
2026

Supported by
RACV





Neighbourhood Watch

Let's watch out for each other

DON'T TAKE THE BAIT

FREE COMMUNITY SCAM AWARENESS PRESENTATION

Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine
in partnership with the
Bellarine Community Support Register
invite you to a

SCAM PRESENTATION

to be conducted at



SPRINGDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE
17 – 21 High Street, DRYSDALE



28th OCTOBER, 2026
2:00pm — 4:00pm

**NO RSVP
REQUIRED**

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Bendigo Bank

BELLARINE POLICE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



WITH SUPPORT FROM





REPORT ONLINE ANYTIME



VICTORIA POLICE

DID YOU KNOW, YOU CAN REPORT



PROPERTY DAMAGE



STOLEN PROPERTY



A STOLEN CAR



BURGLARY (BREAK-INS)



FUEL THEFT



LOST PROPERTY



REGISTER A PARTY



**REGISTER ABSENCE
FROM HOME**



THROUGH VICTORIA POLICE ONLINE REPORTING

report online

ANYTIME



Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing on the Bellarine

Bellarine Police Neighbourhood Unit recently attended the grand opening of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Local outreach centre at Bellarine Community Health in Portarlington.

The new centre is a valuable addition to our local community, providing another avenue for people to access mental health and wellbeing support close to home.

During the opening, Bellarine Police Neighbourhood Unit members had the opportunity to meet with staff and learn more about the services available and the important role the centre will play in supporting members of our community, including older residents who may benefit from accessible, local support.

Having services like this available on the Bellarine Peninsula helps strengthen community connections and ensures people have more opportunities to seek support when they need it.

Bellarine Police welcome initiatives that promote positive mental health and wellbeing and are proud to support local services working to make a difference in our community.

For more information about the services available, contact Bellarine Community Health in Portarlington.

3223 COMMUNITY SURVEY

We want to hear from you!

Help us understand what our community knows and thinks about family violence.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS
We are asking everyone in our community to complete this short survey

Your feedback will help us:

- ✓ Understand community views about family violence
- ✓ Identify what support, information and resources people need
- ✓ Raise awareness and encourage conversations about respectful relationships
- ✓ Plan community led actions that reflects community needs
- ✓ Work towards a safer community for everyone

Scan Here
to complete the survey!



Collaborating together for our community:


 Safe@Home


 MELI


 McAuley
For women and children


 bch
Bellarine Community Health


 pca
Portarlington Community Association
Connecting with community


 Bellarine North
Rotary


 church by the bay
portarlington


 SALTY BITCHES


 Food Assist
3223


 PORTARLINGTON


 St Leonards
Film Society


 ST LEONARDS



Fire Awareness Season: Stay Alert and Help Keep Our Community Safe

As we move into the warmer months, Bellarine Police are reminding residents to remain vigilant and fire aware as the risk of fires increases across our community.

Recently, Bellarine Police have attended incidents involving fires that have been deliberately lit and left unattended. In one incident, a gas cylinder was also left behind at the scene, creating an additional potential hazard.

Unattended fires can quickly spread, particularly in dry conditions, putting lives, homes, wildlife and property at risk. Deliberately lighting fires can have serious consequences, and even a seemingly small fire can become dangerous if left unchecked.

Bellarine Police are urging everyone to:

- Never leave a fire unattended, and ensure any permitted fire is fully extinguished before leaving the area.
- Be mindful of local fire restrictions and total fire ban declarations.
- Avoid lighting fires in unsafe locations or during hazardous weather conditions.
- Keep an eye out for suspicious behaviour, smoke or unattended fires in parks, reserves and other public areas.
- Report dangerous situations promptly and avoid approaching suspicious fires or potentially hazardous items, including gas cylinders.

If you see a fire that poses an immediate threat to life or property, call 000.

If you witness suspicious behaviour or have information about a deliberately lit fire, contact Crime Stoppers Victoria on **1800 333 000** or make a report online at www.crimestoppersvic.com.au.

By staying alert, acting responsibly and reporting suspicious activity, we can all play a part in protecting our beautiful Bellarine community as we head into the warmer months.



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.

COFFEE WITH A COP MARKETPLACE OCEAN GROVE

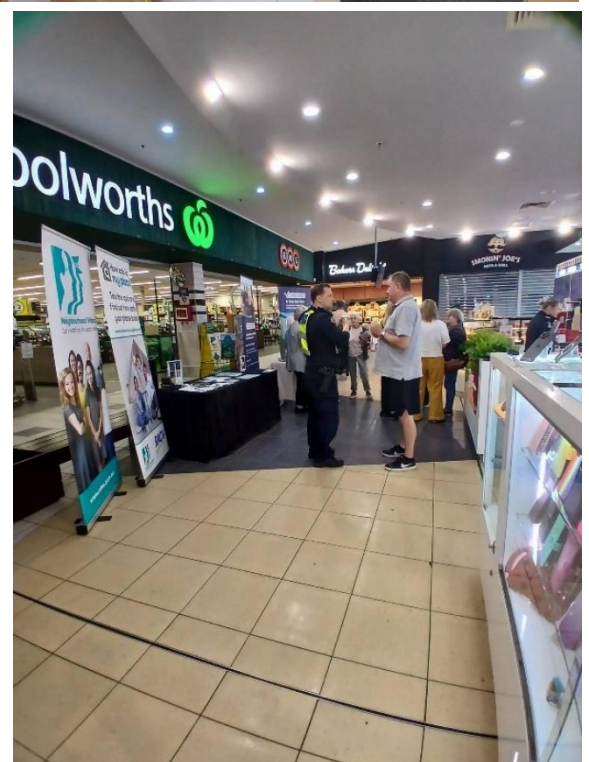
On Wednesday, 21 October, Bellarine Police joined Neighbourhood Watch Bellarine and the Bellarine Community Support Register for another successful Coffee with a Cop event at Ocean Grove Marketplace.

The event provided a wonderful opportunity for local community members to connect with police and community organisations in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Over a coffee, residents were able to raise concerns, seek advice, ask questions and enjoy a friendly chat with those who help support the Bellarine community.

These informal gatherings are a great way to strengthen community connections, build relationships and ensure residents feel comfortable approaching police and local support services.

A big thank you to Lee-Anne and the Ocean Grove Marketplace Centre Management team for hosting the event, and to Fergusson Plarre's Bakehouse for providing the delicious coffee.

Bellarine Police would like to thank everyone who stopped by for a chat. We look forward to seeing you at our next Coffee with a Cop.



NEXT COFFEE WITH A COP

**December 1st – Gateway Plaza, Leopold,
Blax Coffee at 10:00am**

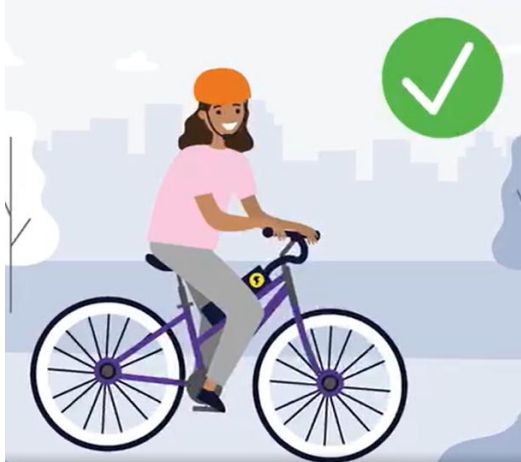
E-BIKES AND E-SCOOTERS SAFETY LAWS IN VICTORIA**E-BIKES**

25km/h MAX speed

Helmet must be worn
at all times

No passengers

Cannot be ridden on footpaths

**E-SCOOTER**

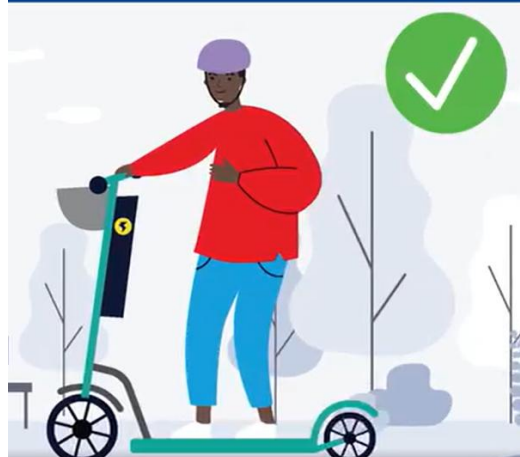
25km/h MAX speed

Be aged 16 years or over

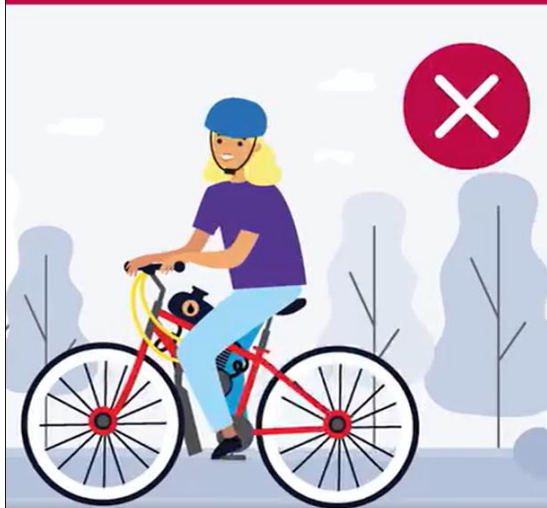
Helmet must be worn
at all times

No passengers

Cannot be ridden on footpaths

**MODIFIED
OR PETROL
POWERED
BICYCLES**

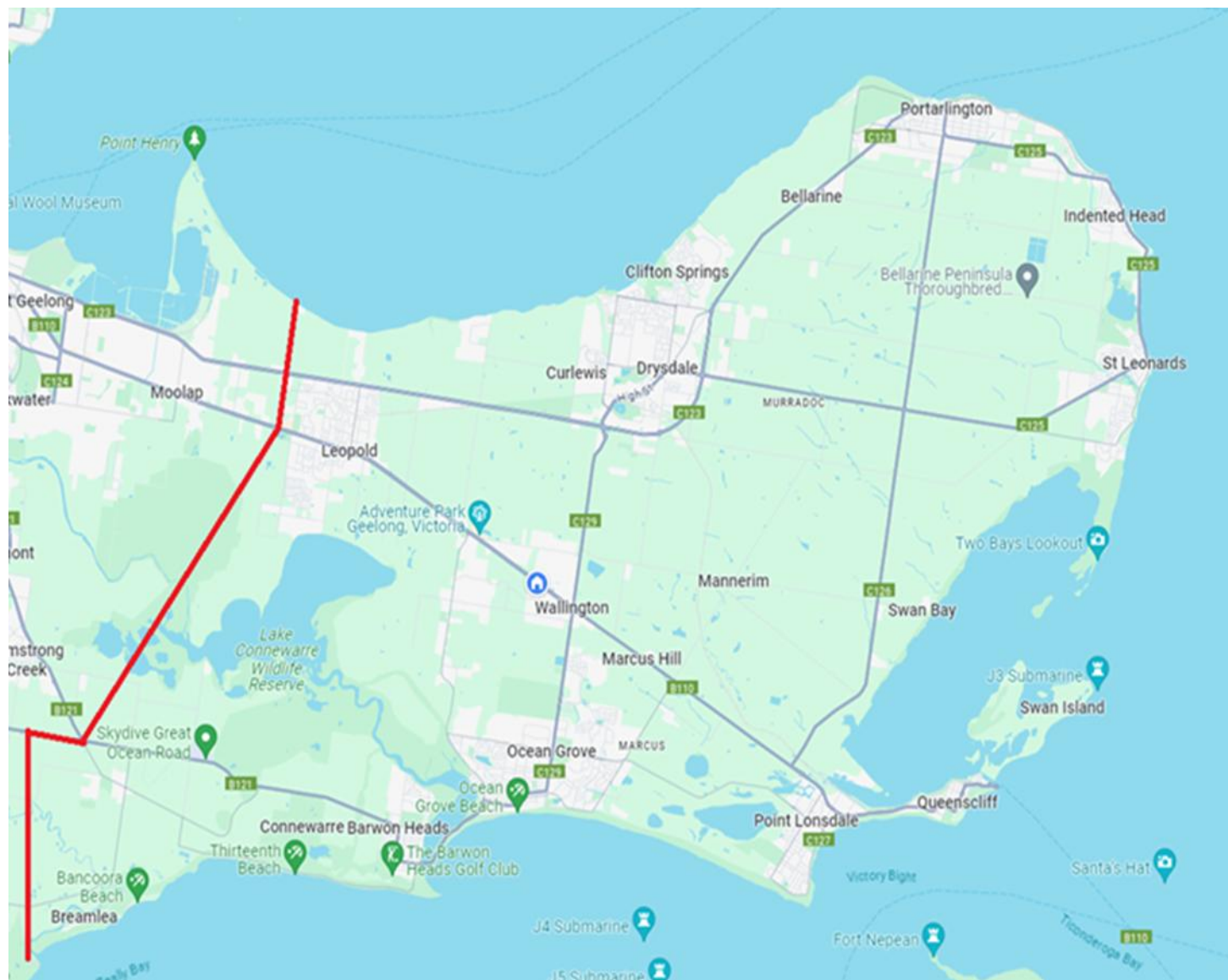
are illegal.

**MOTORBIKES**

To ride on or off road must be
registered with a full recreation
registration

Helmet must be worn
at all times





Have something you would like to say?

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

Have a community even you would like to add?

Email us at:

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