



Progress 3127

Newsletter from the Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Progress Association

June 2026

President's message

This second edition of *Progress 3127* features an update on the campaign to save the old Box Hill Brickworks site from high rise development and turn it into a beautiful park instead.

We think this would be a much better outcome for everyone.

Also, in this edition, we ask whether we need yet another recycling bin, this time for glass, and we provide an update on significant investment being directed to enhancing Mont Albert Village.

Our trader profile this time features the popular **Sips and Stories** café on Union Road.

Finally, I hope you noticed our Association's smart new logo at the top of the page, designed by our own Jeanette Harvey.

Mark Curry, President

Councillors at next SHMAPA meeting

Cr Kirsten Langford (Mayor of Whitehorse) and Cr Shima Ibuki (Deputy Mayor of Boroondara) have confirmed their attendance at our next meeting to talk about council issues and priorities for Surrey Hills and Mont Albert.

All are welcome to attend in person or by Zoom. Please register your interest at shmapa3127@gmail.com.

Thursday July 2, 7:30pm at Balwyn Community Centre, 412 Whitehorse Road, Surrey Hills.

Box Hill brickworks update

The Box Hill Brickworks site sits just outside postcode 3127, to the east of Elgar Road abutting the Surrey Park sports and recreation precinct. Due to instability and contamination risk from many years of use of the old quarry as a tip, the site has long been off-limits for development.

The site is now caught up in a process run by the Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) seeking to amend the planning scheme.

A report is currently sitting with the Planning Minister who will decide whether to accept a proposal agreed between the SRLA and property owner Phileo to cover 95% of the 7-hectare site with high rise development up to 10 storeys and above.

The Brickworks site is the last opportunity in the area to create substantial new parkland for passive recreation. This would not only serve BoxHill, where the population is expected to double by 2041, but also adjacent suburbs including Mont Albert and Surrey Hills that have limited access to public open space.

The Box Hill Brickworks Parkland Association (BHBPAA) held a well-attended public meeting at the MCC Baseball Club on 21st May. An update on the campaign was



provided by co-convenors Greg Buchanan and Vincent Mennilli, and Ben Lau, consulting urban designer/architect (pictured, from left, above). The meeting was also addressed by Whitehorse Mayor Cr Kirsten Langford, Cr Blair Barker, Cr Peter Allan, Richard Welch MP and Sally Houguet (Liberal candidate for Box Hill), all committing strong support to the campaign.

The meeting heard that Whitehorse Council is seeking to acquire the majority of the site and to remediate it for use as parkland, also noting that this would require a significant financial contribution from the State Government.

A public rally is proposed to be held near the old brickworks building on **Sunday 23rd August 2026**. SHMAPA strongly supports the campaign and we hope to see you at the rally.

Anzac Day Dawn Service

This well organised and moving event again attracted a large crowd, estimated at 1500-2000 people.

Congratulations to the organising committee, led by SHMAPA, with great support from the Surrey Hills Historical Society and the MASH Rotary Club.



Are purple bins necessary?

The State Government has legislated for the mandatory introduction of a fourth 'purple' recycling bin for glass collection from mid-2027. The intention is to separate glass from other recycling items in the 'yellow' bin. Broken glass adds difficulty to the processing of recycling streams.

At the same time, the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) is successfully drawing a significant proportion of glass waste from the general 'yellow' recycling bins. A fourth bin will add significant collection costs for councils and inconvenience for residents already juggling three bins.

The cities of Whitehorse and Boroondara are amongst 34 councils across the state calling for the Government to pause and review the mandatory roll out of 'purple' bins.

Instead, the councils propose the expansion of the CDS to include other glass containers, such as wine and spirit bottles. Most other States are taking this approach.

SHMAPA agrees that mandatory introduction of 'purple' bins should be reconsidered. On the other hand, expansion of the CDS seems to be a no-brainer.



Photo by Mike Gong - Resident

Facelift for Mont Albert Village

After decades of graceful decline, Mont Albert Village is getting a facelift. Whitehorse Council's 2026-27 budget has some \$3 million allocated for projects in and around the Village.

Included will be drainage work to mitigate flooding during heavy rainfall events, to be followed by \$1.84 million on upgrading Hamilton Street as a pedestrian friendly precinct.

Plans currently being finalised envisage widened footpaths, new surfacing, streetscape furniture and gardens.

\$580,000 is also allocated to creating a pocket park adjacent to the Village on properties recently purchased at 383-87 Mont Albert Road. This will link with Hamilton Street and the Mont Albert Plaza to create an integrated open space hub.

SHMAPA congratulates Whitehorse Council on this comprehensive approach to urban renewal and liveability in Mont Albert.



Ava and Vomica

Sips, stories and lots more

From northern India to Surrey Hills, the journey of Garv and his family, who conduct the quaintly named **Sips and Stories**, a coffee shop and eatery in Union Road, has been one of grit and passion.

The family migrated to Melbourne during COVID in 2021 and established the business two years later on the site of a former café. "I started working in cafes and the hospitality business when we first came to Australia. Doing daytime work and making coffee and food and the customer interaction got me motivated," Garv said.

Garv's father Binni, who owned fuel stations in India, his mother Vomica and brother Mehul are all invested. Ava, a family friend who also grew up in northern India,

helps out while studying.

Sips and Stories offers the complete range of premium coffee, tea and chai as well as smoothies, fruit juice, shakes and cold drinks.

Their all day breakfast and lunch menu options include omelettes, burgers, French toast, fish, salsa, eggs benedict and salads along with cakes, slices and croissants.

Garv and his family are really soaking up the environment in Surrey Hills. "It's such a beautiful community, so loving and so supporting."

Sips and Stories is located at 111-113 Union Road, Surrey Hills. It is open on weekdays from 6am to 3pm, Saturday from 7am to 2pm and Sunday from 8am to 2pm.