



IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Acting CEO 2

COVID-19 information and updates

COVID-19 vaccine roll out 3

Restrictions update 4

Keep practising good hygiene 4

Participant updates 5

Announcements and updates

Our SDA build has begun 9

Amicus updates

Farewell from Amicus 10

Welcome to Amicus 10

Epilepsy awareness at Amicus 11

Fabulous feedback 12

Morten's adventures 12

Information for participants

Pathways and Engagement Team 13

Visit Bendigo library 14

MPTP for Uber rides 14

SBS Easy English daily news 14

Seasonal health information 15

Office closures and important dates 15

Winter community events 16

Head office

18 Myers Street, Bendigo 3550

9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday

(03) 5441 2666

www.amicus.org.au

A message from our Acting CEO

SOPHIA WIGHT

Our CEO Ann-Maree Davis is on leave for the month of June, so I am pleased to welcome you to our Winter Exchange Newsletter.

How quickly things change! After a seven day lockdown we are glad that restrictions have started to lift across Regional Victoria. 'Circuit Breaker Lockdown 4.0' was the last thing we all wanted to happen, but we are hoping this means we can get back to COVIDsafe in the near future. We have listed the current restrictions below and we will continue to update you via the COVID Hub on our website and our Facebook page.

For those participants who requested to suspend their supports, we will be in regular contact so you can let us know when you are ready to recommence your supports.

We know that there are many participants that we support at Amicus who have vulnerable health and will continue to be very cautious at this time. If you are not venturing from home except for the essentials, please let us know if there is any assistance that we can provide.

Coming into the winter months and entering the cold and flu season, it is important that we remember all that we have learned about infection control and hygiene. For a refresher and tips to avoid the flu, read the seasonal health information section later in the Exchange.

A new Minister for the NDIS, Linda Reynolds, was appointed to the role in April and says she is focused on improving the scheme for participants, and ensuring the scheme is sustainable for generations to come. We look forward to what she can bring to the portfolio.

With the recent departure of Donna Casey, we welcome Shayne Scott back to Amicus, as Acting Adult Services Manager for the coming three months. Many of you know Shayne and I am sure you will be glad to reconnect with him.

Sophia Wight
Amicus Acting CEO

COVID-19 information and updates

COVID-19 VACCINE ROLL OUT

Everyone in Australia will be offered a safe and effective free COVID-19 vaccine.

Some people with disability are at greater risk of becoming very sick if they catch COVID-19. Getting vaccinated against the illness is a way of protecting you, your family and the community.

COVID-19 vaccines are voluntary and you can decide whether you want to be vaccinated or not.

The vaccine rollout is being delivered in phases so that the most vulnerable Australians receive the vaccine first. Australia is currently in phase 2a of the COVID vaccine rollout.

What does this mean?

This means that any of the following people are able to receive their free vaccine:

- People aged 40 years and over
- Adults with specified underlying health conditions, or a disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 - 49 years old
- Frontline health care workers
- Aged care and disability care staff
- Critical and high risk workers
- Healthcare workers
- Household contacts of quarantine and border workers
- Critical and high-risk workers who are currently employed including defence, police, fire, emergency services and meat processing
- Quarantine and border workers

How can I check if I'm eligible?

Use the COVID-19 vaccine Eligibility Checker at www.health.gov.au to find out when you can receive the vaccine.

If you are not yet eligible the Eligibility Checker will help you register to be notified when you are able to book.

Or you can call the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on **1800 020 080** to find an appointment.

Where can I receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

Bendigo Health's COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic is located at 113-133 Mollison Street, Bendigo, 3550.

The Vaccination Clinic is open from 10am – 5pm, seven days a week. The clinic will accept walk-in appointments from 10am – 12pm and 1pm – 5pm.

If the clinic reaches its walk-in capacity for the day you will be given the opportunity to register for the vaccine.

What do I need to bring to my appointment?

Please bring your medicare card and some form of identification.

How to book your vaccination appointment

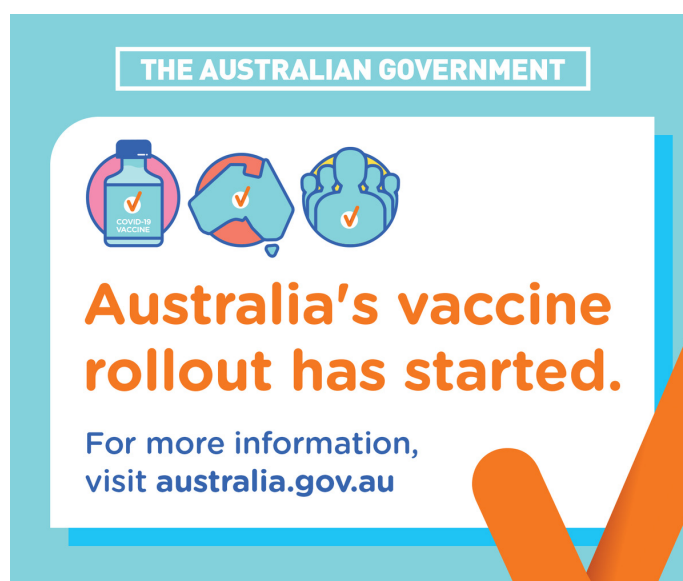
If you would like to book your vaccine appointment at Bendigo Health's COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic visit www.bendigohealth.org.au

Easy English and Auslan vaccine information

The Department of Health has created a web page for people with disability to find information about the vaccine roll-out including Easy English information and videos in Auslan.

The page will be regularly updated as more details are confirmed but is a great resource for our participants, their families and our team.

Find the page at www.health.gov.au



RESTRICTIONS UPDATE

The Victorian Government announced that restrictions will ease in Regional Victoria from 11.59pm on Thursday 3 June and will be extended for seven days in Greater Melbourne.

Key restriction changes for Regional Victoria include:

- You can leave home for any reason
- Schools will return to face to face learning for all year levels
- Face coverings:
 - Must be carried at all times
 - Must be worn indoors except if at home, or if an exception applies
 - Must be worn outdoors where 1.5 metres physical distancing cannot be maintained

Greater Melbourne restrictions:

There will still be only five reasons to leave home:

- Shopping for necessary goods and services
- Authorised work or education
- Exercise, a 2-hour limit with one other person
- Care giving, compassionate, and medical reasons
- To get vaccinated

People will be able to travel further for exercise and shopping, with an expanded 10km radius.

Visit www.amicus.org.au/covid-19 to keep up with current updates on restriction levels.



REMINDER TO KEEP PRACTICING GOOD HYGIENE

You must always carry a face mask with you when you leave home unless you have a lawful reason not to.

To minimise the risk of contracting COVID-19 you should continue to:



Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating and after going to the toilet.



Avoid physical contact with others where possible (touching, kissing, hugging etc.).



Use alcohol-based hand sanitiser often.



Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and dispose of tissues.

Participant updates

HARRIETT'S KNITTING GOALS

Harriett has been working towards her goal of having a stall at the market to sell her knitting products.

Harriett loves knitting and doing craft at home and has been working on making a scarf and snoods for her support staff.

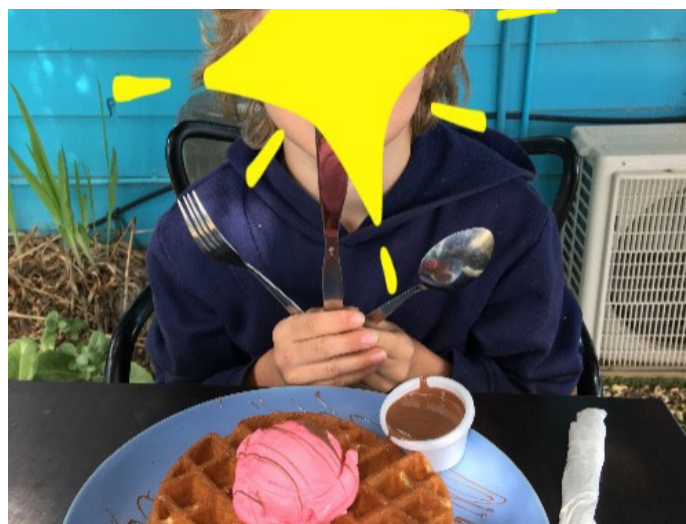
Pictured here is Harriett with her keyworker, Kim, who is wearing one of the snoods Harriett made for her for Mother's Day.



SUNDAY FUNDAY

Sundays are made for waffles, ice cream and chocolate sauce.

A participant from Children's Services got to enjoy these lovely treats on Sunday, while also checking out the local murals in Rochester.



EMPOWERED BY HER KNOWLEDGE AND TREATMENT OF PWS

Our participant Erin is a 42-year-old social butterfly who lives with Prader Willi Syndrome (PWS). Erin enjoys sports and has competed in Special Olympics Australia for many years. Erin thrives on active and social employment and likes to be busy.

Erin made the huge leap from her home with her parents to moving into shared supported accommodation three years ago. This has been a period of transition for Erin and has brought about some challenges, which she is tackling each challenge head-on with a positive spirit and determination.

PWS is a rare genetic disorder that affects development and growth and brings with it some very unique challenges.

People tend to have an excessive appetite which can create very serious health issues, including obesity if not managed.

Erin is well supported and has taken on board her very specific management plan to reduce the likelihood of obesity and manage diabetes and kidney disease. Erin engages in meal planning to promote food safety. Erin also attends multiple appointments in relation to PWS to ensure her health and wellbeing are monitored well.

Erin is currently part of a study led by the Austin Hospital looking at health and wellbeing indicators that will be valuable to those living with PWS.

Erin likes to teach parents about what it is like to live with PWS. In 2015, she presented at the 3rd Asia-Pacific Prader Willi Syndrome Conference in Melbourne.

You can watch Erin speak at the conference. Search **My life with PWS - Erin Gumbleton** on YouTube.

Having recently started with behaviour support at Amicus to develop a better understanding of her emotions after coming into contact with more stressors since moving out of home, Erin has been developing a toolkit of strategies that will help her to live with others safely.

Erin has done an amazing job of helping behaviour support to understand how she wants to be supported by her team each day. Erin has also worked with behaviour support to review restrictive practices aimed at keeping her safe and healthy. A step down is currently being planned for one of her restrictive practices.

What amazing achievements from Erin. Well done and the Behaviour Support Team think you are a star!



GETTING CREATIVE AT PROVIDENCE COURT

Cassie and Charmaine have been enjoying their Wednesday art and cooking program at Providence Court.

They have done a variety of wonderful and creative activities over the term, including rock painting, making Easter chocolates, rum balls, painting, origami, arts and crafts and putting on a lovely Mother's Day lunch.



Creative fun at Amicus

CAROLYN ACHIEVES HER SEWING DREAM

The journey of learning to sew has been lifelong for Carolyn. Having a very accomplished seamstress in her mother, Carolyn often wanted to learn to sew, but her vision decreased and is now 10-12%.

Carolyn saved much of her beloved mother's vintage material, so when she received supports from Amicus her first goal was learning to sew a patchwork quilt in memory of her mother.

Lucky for Carolyn, our support worker Cassie is a sewing teacher extraordinaire. Over two years, Cassie has introduced Carolyn to sewing with the machine, and together they worked on several ideas for the quilt design.

Whilst there have been some mistakes and plenty of changes to the design, Carolyn built her confidence and skills, finally sewing a patchwork quilt that her mother and any quilter would be thrilled with.

Almost the entire quilt was sewn by Carolyn. She used her fingers to guide the material through the machine, ironed, pieced together and stitched it herself. The only assistance received was rethreading the bobbin and machine, unpicking the mistakes and snipping the seams.

Liz, another of Carolyn's support workers, assisted with the second half of the quilt creation, commenting that "When Carolyn spread the beautifully finished quilt it was as though Carolyn's mother was in the room and saying how proud she was of her daughter."

It was an emotional moment and the most rewarding achievement that Carolyn has accomplished.

Carolyn is already working on patchwork pillowcases and a design for her next quilt. What an amazing demonstration of Carolyn's incredible will, determination and forging artists soul.

We are all so proud.



AMICUS MASTER CHEFS

Participants Stephen, Dylan and Nathan have been very busy this year cooking a variety of meals at the Master Chef program.

The boys like to go shopping for the ingredients and are learning important skills about shopping, self serve checkouts and budgeting their money.

They have made some delicious meals, with favourites including sausage rolls, stir fries, mini pizzas, and homemade Easter chocolates for their families.

The boys also love to join in on the arts and craft activities and made some wonderful cards and painted pots for Mother's Day gifts.



Announcements and updates

OUR SDA BUILD HAS BEGUN

On Monday 22 March we turned the first sod and started the build for our new specialist disability accommodation (SDA) units in North Bendigo. After years of planning and work from many wonderful people to make this happen, Bendigo will have two new specialist housing options for people with disability by 2022.

What is SDA?

SDA stands for specialist disability accommodation. SDA houses are built with extra physical support for people with extreme function impairment or very high support needs. SDA gives people with disabilities the ability to live independently.

What supports will our SDA unit have?

One unit will be Improved Livability. This unit will include:

- Step-free entrances and paths
- Automatic of doors and windows
- Extra space for mobility
- Fully accessible bathroom facilities

The second unit will be High Physical Support. This unit will include:

- Wheelchair accessible spaces
- Fully automated front entry door
- Height adjustable kitchen bench and cupboards

Why are these units so important for Bendigo?

Bendigo has a chronic shortage of SDA housing.

Before the NDIS, over 100 people in the region were identified as having an urgent need for SDA. Many of these people are living with an ageing carer, meaning that soon they may not be able to care for them.

By building these SDA units Amicus is ensuring that the people who live there will be able to live independently and remain in the community.

If you are interested in living in one of the SDA units please call Melissa Zera (Pathways Capacity and Engagement Manager) on **5441 2666** for further information.



Amicus updates

FAREWELL FROM AMICUS

Farewell to Donna

Adult Services Manager, Donna Casey finished up in May to commence her new role as CEO of Victorian Specialist Support Services.

Donna was with us for 18 months and supported Amicus through some very challenging times. During COVID-19 Donna supported Amicus' quick response and moved three people out of an acute hospital setting into medium-term accommodation with great success.

Shayne Scott has returned to Amicus for three months as the acting Adult Services Manager while we finalise recruitment.



Thanks and good luck Cathy

Cathy Gaskell, our Corporate Services Manager, has moved on from Amicus.

We would like to thank Cathy for her contribution to Amicus over the past nine years in her corporate and finance roles.

Cathy has been a part of the significant growth and our transformation journey and has contributed to many strategic projects and outcomes.



WELCOME TO AMICUS

Support Coordination Team

Meredith Whittle has joined the Support Coordination Team at Amicus. Meredith has experience in Youth AOD, youth residential out of home care, disability advocacy and community development and arts.

She is passionate about music and the arts and helping those spaces to be an inclusive environment for all to engage in.



Congratulations to Ebonie

In a different welcome to Amicus, we want to wish Ebonie and her partner a huge congratulations on the birth of their beautiful baby girl, Isla-Kate Marrie Withers.

Isla was born at 3.33pm on 3/3/21, weighing 3.46kgs. Lucky numbers for a lucky baby.



EPILEPSY AWARENESS AT AMICUS

Epilepsy training at Amicus

Leesa Swanson, Meryle Bish and Kerrie Barber attended Epilepsy/Midazolam and peg (tube) feeding training recently.

We have a number of participants that this training will benefit, so it's great that we now have staff skilled in these areas.



Purple Day

Friday 26 March was Purple Day which aims to encourage people to talk about epilepsy and to remind those who live with seizures that they are not alone. Purple Day is dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide.

We are encouraged staff to wear purple to help highlight awareness.



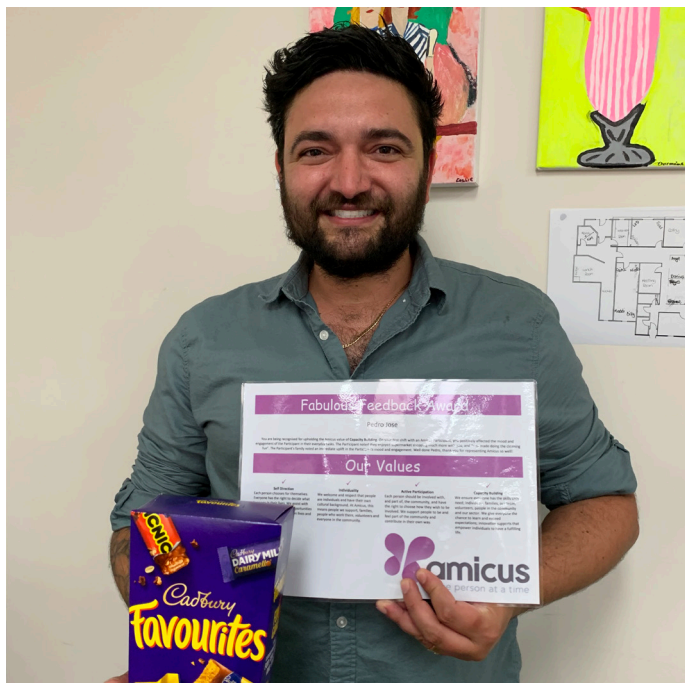
FABULOUS FEEDBACK

To showcase our amazing team, we have been awarding Fabulous Feedback awards to staff who receive feedback from outside of Amicus.

Positive Pedro

On Pedro's first shift as an Amicus support worker, he positively affected the mood and engagement of a participant in their everyday tasks. The participant noted they enjoyed supermarket shopping much more with him and Pedro 'made doing the cleaning fun'.

The participant's family noted an immediate uplift in the participants mood and engagement. Well done Pedro, thank you for representing Amicus so well!



Children's Services

One of our amazing Children's Services teams was recently acknowledged for their hard work and dedication to our participants by upholding the Amicus value of Capacity Building.

Amicus received the feedback from a participant's TAFE teacher who said that through the amazing supports the team has provided around effective communication and keeping up with her work, the participant has successfully completed her first unit and assessment

Thank you and well done for helping our participants achieve their goals and for representing Amicus so well!

This wonderful team includes:

Shelby Knoll	Michael Keighley
Elizabeth Leathart	Alex Wright
Simone O'Sullivan	Emilie Tuohey
Leesa Swanson	Dallas Mcleod
Michael Ervin	Madelaina McGory



MORTEN'S NEW FRIENDS

Morten's friends have arrived at Children's Services and he has been introducing them to participants.

There is Ollie the monkey, Morten the monster, Susan the kitten and Ellen the caterpillar/butterfly.



Morten had a wonderful Easter and ate lots of chocolate goodies. He's already looking forward to next year!

Information for participants

PATHWAYS CAPACITY AND ENGAGEMENT

The Pathways Capacity and Engagement team are based at 18 Myers Street and are here if you have any enquiries, complaints, feedback or questions about your Amicus services, or would like assistance with anything related to your supports.

We are part of your Amicus village and you can ask us a question about anything. If we don't know the answer, we are very happy to find out or help you to find someone who can.

We can help you with almost anything including:

- Understand your funding or your NDIS plan
- Prepare for a review meeting
- Change your goals
- Get a job
- Explore education
- Find a community activity
- Explore new or different supports

We will also be in touch with you at different times during your journey with Amicus to:

- Review your service agreements
- Develop your support plan
- Review your goals

However remember you can call us anytime! If we haven't met you, already we really look forward to meeting you soon.

Below (Left to right):

Rebecca Klein (Incidents Complaints and Investigations Officer), Caitie Williamson (Pathways Officer), Maddi Dajcic (Pathways Officer), Billie Lewis (Pathways Officer), Melissa Zera (Pathways Capacity and Engagement Manager), Nicole Engelmann (Pathways and Engagement Manager)



NDIS AUTOMATIC UPDATES

From April to 30 June, some participants may be eligible to automatically extend their plan, without the need for a plan review.

An automatic plan extension means that instead of getting a new plan, your current plan will continue with the same funded supports for the same duration as your current plan, up to 12 months.

Participants can contact the NDIS to request an automatic plan extension. They will discuss the options and let them know if they are eligible.



VISIT THE BENDIGO LIBRARY CAFE

Bendigo Library cafe is now open and running again, which is a great place for participants to visit with family or their support workers.

Pop in for coffee or to visit Bronwyn, the cafe manager, for a chat. Bronwyn can't wait to see her old customers back in the library!



MPTP FOR UBER RIDES

In an Australian-first, the Victorian Government has expanded the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) to include Uber, giving people with disabilities and accessibility needs access to a greater choice of subsidised transport options.

The MPTP subsidy covers 50% of the cost Uber trips taken by eligible members, up to \$60. The subsidy is available on all rides products except for Uber Pool.

If you are an existing MPTP member, enroll to use the subsidy on the Uber platform at www.uber.com

SBS EASY ENGLISH DAILY NEWS

If you're looking for news in an Easy English format, SBS creates a daily five minute audio news wrap for English learners and people with disability. You can also download and listen through the SBS mobile app.

Find them at www.sbs.com.au/news/podcastcollection/sbs-news-easy-english

Seasonal health information

FLU VACCINATIONS

Vaccination against the flu remains important this year. The flu is a highly contagious viral infection that can cause illness. Behaviors such as increased hand washing, mask wearing when appropriate and social distancing can help to stop the spread of germs. Flu vaccinations are recommended for anyone six months and over.

Those eligible for free flu vaccines include:

- Children aged 6 months to 5 years
- All aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged six months and over
- People aged 6 months and over with certain medical conditions that increase their chance of severe influenza and its complications
- Pregnant women (at any stage during pregnancy)
- People aged 65 years and over

If you are not eligible for a free flu vaccine, you can purchase the vaccine from your GP, a pharmacy, or another immunisation provider.

It is recommended that you wait 14 days between receiving your flu vaccination and your COVID-19 vaccination.



IMPORTANT DATES AND OFFICE CLOSURES

Important dates

Refugee Week

20 - 26 June, 2021

MND (Motor Neurone Disease) Global Day

Monday 21 June, 2021

June Solstice

Monday 21 June, 2021

This is the shortest day of the year. It also means that from June 22 the days will start to get longer.

NAIDOC Week

4 - 11 July, 2021

National Blood Donor Week

12 - 18 July, 2021

Jeans for Genes Day

Thursday 5 August, 2021

Brain Injury Awareness Week

15 - 21 August, 2021

Public holidays

Amicus offices will be closed on the following public holidays. If you require support for these days, please contact the office prior to the day to ensure you have everything you need.

Queens Birthday

Monday 14 June, 2021

Winter community events

Please check your local restrictions for updates to events

MARY QUANT: FASHION REVOLUTIONARY

20 March - 11 July, 2021

Bendigo Art Gallery's newest exhibition explores the years between 1955 and 1975, when Mary Quant revolutionised the high street, harnessing the youthful spirit of the sixties and new mass production techniques to create a new look for women. This will be a fun exhibition full of colour!

Location: Bendigo Art Gallery

Price: \$25 Adult, \$22 Concession, \$12 under 16, Free for children under five

www.bendigoregion.com.au/bendigo-art-gallery



LYTTLE EAT STREET LAUNCH

Date to be announced

Lyttle Eat Street is Bendigo's newest food neighbourhood and they're teaming up to serve delicious wintery goodness.

Pop in for music, demonstrations, deals and special menu items. There will be flame-grilled goodness, Asian street food, smokey flavours, special menus and 'try before you buy' tastings. Find out how to make amazing winter dishes at home.

Location: Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo

Price: Free entry, individual shops will have own prices

www.bendigoregion.com.au



FIRST NATIONS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR MARKET

Friday - Sunday, 2021 (4th weekend of each month)

An indoor market weekend featuring music performances, stalls from First Nations and artists of colour, activities, demonstrations and more. Check Cultural Exchange at Bendigo Beehive for performance times.

Location: Cultural Exchange at the Bendigo Beehive

Price: Gold coin donation on entry

www.mav.org.au/bendigo-cultural-exchange



AWAKEN | BENDIGO BROUGHT TO LIGHT

26 June to 17 July, 2021

Every night over the period of 26 June - 17 July, Bendigo's beautiful Rosalind Park will transform with a series of vibrant installations that engage and immerse visitors in an unforgettable sensory experience.

Each installation captures Bendigo's stories of the city and its rich history, through a radiant display of light, colour and sound in a spectacular fashion. Journey through Rosalind Park, starting at the Rosalind Park Piazza where you will be captivated by the illuminated Acknowledgement of Country, a beacon of light that represents the traditional custodians of the land, the Dja Dja Wurrung People.

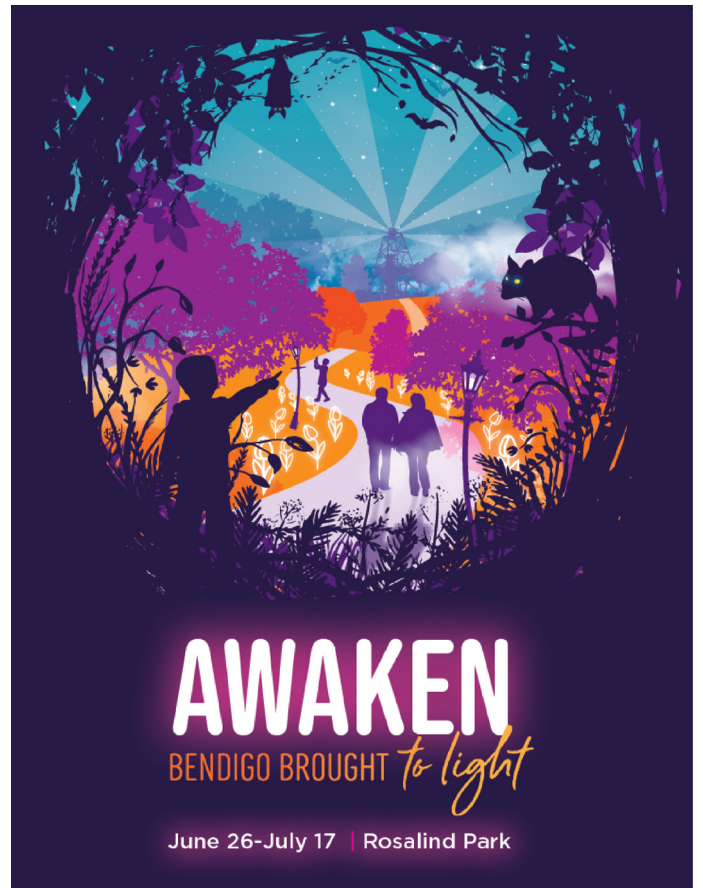
Continuing into the park, you will find illuminated representations of all things Bendigo, including our Horticultural heritage, Chinese heritage, vibrant art history, famous tulips, and even a 'River of Gold'.

At each 14 key light shows, you will be invited to read about the magnificent light displays and the story behind how they relate to Bendigo.

Location: Rosalind Park, Bendigo

Price: Free

www.bendigoregion.com.au



AUSTRALIAN SHEEP AND WOOL SHOW

16 July to 18 July, 2021

For three days in July, Bendigo becomes the epicenter of woollen fashion, fine food and beautiful fibre. The Sheep Show features the 'best of best' sheep breeders, shearers and wool handlers in the country.

You can watch shearing and wool handling competitors battle it out for top prize and speak to sheepdog trainers, watch sheepdog trials and meet farmyard animals in our animal nursery.

More than 5000 farmers, the best fleeces in the country and 28 different breeds of sheep, goats and alpacas make their way to Bendigo each year for the Sheep Show. Come and join us.



Location: Bendigo Showgrounds

Price: Single day, three day passes and parking tickets available

www.sheepshow.com