



A MESSAGE from Brighton Mayor, Tony Foster

ON behalf of Council, I recently hosted a reception to recognise the many volunteers who give up their time to help others in the Municipality.

I'm sure we all know of many people who volunteer to make the lives of others around them easier and better, and as a community we would be lost without them.

Certainly, we are all aware of the impact the pandemic has had over the past 10 months and this brings the importance of volunteering into sharper focus. Never before, perhaps with the exception of the Great Depression and wartime, have the contributions of volunteers been more valuable to Brighton, Tasmania and indeed all of Australia.

The Brighton Municipality is at the forefront when it comes to volunteering. Countless numbers of people and local organisations contribute thousands of hours each year to assist fellow citizens and the community. Increasing numbers of volunteers are doing more and more to help others.

Volunteering changes lives. Through volunteering, people from all walks of life, with all abilities, can build new skills, networks, and a sense of purpose and fulfilment. It is proven to have a positive effect on mental and physical health, as well as being a potential pathway to employment.

Volunteering has long been a driver of individual and community well-being. Not only does it contribute significant economic value, but volunteering also provides enormous social, cultural and recreational benefits.

From a statewide perspective, more than 300,000 volunteers in Tasmania contribute more than seven million hours every year and this was valued at some \$4 billion in economic benefit to the State. Although the economic value is enormous, it is the human connection, compassion and care that volunteers bring to their tasks that sets them apart.

It is this that helps build the resilience in our communities.

In our municipality, it's organisations like Jordan River Service Inc, and events like the Community Christmas Party, Neighbourhood House week projects, the Christmas Parade, the Spring Food Festival, barbecues and numerous other fundraising events such as the Melbourne Cup luncheons, that do much to lift our community. There are also the Pensioners' Club, the Home Cooking Program, the local SES and Fire Brigades, and our many community and sporting clubs such as PCYC, that rely extensively on volunteers.

There are also the many unsung volunteers, people who may just do some shopping, gardening or cleaning for a neighbour, or drive someone to a medical appointment, or groups that clean up rubbish in our public areas. All these people are making a valuable contribution to our society.

We are indeed very fortunate to have so many wonderful people and organisations in our community helping to make our municipality an even better place to live, work and enjoy.

It is my great privilege to thank them all, on behalf of the Brighton Council and everyone in our community.

Tony Foster AM OAM JP
Mayor