STAYING CONNECTED PROGRAM

SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO ARE 65+



For older people living in the Mornington Peninsula community, our social support volunteer program Staying Connected matches and coordinates volunteers who provide you with one-to-one social support.

Our volunteers may provide home visiting, social outings or social support activities, and of course, a little fun, laughter and companionship along the way!

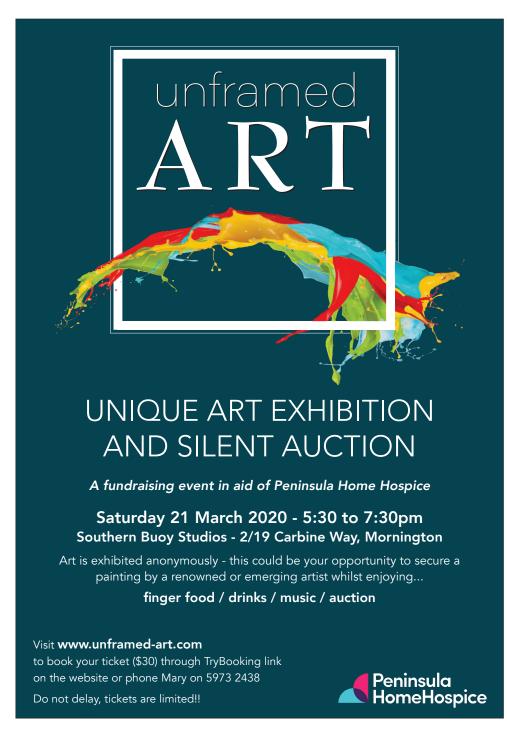
For more information, please





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NEWS DESK



Rallying for Centrelink

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"There is an ongoing commitment to agent services in Mornington over future years for as long as the Mornington community utilise the service."

Mr Davis-Meehan said moving from 160 people a day to something that might be manageable over 15 hours a week would be a "poison chalice for any organisation taking it on".

"My concern is that the demand will be so unmanageable that it will just cause grief for the organisation and the public in trying to cope," he said.

Services Australia general manager Hank Jongen said the change was in response to a "significant reduction in customers visiting the service centre".

"We regularly review our face-to-face services

to ensure service delivery is sufficient to meet community needs," Mr Jongen said.

"What we're seeing is people increasingly using different channels to connect with the agency and access services, with the availability and convenience of mobile apps and online facilities.

"Customers from the Mornington area can continue to access the Frankston and Rosebud service centres."

Cr Hearn said increased foot traffic at other Centrelink sites would increase congestion and queue waiting times. "The shire was not advised or consulted on this matter, nor was the local community, and the intended closure date gives very little time for service users to make other arrangements," he said.

Peninsula misses out as Frankston gets transport 'priority'

EXANDING public transport in Frankston has been listed as a "priority initiative" by Infrastructure Australia.

Infrastructure Australia's latest priority list shows that "optimising the existing bus network, increasing bus service frequency and coverage," and "upgrades to rail services and infrastructure" are seen as ways of improving Frankston.

The list includes 150 "priority" or "high priority" projects and initiatives throughout Australia.

Committee for Greater Frankston CEO Ginevra Hosking described Frankston's inclusion as "fantastic news and proof that solving the region's lack of public transport is a state and nationally important project, one that's vital to unleash the potential of our region".

"Our submission detailed how the rail extension would become the backbone of a revitalised transport system to benefit 400,000 residents, a population comparable to Canberra's," she said.

However, Committee for Mornington Peninsula president and former Dunkley MP Bruce Billson said Infrastructure Australia needed to "lift its gaze beyond the east of Frankston in relation to transport requirements to consider the needs of the Mornington Peninsula".

"Our region has the lowest access to public transport facilities within metropolitan Mel-

bourne, and this raises the question again about whether policy makers and transport planners even consider the Mornington Peninsula to be part of the metropolitan Melbourne", Mr Billson said. "This impacts our community by inhibiting access to educational services, jobs and visitor connections to the region."

A proposal to extend the Frankston rail line to Baxter had been the subject of a business case, which was handed to the federal government in October last year.

The federal government has promised \$225 million towards the project, while the state government has not announced a financial contribution

In April 2019, Frankston Council and Mornington Peninsula Shire expressed joint support for a staged extension of the Frankston line to Hastings

Frankston mayor Cr Sandra Mayer said on Friday that "the need for electrified rail services beyond Frankston is strengthening" as population increased across the south east Melbourne and the peninsula.

Frankston Council has called on the federal government to release the rail electrification business case, completed in late-2019 by the Victorian government.

Brodie Cowburn

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