

LAUNCHING EVENT — CASTLEMAINE FREE UNIVERSITY

WHAT? — Hear and engage with Nikki Marshall, Patrick Jones and Councillor Jen Bray on [Community Voice](#), which started in 2020 to promote participatory democracy in Hepburn Springs Shire. They will talk about their experiences, vision and achievements. An idea for Mount Alexander Shire? Come along and participate in the Q&A.

WHO? — Among a plethora of other activities, Nikki Marshall edits the monthly [Localising Leanganook](#) newsletter, [Patrick Jones](#) and his family are pioneering 'neo-peasant' lifestyles locally, and [Jen Bray](#) has just become one of the two new councillors for Birch Ward in Hepburn Springs.

WHERE? — [Northern Arts Hotel](#), 359 Barker Street, Castlemaine, 3450

WHEN? — 7pm–9pm Monday 1 March 2021

FREE — but gold coin donation for tea, water or coffee.

TOPIC

Community Voice was initiated by a group of concerned residents in May 2020, who wished to bring about democratic renewal across Hepburn Shire, in the lead up to the local government elections. A majority of Community Voice independent candidates, committed to active democracy, were elected in October 2020. Community Voice's current focus includes: notifying residents about what's going on in council; encouraging effective participation in the democratic process; and communicating values, wishes and concerns expressed by our communities to inform and guide council's direction.

SPEAKERS

Nikki Marshall has worked for many years towards system change. Living on Dja Dja Wurrung country for the past 10 years, she advocates ways of living that are regenerative, within the earth's limits, and that draw on our collective and creative capacity to respond to the complex challenges we face.

Patrick Jones is a subsistence-economy activist, poet, forester, community collaborator and goat herder who works within neighbourhood and community biomes to re-common land and build post-capital social and ecological relations in every aspect of life. He is a member of the performance group Artist as Family who perform everyday culture degrowth and neopeasant lifeways in southern Djaara Peoples' Country.

Jen Bray has been active in the Hepburn shire community for the past 15 years working with children and youth in the performing arts, running festivals and events, providing Outdoor Ed activities for families, and advocating for Climate Action and local issues. She has recently been elected to Hepburn Shire Council on a platform of listening to, and acting for the community.

Castlemaine Free University — <https://anitranelson.info/cfu>