

15/12/2020



A force for all cyclists

Advocacy group 'Mount Alexander Cycling' has formed as a collaborative force for all cyclists.

Late last month, in the bike-decorated gardens of The Hub Plot, a new bike advocacy group launched.

Mount Alexander Cycling has representatives from most, if not all, of the cycling-related groups in this region.

Each group has signed up an agreement to work together to improve conditions, awareness and support for cyclists of all bikes and styles of riding.

Penny Gilbert of CycleSafe said relationships had formed between the groups that had already proved to be supportive, encouraging and practical.

"And we have set the foundation for a future policy and information document that can be used to influence regional policy to make cycling safer and more accessible to more people," she said.

Inclusive of Castlemaine Cycling Club, Mount Alexander E-bikes, Newstead Walks and Wheels, The Maldon Classic, Rocky Riders, Castlemaine - Maryborough Rail Trail and CycleSafe Mount Alexander, they feel that they represent just about everyone with a bike.

Also at the launch was new councillor Rosie Annear and long-

time bike rider and climate change fighter Neil Barrett.

Ms Annear spoke to the group about her personal fear of bike riding since a fall on a year 10 trip, resulting in her crying in front of the boy she liked. The humiliation transpired to Rosie giving up bike riding for good.

She spoke about her dad, whose mental health seemed to be declining after retiring and how cycling had helped him recover and is now his whole reason for living.

Inspired by her dad's enthusiasm and having two small children, Rosie has now found a new love for cycling and sees the importance of improving the awareness of bike riders and the facilities available in our shire to allow more people to ride more often, with more safety.

Peter Strang of The Maldon Classic said there were many different ways in which people rode bikes in this shire.

"Future developments need the eyes, ears and wheels of people who ride, and ride in all sorts of ways," he said. "Mount Alexander Cycling is here for the long haul to make sure this happens."