

A recovery approach – drawing out the strengths within the community

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The South West Complex fires left our community overcome and unsure how to move forward. The Corangamite Shire Fire Recovery Team have worked through a community led and case management recovery process to bring out our community strengths and provide linkages to support services.

Our community is connected, supportive, humble and resourceful. How did we draw on these strengths? Knowing the community, respecting their systems, supporting and encouraging them to help each other, building strong networks to the support services and simplifying bureaucratic processes across the government agencies involved in this recovery.

We plan to present a 10-minute video of our community members experience and present the recovery process we have implemented, alongside the challenges and solutions we implemented. The recovery has focused on the directly impacted residents from across the three fires, Camperdown, Terang-Cobden and Garvoc which commenced on March 17 2018 and continued for 53 days until the final peat fires at Cobrico and Lake Elingamite were declared safe on Tuesday 8 May. The impacts included more than 10,000 hectares burnt, killing 2000 head of livestock and destroying 25 homes, 61 sheds, extensive fencing and feed. The recovery also comprises the struggles presented by the small businesses of these townships and the complications of the peat fires around the lakes. The council team of four have actively worked with a base of 180 cases.

We feel this recovery has been a success, while we continue to learn and evolve throughout the recovery process, we believe we have some key messages to share with the sector as the sector explores the next phase of recovery within the before, during and after framework.