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# KerangLink is a cherry on top

**JENNY DENTON**  
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MEMBER for Mallee Anne Webster was in Kerang and Cohuna on a short "mobile office" tour of the region last week.

The visit came two days after the announcement of a major campaigning success for Dr Webster, who together with the Gannawarra Shire Council and Murray River Group of Councils, has been advocating for a Victoria-New South Wales electricity interconnector to run through the Kerang area.

On Tuesday she described the announcement that KerangLink would go ahead as "just fantastic news for Mallee", with the project set to create 2000 jobs and "put Mallee on the map as a national leader in renewable energy".

"We've got such a benefit to all

our flat plains and our sunshine," she said.

Dr Webster said 23 solar farm projects with planning permits that had stalled due to uncertainty could now go ahead in the Mallee electorate.

"Now that this piece of news has come through, those investors will have the confidence to be able to go through with those 23 projects.

"So it's very exciting. It really is very, very exciting."

Details on KerangLink are not yet available but the Mildura-based member already has her sights set on another major initiative – a hydrogen hub for her electorate.

Hydrogen, a flexible energy source, has been hailed around the world as a green energy solution.

As the Australian Government

looks to develop an export industry in the energy, its agency National Energy Resources Australia (NERA) is backing the creation of a network of "hydrogen technology clusters" around the country.

"We are working with RDA (Regional Development Australia) on the hydrogen roadmap that has now been put out, and that's a really positive next step," Dr Webster said.

"I'm keen to see that Mallee is in the forefront of the minister's eyes with regard to hydrogen development."

Dr Webster didn't leave Kerang empty handed after spending an hour discussing a range of issues with constituents.

One local rushed home for a box of Mincha-grown cherries for the federal member.



A local resident gave Anne Webster a box of Mincha-grown cherries when she stopped in Kerang for a "mobile office" visit last Tuesday.  
**Picture: JENNY DENTON**

## Bright move for the town

**JENNY DENTON**  
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A NEW dance floor that doubles as a games board is now installed and ready for action in Atkinson Park, Kerang.

Shire-owned chess pieces are available on loan from the town's swimming pool and Kerang Progress Association is considering buying a draughts set and pieces for other games.

Progress association secretary Jacquie Hibbert said the idea was to cater to anyone who wanted to take advantage of the games.

"It's for anyone holding a function in the park, people on Kerang market days, at Show & Shine and anyone else who wants to do something in the park," she said.

Ms Hibbert said the association had taken its initial idea for the multi-functional item to Gannawarra Shire Council and received fantastic support.

"They were very, very

helpful," she said. "In particular Mr Roberts, who accessed funding for it."

The funding came through the shire from the second stage of the Drought Communities Program Extension.

The dance floor slab, which was laid last month, was topped with a chequered surface last week.

Ms Hibbert, who earned a gold medal in ballroom dancing in years gone by, is these days more focused on chess and hopes to be able to share a game with her Melbourne-based daughter and granddaughter now restrictions have lifted.

Also due to be installed in Atkinson Park in coming weeks are several 15-amp power outlets for food trucks and other uses.

While New Year's Eve celebrations might not go ahead there this year, the park is bound to be pumping for the next big event.



Investigators were on scene on November 21, after an overnight break-in at Kerang Optical.  
**Picture: ANDREW PALOCZI**

## Police seek eyewitnesses

**ANDREW PALOCZI**  
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KERANG police arrested a 19-year-old local man in relation to a burglary and theft at the town's optical store.


The alleged offender was remanded into custody.

Swan Hill investigators probed the crime scene at Kerang Optical on November 21 after the shopfront was broken into the previous night.

Entry was forced through the store's front door at an unknown time, with electronic equipment and prescription glasses later reported missing.

"If anyone in the community has seen anything suspicious in the Kerang CBD or if they've heard anything on the grapevine, please let us know," Sergeant Andrew Neil said.

People with information are encouraged to contact Kerang police directly or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.




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