Taking Care of Business
Mel Bye, owner of Treat It Naturally in Corryong, knew that if she wanted to stay in business, she needed to move forward. "I had lots of ideas in my head, but I never put them out there" she said.
Mel began meeting with Chris Westwood who works for the Australian Industry Group to deliver the Federal Government’s Entrepreneurs’ Program, Strengthening Business.
The program was set up to respond to communities affected by the bushfires with Chris based at the Upper Murray Community Recovery Hub in Corryong.
"I spend time with businesses, discuss where they are at and where they’ve come from. I determine their aspirations and focus and set up a roadmap, or business plan - anything from improving your marketing and social media presence to increasing the size of your production" said Chris.
Mel was able to talk to Chris about social media and technology skills she felt were letting her down. "I feel I can do this now, with his support."
If you would like to talk to Chris about your business, call 0401 266 960 or email chris.westwood@ep.industry.gov.au.

Upskilling: Mel Bye from Treat it Naturally, with Chris Westwood from Australian Industry Group (AIG). Image taken prior to Stage 3 restrictions and mandatory masks.

Recovery and the road ahead
A virtual community forum next week will talk about ongoing bushfire recovery with Psychologist, Dr Rob Gordon, hosted by the Australian Red Cross and Mentors Australia. Issues Dr Rob will talk about include:
• Impact of bushfires on individuals and the community over the next 6 -12 months
• The effects of trauma, loss, stress and disruption to decision making
• Compounding impacts of COVID-19

Community Facility Grants
The Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities are now available to support community groups to build, upgrade or repair important local facilities.
Examples of projects that could be funded through the community facilities grants include upgrades to kitchens or bathrooms at local halls, repairs to fix damage, or new facilities such as playgrounds, community gardens and small pavilions. For more information go to www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-grants-community-facilities or call the Recovery team.

Rebuilding help at hand
Council and BRV are providing a free, rebuild support service to the owners of fire-damaged property, including help with planning and building approvals. Contact the Recovery team on 1800 518 222 or email recovery@towong.vic.gov.au.