

Heidi Victoria MP

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Aquanation set to make a big splash

Ringwood's new state-of-the-art swimming and diving complex Aquanation is one-step closer to reality with the turning of the first sod on-site last week.

Bayswater District MP Heidi Victoria joined state colleague and Sports Minister Hugh Delahunty, Maroondah Council mayor Nora Lamont and federal Labor MPs to officially open works on the \$47.8 million project.

Aquanation is expected to open in Spring 2015 and will be the new State Diving Centre, and a regional aquatic and leisure centre set to benefit the health and wellbeing of more than 1 million people.

Ms Victoria said it was fantastic to see this project come to fruition given the extent of community support.

"After lots of consultation with the community and various groups, I went to the Sports Minister telling him what a worthwhile project this is and how it will benefit future generations.

Ms Victoria said it was wonderful to see three levels of government coming together to fund one common goal.

She said the Victorian government contributed \$3 million as part of the *Community Facility Funding Program*.

The balance of the funds came from Maroondah City Council, the Federal Government, the Ringwood East & Heathmont Community Bank and Connect East.

Aquanation will include a new indoor FINA standard 50 metre pool and 10 metre diving tower, the state's first dry diving training centre, warm water and learn to swim pools, club rooms, gymnasium, creche and spectator seating.

Mr Delahunty said the state-of-the-art aquatic facilities would be capable of hosting regional and state athletes as well as major competitions in water sports.

“People of all ages will have more options to get more active more often, learn important water safety skills, exercise, enjoy water therapy and just have fun,” he said.

Once open, Aquanation will be home to Diving Victoria, Ringwood Diving Club, Ringwood Water Polo club and Ringwood Swimming Club.

Swimming Australia also intends to establish a permanent presence as the centre.

Construction will create more than 290 full time jobs and once it opens, Aquanation will employ more than 145 people.

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