

## **Banking closures**

Dear Secretariat,

I have recently been impacted by the recent closure of my local Westpac branch in Newcomb, Geelong.

It now means I have to travel into the city if I wasn't to do my banking, which I usually never go into.

It was a lovely branch. The staff were always friendly and helpful. It had convenient free parking right at its doorstep unlike the city.

I feel for the elderly customers, that now have to travel to access their pensions!

The manager was fantastic, and I know it hit all the staff hard as to their future of where they could possibly be transferred to.

One staff member had already been transferred from another branch that had closed.

I am currently in the process of applying for a loan, and now have to do everything via phone and e-mail, rather than face to face.

It is frustratingly hard trying to e-mail millions of personal documents rather than just handing them in to the staff at branch level.

In particular, trying to talk over the phone to people who don't know you like at branch level.

The bank sent a letter saying that the closure was due to Covid and less foot traffic as internet banking is preferred.

I think this is a cop out. You cannot have a conversation with your computer, or bank cash into it.

The bank are simply cutting costs to increase their profit margin.

Just after the closure, Westpac had an advertisement airing on TV saying how they are there for their customers. What a hoot.

We have also lost a Commonwealth branch in the local area. It needs to stop.

Yours faithfully,

Maxine Gotts