

SUNBURY

Support needed to save the relay

Barry Kennedy

ORGANISERS behind the Sunbury Relay for Life event say the community has five weeks to save it.

Held since 2011 at Boardman Reserve, the fundraiser for the Cancer Council of Victoria is one of dozens held in Victoria annually.

But relays elsewhere have been shelved when community interest has sagged and the committee is convinced unless there is an upsurge in interest the same fate awaits Sunbury's event.

Last week just seven teams and 24 walkers were registered for the November 12/13 event with about \$1800 so far raised.

Committee president Lorraine Spencer said at least \$5000 was needed to cover costs which included paying for lighting and other logistics.

In 2015, 17 teams with 131 participants raised \$23,194 in a rain-marred event. In 2012 and 2013, about \$80,000 was raised.

Ms Spencer said at least some of the interest lost could be attributed to the town's busy events schedule which includes SunFest, the



Sunbury Relay for Life organisers Nicole Duckworth, Kristy Hermelin, Lorraine Spencer, Deb Brown and Jenna Coghill are urging locals to get behind them to help raise funds for cancer research.

Picture: KYLIE ELSE

Sunbury Show and Sunbury Streetlife. All are successful and require volunteer and sponsorship interest.

"Sunbury has so many events which is of course a good thing and people get a chance to follow their passions, but we think this event deserves a place on the calendar," she said.

Ms Spencer and three other committee members have spent several weeks visiting schools, businesses and other events to spread the message.

They have also written to sporting and service clubs to come on board.

At a Sunbury Business Association event earlier

this month, Ms Spencer appealed to those present to get on board.

Sunbury Community Health Centre is one organisation which will go purple in September to help raise awareness for the event, but what the committee really needed was participants.

"We want mums and dads

and families and loved ones coming down and walking both to commemorate and acknowledge the journey or cancer and to come together as a community," Ms Spencer said.

More committee members are also needed.

Details: 1300 656 585 or 0439 740 464.