



MORWELL GOLF CLUB

# STRATEGIC PLAN

---

May 2021



GippSport Community Solutions  
(03) 5176 3020 | [gippsportcs.com.au](http://gippsportcs.com.au)



## Acknowledgments

The Morwell Golf Club acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government in the development of this strategic plan through the Sport and Recreation Sporting Club Grants Program.



The Morwell Golf Club committee would like to thank GippSport Community Solutions who coordinated the strategic planning process and members who have supported this project.

We also acknowledge the staff at Latrobe City Council, Golf Australia and other important stakeholders for providing background information and support for this planning project.



## Introduction

Morwell Golf Club is one of Latrobe Valley's finest golf courses, with undulating fairways in a quiet pocket of land, along with birdlife and the occasional kangaroo. The course is well presented, yet demanding with Par 72 layouts for Blue, White and Red tees, featuring magnificent greens, generous fairways, bunkers and water hazards. Morwell is a major town of Latrobe City, a 1:45 hour drive East of Melbourne along the Princes Highway and has a current population of 14,026.

The community golf club has around 250 members and is operated by a dedicated group of volunteers with support from a paid course superintendent and some part-time house staff.

The facilities are in good condition and the club is striving to improve membership and sustainability in a rural setting. In person engagement with club members during this planning project has been challenging during COVID, however the member survey and committee workshops have informed this important plan.

Known as the friendly club, Morwell is working to attract and welcome new members to increase diversity. The ability of the club to raise capital to improve facilities will continue to be a challenge, so a realistic plan for course and club development has been developed, however investment is needed.

The club's vision is

**“At Morwell Golf Club we provide inclusive and friendly golf opportunities to the Latrobe Valley”.**



## About the Morwell Golf Club

The land in which the Morwell Golf Club is located was donated and is now club owned. Our 6079 metre (Men's), 5283 metre (Ladies') 18-hole championship course requires plenty of accuracy on the approach shots and provides a challenging experience for golfers of all standards

There is a fully licensed clubhouse, with a friendly atmosphere. Green fee players and Group bookings are welcome.

Morwell Golf Club is part of the West Gippsland region which comprises the following clubs:

- Warragul Country Club
- Drouin Country Club
- Traralgon Golf Club
- Trafalgar Golf Club
- Churchill/ Monash Golf Club
- Mirboo North Golf Club
- Yallourn Golf Club
- Moe Golf Club
- Garfield Golf Club
- Pakenham Golf Club

There are opportunities to play pennant and tournaments as part of this local Association.





## Club Operations

The club operates the following schedule of events throughout 12 months of the year:

| Monday                                 | Tuesday | Wednesday          | Thursday               | Friday                     | Saturday                 | Sunday                                    |
|--|---------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Latrobe Valley Open Medley Competition |         | Ladies Competition | Chicken Run- 9/ 6 hole | Ladies – 9 hole social day | Men's/Ladies Competition | Men's Pennant (summer)<br><br>Club events |

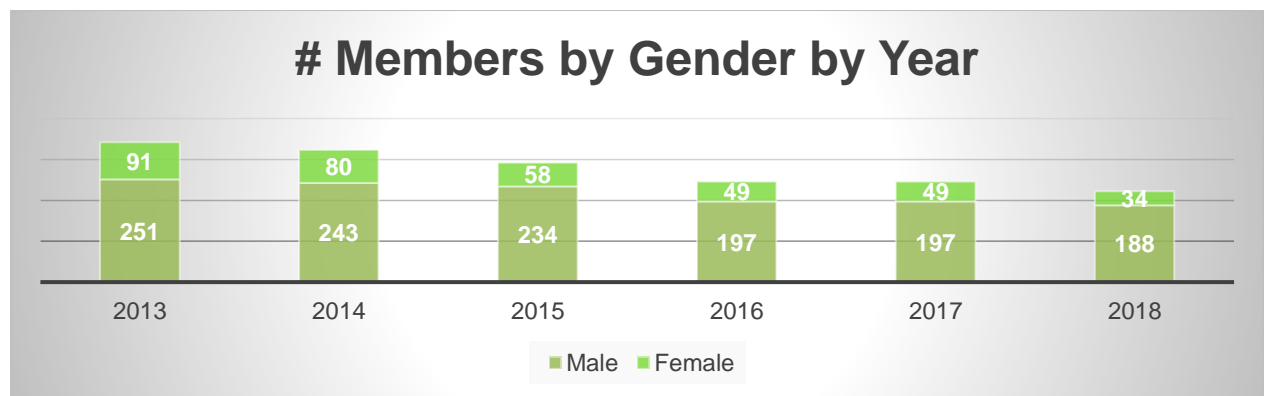
## Club Membership Numbers

The member breakdown of the last 9 years is included below:

|                          | 2014       | 2015       | 2016       | 2017       | 2018       | 2019       | 2020       |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Country Member 50-1001ks | 1          | 2          | 2          | 2          | 2          | 1          | 1          |
| Country Member 100k +    | 18         | 18         | 15         | 9          | 9          | 5          | 5          |
| Honorary Playing         | 4          | 1          | 1          | 1          | 1          | 1          | 2          |
| Junior Under 18          | 5          | 2          | 2          | 1          | 1          | 3          | 0          |
| Junior Under 23          | 3          | 7          | 6          | 4          | 4          | 3          | 8          |
| Life Member              | 4          | 4          | 4          | 5          | 5          | 5          | 5          |
| Nine Hole                | 0          | 0          | 0          | 11         | 11         | 10         | 10         |
| Non Playing              | 6          | 1          | 3          | 4          | 4          | 2          | 2          |
| Ordinary                 | 96         | 81         | 86         | 87         | 87         | 91         | 103        |
| Senior                   | 65         | 73         | 72         | 56         | 56         | 43         | 55         |
| Social                   | 54         | 55         | 27         | 16         | 16         | 7          | 12         |
| Social Staff             | 5          | 2          | 2          | 2          | 2          | 2          | 0          |
| Sponsor - General        | 9          | 12         | 17         | 14         | 14         | 16         | 5          |
| Sponsor - Hole           | 10         | 14         | 14         | 11         | 11         | 12         | 5          |
| Spouse                   | 7          | 1          | 1          | 2          | 2          | 1          | 2          |
| Summer                   | 2          | 0          | 1          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 1          |
| Veteran                  | 53         | 49         | 39         | 21         | 21         | 20         | 0          |
| Winter                   | 0          | 1          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>342</b> | <b>323</b> | <b>292</b> | <b>246</b> | <b>246</b> | <b>222</b> | <b>216</b> |



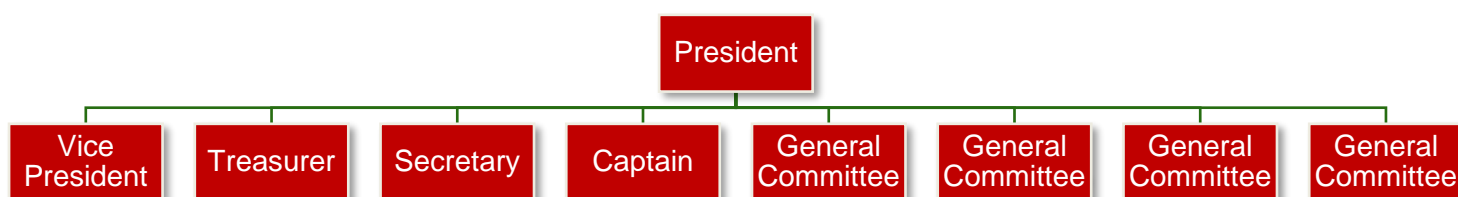
Gender equality is a priority of the club however the number of women golfers has been declining.





## Organisational structure

The club is an Incorporated Association affiliated with Golf Australia and the volunteer structure is as follows:



### Proposed Sub Committees

1. Facilities Sub Committee – Effective management of the Bar, House, car park and security at the club.
2. Course Sub Committee – Course and garden planning maintenance in conjunction with the Greens Keeper.
3. Women's Sub Committee – responsible for the development of women's golf at the club.
4. Match n Play Sub Committee - Captain plus 2 men and 2 women who manage the operations of the competition.
5. Financial & Risk Management Sub Committee – led by the Club Treasurer and roles include: budget, risk register, policy development and sponsorship.
6. Golf Development Sub Committee - will utilise the Strategic Plan to seek grants, develop programs and seek new opportunities.
7. Member Engagement Sub Committee – will focus on ensuring a positive club culture, membership growth and retention, and club communication.

### Proposed Appointed Roles

- Membership Officer
- Member Protection Information Officer including Child Safe Officer

In addition to the volunteer roles, currently there is a full-time Course Superintendent and part-time staff who work in the club house.



## Consultation Findings

The development of this strategic plan would not have been possible without the extensive input of the committee and members. The detailed survey results can be found in the appendix and several committee workshops were held work through the SWOT analysis.

### • Strengths

- Club owned facilities
- Challenging and well-presented course
- Dedicated and experienced committee
- Social media following increasing
- Hard working grounds team
- Female representation on committee
- Increasing population in Latrobe Valley as a regional town
- Course availability for members

### • Weaknesses

- Limited golf program opportunities
- Complex issues being faced by a small volunteer committee/ roles
- Financial constraints and management
- Outdoor facilities for social functions
- Limited paid staff resource/ reliance on volunteers
- Ageing and declining membership numbers
- Committee succession planning
- Lack of formal plans i.e. course master plan and detailed budgets
- Limited numbers of women playing in competitions

### • Opportunities

- Get Into Golf - Golf Australia
- Possible opportunities for partnerships with other golf clubs
- Clear priorities for facility development/future plans with supporting documentation
- Modified programs/events/formats
- Improved marketing & promotion
- Grants/funding to support facility development

### • Threats

- Declining golf participation may impact sustainability
- Major investment needed if facilities deteriorate
- Financial capacity of community
- Staff or experienced board members leaving club or no new volunteers
- Competition from other clubs, operating similar programs or events
- Future difficulty in accessing club professional or coach to run beginner programs





## Golf Australia

Golf Australia is the governing body for golf in Australia.

Their goal is to raise the level of interest and participation in the game from grassroots golfers through to the elite levels, spectators, volunteers and associated industry bodies.

**Purpose** - "To inspire more people to play more golf".

**Vision** - "Golf is a game for life where participation contributes to a healthy Australian community".





## Strategic Plan

### Vision:

**“At Morwell Golf Club we provide inclusive and friendly golf opportunities to the Latrobe Valley”.**

### Values:

Morwell Golf Club will strive to achieve its vision by:

- ✓ we are welcoming to all and working towards increasing the range of people who play at our club;
- ✓ we are leaders, ensuring good governance and we value and respect our volunteers, members and visitors through a code of conduct;
- ✓ we offer a range of ways to play golf and engage with the club, in line with current trends;
- ✓ our services are affordable and sustainable;
- ✓ the facilities are well maintained and we are planning for the future; and
- ✓ strong partnership with Golf Australia and other local stakeholders and supporters is a priority.

## Implementation Plan

Following is a series of objectives that have been developed in line with Morwell Golf Club's proposed sub-committee structure to be implemented over the coming five years.

Actions have been given a priority ranking scale using Very High, High, Medium or Low. In some instances, ongoing has been allocated as these tasks are required on a regular basis.



**1. Facilities Sub Committee - Effective management of the Bar, House, car park and security at the club.**

|     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1.1 | Review the condition of the club house facility and plan likely future maintenance work that will be required. Priorities include the toilets, car park and outdoor social area. This might require external technical advice. | Medium    |
| 1.2 | Operate the Bar in accordance with liquor licencing requirements. Train volunteers and staff to maximise opportunities and reduce any risks to the club.   | Very High |
| 1.3 | Apply for grants that will assist the club to reduce the amount of water and electricity to ensure responsible use of resources.   | High      |
| 1.4 | Present and maintain the club facilities in the best condition for club functions and activities. Seek to hire out facilities to other groups or organisations if demand was identified.                                       | High      |





## 2. Course Sub Committee – Course and garden planning maintenance in conjunction with the greens keeper.

|     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 2.1 | Develop a course improvement master plan with justification and planned expenditure, including cart paths. This might require external technical advice.   | Very High |
| 2.2 | Consider how the club could improve practice facilities.   | Medium    |
| 2.3 | Provide regular training opportunities to staff and greens course volunteers and/or seek external advice where needed to ensure industry best practices are used to maintain the course within the budget available.   | High      |
| 2.4 | Partner with local community organisations or stakeholders who are experts in environmental management to ensure club practices enhance the natural environment and meet legislative requirements. Determine if they have opportunities to support projects at the club. | Medium    |
| 2.5 | Look to form a garden's group or partner with a like-minded organisation to assist with course presentation and undertake regular garden maintenance.  | Medium    |



**3. Women's Sub Committee- responsible for the development of women's golf at the club.**

|     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 3.1 | Review all club documentation/policies to ensure that it represents the club's gender equality culture and values.                            | Medium    |
| 3.2 | Ensure that the women's subcommittee operates as part of the main Golf Club board following the update of the constitution.                   | Very High |
| 3.3 | Consider the re-naming of some or create new events and awards to create an equitable opportunity for women to participate and be recognised. | High      |





**4. Match n Play Sub Committee- Captain plus 2 men and 2 women who manage the operations of the competition.**

|     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 4.1 | Monitor current trends in Golf to redefine competition structures so that they match expectations as well as cater for the members' preferences. | Medium    |
| 4.2 | Review competition structures to ensure everyone feels welcome and has an opportunity to play. Prizes are distributed in line with field sizes.  | Very High |
| 4.3 | Consider how the course and competitions are structured to make the game easier for new players.   | High      |
| 4.4 | Implement electronic systems when available for scoring, timesheets, bookings etc.   | High      |

**5. Financial & Risk Management Sub Committee – led by the Club Treasurer and roles include: budget, risk register, policy development and sponsorship.**

|     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 5.1 | Ongoing education of the members about the club's financial position so that they can support future strategies to improve financial performance.  | Very High |
| 5.2 | Ensure all significant expenditure is matched with a detailed business proposal.   | High      |
| 5.3 | Develop role and responsibility statements for paid staff and volunteers to ensure that their workload is clear, realistic and achievable and aligned to the club's strategic plan. Review their | Very High |



|      |   |                   |
|------|---|-------------------|
|      | performance against these statements annually especially for the paid roles.  |                   |
| 5.4  | Recognise and value the contribution of all staff and volunteers. Consider the appointment of a volunteer coordinator to monitor and support all work completed by volunteers.                        | High              |
| 5.5  | Develop a succession plan to replace staff / board members for leave breaks or on retirement.   | Very High         |
| 5.6  | Benchmark all fees i.e. membership, green, bar prices against similar clubs, increase with CPI and develop diverse income streams to maximise revenue in line with what it costs to operate the club. | Very High         |
| 5.7  | Monitor industry and Council policy, programs, procedures, strategies and plans that provide opportunities for Morwell Golf Club and implement where possible to strengthen club operations.          | Ongoing as needed |
| 5.8  | Update the sponsorship package and create new ways to better recognise and service sponsors.  | High              |
| 5.9  | Investigate cloud based software for filing and record keeping to ensure contract monitoring, outstanding invoices, orders and up to date financial reporting.  | Medium            |
| 5.10 | Plan for the replacement of all club equipment valued over \$1,000 using an asset register.   | Medium            |
| 5.11 | Develop and monitor a 12 month and 5-year budget as well as a risk register that includes financial triggers. Recognising that the clubs financial position requires careful management.              | Very High         |



**6. Golf Development Sub Committee- will utilise the Strategic Plan to seek grants, develop programs and seek new opportunities.**

|     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 6.1 | Partner with golf professionals, Golf Australia, Gippsport, program providers or other clubs to deliver a broad range of golf offerings to suit the local need. Utilise these partnerships to apply for grants to introduce new programs. | Very High |
| 6.2 | Develop and promote membership options that encourage partners, locals to support the club, reciprocal rights with other local clubs, social members or a multi visit pass/ voucher system  | High      |
| 6.3 | Further enhance social functions at the club to assist with member connection and fundraising.  | Medium    |
| 6.4 | Develop a coaching/ mentoring structure to enhance the club in district and intra-club events. This could encompass a sponsored coaching program that is financially supported by the club to increase opportunities.                     | Medium    |
| 6.5 | Look to partner with local accommodation providers to develop a stay and play package or other promotional opportunities.   | Medium    |







**7- Member Engagement Sub Committee – will focus on ensuring positive club culture, membership growth and retention, and club communication.**

|     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 7.1 | Clarify the new members process and welcoming procedure. Ensure it is simple and involves the broader membership to foster the “friendly club”.   | Very High |
| 7.2 | Ensure that the club promotional materials, club house and information are easy to read and reflect a broad demographic.  | High      |
| 7.3 | Continue to try new strategies to welcome community members to visit the club as a destination, not just for golf. This could be through facility hire, alternative programs or events. Then, try and introduce these new visitors to try golf. | Medium    |
| 7.4 | Complete regular updates to the website and ongoing use of social media platforms to promote the club and facilities.   | Very High |
| 7.5 | Continue to communicate to all members and stakeholders, especially good news stories and board meeting updates via a succinct newsletter.  | High      |
| 7.6 | Continue to recognise and celebrate the club's history in ways that the club continues to grow and change over time.  | Low       |
| 7.7 | Communicate the club's vision so that members have realistic expectations about how the club can be managed and developed in the future.  | Very High |
| 7.8 | Utilise the Strategic Plan to make future decisions and measure performance annually. Formally update the plan after 5 years.   | High      |



### Success at Morwell Golf Club will look like:

- ✓ Members feel connected and notice that the club is friendly.
- ✓ There will be diverse group of members and players visiting the course, some who have only recently joined.
- ✓ There will be sound policies and practices in place, implemented by a well-run committee.
- ✓ Volunteers will feel valued and the workload is spread across a broad group of people in a range of roles.
- ✓ Many partners will support the club: Council, GippSport, Golf Australia, schools, other clubs and sponsors.
- ✓ Facilities and course will be well maintained.
- ✓ The club is financially sustainable.





## Appendix

### 1. Summarised Survey Results

### 2. Supporting information

#### Methodology

The following key steps were completed during the development of this Strategic Plan:

- A start up meeting was conducted with Morwell Golf Club Committee in June 2020.
- Research, consultation and an industry review were completed.
- A site inspection was conducted.
- Consultation including numerous meetings were held with club members, Latrobe City Council, Golf Australia and other key stakeholders to discuss the project and identify key issues and opportunities.
- A draft Strategic Plan was provided to the committee for input.
- The final Strategic Plan will be adopted.

This project was undertaken during a unique time where the community was impacted by COVID 19.

#### Morwell Golf Club History

The club has a long and proud history where the land was donated and then developed by the hard work of members in the 1970's.



***Bryan Moore working on the course in 1973.***



***Gerries and Gerriettes***



***Dorothy Rejmer, Shirley Wells, Judy Brownbill, Pat Keenan***

The club has always had a strong presence with women golfers and committee.



***Ladies committee 1970***



## Demographics

Latrobe City (map) is recognised as one of Victoria's four major regional centres along with Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. Located 150 kilometres east of Melbourne, our city is made up of four central towns; Churchill, Moe/Newborough, Morwell and Traralgon; and smaller rural townships of Boolarra, Glengarry, Toongabbie, Tyers, Traralgon South, Yallourn North and Yinnar. It is spread over 1,422 square kilometres.

With a population of over 75,000 people, Latrobe City is Victoria's only eastern regional city. The City is the residential and commercial hub of a larger catchment of 262,000 people stretching across the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland region. Latrobe Valley is one of the most liveable regions in Victoria, known for its high quality-health, education and community services.

Morwell is a major town of Latrobe City and has a population of approximately 14,026 people. It is an ageing population with a low social economic profile.





## Disclaimer of liability

The information contained in this report is intended for the specific use of the key stakeholders that have provided input into this planning project. All recommendations by GippSport are based on information provided by or on behalf of the committee, Golf Australia and Latrobe City Council and it has relied upon such information being correct at the time this report has been prepared.

Readers should note this report might include implicit projections about the future, which by their nature, are uncertain and cannot be relied upon. They are dependent on potential events or technical assessments, which have not yet occurred.

## References

The following references have been used in the development of this report:

- Government websites – Planning scheme data and maps, grant information.
- Latrobe Council website and relevant planning documents.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics – Population data.
- Other Recreation studies and strategies as identified in the document.