



# WARRNAMBOOL GOLF CLUB

Strategic Plan  
2024-26

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Strategic Plan outlines the club's priorities to build its capability and a culture of financial rigour, to support its long-term sustainability following a period of considerable development and growth.

This approach will enable the Club to remain in control of its operations, for the benefit of its members and the long-term financial sustainability of Warrnambool Golf Club.

The detailed priorities and proposed activities are contained within the Business Plan and Investment Logic Mapping contained in this document.



## AREAS OF FOCUS

### Financial stability:

Following an exceptional period of development, and the resulting growth, it is the Committee of Management's priority to implement a plan and operations that are focused on debt reduction and a rebuild of the Club's financial reserves.

This approach has been put in place prior to adoption of this strategic plan, and is likely to remain a key consideration and determining factor in most decisions made over the next two to three years – even beyond.

### Future Development:

The Club's conservative financial plan for the next three years need not mean that progress at the Club halts; in fact, this would be counter-intuitive to all that has been achieved in the past two years, with the Club redevelopment finally delivering WGC a modern, progressive environment in which to operate.

That said, major capital developments outside necessary maintenance and upgrades will not be prioritised in the short term future.

The Committee of Management is mindful of land access contracts and water supply infrastructure that must be finalised; implementing plans to deliver on these two areas of risk will be a priority of this strategic plan period.

### Membership growth:

The recent Clubroom development has already generated positive membership growth, and current management has also identified other opportunities to foster further strategic growth in coming years, particularly in identified areas of priority, including female and youth participation.

Again, the effort to capitalise on these opportunities will be executed within the financial and human resources at-hand over the strategic plan period.

# ABOUT WARRNAMBOOL GOLF CLUB

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Founded in 1926, the Warrnambool Golf Club is an 18-hole, par 72 course built upon a tertiary dune system nestled in the western dunes of the City of Warrnambool.

It is the municipality's only golf club, attracting 46.7k visitor rounds between April 2023 and May 2024. The course location, layout, ocean vista, playing conditions and club amenities provide a high-quality playing experience.

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It is a relaxed country club, with more than 1000 members, representing membership growth of 20% since 2019. The Club is governed by a Committee of seven, with four sub-committees, has a full-time General Manager and approximately 11 EFT staff, including a General Manager, an Operations Manager, an administration officer and bar staff working inside the clubrooms, and a Course Superintendent and three full time groundskeepers.

While its dune-based course remains the backbone of the Club, WGC's newly-opened social facility is its heartbeat.

Constructed during 2023 at a cost of \$7.5 million, the redeveloped showpiece was locally-designed and built, featuring a large function space, a fully operational and commercial café and bar facilities, an expansive retail/pro shop and community meeting rooms. This project was funded via the Federal Government's Building Better Region's Fund (\$2m), the Warrnambool Golf Club (\$3.5m) and club-led fundraising (\$2m).

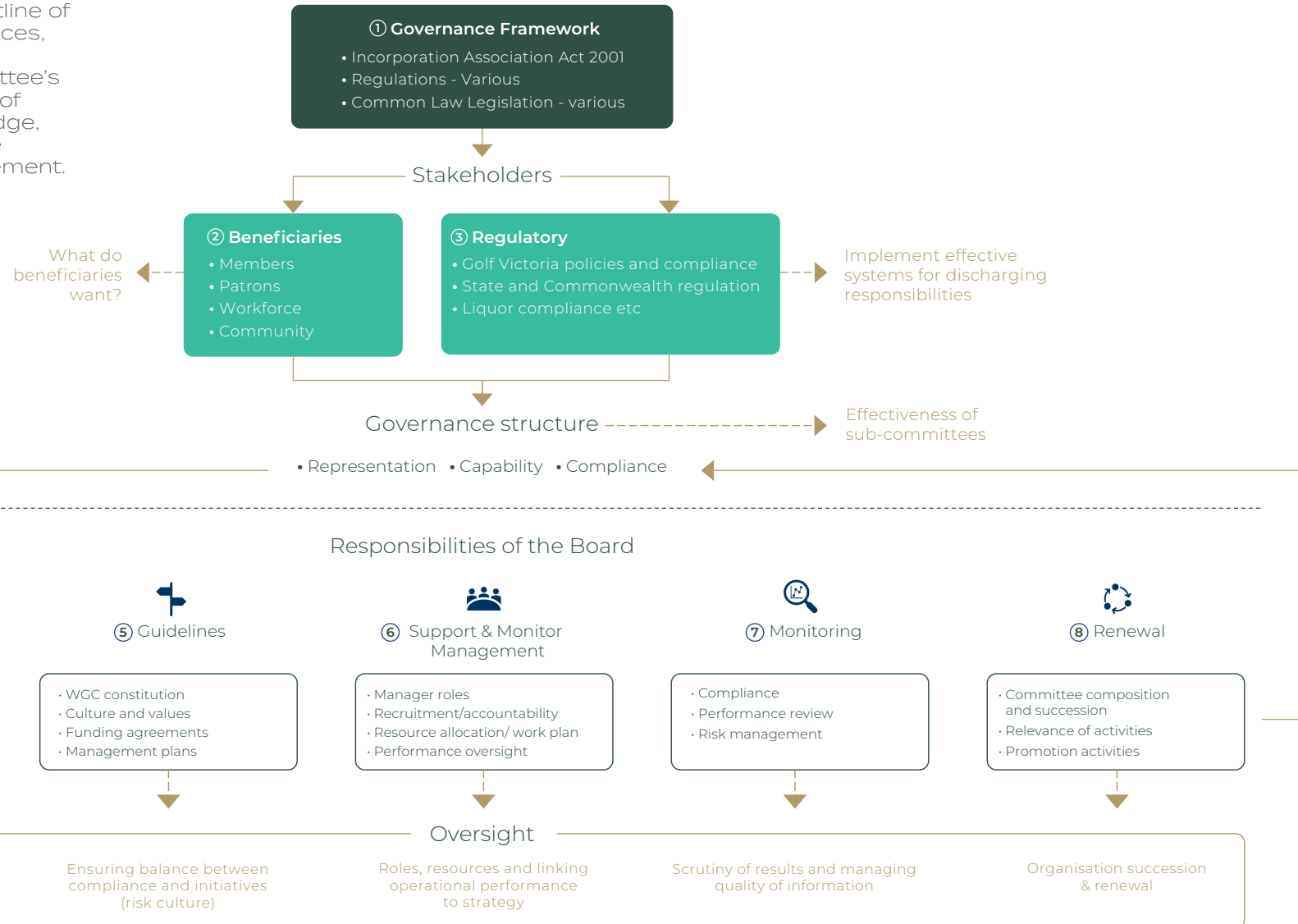
Following the redevelopment of its clubroom, WGC's activity has increased three-fold across the board, tripling its income, expenses, wages and staff workload.

Today, with its once-in-a-lifetime capital works project complete, the Club's challenge is to effectively manage an organisation – and assets – that are significantly different to what operated even 12 months ago, whilst preserving financial sustainability, paying off debt, continuing to meet and exceed members' expectations and simultaneously growing the membership base in a way that is both strategic and sustainable.



# CLUB GOVERNANCE

This framework provides an outline of Director and Management practices, and is designed to guide the Warrnambool Golf Club Committee's knowledge and understanding of its own responsibilities, knowledge, attributes and skills, and inspire encourage continuous improvement.





# FUTURE DIRECTION BEYOND 2024

## VISION & MISSION

Warrnambool Golf Club is a challenging signature course, designed for enjoyment by our diverse membership, and providing all visitors with a quality coastal golfing experience.

## OBJECTIVES

**1** SUSTAIN INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

**2** INCREASE BROADER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN OUR CLUB

**3** OPERATE HIGH STANDARDS OF CLUB MANAGEMENT

**4** DEVELOP CLUB FACILITIES AND AMENITIES FOR OUR MEMBERS, THE WIDER COMMUNITY AND THE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY OF WGC

## ENABLING PLANS

FINANCIAL PLAN

ANNUAL MARKETING PLAN

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 and beyond

# STRATEGIC ROADMAP TO 2026



SCORECARD PILLAR	Focus areas for a better club	Objective	Actions FY24-25 <i>Adapting and consolidating</i>	Actions FY25-26 <i>Building sustainability</i>
Financial Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be financially sustainable</li> <li>• Repay debt</li> <li>• Plan future investment</li> <li>• Rebuild reserves</li> </ul>	<i>Sustain independent financial security</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement debt repayment plan</li> <li>• Develop new budget based on increased activity and off-course activities to build revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop funding strategy to rebuild reserve</li> </ul>
Markets & Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club Marketing Plan</li> <li>• Membership &amp; participation growth</li> <li>• Build &amp; enhance connection to and engagement with peak bodies and community groups</li> <li>• Establish off-course venue offerings and attractions</li> </ul>	<i>Increase broader engagement in our Club</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise &amp; adopt Club value proposition</li> <li>• Develop marketing strategy, plan &amp; budget, based on new offering &amp; VP</li> <li>• Develop targeted visitor attraction packages to build revenue</li> <li>• Commence developing interclub partnerships (eg: Pt Fairy, Timboon, Framlingham, Cobden, Camperdown)</li> <li>• Develop strategies to engage identified growth areas (women, juniors)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop &amp; implement community engagement plan</li> <li>• Implement golf tourism initiatives</li> <li>• Roll out interclub partnerships with other south west clubs</li> </ul>
Club Management Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective governance &amp; management structure</li> <li>• Maintain strong administration and management systems</li> </ul>	<i>Operate high standards of Club Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- risk register</li> <li>- succession plan</li> <li>- skills matrix</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Complete business plan for 2024-25</li> <li>• Renewal program for volunteer management &amp; CoM members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce Governance training schedule for CoM &amp; GM</li> </ul>
Develop Facilities & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit course enhancement plan, to ensure aligned with strategy, investment opportunities &amp; business plan</li> <li>• Build and maintain human resource capacity??</li> </ul>	<i>Develop Club facilities &amp; amenities for our members &amp; the wider community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit relationship/negotiations with WCC &amp; WW re: on-course water supply</li> <li>• Develop five year plan for course enhancement, including finance / funding needs &amp; opportunities</li> <li>• Review staff structure, including appointment of marketing / promotion resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop business case &amp; ILM for irrigation system replacement / upgrade</li> <li>• Resolve uncertainties re: on-course water supply</li> <li>• Negotiate extended lease with DEECA</li> <li>• Resume course enhancement plan</li> </ul>

# BUSINESS PLAN 2024-2026



Financial	Activity	Priority	Responsibility
To sustain independent financial security	Implement debt repayment plan, to ensure Club can at least meet, if not exceed, repayment targets in first two years post-opening	High (1st part of 2024)	Club Manager & Treasurer
	Reconfigure annual operational budgets to accommodate increased & varied activity post-development (eg: increased wages, extra workload)	High (2nd part of 2024)	Club Manager, Treasurer & Committee
	Develop five year funding plan and sources of capital finance required longer-term to contribute to future maintenance of the course	Medium (Early 2025)	Club Manager, Treasurer & Committee
Participation	Activity	Priority	Responsibility
To increase broader engagement in our Club	Decide and ratify a club value proposition that defines the overall offering of WGC to all stakeholders	High (2nd part of 2024)	Committee & Club Manager
	Develop marketing strategy, plan & budget based on increased promotion and outside-club relationships, and engagement of identified growth areas (women & juniors)	High (2nd part of 2024)	Club Manager
	Meet with Great Ocean Road Tourism and/or other relevant marketing bodies, to commence developing Golf Tourism opportunities, with WGC at the heart	High (2nd part of 2024)	Club Manager/ Marketing resource
	Develop a plan to generate interclub partnerships with a view to creating a golfing 'trail' or offering that extends into SW region (eg: Pt Fairy, Timboon, Framlingham, Cobden, Camperdown)	Medium (Early 2025)	Club Manager/ Marketing resource
	Create a community engagement plan, identifying how WGC can and will undertake community engagement, to ensure Club is, and is seen to be, a true community asset	High (2024)	Club Manager, Committee



# BUSINESS PLAN 2024-2026



Management	Activity	Priority	Responsibility
<p><b>To operate high standards of Club Management &amp; Governance</b></p>	Review staff structure to ensure new workload in new environment can be managed effectively. This includes considering appointment of marketing/promotion resource to implement Club's ongoing marketing & promotion needs	<b>High</b> (2nd part of 2024)	Club Manager & Committee
	Develop a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- risk register</li> <li>- succession plan</li> <li>- skills matrix</li> </ul>	<b>High</b> (2nd part of 2024)	Club Manager & Committee
	Complete business plan for 2024-25	<b>High</b> (Mid-late 2024)	Club Manager & Committee
	Develop a renewal program for CoM and Sub Committee members, to manage and facilitate CoM succession.	2025	Committee, led by Chair
	Develop a renewal program for volunteer management, to ensure ongoing management of Club's volunteer resources and potential to grow volunteer involvement off back of club's increased activity	Early 2025	General Manager, Committee, Sub Committee Chairs
	Introduce Governance training schedule for GM & COM (starting with Club Chair as priority)	Mid-late 2025	General Manager & Committee



# BUSINESS PLAN 2024-2026



Development	Activity	Priority	Responsibility
<p><b>To develop Club facilities &amp; amenities for our members and the wider community</b></p>	Revisit relationship/negotiations with WCC & WW re: on-course water supply, to ensure discussions re-commence now that club redevelopment has taken place	<b>High</b> (2nd part of 2024)	General Manager & Chair
	Review and re-design a five year plan for course enhancement, including finance/funding needs & opportunities for future maintenance.	<b>High</b> (2nd part of 2024)	General Manager & Committee
	Develop business case & ILM for irrigation system replacement/upgrade	Mid-late 2025	General Manager & Committee
	Formalise the arrangements regarding the on-course water supply, in consultation with Warrnambool City Council, Wannon Water & Proviso.	Mid-late 2025	General Manager
	Negotiate extended lease with DEECA to ensure current land use can be maintained.	Mid-late 2025	General Manager
	Resume course enhancement plan, in line with revised financial forecasts & funding opportunities	Early 2026	General Manager & Committee



# SUPPORTING PLANS

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This strategic plan update is designed to help the club continue to build long-term sustainability.

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This will be primarily be achieved by maintaining high levels of performance, alongside and financial pragmatism to re-build the Club's financial reserves, capitalise on the opportunity to develop additional sources of revenue and continue to generate on-course income.

It is important the Club builds on its newly completed infrastructure to generate sustainable off-course income. Any additional income on infrastructure in the short term must be supported by a business case to justify the expenditure that may be required.

The Strategic Plan allows a suitable period of time to enable the activity it recommends to be undertaken; this is taking into consideration movement of employees, committee members, the political climate on all levels (local, state and federal) and the Club's success engaging with its growing base of stakeholders.

The supporting plans on the following pages are suggested ideas and methods to undertake some of the the work necessary to achieve the Club's strategic goals from 2024-2026.





# SUPPORTING PLANS – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LOGIC MAP



**NEEDS (WHAT)**      **BENEFITS (WHY)**      **PROPOSED SOLUTION (HOW)**

	Problem	Benefits sought	Potential Interventions	Assets needed
<b>MARKET OFFER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ageing member base</li> <li>• Access to accommodation for out-of-town patrons</li> <li>• Financial viability of on-course events</li> <li>• Member/public awareness of Club position/value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable membership</li> <li>• Wider exposure of Club outside region</li> <li>• Commercial viability</li> <li>• Better understanding of club offering/'premium' point of difference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young member offer</li> <li>• Establish packages with nearby tourism providers</li> <li>• Develop clear guidelines for events/functions</li> <li>• Promotion of club benefits &amp; point of difference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young member package</li> <li>• Transport options?</li> <li>• MOU/Contractual arrangement or relationship with accommodation providers</li> <li>• On-site functions manager</li> <li>• Functions &amp; events strategy</li> <li>• Strategic marketing &amp; communications plan, incorporating identified channels of communication to members &amp; non-members</li> <li>• Marketing collateral suite</li> </ul>
<b>FACILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation system deteriorating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned and gradual upgrade of system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staged system upgrade plan, including staged costings</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mervue Fund empty</li> <li>• Debt repayment plan priority over investment</li> <li>• Government/private investment necessary for irrigation infrastructure upgrades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore financial legacy for future club development</li> <li>• Sustainable debt repayment plan over short term</li> <li>• Outside investment to ensure failing infrastructure is replaced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term financial plan</li> <li>• Investment by Government/outside partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial plan</li> <li>• ILM &amp; Business Plan</li> </ul>
<b>RISK EXPOSURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year to year licence agreement with DEECA</li> <li>• Lack of formal agreement with WCC &amp; WW re: on-course water supply</li> <li>• Delivering on the club's pre-development promise to deliver a true 'Community Asset'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certainty of land access beyond 12 months</li> <li>• Certainty of water supply</li> <li>• Greater awareness, use &amp; appreciation of WGC facilities amongst Warrnambool Community</li> <li>• Wider exposure of club beyond membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue as is (year to year)</li> <li>• Investigate long-term options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison of current/other options</li> <li>• Water supply agreement</li> <li>• Community engagement plan</li> <li>• Service benchmarks (eg: minimum qty functions)</li> </ul>

# SUPPORTING PLANS - MARKETING SUMMARY

The Club's marketing plan is developed under the direction of the General Manager. Any support from sporting peak bodies is limited, and is generally outside the body's remit or commitment. However, support can be leveraged through local and regional tourism bodies.

The WGC needs to develop an annual marketing plan to support the agreed strategy, member participation and club activities.

The Marketing Plan should not replicate the business plan, but instead highlight the important initiatives the WGC can implement, including any development initiatives, to support greater visitor and community engagement and participation of club members.

The marketing plan should seek to integrate club activities with wider regional and industry objectives including:

- Reposition the club and its facilities in the minds of the wider public as a premium venue and experience
- Build genuine community engagement to foster wider community ownership of the Clubrooms and increase patronage
- Promote the quality, vibrancy and wellbeing benefits of participation in golf and other social activities, and community-based volunteerism
- Promote Club events and achievements at both a regional and local level

Specifically the WGC should build a marketing strategy that aims to better utilise the club's newly developed major asset, its Clubrooms, by both members and non-members. This will improve club profitability and support its commitment to invest in long term sustainability of this asset for the community and its members.

It will also align with golf and regional tourism industry objectives.

This summary highlights ideas generated from the committee engagement and stakeholder consultation sessions. This input to be considered in drafting future marketing plans, and includes the following:

## WE SEEK TO LEVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES

### Golf

- Growth in membership
- Expanded golf program particularly focused on women & young golfers
- Initiate events to increase patronage

### Region

- Leverage Regional Tourism market
- Enhanced dining and function experience
- Attract visitors through a modern offering that also benefits the City and region through extended stays

### Club

- Utilise available space for the club,
- Hosting community, corporate events, eg:
  - Fundraising events
  - Strategic corporate activities
  - Sports Club Presentation Nights (Footy/Netball Season & Cricket Season)

### Ideas

- Community friendly environment
- Attracting other user groups to utilise space
- Build suitability as an outdoor venue with natural amphitheatre effect
- Offer services to nearby new mountain bike trail (future)
- Support Golfing Tourism with onsite accommodation (future)
- Courtesy bus (future subject to demand)

## IN 5 YEARS WE WANT TO BE

- Recognised for supporting a variety of activities, providing a vibrant destination club
- Showcasing improved meeting space and facilities, that support members and community groups
- A valued employer of local people
- A strong supporter of Community and events
- A destination for Golf visitation
- A venue of choice for events and functions, including private events (eg: weddings) and corporate functions

## WE WANT TO BE KNOWN FOR

- A welcoming and relaxed environment, with the core reason for patrons' support being social, dining and entertainment activities
- Supporting community health & wellbeing
- Strong governance
- Modern facilities and layout
- Good staff and service
- Offering to provide its facilities for community groups
- Supporting the City and region by capturing the domestic tourism market through greater visibility
- Offering greater opportunities for use of our new facilities
- Attracting more willing volunteers, in particular younger demographic
- Innovative events such as annual member dinners with member benefits discounted

# SUGGESTED MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT DIRECTION 2024-26

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## Social media activity

- Channels (FB, Instagram)
- Month-to-month schedule

## Clubroom / function promotion

- Wedding expo
- Dedicated website
  - Photography
  - Seating arrangement/function packages
  - Dining options
  - Testimonials
- Familie for local sporting clubs/community groups
- Support packages for other local sporting clubs or community groups

## Membership engagement

- Communication (eg: Newsletter, increased social media activity, in-club communication)
- Member-specific events, campaigns or initiatives
- Recognition of milestones/achievements, etc
- In-facility notices/information

## Community engagement

- Community engagement plan

## Tourism promotion

- GORT/WCC involvement

