

Master Plan 2024 – 2034



Ballarat Pony Club

BACKGROUND REPORT



The Ballarat Pony Club extends its heartfelt appreciation to the City of Ballarat for their generous support through the Community Impact Grant Program (CIGP). This invaluable assistance has enabled us to undertake the research, development, and production of our comprehensive 2024-34 Master Plan. This plan, consisting of a succinct summary document complemented by an in-depth background document, has been made possible through the funding provided by the City of Ballarat.

The Master Plan holds significant importance for the future trajectory of the Ballarat Pony Club, serving as a strategic blueprint for our growth and development in the coming years. It is through initiatives like the CIGP that community organizations like ours are empowered to realize our vision and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of our community.

Once again, we express our sincere gratitude to the City of Ballarat for their unwavering support and commitment to fostering community capacity and cohesion. Their investment in our endeavors will undoubtedly yield lasting benefits for our club and the wider community we serve.



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Members and families of the Ballarat Pony Club are welcome to capture photographs during rallies and club events. These images may be disseminated across various platforms including our newsletter, website, closed Facebook group, PCV magazine, or other publications. However, it's important to note that full names will never accompany these photos in public domains to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The images featured in our publications are contributed by users and members who have not opted to withhold any of their captured moments as part of their membership agreement.

The Master Plan

The Master Plan provides a direction for the future improvement and development of the Ballarat Pony Club (BPC), an introduction of accessibility for all abilities and improvements to ageing infrastructure. This is to meet the increasing usage and demand, maintain safety standards and provide optimal opportunities to all equestrian users in the region.

This Master Plan has been developed to provide immediate and long-term actions for the BPC and partners to implement.

The BPC has ageing, poorly maintained infrastructure in their club rooms, limited accessibility to only four toilets, no showers, a very basic kitchen and limited undercover areas. The grounds are prone to flooding with limited sealed (gravel access) roadways within the site.

BPC have fundraised, maintained, and built the current facility to what it is today and are now looking for outside support to assist with their growth, the safety for current and future members, and to herald the internationally recognised Ballarat sporting facility as one that is modern, functional and accessible.

BPC personnel have generously provided their own time to ensure this plan reflects the majority of its members and considers the opinions and suggestions of those involved in the activities offered.

The BPC was fortunate and grateful to receive funding through a grant from the Ballarat City Council through the Community Impact Fund to update this Master Plan.

This Master Plan was developed in consultation with representatives of Ballarat City Council and the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and the BPC committee.

Ballarat Pony Club

The Ballarat Pony Club (BPC) is approximately 43 acres and located in the southern section of Victoria Park, Ballarat. The BPC has been at this site since 1956.

The BPC has two licences with the Ballarat City Council, due to expire in 2025.

As at 2023 BPC has 56 riding members (age 4- 25) with no cap on membership and newcomers are welcome. Membership demographics encompass the broader Ballarat region reaching as far as Maryborough, Ballan, Beaufort, Skipton, Smythesdale, Meredith, and Mt Mercer.

In addition, approximately 1500 private users access the grounds for individual training and instruction.

The Friends of Ballarat Eventing Association (FOBEA) is an affiliate organisation and collaborates with BPC on event management, infrastructure, maintenance, and improvements, jointly raising funds to cover these items. FOBEA's membership consists of 50 people, the majority having a previous connection with the BPC (ex-committee members, previous riders, family of riders, instructors, judges).

These two main user groups work closely together to maintain, improve, and cater to all equine activities, competitions, clinics, and casual users at the precinct.

A Committee of Management oversees the running of the BPC.

The BPC relies heavily on volunteers, with 930 volunteers helping in 2023.

Across all events in 2023, the BPC attracted 3741 riders and close to 7000 family members and supporters.

Participation 2023

Event Name	Participating Riders	Number of Horses on site	Family Members & Supporters	Number of Volunteers
BPC Rally (11 rallies)	540 (~ 45 per rally)	600 (50 per rally)	90	10
BPC Horse Trials	250	300	1000	200
FEI Horse Trials	130	150	500	100
FOBEA Horse Trials	300	~400	1500	200
FOBEA Clinics (2 per year)	200	250	300	50
FOBEA Hunter Trials	200	230	400	50
BPC Clinics (4 per year)	400	500	1000	250
BPC Hunter Trials	100	130	250	25
BPC Freshmans Event	100	130	250	25
Squad Clinics (Schools, International Comp prep)	105	200	150	20
Casual Users of the Precinct	1416	2100	1500	NA
TOTALS	3741	4890	6940	930

There are 11 pony club rallies annually, held on the first Sunday of the month (except January when a PC Camp is held). Members ride in groups based on ability and age, and each group has three sessions per rally. Rallies offer instruction in dressage, show jumping, cross country, mounted games and horsemanship and we have guest speakers and demonstrations throughout the year. Rallies align with the Pony Club Victoria (PCV) Syllabus of Instruction (<https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/syllabus/>)

There are four major events conducted each year by the club, two of which are two days in duration. The annual horse trials, is the largest event, fundraiser, and competition for BPC. It is a two-day competitive event involving riding the cross country course, show jumping and dressage. It attracts more than 250 riders for the weekend and their supporters totalling 600 people, with visitors, the local community and local media also attending. In association with FOBEA there are an additional two major events (a three day and a two day) with similar attendees and interest from the community.

Participation 2023

There are also approximately five training weekends in the year as well as individuals using the facilities throughout the year. Some of the private users travel several hours to use the facilities and the club often attracts interstate pony club members or casual riders to train and or use the facilities. The BPC is a gateway through to other regions of Victoria with national travellers utilising the stop over training facilities, horse yards and facilities as part of their travel through to Melbourne and further.

Other users:

- BPC and FOBEA work closely with the local Ballarat Turf Club and the official Off The Track programs to rehabilitate post racing horses into equine events and facilities. BPC is also a recognised feeder group into the racing industry with many of the members seeking work within the stables of local race trainers.

FOBEA conducts the Horse Trials in May which runs National classes catering for less experienced horses and riders through to International classes for aspirational Olympic riders

This event attracts 450 horses from across the State and Interstate. It is the largest event held at

the venue and annually attracts funding to run educational seminars to train aspiring Olympic level officials. EV provides this funding from the International Competition Development Fund

It is a credit to the out door horse facilities available at the Ballarat equestrian precinct that FOBEA was the recipient of the Equestrian Victorian Award for the Best Horse Trials in the State for 2023.

- Skill Invest utilises the equine precinct for the delivery of their equine courses from vocational certificate (Certificate III in Equine Studies) through to degree qualifications for students from all over the Ballarat area and the region.
- The precinct also provides horse refuge for the City of Ballarat and surrounding areas on extreme and catastrophic fire risk days, including an evacuation point for the equine industry locally in Ballarat and the region.
- The BPC also host Sovereign Hill's horses in preparation for the Begonia Parade and intermittently the Victoria Police Mounted Branch for large events and security requirements.



Our Vision

During the creation of this Master Plan and after analysing the survey results, BPC have amended and updated their purpose, vision and values to reflect the modern club community and their members.

OUR Purpose

To provide a safe, kind, accessible space for equestrian riders.

OUR Vision

Bringing everyone along for the ride and caring for horses along the way.

OUR Values

Respect

We listen to you, value your contributions, choices and feelings.

Collaboration

We work together as a club, bringing together ideas, passion and expertise.

Community

We communicate widely and encourage our communities to be involved with our club from far and wide.

Inclusion

We are inclusive and welcoming, providing a safe program for everyone.

Safety

Ensuring at all times safety for the rider, supporter and horse is paramount.

What we do

- Provide opportunities for young riders to gain knowledge and become proficient in their chosen equestrian sport.
- Promote the physical, mental and spiritual development of young people by encouraging sportsmanship and participation.
- Provide children and young adults up to the age of 25 the opportunity to learn the skills of riding and general horsemanship and have the opportunity to compete at state, national and international events.
- We adhere to and promote the Code of Practice for the welfare of horses. www.equestrian.org.au/horse-welfare
- We volunteer. Volunteers are the heart of BPC and run every event, provide maintenance on the grounds, instruct, plan, fundraise and enable the club to exist. With our dedicated volunteers we are able to offer these exceptional riding opportunities for our young members.

Facilities and Ground Assets

The BPC is situated on the corner of Cedar and Winter streets, Ballarat. The City of Ballarat is the 'public land manager' for Victoria Park and this location. The area is roughly 43 acres.

The site is leased from the Ballarat City Council.

The BPC has international standard grounds, drawing horse enthusiasts and competitors from across Australia. Our ground assets include:

- Five permanent dressage arenas,
- A full internationally rated competition size cross country course,
- Two show jump arenas and a third fenced arena under construction,
- Round yard,
- 136 holding yards,
- Three wash bays and horse crush

The ageing club rooms contain a basic kitchen, four dual sex toilets (no disabled access) , a meeting room with office and store room.

There is a storage shed that contains all equipment and maintenance tools as well as a storage shipping container.



Fundraising and 'The Build' of Ballarat Pony Club

BPC has vigorously fundraised in its existence but most notably over the past 20 years to build and construct the ground assets we have today. In conjunction with FOBEA, our major partner and affiliate organisation, there has been nearly \$800,000 raised.

This has been raised from fundraising events, equine events, the casual user fees and rental of the grounds.

It is to be noted that our membership fees do not cover the BPC rally days, with members to pay insurances to both Pony Club Victoria and Pony Club Australia we receive just \$168 per member each year, with the total fee payable all inclusive of \$389 per member. We keep our fees as low as we can so all are able to ride and enjoy the grounds and our community. (We provide Get Active Kids vouchers to those eligible.) Therefore, we also subsidise the running of the club with fundraising dollars.

All funds have been raised with the generous time and commitment of the club's volunteers and supporters.

Ballarat Pony Club has received the following outside funding to assist with its development:

- 2012 City of Ballarat
\$10,000 towards surface for show jump arenas
- 2018 City of Ballarat
\$5,000 towards surface for dressage arenas
- 2021 Ballarat Connected Communities
\$2500 for show jump wings
- 2022 Buninyong Community Bank
\$250 volunteer vouchers
- 2023 City of Ballarat
\$8,800 BPC Master Plan development
- 2021 – 24 City of Ballarat
\$10,000 provide four grass slashing and mowing for the grounds per year.

BPC Grounds Asset	Description	Amount
Show jump arenas x 2	SJ 1 70m X 55m SJ2 70m X 50m Fully fenced with two entry points Surface to specific requirements Drainage	\$100,000
Dressage Arenas x 5	60 m X 20 m Single posts contain the area with synthetic chain enclosing each arena. Surface to specific requirements Drainage	\$150,000
Water Jump	An area of 40m ² Constructed to provide a bank with solid wooden edges. Multiple sized jumps into and out of the water area. Plantings to hold erosion and blend into the natural area. Drainage and water pipe access to main water. The jump is filled with a tap and costs \$400 each time we fill for a clinic/PC rally/event as it does not hold water and quickly evaporates.	\$25,000

Fundraising and 'The Build' of Ballarat Pony Club

BPC Grounds Asset	Description	Amount
Show jumping equipment - Jump For Joys	These are our 'good' eventing, pony club, clinic jumps. Stored away for these events or if we hire them out.	\$20,000
New jump wings	Two sets of jumps for both arenas. These are the everyday jumps, provided for casual users and are out in the weather for everyone to use. They continually need maintenance and upgrading, this is the purchase figure.	\$15,000
Cross country bank jump	A more recent addition to the far end of the course is a constructed bank or mound, adding a required element into the cross country course for events.	\$15,000
Cross country jumps	Our cross country course makes up the majority of our 43 acres and has more than 150 varied sizes and types of jump. The course encompasses all nine levels, and each has 18 jumps.	\$450,000
Grass arena	This is a purpose built area to use for warm up for the cross country events. Fully fenced with multiple gated entry and feeds out to the start of the course.	\$20,000
Grass Show jump competition treble combination	Specific jumps x 3 for international show jumping competitions.	\$30,000
UNDER CONSTRUCTION Show jump arena 3	70m x 30m This is a smaller arena for use as a warmup area for competitions. More specifically a small area to provide safe lessons for our very junior members who are typically on lead or learning to ride independently.	\$30,000
TOTAL	Fundraising for assets	\$778,000



Facility Review and Conditions

CLUB ROOMS - Built in the 1960s, this 15 sq building is the hub of the club, providing all administrative, catering/canteen, meetings, wet weather cover, storage of history, toilet facilities, storage for (canteen, cleaning, office supplies, event and program equipment, furniture), safety and first aid stations (including defibrillator). There is no access for visitors with a disability or mobility issues.

BASIC KITCHEN - Provides basic kitchen use, oven, fridges, bench tops, sinks and shelving. No dishwasher.

MEETING ROOM - Holds our history back to the 1960s with honour boards, a board table for theory lessons, chairs and space to hold most all of our members in a very tight location during the winter months for our rally meetings and lunch time.

OFFICE - Is used for all administration, uniform distribution and stock, awards, first aid area.

STORAGE ROOM - Storage for cleaning supplies (toilet paper, mops etc), canteen supplies (drinks, paper plates, cups etc), hardware for maintenance of the grounds (hammers, zip ties, paint)

TOILETS - We have four dual gender use, basic sinks, sanitary bins and hand towel dispensers. No disability access or showers.

STORAGE SHED - A double shed (18m x 6m) holds two purpose-built trailers with show jump equipment and games equipment. Also used to store hardware and tools, signage, dressage letters, wood fire pit, dressage chains, rakes and wheel barrows.

SHIPPING CONTAINER - Holds show jumping equipment.



Car park



Clubrooms



Kitchen



Meeting room



Storage sheds



toilets



Clubrooms (access)



Clubrooms



damage



Storeroom

Consultation and Engagement

COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

A sub-committee of the BPC was tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the development of this Master Plan. The committee was involved in survey design, providing input into the design of the plan and endorsing the recommendations. External meetings were held with the City of Ballarat and an affiliate organisation in Friends Of Ballarat Eventing Association (FOBEA) to further discuss the development of the plan.

SURVEYS

Surveys were sent to all members seeking their input into the BPC's future as well as non-members who regularly use the facility.

Not every suggestion or recommendation has been documented in this Master Plan. As with any voluntary organisation, there are limitations to resource availability, capability and commitment. This Master Plan offers a practical and actionable plan supported by the Committee at the time. The Master Plan should be treated as a live, work-in-progress document and updated regularly as circumstances change.

Two surveys were created to ensure members and users of the facility had the opportunity to provide input into the future direction of the BPC, feedback on the current facilities and have the opportunity to comment on any improvements that could be made on the structures and grounds of the BPC.



Member Survey

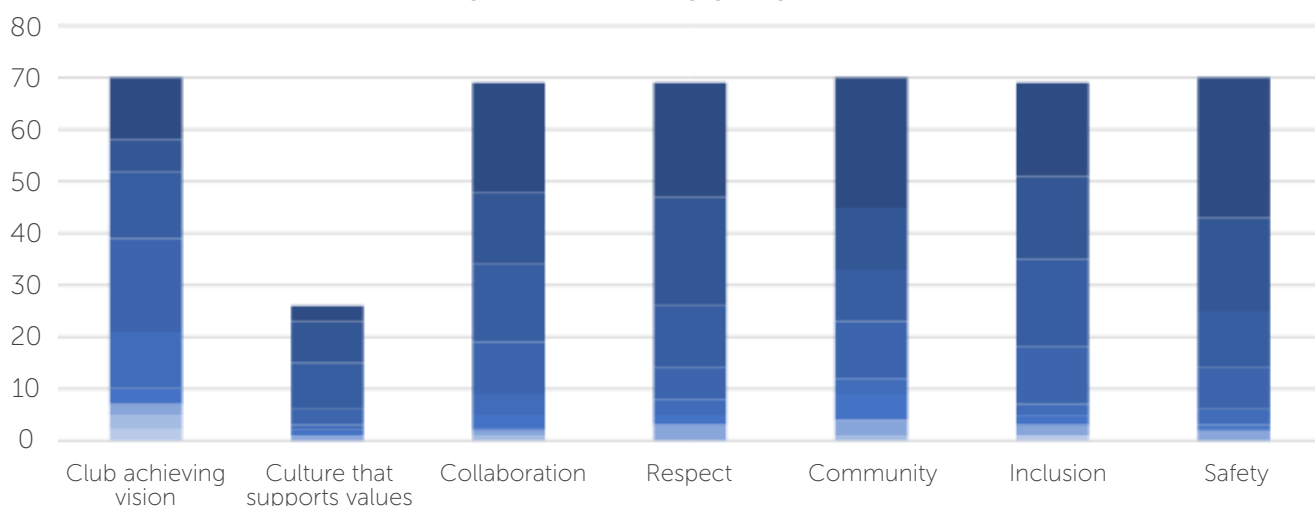
A total of 41 out of 56 club members responded to the survey and 49 other users replied with a total of 90 respondents to the surveys. A summary of the survey results is provided below.

VISION AND VALUES

Members were asked how strongly they believed the club’s actions and activities aligned with their vision and values. Member responses confirmed that they felt that there was strong alignment, particularly with the values of safety, respect and collaboration.

The key area for improvement identified was the achievement of the vision (with 21 respondents ranking this as a six or lower). It’s also noted that nearly half of the respondents didn’t respond to the question regarding a culture that supports values (26 respondents out of 70).

ALIGNMENT WITH VISION- OVERALL



Subsequent to the survey feedback, the committee has reviewed its vision to ensure it aligns with the direction the club is heading. The new vision is provided in this Master Plan and will be reviewed regularly, monitored and aligned to actions in this plan.

Satisfaction

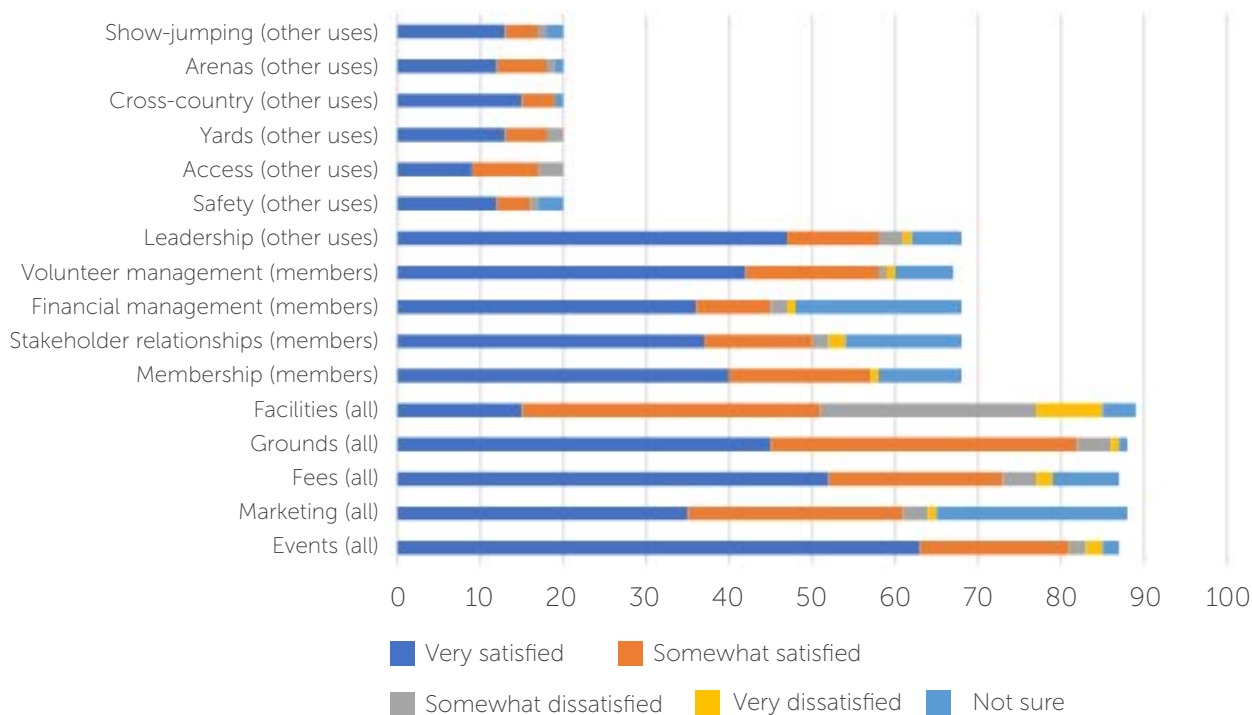
Overall respondents are very satisfied with the club across multiple areas. Areas of greatest satisfaction for both members and other users were with the grounds and events. Members were also very satisfied with volunteer management.

Areas of least satisfaction were with the facilities, with nearly 40% dissatisfied and only 15 of the 90 respondents reporting they were very satisfied with the facilities. Survey respondents commented that facilities, particularly the club rooms, need improving.

Satisfaction level – survey response from members and other users

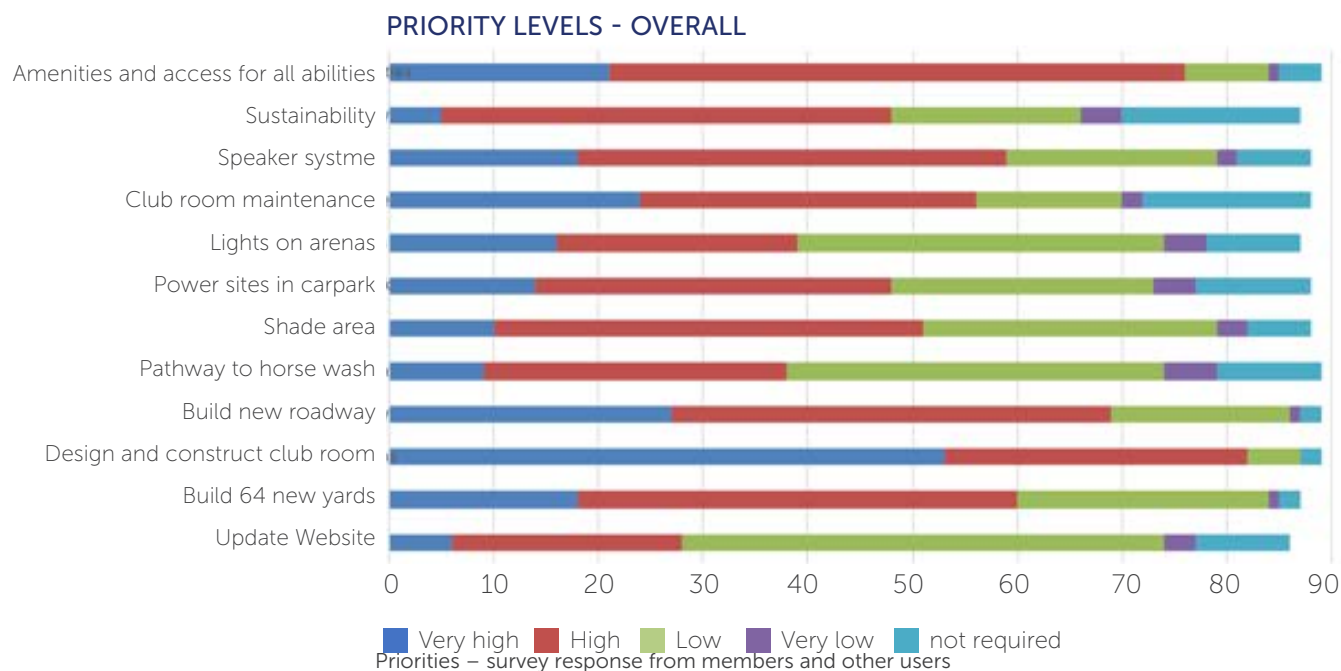
Note that there were some differences in the surveys sent to members and other users, indicated in the graph below.

SATISFACTION LEVEL - OVERALL



Priorities

When asked what they thought were the priorities for the club, respondents clearly identified suitable club rooms, followed by access for all abilities. A high number of respondents also suggested a new roadway as vehicles and horse floats regularly get bogged



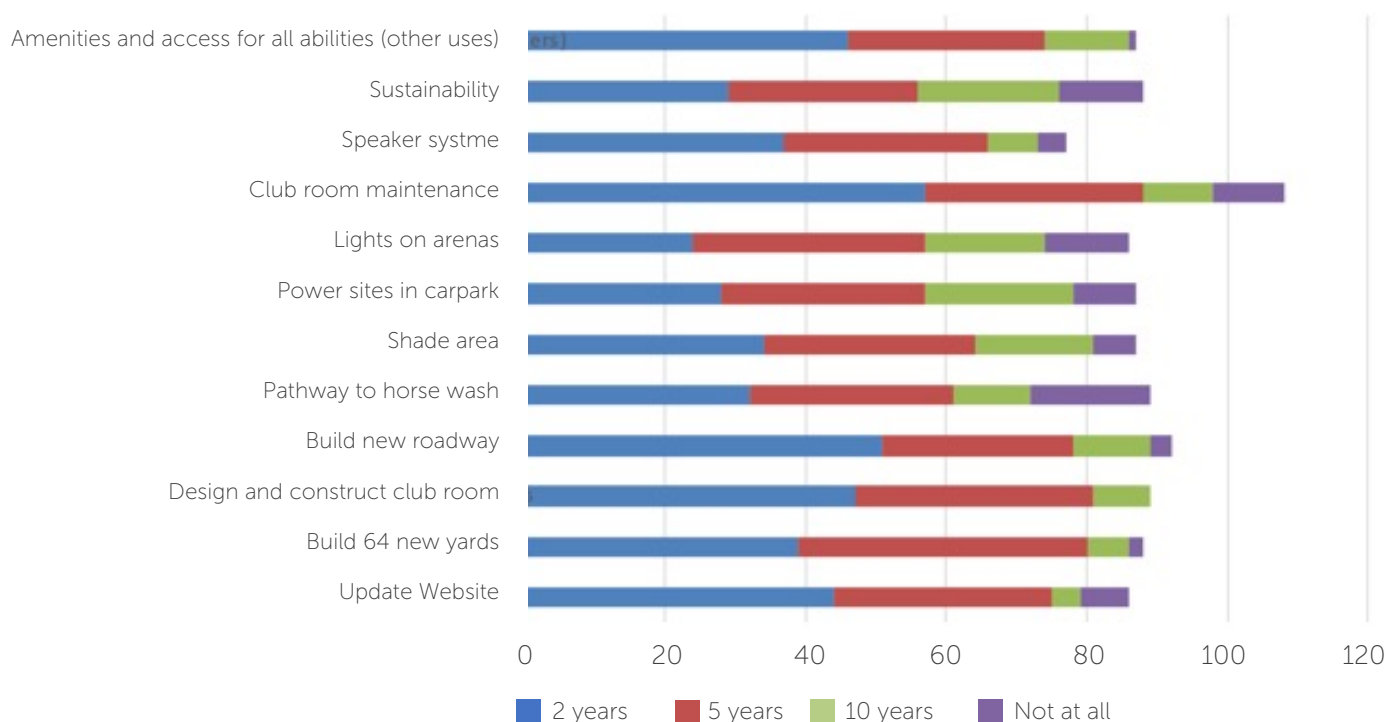
“ It is a wonderful facility but could be so so much better if the funds were available to develop its potential. ”

Priorities

Clearly the highest priority is new club rooms, followed by access for all abilities, building a new roadway and club room maintenance.

“ Clubrooms need significant improvement for the types of events that the grounds hold. Not having facilities that are accessible are definitely lacking in today’s modern world.”

PRIORITY TIMING - OVERALL



The results of the priority timing of these projects is immediate club room maintenance, improved access for all abilities to the facilities and improved roadways and drainage.

“ We can’t bring the grandparents to watch him ride, as the facilities don’t have access. They cannot even access the clubrooms at all to get out of the weather.”

Other projects are a priority but can be allocated to the five and 10 year category, realising some of them will take time to plan and implement.

Survey Findings

The key themes received from the member and user surveys were:

- Improvements were needed to the club rooms, particularly toilets and showers,
- Adequate parking (of equestrian vehicles) for large events and road access particularly during wetter periods should be addressed,
- There is a large economic cost of managing such a large site, and hosting so many events. Continue to seek support from council, other parties and not always volunteers.
- The southern areas of the grounds are prone to localised flooding in wet weather. This is noticeable when the BPC run events and larger vehicles attempt to park. Any grassed area becomes saturated, and vehicles become bogged easily.

General Comments

Users highly valued the cross country course, the events and having a safe area for riding. Many also really appreciated the community atmosphere that BPC offered.

There was a common theme among respondents that what sets the BPC apart from others is the high degree of friendliness and kindness. People noted these qualities are present in the committee, trainers, as well as the broader community. Respondents valued the professionalism and communication of BPC.

“I travel over 2 hours to train on the xc course and compete at the venue”

The most commonly referenced areas of improvement were facilities for showers, toilets and getting out of the cold during winter.

Power in the car park and improvements to parking were also requested by some members. A number found it difficult to park in winter months when grassed areas became saturated.

Other specific comments and feedback have been considered by the committee and while may not have made a mention in this plan will be considered and implemented if possible.

Particular Survey Comments



- Access to toilets when training would be good.
- Build clubrooms capable of matching the calibre of events run from them. If possible, improve drainage in bottom car park.
- Beautiful facilities, more options for training than others, easy to get to and very local from other venues. High quality facilities.
- Simplify website
- The growth! The grounds have been constantly upgraded and maintained by a seriously hard working bunch of volunteers. Now it's time for some club rooms to match!
- Better parking and more separation of horses and vehicles.
- It is a wonderful facility but could be so so much better if the funds were available to develop its potential.
- Please look at providing permanent mounting blocks near the arenas.
- Power would be so good. A horse wash in each area where there are bulk number of yards.
- Powered sites in the car park We generally freeze camping there in May.
- Maybe be more inclusive of disability groups.



Council and Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

A number of issues were discussed including management of the land and tenure of use, maintenance, retention of open access for the general public, landscape and plantings, visual impacts of siting a building in Victoria Park, services and infrastructure, walking paths and safety issues around outside users and conflicts with horses and their riders.

General public access should be minimised for risk management reasons. Public access is supported for organised events or activities and on paths around the perimeter of the site.

Flexibility of use in the future should be built into the Master Plan and the perception that this facility is for members only should be revisited.

Outside users and opportunities for the Ballarat community to use the facility are available with management to take care of the grounds and facilities, section off no-go areas and only permit suitable users with consultation with the BPC to access the club grounds and facilities.



SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was completed by the BPC committee to highlight the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the BPC highlighted from the survey results, consultation and research completed.



STRENGTHS

- Sense of Community
- Diversity
- Strong member numbers
- Unique central Ballarat location
- Professionalism of committee
- Expert instruction and guidance
- International rated equestrian ground assets
- Strong history and support from past life members and members
- Economic financial benefits to the wider Ballarat community with riders and supporters visiting the grounds each day to compete, attend clinics, be educated or attend an event.

WEAKNESSES

- Unsealed (gravel) roads and pathways
- Current weather dependant car and horse float/truck parking in the car park
- No disabled accessibility to facilities and grounds
- Failing infrastructure – toilets, club rooms, drainage
- Storage shed is infested with pests (rabbits)

OPPORTUNITIES

- More inclusive with improved accessible facilities
- Further skill development for members
- Job pathways through to Racing Victoria and other equine industries
- Socialisation and support for isolated members
- International standard events scheduled and held at the BPC Grounds instead of other locations in Victoria
- Continued growth in casual users and visiting riders
- Further opportunities for other user groups to access the grounds and facilities
- Economic benefits to Ballarat community and businesses and the equine industries
- Increased sustainability mindfulness in operating the club

THREATS

- IT failure - online bookings, membership and event management
- Other pony clubs providing better facilities and grounds assets
- Lack of security
- Isolated location in central Ballarat on 43 acres (theft, vandals, destruction)

Additional Site Considerations

The Victoria Park Master Plan has strong links with BPC. Principles and strategies identified in that Master Plan should be considered in the context of any proposed changes at the BPC. This is detailed in Appendix 1 with details from the Victoria Park Plan and suggested improvements to BPC included.

- Native vegetation – Maintain existing plantings and any new tree planting to be consistent with the Victoria Park Master Plan.
- Flood overlays- there are areas within BPC that are prone to flooding.
- Drainage
- Crown land
- Ownership - Victoria Park restrictions, council permissions

Cultural Considerations

The Ballarat Pony Club are conscious that the Club does not own these lands and before any works that take place to alter or disturb the current site, will first be discussed with the Ballarat City Council to ensure we meet our obligations as custodians of this land.



Key Recommendations

The following have been identified as a series of overall priorities for the Ballarat Pony Club and its future development. Possible source funding has been identified in Appendix 2. They include:

Item	Recommendation	Description	Priority
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club rooms • Toilets • Roadways • Update Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance on existing club rooms • Guttering needs replacing and roof repairs • Storage room has mould, leak needs fixing • Toilets need maintenance on the pipes, cisterns and hand basins • All internal walls are asbestos – require sealing/ painting. • Outside picnic tables are unstable and need replacing • Put in railings for access to toilets, a solid pathway to the entry and safety railings within the toilets. • Update website – improve online grounds bookings system • Build and improve roadway around the older set of yards, pathway to horse wash, road to back yards. • Resurface current access roads to fill in potholes and create better drainage out of the site 	Immediate

Key Recommendations

The following have been identified as a series of overall priorities for the Ballarat Pony Club and its future

Item	Recommendation	Description	Priority
Club Rooms and Facilities	<p>New purpose built rooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial kitchen • Toilet and shower facilities • All access abilities • Shade structure • Outside speaker • CCTV security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and construct specifically designed club rooms with modern facilities, a functional meeting room and commercial kitchen facilities. Become more sustainable and environmentally conscious and provide amenities and access for all abilities. • Provide an all access shower and toilet facility. • Shade area in front of club rooms. • Improve outside PA speaker system for safety and notifications to all users of the grounds during events. 	Medium
Car Park and Horse Yards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage • New yards • Paths • Powered parking sites • Arena lights • New website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve drainage in the southern zone • Build 64 new yards • Provide powered sites in the car park. Install solar lights on the main arenas. 	Medium

Timing chart 2024–2034

Priorities have been considered and the below chart outlines the timing suggested for each project to be completed.

Project	2 Years	5 Years	10 Years
Amenities and access for all abilities	Yes		
Drainage	Yes		
Update website	Yes		
Club room maintenance	Yes		
Speaker system	Yes		
Sustainability	Yes		
Design and construct club rooms		Yes	
Build 64 new yards		Yes	
Shade area Power sites in carpark		Yes	Yes
Lights on arenas			Yes

Equestrian Community Sport in Victoria

In Victoria, Performance Horse and Pony Sport is governed by three organisations.

- Pony Club Victoria (PCV) in association with its national body Pony Club Australia
- Horse Riding Clubs Association of Victoria (HRCAV)
- Equestrian Victoria (EV) in association with its national body Equestrian Australia and international body (FEI)

Together the associations cater for a wide demographic which illustrates the size and breadth of the sports involvement.

Association	No. of Clubs	Demographic
PCV	170	Amateur riders from beginner children up to more experienced 25 year old riders
HRCAV	250	Amateur adult riders - from beginner adults to more experienced adult riders
EV	200	Professional and Amateur riders from less experienced juniors to High Performance Olympic standard riders

Performance horse sports and their 620 clubs are based state wide and largely focus on dressage, show jumping, and cross country being the three Olympic Equestrian disciplines.



The Grounds



KEY

- 1 Main Entry - Southern entry to grounds (that is prone to flooding during weather events)
- 2 Clubrooms
- 3 Horse yards
- 4 Round yard
- 5 Horse wash bays
- 6 Show Jumping Arenas
- 7 Dressage Arenas
- 8 New smaller fenced arena
- 9 Cross Country course

Master Plan Summary

Ballarat Pony Club, one of the largest pony clubs in Victoria, requires support to improve the growth and safety of the club and its facilities to provide equestrian activities for riders of all abilities.

The club fosters a strong sense of community among its members and visiting riders while building partnerships with local equine businesses and industries which in turn support the broader Ballarat community.

As a volunteer-run group we rely on fundraising and grants to enable us to improve our facilities and grounds.

One of the highest priorities for improvement, identified in a survey of members and users, was to upgrade the outdated 1960s-era clubrooms to

provide disabled access, more and accessible toilets, showers, and a kitchen area to match the needs of the club now and into the future - to a modern standard seen in nearby equestrian and other council-owned sporting facilities.

The club has, and will continue, to provide a strong economic benefit to the city, attracting riders, equestrian professionals and their supporters from far and wide who spend money buying fuel, feed, horse supplies, visiting local hospitality venues, staying in local accommodation and visiting local attractions while in Ballarat.



Appendix. 1

Ballarat City Council Community Vision

The Victoria Park Master Plan has strong links with BPC. Principles and strategies identified in that Master Plan should be considered in the context of any proposed changes at the BPC.

Victoria Park is one of Ballarat’s most significant and iconic parks. Among 131 hectares of parklands, Ballarat Pony Club leases ~20 hectares. The Victoria Park Master Plan was developed after extensive consultation with user groups, communities and key stakeholders and identified the following key development opportunities for the park:

- Increased tree planting, enlarged native grassland areas and improved vegetation management.
- Increased events capacity with an open lawn events space in the south-west corner and water and power services throughout the park.
- Improved recreation facilities including: clubrooms with publicly accessible toilets, oval resurfacing, criterium course upgrades, and equestrian precinct improvements.
- Improved parkland amenity and leisure facilities including: dog off leash areas, playgrounds, BBQs, seating, drinking fountains, and wayfinding and interpretive signage.
- Additional and improved walking paths and pedestrian and cycling access and connections.
- Improved entrances, traffic management, vehicle control and car parking.
- Additional and improved water bodies and drainage works to reduce flooding, increase park amenities and provide opportunities for stormwater harvesting for irrigation.

A summary of general improvements, observations or discussions within the Master Plan that are relevant to the BPC include:

LANDSCAPE AND VEGETATION ¹

- Prepare landscape concept plans for all new tree plantings along Winter Street frontages.
- Increase tree planting throughout the park to achieve council’s stated goal of 40% canopy coverage.

PROPOSED EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL AMENITY ²

- Explore opportunities for synergies and shared use of facilities between the events space and equestrian precinct.

- Development of the southwest corner of the park for a major events space, minimising building footprints, and maximising outdoor events space available for public access and use when not used for events.
- Consideration of, subject to the saleyards relocating, the closure of Winter Street and reopening of Gillies Street and the use of the saleyards site for all built infrastructure and car parking associated with the events space.
- More detailed planning of the events space to consider: shared facilities with the equestrian precinct; improved landscaping with new water bodies and perimeter tree planting; integration with the adjoining parkland; and indicative parking and traffic interfaces.
- Design and document upgrades to the equestrian precinct including fencing/gates/styles, clubroom upgrades, dressage facilities and tree planting.

PROPOSED FACILITY DEVELOPMENT ³

- At a minimum, provide basic upgrades including accessible toilets and women’s change rooms to the existing clubrooms. Further consultation with user groups is required to determine the extent of upgrades/ replacement in the long term however the provision of toilets and women’s change rooms should be prioritised.
- Undertake further consultation with user groups to determine the extent of upgrades to existing clubrooms.

ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND CONNECTIONS ⁴

- opportunities to improve connections through equestrian precinct (in consultation with Ballarat Pony Club and council).

HYDROLOGY AND LAKE IMPROVEMENTS ⁵

- Develop concept for events space water body (this should form part of events precinct master plan)

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ⁶

- Design and document upgrades to equestrian fencing, club rooms and facilities
- Implement equestrian precinct changes
- Upgrade or develop new car parks

The Master Plan also discussed opportunities to upgrade perimeter fencing and recommended exploring opportunities to improve connections through the precinct with the pony club.

³ Ibid, page 32,

⁴ Ibid, page 39,

⁵ Ibid, page 42,

⁶ Ibid, pages 48-49

⁷ Ibid, pages 11 and 39,

⁸ Ibid, page 46

Appendix. 1



Key Improvements Master Plan
This plan is a summary of the key improvement recommendations discussed in greater detail in this chapter.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>PROPOSED PARK PRECINCTS
(WITH PRECINCT PERCENTAGE OF ENTIRE PARK SHOWN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPORTS GROUNDS (20%) GRASSLANDS (23%) BUILDING FOOTPRINT (<1%) <p>VEGETATION IMPROVEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXISTING SPORTS GROUNDS AND SURROUNDING MOWN GRASS PROPOSED TREE PLANTING PROPOSED IRRIGATED OVAL REJUVENATED LANDSCAPE PROPOSED CRICKET NETS <p>EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPEN LAWN EVENT SPACE PAVILIONS IMPROVED EQUESTRIAN FENCE CLUBROOM IMPROVEMENTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> INCLUSIVE REGIONAL PLAYGROUND - REFER SCHEDULE <p>PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR IMPROVEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VICTRACK PROPOSED NEW VICTRACK 3KM & 1.5KM LOOPS EXISTING PEDESTRIAN PATH PROPOSED NEW PEDESTRIAN PATH PROPOSED SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE PATH PROPOSED BOARDWALK PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE IMPROVED CYCLING CRITERION COURSE PROPOSED DDA COMPLIANT CROSSING VEHICLE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED SEALING OF PLANE AVENUE PROPOSED CAR PARK POTENTIAL URBAN RENEWAL INTERFACE DRAINAGE AND LAKE IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED WETLAND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [1] TREE PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HISTORIC GROVE PLANTING AND ARBORETUM [2] IMPROVED AND EXTENDED NATIVE GRASSLAND [3] MAJOR EVENT SPACE [4] INCLUSIVE REGIONAL PLAYGROUND FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING ACCESSIBLE TOILETS (WITHIN PAVILIONS) AND FURNITURE [5] UPGRADED AND IRRIGATED SPORTS FIELDS [7] IMPROVED VEHICLE ENTRANCES [8] IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN / BYCYCLE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION [9] INTERPRETATION, WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS [10] LAKES, DRAINAGE AND HYDROLOGY IMPROVEMENTS [11] EQUESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING DRESSAGE, FENCING AND CLUB ROOM IMPROVEMENTS [12] DOG OFF LEASH AREA [13] HIGH QUALITY LAWN AREA FOR PICTNICS OR ENCLOSED DOG PARK AREA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [14] SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR URBAN RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT OF LAND INTERFACING WITH VICTORIA PARK. (TO BE INVESTIGATED SEPARATELY) |
|---|--|--|--|

Appendix. 2

Ballarat City Council Community Vision

The BPC supports the community vision in that ‘we celebrate our diversity and everyone in our community is able to participate fully in life’ and that ‘services, infrastructure and amenity meet community needs and aspirations’.

Ballarat City Council Community Vision

- The Health and Wellbeing Plan identifies six priority areas. The activities provided by the Pony Club support two of the priority areas. These are;
- Increasing active living, and
- Improving mental wellbeing.

Active Ballarat Strategy

There are five key strategic pillars with a comprehensive action plan. The following actions support align with the BPC objectives:

- Continue to invest in the Active Women and Girls Strategy, including participation and active lifestyle opportunities
- Understand current female participation by sport
- Understand current female participation in active recreation programs
- Improve equitable access to facilities
- Identify asset investment requirements to improve linkages, accessibility, safety and engagement with community spaces
- Ensure any stadia/infrastructure built for state/national events leave a lasting legacy, and becomes a highly active community asset
- Understand and measure how major sporting events transition into participation outcomes for the whole community
- Investigate opportunities for Ballarat to be recognised as a destination for training centres, camps, coach education and leadership, in conjunction with our venues and educational institutions.

Active Women and Girls’ Strategy

The Active Women and Girls’ Strategy seeks to create equitable opportunities for female participation in sport, so women and girls have equitable opportunities to participate in the sporting environment. The action plan identifies areas that can support the BPC in the following areas:

- Support women’s and girls’ sport participation initiatives.
- Support local competitions and physical activity events targeting women and girls.
- Increase female participation and representation in leadership, governance, coaching and executive roles in the local sport and recreation sector, including within sporting clubs.
- Identify opportunities to partner with organisations that delivery female physical activity programs
- Ensure the City of Ballarat’s Sport and Active Living Grants program supports coaching, training and leadership initiatives targeting females. Look for opportunities to support pilot programs that promote local women and girls’ programs.
- Audit existing facilities to determine suitability for females use and establish a prioritised schedule of works to improve venues when budgetary and funding opportunities arise or as required.
- Advocate to increase awareness through Ballarat media organisations to promote women and girls’ involvement and successes in sport and recreation.
- Make improvements to facilities and infrastructure to support increased female participation.
- Increase local media exposure and enhance positive messaging associated with women and girls’ sport and active recreation.

Appendix. 2

Quotes from the Active Women and Girl's Strategy:

“ Current infrastructure provides a higher level of support for initiatives that encourage traditional male dominated activities ahead of activities targeting women and girls. ⁹

Inappropriate and inadequate infrastructure is commonly identified as a barrier to participation. This includes infrastructure to support formal sports as well as informal recreation. ¹⁰

(Kowal J & Fortier MS 2007)

Improving facilities supporting females are now considered an integral part of broader Universal Design Principles.

(i.e. facilities that are designed to maximise use and appeal for all members of the community).

(SRV Funding Guidelines 2018) ¹¹

”

Other Plans, Strategies and frameworks:

- Ballarat Open Space Strategy
- Ballarat Events Strategy
- Equestrian Victoria – Event Risk Management Policy
- Pony Club Victoria
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
 - Active Victoria 2022-2026 A strategic framework for sport and active recreation in Victoria

⁹Active Women and Girl's Strategy, Ballarat City Council, pg 9.

¹⁰Active Women and Girl's Strategy, Ballarat City Council, pg 9.

¹¹Active Women and Girl's Strategy, Ballarat City Council, pg 9.



Ballarat
Pony Club

Appendix.3

Media clippings

thecourier.com.au Monday May 08, 2023 THE COURIER 3 NEWS

Action aplenty at horse trials

VICTORIA Park has come alive with hundreds of horses and riders, some with their goals set on next year's Olympics, taking part in the 2023 Marcus Oldham Ballarat International Horse trials.

Across three days from Friday, about 370 horses completed minutes of dressage, show jumping and cross country courses ranging from 1.5km to 3.7km long stretching out from the Ballarat Pony Club grounds into Victoria Park.

Event organiser Judy Cough from Friends of Ballarat Equestrian Association said it has been a fantastic weekend for competitors and spectators alike.



Mount Bolton equestrian Yona Lloyd on Ballatown Araya-victic tackles the cross country course in the elite four star class at the Marcus Oldham Ballarat International Horse Trials. Picture by Kate Healy

"Along Winter St and Cedar Drive people have positioned their cars to watch, and there's families and kids in the grounds watching," she said.

"It has been amazing seeing especially the top level riders jump around

the showjumping and cross country – and giving our equestrian community the opportunity to see it all happens."

Some of the top-level competitors in the four star class acquired points toward qualification for next year's Paris Olympics, while also competing on younger horses in lower classes.

"It's fantastic to have that calibre of rider here as we head toward the Olympics next year – then you have pony club kids riding and looking up to their idols"

While the action was hot on the dressage and show jumping arenas and along the cross country course, competitors shivered through Ballarat's coldest weekend of the year.

While the rain mostly held off during the competition, on Saturday the temperature struggled to reach double digits hitting 10.2 at 12 noon, but the warmest feel-like temperature of the day was 18 at 2pm.

On Sunday it was even colder, with a high of 9.6 degrees at 1.30pm when it

felt like 3.5 degrees, after a freezing night for competitors, most of whom camp in horse floats and trucks, when the actual temperature dropped to 1.6 but the feel-like temperature registered a bone-chilling -0.4 degrees.

MICHELLE SMITH

No bail for alleged thief

Bobcat allegedly stolen amid 'spate of heavy vehicle thefts'

BY ELISE MITCHELL
A MAN charged with stealing a bobcat in a string of alleged heavy vehicle thefts across the region has been denied bail by Ballarat court.

Accused man Jamie Hancock had been in custody for 73 days when he appeared via video link from prison in the Ballarat Magistrates' Court on related charges.

Authorities allege about 2.3km on February 21, 2023.

The accused and a co-accused stole a 2008 bobcat from a Central Highlands Water (CHW) site in Mount Pleasant, transporting the machinery in a tipper truck.

Prosecution evidence submitted to the court detailed the bobcat's GPS tracking data, the accused's mobile phone location records, and CCTV footage from a service station where the pair were alleged to have stopped.

A CHW employee first reported to police when he arrived at work to find a gear lock cut and the bobcat missing.

Using the machinery's GPS tracking, the employee located it in Cardigan where it was found hidden under a bush.

Police nominal informant Detective Senior Constable Mark Howard told the court more charges may be laid.

"It was the first of a spate of heavy vehicle thefts in the ar-

ea from the 21st of February to the 21st of February and further charges are likely to follow as a result of the ongoing investigation," he said.

Hancock was on bail at the time for allegedly forcing entry to Maryborough Toyota dealership about a month earlier, in the early hours of January 17, when he was said to have stolen a Toyota Land Cruiser and Hilux with his brother, Drew Hancock, 26.

Defence counsel for Jamie Hancock, Rose George, told the court on Friday he had been assessed as a suitable participant for a court support program funded.

"This treatment in combination with a lot of stringent bail conditions will provide a more intensive level of support in the community than he's had in some time," Mr George said.

"But Magistrate Mark Stramann was not convinced.

"The context of that is that he was on bail, in relation to alleged dishonesty offending, in relation to two motor vehicles – some four weeks prior to the alleged subsequent offending," Mr Stramann said. "It is not dissimilar to the alleged offending he engaged in now."

"The significant prior history. When I look at the 21 pages, they are filled with offences against the bail act."

The matter will return to court on May 15.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2023 thecourier.com.au



RIDERS TAKE TO THE PARK
Ballarat's Army Smith rides Thistlehill Cypress at the Ballarat Pony Club Horse Trials cross country event on Sunday. Almost 250 riders took to the Victoria Park track for the annual horse trials.

More photos Page 21

Picture by Adam Trafford

Keeble leaves big mark

BY JANE BRIDGES
JAMES Keeble has left an indelible mark on Ballarat's football scene with his cover with the Ballarat Football Netball Club.

Keeble is leaving the Burra after close to a decade to play with Boro, where he grew up and played his early football.

Although sorry to be leaving the VFL-experienced veteran, Subotnik will be forever grateful for the contribution he made to help lift it from the depths of despair to becoming a force to be reckoned with.

"I really appreciated being able to keep him, but we're excited for him to start a new chapter," he said.

Lackey said he never knew Keeble's plans for sometime long before the club was announced at Subotnik.

"He's had a significant impact on getting better where we are today."

Lackey, who is a close friend of Keeble, said his long-time teammate had been talking about one day going back to Boro to play.

"He's 32 now and time is tight for a change to VFL level to keep him, but we're excited for him to start a new chapter," he said.

Lackey said Keeble had been impressive in the time around at Subotnik.

"He's had a significant impact on getting better where we are today."

"It's a powerful, exciting player. He takes a lot of big contested marks."

"He's so damaging up the field, but his defensive work is fantastic. He offers versatility. We'll miss him."

Lackey said the Ballarat-based Keeble would continue to have close ties with Subotnik by using it as a training base.

"You never know. He might end up back here."

Keeble was one of the first key signings in Subotnik's rebuild under coach Shane Subotnik in 2015.

Then 23 years of age, Keeble started out with Boro and played with the Burra before joining the VFL. He never full time with the Boro in 2015 after the Boro were dropped out of the VFL.

He made the roster along with fellow Boroers, Matt Austin, Lachlan Cassidy and Lackey.

They would be later joined by Brent Goodes.

They helped lift the Boro to second place and a grand final berth in 2016.

Paper chuffed up over 50 games for the Boro as primarily a half forward.

He became a regular VFL player in 2013 and went onto play more than 70 games.

"SRASSTOPER" has also announced the departure of Hugo Page.

He is returning to the Wimmera after joining from Kalbar in 2015.

Page, chuffed up over 50 games for the Boro as primarily a half forward.

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The Courier, May 8, 2023

The Courier, November 27, 2023

The Courier

Horses find refuge in Ballarat as Buangor fires take hold

By Michelle Smith
February 23 2024 • 8:08am

More than 100 horses and many owners heeded emergency warnings arising from the Buangor blaze and evacuated to Ballarat Pony Club where they spent the night on Thursday.

Two families alone transported dozens of horses including harness racers and performance horses from properties north of Ballarat as the fire threat grew.

Horse floats and horse trucks began arriving at the equestrian precinct in Victoria Park in the early afternoon as the fire rapidly grew with strong winds fanning the fire ahead of a wind change.

Most were able to return home on Friday.

In extreme weather and days of total fire ban, the Ballarat Pony Club ensure that the gates to the Ballarat Equestrian Precinct are unlocked for access in case of an evacuation event in the local area and region.

"SUPERB" and "HILARIOUS"

groundhog day the musical

FINAL SHOWS JUST RELEASED FROM LAUNCESTON, PERTH AND SYDNEY

BOOK NOW

ACM

WAT Oh! Bughton fences evacuation of hores west of Ballarat.

During last week's fire around Ross Creek and Scarsdale, 41 horses were evacuated to the pony club grounds.

"Families are very familiar with our facilities and the pony club located in town is a very safe option," said Ballarat Pony Club president Yona Lloyd.

"Thursday saw high temperatures and wild weather batter our local area and as a club we would like to provide a safe haven for families and their horses during these times."

For most horse owners, enacting their fire plan often includes an evacuation either before fire on a catastrophic or extreme day or leaving when advised by emergency services.

Ballarat Pony Club has secure yards that can hold 136 horses.

Nearby Woody Yalook Equestrian Centre at Smythesdale also opened its gates for equine evacuations as it does on days of extreme fire risk.

Read More:

RCA PREVIEW | Final 10 teams face their last big test

High-flying finance and partner 'AFC West' declared bankruptcy

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The Courier, 23 February 2024



Appendix.3

Media clippings

22 THE COURIER Wednesday May 03, 2023

SPORT

Horse trials to host nation's elite riders

EQUESTRIAN
BY BRYAN HOADLEY

MORE than 300 horses and riders will be saddling up this weekend for the Marcus Oldham Ballarat International Horse Trials.

Over three days from Friday May 5, the Victoria Park Equine Precinct will host competitors from across Australia aged from 10 years old to over 60.

The event is one of only a few Olympic level four-star events on the Victorian calendar, and is an important step in qualifying for the prestigious Melbourne International Three Day Event.

Held in November over the June long weekend, the Melbourne International Three Day Event is one of the oldest horse trials in the world, and is a qualifier for World Cups and will contribute to selection for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Consequently, there will be a number of top riders competing in the four-star category this weekend, including Ballarat Pony Club president Yona Lloyd, 2008 Beijing Olympic silver medalist Megan Jones and former world championships competitor David Middleton.

Top classes will be competing in show jumping and cross country from 9am until 3pm on May 7, with dressage to take place on May 6.

Ballarat Pony Club committee member Niss Lloyd said there was huge community support for the event, which was one of the biggest in the state.

"It's been running now 16 years so it's a well established event, and it's one of, if not the most popular



Tahlia Pursellon during the 2022 Marcus Oldham Ballarat EA International Horse Trials. Picture by Luke Hemer

event on the calendar for riders across Victoria and Australia," she said.

"According to Lloyd, the event gives young riders a rare opportunity to witness high level competition in their own backyard.

"It's pretty cool to see kids that are busy off the lead sign cheering on peo-

ple where they ride every month," she said.

"There's no other event, definitely not in Victoria, where one month we've got four-year-old kids on leads, and then a week later we've got Olympians galloping around the same area. It's fantastic."

Lloyd said there would

be a trade village, food and commentary to entertain spectators across the event, and encouraged people to come out and support the riders.

"They love showing people the horses after they finish. They love the interaction of the crowd cheering them on as well," she said.

"We've had a lot of people in the past when the weather wasn't great, just parking out on Winter Street and around the park and just looking in. So that's also an option for them, but they're more than welcome to come into the grounds, we'll have commentary and they'll know exactly what's going on."



Saunter Boy will carry 71kg in the Galleywood Hurdle. Picture Getty Images

Heavy weights for top stable

HORSE RACING

CLARON Maher and Dave Eastace have the early favourite for the two feature jumps races over the final two days of the Warrambrook May Racing Carnival but both Saunter Boy and Stern Idol will have to earn their victories.

Beginning Galleywood Hurdle winner Saunter Boy has been issued a handicap of 71kg for the race, which would be the highest weight taken to victory in the event since its inception back in 1965.

The following day, Stern Idol lines up in the \$400,000 Grand Annual Steeplechase for the stable carrying 68kg.

Before being imported to Australia, Stern Idol had four jumps races in France for a win and two falls.

In three hurdle runs in Australia, he has won twice and in his sole steeplechase start in his career, he jumped 70kg to a 15-length victory at Parkrunham.

The Maher-Eastace stable also provides the co-top-weight for the silver Thursday feature, the \$300,000 Listed Warrambrook Cup (2150m) in the form of Manxman.

Riding High fourth in Brierley

MAY CARNIVAL

THE Ballarat-trained Riding High has finished fourth in the Brierley Steeplechase (3450m), the feature race on the opening day of the Warrambrook May Racing Carnival on Tuesday.

Riding High, trained at Miners Rest by Henry Dwyer, was having his first jumps start this campaign having built form and fitness in the past few weeks.

However, the nine-year-old gelding was no match for

grey Valec, a further length-and-a-half back in third. Riding High was 7.5 lengths off the winner.

It was a tough event with three of the 10 horses failing to finish including Hoersch-trained pair (Inaythorby, trained by Paul Fynewick, and stablemate St Arnic, which fell).

Should Riding High come through the run well, it is expected that he will head to the Australian Steeple at Sandown on May 21 rather



Henry Dwyer
Dwyer is expected to enter Saturday's big winner.



The Courier, May 3, 2023

Online articles can be found at:

www.thecourier.com.au/story/8531881/horses-in-bushfire-danger-zone-evacuated-to-ballarat-pony-club/

www.thecourier.com.au/story/8370127/fire-shock-for-pony-club-after-suspected-arson-attack/

www.thecourier.com.au/story/8186078/victoria-parks-massive-horse-trials-weekend-gallery/

Alex Ford • 1 DAY AGO

The Ballarat Pony Club on Winter Street has once again thrown open its gates for people evacuating from the fires.

Gaile, from Clunes, made it there on Tuesday with her two horses, and her husband joined her today with the dog after finishing preparing their house at the base of Mount Beckworth.

"We're right in the firing line," she said.

"This is the calm before the storm, and come 6pm when the wind picks up, we don't know what's going to happen, but it's just the worst feeling ever."

She was full of praise for the Pony Club, and for PetStock, which dropped off a load of hay bought by the Ballarat Trotting Club for the 50 or so horses currently sheltering there.

She was full of praise for the Pony Club, and for PetStock, which dropped off a load of hay bought by the Ballarat Trotting Club for the 50 or so horses currently sheltering there.

But the fear remains, she said.

"Since I knew it was coming, I wasn't going to leave it until the last minute to get the horses out," she said.

"I've been trying not to think about it, to tell you the truth - will I come home to a house tomorrow, or Saturday? What will we go home to?"

"I just hope everyone's safe, everyone's animals are out, and people don't leave it too long to get out."

EDITED

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