

# Landcare in West Gippsland Group Handbook

July 2020



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### **Cultural Heritage Information Pack** *(attached in slimpick wallet)*

- Aboriginal Cultural Guide
- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation Information
- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation Information
- Aboriginal Victoria Preliminary Report Form
- Parks Victoria Aboriginal Heritage Identification Guide
- Cultural heritage guide
- Acknowledgement of Country Card

# Introduction





## Purpose of this handbook

This handbook has been funded through the Victorian Landcare Program and developed by Landcare in West Gippsland and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA).

Committee members of local Landcare groups may find this information useful. You are welcome to adapt the forms and templates to suit the needs of your group. This can also be a useful place to add information specifically relevant to your group such as membership lists, contact numbers, records of group activities and insurance documents.

Each Landcare group throughout West Gippsland has been provided with both a hard copy and an electronic copy of this handbook. The electronic copy allows committee members to easily make changes to the forms and templates, as well as type information directly into spreadsheets. A tri-fold membership brochure which can be adapted to your group's details is also included in the electronic copy.

This handbook will be updated periodically, and your feedback is essential. A feedback form is included overleaf. Please take the time to record any way in which you think this handbook could be improved and pass this information on to your network representative or WGCMA.

We would like to acknowledge and thank East Gippsland Regional Landcare for allowing us to adapt their handbook to create the Regional Landcare Handbook for West Gippsland.

Landcare in West Gippsland would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Land Owners and other indigenous people within the catchment area; the Gunaikurnai, the Bunurong and Boon Wurrung and the Wurrundjeri people. We also recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people and organisations in land and natural resource management.

# West Gippsland Landcare Networks



## Regional Landcare Coordinator

**Kathleen Brack**

03 56135966 | [kathleenb@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:kathleenb@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

[@landcareinwestgippsland](#)

[@landcarevictoria](#)



National  
Landcare  
Program



## Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator

**Sam Shannon**

03 56135978 | [sams@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:sams@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

[@westgippslandcatchmentmanagementauthority](#)



## Bass Coast Landcare Network

2-4 Bass School Road, Bass VIC 3991

<https://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au>

**David Bateman – Executive Officer**

03 5678 2335 | [david.bateman@basscoastlandcare.org.au](mailto:david.bateman@basscoastlandcare.org.au)

[@basscoastlandcarenetwork](#)



## Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network

16 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

<http://lcn.com.au>

[info@lcn.com.au](mailto:info@lcn.com.au)

[@latrobecatchmentlandcare](#)

**John Crosby – Network Coordinator**

03 5175 7841

**Marnie Ellis – Network Facilitator**

03 5175 7846



## Maffra & Districts Landcare Network

1 Malmo Street, Maffra VIC 3860

<http://www.mdln.com.au>

[info@mdln.com.au](mailto:info@mdln.com.au)

 [@maffradistrictslandcarenetwork](https://www.facebook.com/maffradistrictslandcarenetwork)

**Nicola Hair – Network Coordinator**

03 5175 7818

**Carmen Lee – Network Facilitator**

03 5175 7876



## South Gippsland Landcare Network

2 Bellingham Street, Leongatha VIC 3953

<http://www.sgln.net.au>

 [@southgippslandlandcarenetwork](https://www.facebook.com/southgippslandlandcarenetwork)

**SGLN General enquiries –** [info@sgln.net.au](mailto:info@sgln.net.au)

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0419 761 531 | [andrea@sgln.net.au](mailto:andrea@sgln.net.au)

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0413 148 209 | [cassie@sgln.net.au](mailto:cassie@sgln.net.au)

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0428 427 004 | [glenn@sgln.net.au](mailto:glenn@sgln.net.au)

**Susan Koci – Project Officer**

[pestanimals@sgln.net.au](mailto:pestanimals@sgln.net.au)



## Yarram Yarram Landcare Network

2 Livingstone Road, Yarram VIC 3971

<http://www.yarramlandcare.org>

 [@yarramyarramlandcare](https://www.facebook.com/yarramyarramlandcare)

**Scott Elliot – Network Coordinator**

0467 000 935 | [scotte@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:scotte@wgcma.vic.gov.au)

**Jason Pickering – Project Officer**

0429 775 787 | [jasonp@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:jasonp@wgcma.vic.gov.au)



# Landcare Networks in West Gippsland



Figure 1. Map of Landcare Networks in West Gippsland.

# Landcare Groups in West Gippsland

## Bass Coast Landcare Network

Anderson Inlet Landcare Group  
 Bass Valley Landcare Group \*\*  
 French Island Landcare Group \*\*  
 Kongwak Hills Landcare Group  
 Korumburra Landcare Group \*\*  
 Powlett Project  
 Three Creeks Landcare Group  
 Wonthaggi Urban Landcare Group  
 Phillip Island Landcare Group\*\*

## Latrobe Catchment Landcare Group

Cowwarr Landcare Group  
 Yinnar – Yinnar South Landcare Group  
 Flynn Farm Discussion Group  
 Glengarry Landcare Group  
 Woorabinda Junior Landcare Group  
 Boolarra South Landcare Group  
 Gippsland Agroforestry Network  
 Springsure Hill Landcare Group  
 Tanjil Valley Landcare Group  
 Neerim & District Landcare Group  
 Friends of Land & Water Landcare Group  
 Mt Worth Landcare Group  
 Narracan Landcare Group  
 Mountain Rivers Landcare Group  
 Earls Road Landcare Group  
 Warragul & District Urban Landcare Group

## Maffra & Districts Landcare Network

Avon Landcare Group  
 Avon Trees on Farms Group  
 Bellbird Corner Riverside Reserve Committee of Management  
 Clydebank Landcare Group  
 Dawson Landcare Group  
 Flooding Creek Landcare Group  
 Glenmaggie–Seaton Catchment Group  
 Kilmany–Pearsondale–Nambrok Landcare Group  
 Licola Landcare Group  
 Longford Landcare Group  
 Macalister Landcare Group

Munro Landcare Group  
Perry Bridge Landcare Group  
Stratford and District Farmcheque Group  
Upper Avon Landcare Group  
Wellington Sustainability Group

### South Gippsland Landcare Group

Agnes River and District Landcare Group  
Allambee Community Landcare Group  
Allambee South Landcare Group  
Arawata/Mount Eccles Landcare Group  
Fish Creek Landcare Group  
Franklin River Landcare Group  
Friends of Stockyard Creek  
Friends of Turtons Creek  
Hallston Regenerative Farming Group  
Loch/Nyora Landcare Group \*\*  
Mardan-Mirboo North Landcare Group  
Mt Lyall Landcare Group \*\*  
Nerrena/Tarwin Valley Landcare Group  
Poowong and District Landcare Group \*\*  
Tarwin Landcare Group  
Triholm Landcare Group \*\*

### Yarram Yarram Landcare Group

Albert River Landcare Group  
Binginwarri Landcare Group  
Hedley/Nine Mile Creek Landcare Group  
Merriman Creek Landcare Group  
Woodside Landcare Group  
Won Wron/Devon North Landcare Group  
Wonyip Landcare Group  
Yarram Urban Landcare Group

*\*\* These groups are part of the Network but are located in the Port Philip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority region.*

# West Gippsland Regional Agencies

## West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA)

WGCMA was established by the State Government in 1997 to manage land and water resources in the West Gippsland region.



<https://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au>

1300 094 262

### Traralgon Office

16 Hotham Street, Traralgon

Post: PO Box 1374 Traralgon VIC 3844

### Leongatha Office

Corner Young and Bair Streets, Leongatha VIC 3953

## Landcare Victoria Inc. (LVI)

Landcare Victoria Inc. (LVI) is the independent representative body for Landcare in Victoria and exists to secure increased recognition, resourcing and support for Landcare. LVI serve the broader Landcare community within Victoria and we represent paid members.



<http://www.lvi.org.au>

[info@lvi.org.au](mailto:info@lvi.org.au)

03 9207 5527

Post: PO Box 509, Flinders Lane VIC 8009

## Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA)

The Port Phillip and Westernport CMA (PPWCMA) was established in 2002 as the peak natural resource management body in the Port Phillip and Western Port region to develop and oversee the implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy.



<https://www.ppwcm.vic.gov.au>

03 8781 7900

Level 1 Landmark Corporate Centre

454 – 472 Nepean Hwy, Frankston VIC 3199

## Department Environment Land Water & Planning (DELWP)



<https://www2.delwp.vic.gov.au>

### Gippsland Office – Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

03 5172 2111

71 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

### State Landcare Team – Environment and Climate Change Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

[landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au)

Level 2, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Post: PO Box 500, East Melbourne VIC 3002

## Agriculture Victoria / Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)

Agriculture Victoria has been created to give greater visibility to the agriculture activities of the department, giving a clear identity to agricultural services and initiatives with the department.

The Agriculture Victoria brand and logo emphasise the clean, green nature of Victoria's farming produce and will be used to promote the state's agriculture industry and its world-class farmers



<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au>

### Ellinbank

03 5624 2222

1301 Hazeldean Road, Ellinbank VIC 3822



### Leongatha

03 5662 9900

12 Peart Street, Leongatha VIC 3853

### Maffra

03 5147 0800

1 Stratford Road, Maffra VIC 3860

## Parks Victoria (PV)

Parks Victoria is a government agency of the state of Victoria, Australia. Parks Victoria was established in December 1996 as a statutory authority, reporting to the Victorian Minister for Environment and Climate Change.



<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au>

## Landcare Australia

Landcare Australia is the national not-for profit that works in partnership with multiple stakeholders to support the landcare community with funding and capacity building opportunities for on-ground projects. Landcare Australia develops campaigns to raise awareness of landcare to increase participation and to attract corporate and philanthropic support.



<https://landcareaustralia.org.au>

## Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)

Consumer Affairs Victoria is a business unit of the Department of Justice and Community Safety, within the Victorian government. CAV are Victoria's consumer affairs regulator and their purpose is to help Victorians be responsible and informed businesses and consumers.



<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au>

## ACNC

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission is the national regulator of charities and regulate over 50,000 charities Nationally. The ACNC help charities understand and meet their obligations through information, advice and guidance. They also help the public understand the work of the not-for-profit sector and provide a free searchable database of charities.



<https://www.acnc.gov.au>

## Our Community

The Our Community Group is a social enterprise which provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities. Partners in their work are not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises; government, philanthropic and corporate grantmakers; donors and volunteers; enlightened businesses; and other community builders.



<https://www.ourcommunity.com.au>

## Not for Profit Law

Not for Profit Law is a charity providing free legal help to community organisations and social enterprises.



<https://www.nfplaw.org.au>

## Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) in West Gippsland

### Gunaikurnai Land & Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) represents Traditional Owners from the Brataualung, Brayakaulung, Brabralung, Krauatungalung and Tatungalung family clans, who were recognised in the Native Title Consent Determination, made under the new *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, the first such agreement under that Act.

GLaWAC is the Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) for the Gunaikurnai people and claim area, as outlined in the agreement, providing joint management of 10 parks and reserves within the State.



<https://gunaikurnai.org>

03 5152 5100

[reception@glawac.com.au](mailto:reception@glawac.com.au)

Post: 27 Scriveners Road (Forestec)  
Kalimna West VIC 3909

### Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC)

Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation are the Traditional Owner organisation that represent the Bunurong people of the South-Eastern Kulin Nation. They aim to preserve and protect the sacred lands and waterways of their ancestors, their places, traditional cultural practices, and stories.



<https://www.bunuronglc.org>

03 9770 1273

[admin@bunuronglc.org.au](mailto:admin@bunuronglc.org.au)

Post: PO Box 11219 Frankston VIC 3199

## Other non-RAP Aboriginal parties within our region

### Boon Wurrung Foundation

The Boon Wurrung Foundation represents the traditional people and custodians of the lands from the Werribee River to Wilson Promontory and are proud members of the Kulin People – the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung. ... The history of the Boonwurrung people dates back many thousands of years.

03 9537 2222

Field Work: [fieldreps@boonwurrung.org.au](mailto:fieldreps@boonwurrung.org.au)

Cultural Consultancy: [info@boonwurrung.org.au](mailto:info@boonwurrung.org.au)

Boon Wurrung Foundation

Level 1, 14 Acland Street, St Kilda VIC 3182

# Feedback form

Landcare Networks in West Gippsland seek your support to improve this handbook.

Thank you for reading this handbook. This will be revised and updated periodically. Your feedback is essential to ensuring that current and future Landcare group committees have access to useful and up-to-date tools and information.

Any feedback is useful. Please consider the following, however additional comments are very welcome:

- > What additional information would you like to see in the handbook?

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- > What information, if any, do you think is unnecessary, irrelevant or confusing for committee members?

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- > Are you aware of any advice or information which needs to be updated for the next version of the handbook?

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If you have any suggestions or comments, please submit this form to:

West Gippsland Regional Landcare Coordinator – Kathleen Brack

E: [kathleenb@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:kathleenb@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

P: PO Box 1374, Traralgon 3844









# Good Governance

Good governance is essential to Landcare groups and networks. It ensures that obligations are met, fairness and due process are followed, problems are minimised, and Landcare groups are enabled to function well.

Good governance ensures that the culture of Landcare is carried throughout everything we do, and that all actions are carried out in a fair, accountable, transparent and inclusive manner. It also ensures that people outside of the Landcare network see the organisation as trustworthy and legitimate.

In general, groups which perform their governance procedures well are usually more effective in achieving their stated aim. This means that well-run Landcare groups are more likely to be effective in protecting and improving the environment.

## What does the term 'governance' actually mean?

Governance is the term referring to the procedures and practices which Landcare groups use in carrying out their activities.

Some of these are determined by **state or federal legislation**:

- For example, the *Incorporations Act* has a number of requirements for groups which choose to become incorporated.
- Some activities of Landcare groups may need to follow state or federal legislation, such as what sort of chemicals can be used to control weeds or pest animals.

Some practices are set down by **Landcare Victoria Inc (LVI)**:

- For example, following insurance requirements for groups which have insurance through LVI.

Some are determined by **regional bodies** such as Catchment Management Authority (CMA):

- For example, regular reporting of the volunteer hours contributed by members in planning and carrying out group activities.

And some are determined by the **Landcare group** themselves:

- This may include the frequency of meetings and activities, or requirements around the use of a particular piece of equipment.

## Landcare groups are practicing good governance when guidelines are followed for all procedures. Examples include:

- Records are kept for all activities
- Meetings are run according to fair meeting principles
- Safety and risk requirements are met
- Each group has a clear code of conduct, child safety policy and anti-bullying policy which informs the behaviour of all members.

This manual contains guidelines, forms and attachments which will assist Landcare committee members with all aspects of running a group according to good governance principles. See index for a complete list.

# Committee Roles

If your Landcare group is going to work effectively you need a good committee to make it happen. This document outlines the key roles and responsibilities of committee members.

The responsibilities of the committee are to represent the Landcare group and manage its responsibilities including finance, project planning, insurance, publicity and record keeping.

The committee structure usually includes key office bearer roles such as president, secretary and treasurer, as well as other committee members, all of whom are responsible to the full membership.

When you are appointing key roles, it can be useful to also choose assistants to all roles (vice president, assistant treasurer, and assistant secretary) who can help the key member and potentially take over if that member is not available or when they decide to step away from their committee role.

## How committees work

Most groups appoint office bearers and committee members at their first meeting and those positions then come up for election at each Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The roles and responsibilities of these people are given below, although they may vary if your group decides otherwise and specifies this in your constitution (ie your rules or bylaws). It is important to make sure committee members share the workload.

## President

The president is the leader and anchor of your group and has several roles including:

- **Leadership and coordination**  
If you are the president, your job entails motivating members, delegating tasks to them and involving them in activities, making sure all projects are completed on time, ensuring the committee functions well, and making sure the group is on track with its goals and objectives.
- **Representation**  
As president, you will generally be the first point of contact between your group and other people. That also means signing all official documents on behalf of the group and attending functions as a representative.
- **Chairing meetings**  
At each meeting the president acts as chair, welcoming and introducing members and guests, encouraging discussion but also keeping the meeting focused on the agenda, and ensuring resolutions are achieved. You must make sure that the decisions and actions are clearly recorded in the minutes and that everyone at the meeting is aware of the decisions which are made.
- **Convening meetings**  
You also call the meetings and prepare the agenda (with help from the secretary), set the business priorities for the meeting and ensure the venue and any guest speakers have been arranged.

## Secretary

The secretary looks after the group's administration and has specific tasks which include:

- **Correspondence**

As secretary, you will manage all correspondence, maintain official records and ensure that all information, both internal and external, is available to all those who want access to it. There are a range of commercial and free software options available which may assist you in this task.

- **Meetings**

You will also help the president in preparing the agenda for the meeting and maintaining accurate minutes of everything that happens. Your job also entails ensuring the minutes are distributed to all members, along with any notices or agendas for future meetings. The secretary also makes sure that all correspondence listed at the meeting is available for anyone who wants or needs to read it.

- **Incorporation**

If your group is incorporated, you will need to act as the group's Secretary for Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV). This involves paying a fee and lodging an annual statement each year. You can check with CAV for any other requirements.

- **ACNC reporting**

If your group is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC), either you or the treasurer of your group will need to submit an Annual Information Statement to the ACNC each year.

- Other duties you may have include acting as the group's contact person or representative, helping other members with grant applications and funding enquiries and organising any official documents that need to be dealt with including letters, leases, insurance policies and funding agreements.

## Treasurer

The treasurer manages the group's finances on behalf of the committee. All transactions must be documented (including cash receipts), and account payments must be passed for payment at a committee meeting, unless they are already part of an approved budget.

As the treasurer, you'll:

- Manage every money transaction involving the group (including banking and full and accurate record keeping with relevant correspondence), issue invoices and receipts, pay the group's bills and accounts and manage petty cash.
- You're also responsible for all financial reporting which means developing finance reports or keeping a cash book stating all income and expenditure and providing regular financial reports to the committee.
- You'll need to provide a financial report for the AGM and maintain a file of all documents relating to the group's finances including anything on incorporation, tax deductions, permits or licences and insurance policies.
- If your group is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC), either you or the treasurer of your group will need to submit an Annual Information Statement to the ACNC each year.

*(Budgeting and financial reporting information is included on pages 29 and 74 of this handbook.)*

## **General Committee Members**

All committee members are responsible for promoting and explaining the group's work, actively supporting the group as a whole and supporting other committee members.

With the other committee members, you'll be involved in setting the strategy of the group and ensuring that the group's aims are achieved.

As a committee member, you could be given a specific role, such as vice president (acting in the absence of the president and possibly preparing for a future role), assistant secretary or treasurer, newsletter editor or project manager. Other general committee members simply support the group and assist in making decisions about Landcare activities and other matters.

# Incorporation for Landcare Groups

There are reasons why some groups choose to be incorporated and some do not. As groups differ widely, each group will need to consider which option suits their circumstances.

If you want to trade as an entity in your own right, your group will need to be incorporated. Operating as an incorporated entity allows the group to be eligible for grants, to own, lease or rent land or other property, and to enter into contracts.

Alternatively, some groups opt to be a financial member of an incorporated entity (e.g Landcare Victoria Inc), which can allow the group to gain some of the benefits of incorporation but will also restrict what the group can do in its own right. A group that is a member of an incorporated identity can still apply for grants however the group would require the umbrella organisation to act as an auspice for the grant application.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. Your group can decide which best suits your particular circumstances.

## Being a Member Group under Landcare Victoria Inc umbrella of incorporation

LVI acts as an umbrella body under which Member Groups obtain the benefits of Incorporation (as described above), without the member group having to deal directly with the required legal requirements associated with incorporation. It can also offer more flexibility at the group level.

The LVI Committee and Executive Officer take care of general compliance issues, which may be of value to smaller, disorganised, or unstable groups. LVI Member Groups must be financial in order to obtain the benefits of membership.

Groups who choose this option would not need to develop their own constitution. They would be required to develop a Statement of Purpose and abide by the LVI rules.

LVI Member Groups have a responsibility to assist LVI in fulfilling the incorporation requirements by:

- supplying a current list of members complete with postal addresses and join dates (also enables them to receive the Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine);
- keeping adequate financial accounts, hold them for a period of seven years, and providing LVI with a summary each year
- informing LVI of any change to your purposes or activities
- maintaining your non-profit status
- not distributing surplus monies to members
- complying with the non-profit winding up clauses

Of course, if a group chooses to incorporate through Consumer Affairs they are still welcome to join LVI for the other benefits. Conversely if a group chooses initially not to go through the incorporation process they can always change their mind at a later date.



## **Incorporation**

Incorporation is a voluntary process whereby a not-for-profit club or community group can apply to become its own 'legal person' (i.e. the association becomes a distinct legal entity that continues regardless of changes to its membership, or appointed office bearers). This option would require the group to develop their own constitution.

The advantages of incorporation include:

- Protection of the members and office holders against personal liability for debts and other legal obligations of the organisation;
- The ability to buy and sell property in the name of the organisation;
- Greater certainty and acceptability to potential contracting parties such as lenders, lessors, employees and suppliers of goods and services;
- The ability to sue and be sued in the name of the association;
- The ability to open bank accounts, invest and borrow money; and
- Greater eligibility to apply for government grants and funding.

Incorporation however will not protect a group or its members from the consequences if they fail to exercise the care that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in like circumstances or breach their legal duties (see the section earlier in this kit on duties).

### **Incorporation in your own right**

For an organised group this isn't particularly difficult. Most groups would become an Incorporated Association through Consumer Affairs Victoria, but other structures are possible. It does mean going through a registration process and then complying with the legislation, which largely means annual general meetings (AGMs) and complying with various deadlines and reporting requirements, including financial reporting requirements.

The following websites are an invaluable resource if you want to learn more about incorporation.

<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au>

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/incorporationdecision>

## Record-keeping for Secretaries

The secretary is responsible for meeting minutes, correspondence, maintaining the records relating to the group's membership, and ensuring that members are kept informed of all essential activities.

While it may be convenient to store emails and reports in electronic form, some records should always be maintained in paper form. These include any correspondence which is received as a physical letter, along with any other signed paper documents such as records of activities undertaken, membership forms, and applications.

Any records which are kept electronically need to be backed up regularly to ensure that information is not lost. These backups should be stored either at another location or in 'the cloud' to guard against loss. A range of commercial and free software is available which can be of use for this role.

Specific record-keeping responsibilities of the secretary include the following:

**Minutes** are a written record of a meeting. Good minutes are clear, succinct and easy to read. They do not need to be lengthy, but should record the time, place and attendees of the meeting, as well as the decisions reached during the meeting and any general points of discussion.

After the meeting, the secretary will usually need to tidy up the minutes which were taken during the meeting. It's best if this is done soon after the meeting while memories of the meeting are still fresh. In some groups, the group president will request to approve the minutes prior to distribution to other committee members, but in others the minutes are sent out to other members as soon as the secretary has completed them.

*(A suggested template for meeting minutes is included on page 69.)*

**Correspondence** is another record-keeping responsibility of the secretary, who is responsible for both receiving mail and emails and sending them out according to the decisions of the committee. All incoming and outgoing correspondence needs to be brought to the committee meeting and listed in the minutes.

It's usual to receive some correspondence in paper form and some electronically, typically by email. It's not always necessary to print out emails, however this can be done if required to make it easier to ensure the email is securely stored for future reference.

Simple correspondence such as membership enquiries and requests for details of activities do not need to wait for the committee to approve before the secretary can reply. Other more complicated or contentious issues will need committee approval before correspondence can be sent, as this will need to reflect the committee's standpoint on the issue rather than the opinion of just one member of the committee. Again, these replies need to be stored for future reference if needed.

**Storing information** is another important role. These records include membership lists, records of activities, and important documents such as insurance papers. All committee documents such as minutes and reports also need to be kept and made available for members to access. It can be a good idea to take a folder of the minutes of recent meetings to all committee meetings for reference if required.

**Landcare groups are required to hold onto their records and documentation for seven years. It is a good idea to ensure that all past records within this time frame are passed onto new secretaries.**

## Record-keeping for Treasurers

The treasurer is responsible for recording the financial transactions of the organisation

There are a number of free accounting software programs available online which are suitable for non-profit organisations.

A computer system is not a substitute for paper records. Make sure you keep a hard copy audit trail of any financial transactions which are paper-based, including receipts, chequebook stubs and tax invoices.

Also ensure you make regular back-ups of any computer records. Hard drives can crash, and data can get lost. Keep your back-ups offsite, so they are safe in the event of a fire or burglary.

Very small organisations can get by with what's called 'shoebox accounting' with all accounts kept in a box or filing cabinet. It will be easier to access your material if it is organised into folders, large envelopes or different compartments of a folder for separate items such as:

- Bank statements
- Paid bills and receipts
- Lease file for equipment and rental hire
- Cash book (a record of your cash receipts and payments)
- Your group's budget
- Outstanding bills
- Asset file with instructions and guarantees
- Insurance

One step up from shoebox accounts is a ledger of income and expenditure. You can use books for ledgers, develop your own spreadsheet or use commercial software, which can track your changes, providing the advantage of transparency. Information in ledgers will include:

- Date
- Who was paid
- Purpose
- Amount
- Receipt number (if appropriate)
- Who paid the money
- Account

You may also have separate ledgers for large projects and fund-raising events.

All grants or project money needs to be accounted for separately. If your group receives funding for a particularly major project, you may need to seek advice regarding properly accounting for the amounts which are received and spent during the project.

### Specific record-keeping responsibilities of the treasurer include:

#### Tracking Cash

When receiving cash, you will often provide people with receipts (standard receipts books are available from newsagents or stationery shops). While receipts are not always appropriate, you should count the money at the end of each event (or at regular intervals) and record how much you have collected and what it was for.

Here are some keys for tracking cash:

- Count and bank cash promptly (many ATMs take deposits after hours)
- Never pay wages or expenses from cash waiting to be deposited
- Keep a petty cash box for small items such as stamps and parking (keep an upper limit on how much can be spent on any one item; above that figure, pay by cheque or online banking transfer so you have a record). Petty cash should last a month and you will need to have enough so you don't run out, but not so much that it becomes a security risk. Document all petty cash spending through vouchers or a book and get receipts if possible.

### **Bank Records**

Your bank statements are important financial records. Ask your bank for statements that finish at the end of a month as this will make it easier for you to reconcile your accounts. Unless you request it, you may find that each bank statement starts on the day of the month on which you opened the account.

A bank reconciliation is a schedule that explains the differences between the bank statement balance and the company's cash balance. Your bank statement may not equal your cash records because of timing differences, un-presented cheques, and other information not in your cash records, such as interest paid or received.

## **Maintaining records of the group's assets, liabilities, equity and revenue**

### **Assets – what you have**

There are two types of assets – current assets and non-current or fixed assets. If the asset is expected to remain in your organisation for more than one year, treat it as a fixed or non-current asset.

Current assets are assets you use in your everyday operations or assets you intend to dispose of within the next 12 months. They include:

- Money in the bank
- Money owed to you
- Items you intend to sell or give away within 12 months
- Cash

You receive the benefits from your non-current assets over a longer period of time. These include assets you own or lease, such as cars or computers. The wear and tear on these assets in daily use means their value declines. Your accounts need to show this depreciation, or in other words, how much value your assets have lost.

### **Liabilities – what you owe**

Your liabilities are what your organisation owes for goods or services. Again, there are two types – current or non-current:

- Current liabilities, which need to be paid in the near future, include bank overdraft, suppliers who have provided goods or services, payments to employees, including superannuation and PAYG, taxation, finance leases and short-term loans.

- Non-current or long-term liabilities are sources of finance supplied to your organisation, which are not due for repayment in the next 12 months. They include: long-term loans, finance leases payable beyond one year, and long-term loans.

### **Equity – your net worth**

Equity is your organisation's net worth. It is what your organisation would be worth if you cashed up today. It includes accumulated funds and reserves, which you have put aside as a backstop.

### **Revenue – what you receive**

Revenue is the total income your organisation receives and includes membership fees, grants, donations, sale of products and services, special events, consulting fees and sponsorships.

### **Extra resources can be found at**

<https://communitydirectors.com.au/help-sheets/record-keeping-for-treasurers>

# Group Budget

Having a budget is important as it sets up the group's financial plan for the coming year and predicts financial performance for that year.

A budget is a tool for planning your finances, usually for a 12-month period covering the financial year (July 1 to June 30). The budget will tell you if your incoming funds will cover your expenses and usually includes all the activities your group is planning for the year.

Usually it will be your treasurer who manages the budget and accounts on a day-to-day basis but preparing the budget should be done in consultation with the whole committee. There are various different types and formats of budgets, but all are designed to be a statement of anticipated income, expenditure, profit, and cash flow and reflects the aims and plans of the group for that year.

The budget is a tool to help you understand what resources you have available and how they are to be used. It is a key reference point for the committee to ensure that the group is not generating an operating loss. Equally important is the fact that a budget provides a transparent document of your finances for access by members, accountants, and auditors.

## How to create a budget

Your group may be fairly small and not have a large budget to manage. In this case you only need a simple method to keep track of your finances and ensure you can report to the group and others when necessary.

You need to establish a time frame for your budget, and whether you will use a calendar year (January to December) or a financial year (July to June).

Include income such as membership fees, sponsorship, grant and fundraising. Much of this will have to be estimated using figures from previous years.

For estimating expenses, think about your planned activities over the next year. What can the estimated income cover? You will need to consider expenses such as postage, room hire, insurance, and catering. What commitments are associated with the income (especially with respect to grants or sponsorship), and what other outstanding commitments exist?

The committee will need to agree to the budget before it is finalised. Once this has happened, the treasurer is responsible for keeping track of the figures. The budget should be reviewed during the year and revised if necessary.

## Planning specific projects

When you take on a specific project with dedicated funds, you will need a project budget. This can be done as a section of your annual budget or can be an entirely separate document.

# Applying for Grants

Obtaining grants is a great way to allow your group to undertake projects or purchase items which would normally be out of your reach financially. While the process can require some effort, a successful grant application can have wide-reaching benefits.

Grants are a way that governments, philanthropic organisations or corporations can have an impact at the local level in measurable ways. They provide an opportunity for your group to obtain funding for a specific project or purchase of equipment.

A wide range of granting opportunities become available each year. The easiest way to find out about these opportunities is to keep an eye on the regular communications from your Landcare support staff.

Every granting organisation has slightly different guidelines and asks slightly different questions. But they all have two things in common:

- They want to fund a group that can do something that will have a real impact.
- They want to read clearly written grant applications that specify exactly what will happen and how the community and the environment will benefit.
- They want to fund projects which fit their criteria and objectives.

The most successful projects are those where the granting organisation has been contacted early in the application process by a representative of the group applying for funding. They can give you guidance about what they'd like to see in the application and advise you whether your project meets their funding criteria.

A very common mistake groups make when writing grant applications is to assume that the process is all about simply filling in a form. While most funding bodies will provide a standard proforma which will need to be filled in, a good grant application is much more than just providing answers to questions. Grant applications can take quite a long time and require a lot of effort and consultation to be done well, so it's always best to start early. You may need to provide photos, quotes from suppliers or contractors, and letters of support from other organisations or individuals. Planning to obtain these should start early in the application process.

When writing the grant application, keep in mind that most successful grant applications have a few things in common:

- The grant guidelines are read closely and followed exactly.
- A clear and concise argument is provided which shows why the funding is necessary and what impact it will have on the environment and the community.
- The writing is clear, concise, unobtrusive, and informative. You can feel free to use dot points and lists to break up the text if that's appropriate for your project.

It can be a good idea to keep a 'wish list' of projects which your group would like to accomplish and which could be adapted to fit the funding criteria of different granting organisations. Your group will then have a good start on the scope and cost of the project which can be useful when searching for suitable funding.

Most funding bodies will want acknowledgement of their contribution through social media or press releases. They may also be able to supply you with a logo which you can use for this purpose.

Your landcare support staff can provide a great deal of support and information during the application process.



# Insurance

Every Landcare group needs insurance. It's a fact of life that despite the best intentions of everyone involved, sometimes things happen that have unwanted consequences.

One way to get suitable insurance cover for local Landcare groups is through Landcare Victoria Inc (LVI), however obtaining insurance through other organisations and companies is also possible.

Please ensure that any insurance product that is obtained by your group provides a suitable level of cover to protect your group. You can speak to your network representative or LVI to find out what your insurance needs are. Your need for insurance will also be determined by the way your group functions and how independent it is from other groups and local networks. This is a highly complex area and one which is too important to get wrong, so please seek advice.

If your group decides to obtain insurance through LVI, in order to keep the insurance cover current, the following conditions must be met:

- The group's financial membership must be kept current – your group will not be covered by insurance if your membership has lapsed.
- The number and names of members and any other regular volunteers must be kept updated on the membership list.
- Health and safety must be a priority, and all activities must be conducted safely.
- The LVI Rules must be followed at all times.
- Your group must adhere to all legislation which is relevant to your activities.
- All participants at activities must have their details recorded.
- If your group uses independent contractors, ensure that they hold their own insurance. Paid contractors are not covered by insurance through LVI.
- Landholder permission for activities must be obtained in writing.
- If your group organises any unusual activities, contact Landcare Victoria Inc well in advance to check that your insurance will cover the events you are planning.

Note that it is extremely important for Landcare members to not admit liability in the case of an accident. Please contact your insurer as soon as possible after any event which may require insurance cover. In addition, Landcare groups need to be certain that any contracts signed do not contain 'hold harmless' or 'indemnification' clauses.

Please consult the LVI Insurance Program Summary for details about insurance provided through LVI. The full policy documents are available by contacting Landcare Victoria Inc or by viewing the link below. If your group has insurance through another insurer, you'll need to make sure that the policy documents and other details are available for all committee members to access if necessary.

The full Landcare Victoria Inc Insurance Summary is available in the link below.

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/state/lvi/landcare-victoria-inc-insurance-summary/>

If you have any questions regarding insurance for your landcare group, please contact LVI.

# Annual Reporting

Accurate reports about Landcare activities are essential in ensuring ongoing funding for Landcare, at every level: local, regional, state and national. Lobbying for secure and increased funding for Landcare activities is only possible with a clear picture of the commitment, effectiveness and value that volunteers provide.

## Reporting to Landcare Victoria Inc:

As detailed in the LVI Rules, all Landcare groups which have chosen to be members of LVI are required to report annually on local group activities, finances, membership, and volunteer efforts. These reports are required to fulfil insurance conditions and enable LVI to have accurate information to use when advocating for increased funding for Landcare. They also enable LVI to ensure that they are sourcing an appropriate level of insurance cover to protect volunteers. You can contact LVI to obtain the exact details of your group's reporting requirements. (See Page 74 for a template titled 'Financial reporting at AGM')

### Step 1 – Group/Network LVI Member List

Review and amend the group/network LVI member list (Template can be found on page 58 of this handbook).

**Then** – if no changes are required on the list, please go to Step 2.

**Or** – if amendments are required, please update and email the updated copy to [info@lvi.org.au](mailto:info@lvi.org.au)

### BEFORE proceeding to Step 2.

Please ensure to:

- List all members (and/or member groups) complete with postal addresses and join dates.
- Join Dates (as required by legislation):
  - Members first joined after 2012 – note day, month and year
  - Reactivating members who first joined prior to 2012, just note “pre 2012”
  - Yearly renewal dates are not required
- Legislation also requires members to be removed within two weeks of ceasing membership so to make things easier:
  - If you know when an individual's membership expires please note it.
  - If the group has a common membership expiry date when the renewals for your members are all due, please indicate the common expiry date once at the top of the member list
  - Please update us ASAP if someone resigns their membership before the date noted
- Identify & list all Professional Landcarers\*, office bearers and committee members.

\*“Professional Landcarer” means an individual person in paid employment on behalf of a Member Group, who works a minimum 40% of an effective full time role.

Supply of this information is a condition of LVI membership and groups in breach of this condition may have their membership and insurance coverage suspended. For a copy of LVI Rules see link <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/state/lvi/lvi-rules/>

Please respect members' privacy and do not pass on member addresses or financial details of specific groups to any third parties.

### **Step 2 – Financial and Contact Details**

Please provide updated financial details and confirm the group contact details are correct via the annual online member group renewal form at Step 3. Please note that audited figures are not required unless specifically requested.

### **Step 3 – Group Membership Renewal Form**

Complete the online renewal form by following the link that will be emailed to all group secretaries in May / June annually. Please note - if the webform link does not open for you, try copying and pasting the link into a new web browser.

### **Step 4 – Invoicing**

Once the BOTH the group's member list and online renewal form has been received, LVI will review the submissions and issue an invoice via email within 2-5 business days for payment to be made by the group/network. If LVI has any follow up queries regarding the information provided, you will be contacted via email prior to the invoice being generated.

Please note: The LVI office experiences a high volume of enquiries during the annual renewal period, so please wait the full 5 business days before calling to check when an invoice will be issued.

### **Step 5 – Payment**

The electronic invoice can be paid via EFT or cheque and payment is expected by 1 July annually in order for the group to remain financial and covered by the LVI insurance package and incorporation.

### **Step 6 – Renewal Confirmation & Proof of Insurance**

Shortly after payment has been received and processed, the group and billing contacts will receive a confirmation via email. Insurance certificates of currency and membership certificates will then be available to groups on request if proof of insurance and membership is needed.

## **Reporting to the state government**

Annual reporting for the State Government's Victorian Landcare Program is collected by West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA). Your group will be contacted once a year, usually by your network facilitator, and an online form will be provided which a committee member can complete and return.

These reports will centre around your group's functions including funding, activities, member numbers, volunteer hours, and communication methods. Completion of this online form is much easier if records of volunteer time are kept consistently throughout the year. Most of the sample forms in this handbook include space for volunteer hours to be recorded.

## Reporting on grants funded projects

For groups that successfully applied for and were awarded grants to achieve specific projects, a report known as an acquittal will need to be provided to the funding body.

The exact requirements for the acquittal vary between different funding bodies, however in general you will be provided with a form which is usually considerably simpler than the original grant application. Common questions include:

- What were the exact activities carried out?
- What was the funding spent on? Some acquittals will require receipts to be provided.
- Was there any money left over? If your project cost less than you anticipated, you'll need to contact the organisation which provided the funding to see what they want you to do with any excess funds. Sometimes they will agree that the funds can be applied to a similar project or the purchase of plants or equipment. Occasionally you may be required to return any excess funds.
- What did you learn from the project, and how would you do things differently next time? If things didn't work out as you originally planned, don't be afraid to say it like it is. Funding bodies do understand that project processes and outcomes vary, however they will be looking for your group to build on your experience and plan to apply that knowledge towards future projects.

## Reporting to Consumer Affairs Victoria – for Incorporated groups only

(Below is a copy of information on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website)

The information below is a summary of the steps your incorporated association must take in order to submit its annual statement to Consumer Affairs Victoria properly.

### **Before the annual general meeting – prepare financial statements**

*The annual general meeting is a meeting of all the members of an incorporated association and must be held each year. It is a part of the financial reporting cycle and financial statements must be prepared in readiness for it.*

*Step 1: Prepare financial statements based on your association's financial records from the past financial year; you may have to prepare additional statements based on your association's tier level.*

*Step 2: The committee considers the financial statements; two committee members certify that the statements provide a 'true and fair' view of the association's financial performance and position.*

### **At the annual general meeting – present financial statements to members**

*Step 3: The committee presents the financial statements (with the certificate signed by two committee members) to members at the annual general meeting, which must be held within five months of the end of your association's financial year. If applicable, a review or audit report must also be presented. The annual general meeting minutes must include a copy of each of these documents.*

*Step 4: Immediately following the annual general meeting, a committee member must certify that they attended the annual general meeting and that the financial statements were presented to members.*

**After the annual general meeting – lodge the annual statement**

*Step 5: Annual statements must be lodged online using your myCAV account (an online account given to all incorporated organisations) within one month of your annual general meeting. Lodgement can be made by either the secretary or an authorised delegate of the association.*

***If your Landcare Group is Incorporated in their own right and insured with LVI, there will be a requirement that reporting is done for both organisations.***

**Reporting to the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC)**

**Small Charity**

A small charity has an annual revenue of less than \$250 000.

**Annual Information Statement**

Small charities must submit an Annual Information Statement.

**Financial reporting**

Small charities have the option to submit a financial report. If they do so, they can submit either a special purpose financial statement or a general purpose financial statement. Small charities can choose whether to use cash or accrual accounting, and do not need to have their financial statements reviewed or audited for ACNC purposes.

**Medium Charity**

A medium charity has annual revenue of \$250 000 or more, but less than \$1 million.

**Annual Information Statement**

Medium charities need to submit an Annual Information Statement. Since 2014, the Annual Information Statement has included financial questions.

**Financial reporting**

Since 2014, medium charities have been required to submit a financial report that is either reviewed or audited. They can submit either a special purpose financial statement or a general purpose financial statement. Medium charities have had the option to use transitional reporting arrangements.

# Making Your Local Landcare Voice Heard

The more the public is aware of the work being done by Landcare and its importance to the future of Australia's environment and agricultural sector, the greater the chance of impressing upon government, corporate and philanthropic decision-makers the need for ongoing and sustainable funding. Raising awareness of Landcare's results can also raise interest and greater engagement from potential volunteers or local partners.

There are numerous ways to communicate your messages including:

## Media

Local journalists are often time-poor and are looking for good local stories, so if you can provide them with a media release, photos, case studies and any other relevant materials they are usually very accommodating. The following mediums offer a range of opportunities:

- Newspapers – stories, photos, columns, editorials, letters to the Editor, and classified ads (where your group's budget allows)
- Radio – community service announcements, interviews, and ads (again, if your budget allows)
- Television – interviews and images of Landcare volunteers at work.

## Social Media

In today's online world, social media is key to spreading the word about Landcare. Please keep in mind that because it is an interactive medium, posts can attract negative comments, so be prepared to monitor and respond in line with protocols. Some tips for using social media are:

- If members of your group have social media accounts, ask them to 'like' and 'follow' the following pages
- Landcare in West Gippsland
- Landcare Victoria
- Your local group
- Share these social media posts and the posts of other local Landcare groups with your personal networks
- Post to your social media platforms about the great work you are doing, making sure you tag your local Landcare group.

## Newsletters

Your newsletter can be distributed by either email or on paper. Copies can be sent to your local council, MPs, community groups, schools, and local utilities such as the water authority.

## Website

Your group may wish to set up its own website. Please ensure that this can be updated regularly. You can also list your group's contact information and joining details on the Landcare Victoria Gateway.

## Events

- It can be good to invite representatives from your local media, council, members of parliament, and community groups to attend a program you are supporting or facilitating.
- Keep an eye out for relevant local events which your president or other committee members can attend as a speaker or to network with representatives of other community groups.
- Have a table or demonstration poster at local community festivals and events.

## Brochures/Flyers

- Brochures and flyers are easy to produce and print on a home computer. Your network facilitator can assist you with developing a brochure if you wish. A sample publicity brochure is included in the USB version of this handbook which can be adapted to include your group's details. Often you can obtain assistance from your member of parliament or neighbourhood house to help with the printing of your brochure.
- Your local post office may have options regarding distribution of your flyer to selected areas.
- You can contact retail outlets like local agricultural merchandise businesses and ask them to display the brochure in their window or distribute it in their customer mailouts.
- You can also enquire with the local council regarding placing the flyer in libraries and visitor centres.

## Displays

- Your local council may allow you to use empty shop windows to feature displays of your local group's activities.
- Libraries usually have space for displays which may be available for community organisations to use.

## Press Releases

- A media release is a tool for announcing items of interest via the media.
- It should contain a punchy headline and lead paragraph, concise key messages including acknowledgement of those supporting a particular Landcare initiative, and a photo if possible.
- Keep it short, with just the bare essentials plus a few quotes from a spokesperson.
- Ring the journalist or media outlet first to explain and then email your media release to their office.
- To extend the reach of your message, you can put a post on social media as well as sending it to others in the community who might be interested, such as local MPs, local Councils, farming body representatives, and relevant local community groups.

*Note: When using a Landcare logo in any publicity, please consult the 'Guide to use of Victorian Landcare Program Logos' and the 'Landcare Australia Logo Style Guide' whichever is appropriate. These are available online at <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/landcare-logos>. If you are using the logo of an organisation or business which has provided funding or grant money for a particular project, you will need to seek guidance regarding the use of any logo. Your network facilitator can be of assistance with this.*

## **Networking**

To generate support for the work the group does, it's important to keep key individuals or organisations informed. These can include your local mayor and councillors, key people from business clubs and service organisations, and your state and federal members of parliament.

Ideas for networking include:

- Consider contacting your Federal and State MPs and local mayor or other councillors periodically (once or twice a year) and arranging a brief chat, with the purpose of updating them on recent local Landcare activity and future plans, as well as asking them about any grants or support programs at their level of government.
- Invite each to present to a general meeting of your group once a year, or to conduct the election of the next office bearers at your AGM.
- Invite them (collectively or individually) to any Landcare activities you have planned within the next few months or so. Politicians love photo opportunities, and Landcare group gatherings such as tree plantings are great publicity for them as well as good for building a relationship with your group.
- Add them to your group's newsletter mailing list.



# Attracting New Volunteers and Keeping Members Engaged

Ensuring that volunteers are happy and engaged with a local Landcare group is vital and is an important part of securing the future of the group.

Attracting and retaining new members is essential to ensuring the continued success of Landcare groups. This involves not only recruiting volunteers but ensuring that they are given the opportunity to develop useful skills. Volunteers also need to be monitored and supported when they are new to the group.

## Recruitment

- Ensuring that your Landcare group can be easily found is important. You may not have to do the hard work of convincing people to join Landcare – there may be new members of the community, or established residents who are looking for a new group to join, who are naturally attracted to Landcare. Make sure that your group is listed on your local council's website and the register of local groups on the Landcare Gateway.
- Publicity is essential. Keeping a high profile through newsletters, social media and local publications ensures that your group is seen as active and vibrant.
- Finally, never underestimate the value of a direct approach. Having members take the time to ask other community members if they are interested in joining Landcare can be surprisingly effective.

## Skilling up new members

- Ensure that new Landcare members are given information about the group, including the code of conduct and child safety policy.
- Some people are naturally skilled and motivated in the types of activities held by Landcare. Others may be willing but not know one end of a shovel from the other. Assigning a committee member to support new members is a useful approach.

## Monitoring and supporting new members

- It is extremely useful and supportive for a new member when an established member checks in with them to ensure they are clear about how the group operates and answer any questions or concerns they may have.
- Keeping an eye on the actions of members is a reality for all organisations, and this is particularly important when members are new. Committee members need to be vigilant in order to ensure that both new and existing members are acting in a manner which is in keeping with your group's code of conduct and child safety policy.

**Having enthusiastic and engaged Landcare volunteers ensures a healthy and active group both now and into the future. There are many ways in which the enthusiasm of volunteers can be promoted:**

During the normal activities of a Landcare group, ensuring that a committee member takes the time to engage with volunteers can go a long way towards people feeling like they have a personal connection with their Landcare group. This doesn't need to be a formal approach, but simply having a committee member take time away from the activities of the day to chat and connect with attendees at the event will make a huge difference to the sense of connection which people feel.

Another way to keep people engaged is to celebrate milestones and completed events, such as:

- Holding periodic social events such as barbecues
- Marking group milestones, for example celebrating five years since the group was established, or the twentieth working bee
- Holding opening events and celebrate completed events ensuring that local media, council and CMA are invited. Other potential invitees include neighbouring Landcare groups and environmental organisations.

There are plenty of ideas online for activities which are short, easy, inexpensive, and have the potential to attract large numbers of people. Landcare Victoria Inc as well as other state Landcare websites have examples of activities which groups have submitted. (see Further Resources on page 53 of this handbook)

## **Things to consider when holding these events**

### **Publicity**

Is this event something only for current members, or is there a recruiting focus as well? Is the general public welcome? Publicity can be targeted depending on which group you are hoping to attract.

### **Catering**

Food is usually a part of any celebration and is a great way of bringing people together. You may need to check whether a safe food handling certificate or notification to the local council is required for the food component of your event. Be aware that you may need to cater for allergies and dietary requirements.

Please ensure that any committee member who is organising food is confident in that role and is compensated for any expenditure.

### **Ice-breakers**

Doing something different at the beginning of a celebration or activity can help to relax people and promote good group functioning. Some people can find this process daunting, so please tread carefully and don't request that people do anything too surprising, confronting or personal. A few suggestions include:

- Ask each person to 'tell us something we wouldn't guess about you'
- Provide an activity, such as crafting an animal out of playdough or placing pre-cut bamboo lengths in containers to take home as native bee nests
- Having people line up along the room in a particular order, such as how far away they were born.

### **Wet weather plan**

It's vital to have an inclement weather plan if you are holding an activity outdoors, or alternatively you will need to be prepared to cancel or postpone the event. This includes ensuring that organisers can contact people to inform them that the activity will be held at a different location and having a plan to transport people and equipment if necessary.

### **Photos**

If you're planning to take photos, particularly if these will be used or published after your event, you'll need to ensure that you have permission from participants, or that you are careful not to photograph people who don't want their image taken.

(A Participation Registration and Consent form example is included in on Page 67 of this Handbook)

### **Insurance**

Make sure that any event you are planning is covered by insurance. If in doubt, contact Landcare Victoria Inc to ensure that you're covered.

# Succession Planning

To ensure that Landcare groups continue into the future, it is essential that thought be given to what will happen when current committee members move on from their positions.

Succession planning can be difficult in small groups. It can sometimes seem that the success of the group is dependent on one or two particular individuals. However, this is rarely the only reason the group is successful, and eventually even the most enthusiastic and motivated people need to move on from their roles.

Groups vary widely, and planning for the time when established committee members move on from their roles will be different from one group to the next.

Succession planning is actually a two-sided activity. On one hand, new committee members and leaders need to step forward. At the same time, former committee members need to step back and allow those roles to be taken by other people. This can be a difficult thing to do, particularly when committee members have a strong sense of ownership over the role or the way things have previously been done. However, it's important to let new committee members grow into the role and develop their own style and methods.

There are a few steps to succession planning:

- 1 **Find new committee members.** By far the most successful method to achieve this is by taking a direct approach. Simply asking someone if they are interested in being on the committee can be extremely effective. Other methods include advertising through local newsletters or social media, as well as contacting residents who are new to the area.
- 2 **Conduct a skills audit.** This need not be a formal process, however developing an understanding of the skills and interests of prospective committee members can enable the right role to be given to the right person. Having certain skills, however, does not mean that people have the desire or capacity to use them to their full extent in forwarding the aims of the group. It's important to be aware that some local residents may be wanting to become Landcare members simply to be kept in the loop, attend a few activities when they have the time, and not step into a more active role at their current stage of life.
- 3 **Train people for new roles.** New office bearers on the committee may be fine to jump straight into their new roles, or they may need mentoring by more experienced members. Depending on the skills of the new member and the role they are stepping into, a handover session may be necessary, where the former and new office bearers meet to pass over any records or equipment and discuss the requirements of the role. A period of shadowing another office bearer in their role may be useful for some new members to gain the skills and confidence to perform their role successfully.
- 4 After a suitable transition period, it's important that the **previous committee members step back** and allow the newer members to do their thing.

Transitions can be difficult and establishing a new committee may require effort and patience by both long-standing and new committee members. The problems which sometimes arise during this process can include:

- Newer committee members find that the role involves more commitment than they are able or willing to offer.
- The approach to the role taken by a newer committee member is different from that taken by the previous person in that role, which is concerning to other members of the group.
- People who have been fulfilling a committee position for some time may be so relieved to step away from the role that they do not provide support to the new committee member.

Keeping in mind that these issues are usually temporary and realising that new committee members usually settle into a new role and handle it well is very important during a time of committee transition.

# Resolving Issues

Issues and conflicts can arise in all areas where humans interact. Ensuring that conflicts are resolved quickly and respectfully allows your Landcare group to continue to work together effectively to promote better outcomes for the environment.

Conflict is a normal part of any group. Usually issues are quickly and easily dealt with as part of the normal group processes. However, sometimes problems require an active conflict resolution process. This can take many forms and will depend on the nature of the issue and the personalities and positions of the people involved.

When resolving problems, it is essential to ensure that people are treated with respect at all times. It is also extremely important for issues to be addressed as quickly as is reasonably possible to achieve a clear and fair outcome.

At the forefront of any discussions should be your group's code of conduct as well as the LVI Rules (if your group is a member) and your local network.

While the method for resolving conflict will vary depending on the issue and the people involved, these are some principles which have assisted other groups:

- Conflict and disputes must be resolved in a timely manner – leaving things too long can make matters worse in the long run.
- Consider the most appropriate forum for resolving disputes. Depending on the parties involved, this may be a meeting between the people involved with one facilitator, a meeting of the executive (president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer), a committee meeting, a meeting with Landcare support staff, or meeting with a neutral external mediator from the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria or a similar body.
- Records need to be kept of any formal meeting.
- Ensure that conflicts are addressed directly, and ideally while people are sitting down. Being in a seated position is likely to make the situation calmer and minimise differences in height and body size.
- No matter what your opinion is of the behaviour of the people concerned, please be sensitive and calm at all times, and encourage others to do so as well. Remember that conflict can trigger unexpected reactions in some people, and in fact can become overwhelming for certain individuals, or bring up long-hidden issues. It is absolutely essential to tread gently, even when someone appears to be behaving atrociously or when a person appears to be unaffected or unaware of the effects of their behaviour on others.
- For the same reason, ensure that all people involved in the conflict, without exception, know that they are welcome to bring a support person to all of the discussions.

Remember:

- Treat the conflict situation as something which will naturally arise from time to time in any group, rather than escalating it as something which is a 'big problem'. This will help to keep it in perspective for the people involved and the group as a whole.

- Ensure that every person involved has a copy of the rules and expectations of Landcare members.
- Consider whether the conflict is the result of a difference of opinion, rather than either one person or the other having the wrong approach or attitude. If there are members who want to see a shift in the way the group operates, while other members are resisting that change, this can lead to a constructive discussion about the future directions of the group.
- If claims of bullying or sexual harassment are raised, these must be recognised as legal and safety issues which are covered by legislation.
- All decisions need to keep the best interests of Landcare and your local group in mind.
- Never assume that you know what the problem is, and always clarify with the people involved that you have understood their concerns correctly.

After any conflict resolution process:

- Remind members that they are bound by the decision of the committee, even if they disagree.
- It is important for members to be respectful about the process and the people involved when speaking to members of the community, no matter what their personal opinion is.
- Check in with people after a couple of weeks to ensure that they are comfortable with the process and their place within the group.

While conflict is part of group life, there are steps that can be taken to minimise future conflict. These include keeping up with changes in rules and procedures, effective distribution of information to all parties, and ensuring that processes relating to meetings and activities are followed and documented at all times.

Your landcare support staff and Landcare Victoria Inc are also good sources of support when issues arise.

## Going into Recess or Becoming Inactive

Many groups experience periods of inactivity or recess from time to time. Some groups eventually reactivate while some groups fold or fade away.

If your group is thinking of going into recess or becoming inactive, please talk to your network facilitator about your options.

**If your group just wants a quiet year**, then you can simply decide at the AGM on a minimum level of activity.

**If your group has been inactive for more than a year and is unincorporated or intends to be completely inactive**, then it is advisable to have a plan for going into and coming out of recess. The first place to start is your group's rules, as you may find that you already have a process specified. If not, you'll need to set up a system for members to be called back every one or two years to see if they want to restart.

*Set a sunset clause of two to five years where if the group hasn't reactivated after that period, the group will then close down. You will need an agreement on what is then done with the funds and assets of the group, which will need a 75% vote at a meeting called for that purpose: a Special General Meeting (SGM).*

Some of the steps which need to be followed in this case include:

- At the SGM one or two people should be chosen who will call a meeting in a year or two to determine whether the group will fold or reactivate. These people should be given the power to close down the group if there is not enough interest.
- Speak to your bank about how to keep your account open and what to do in the event that a bank signatory moves out of the area. At least a dollar a year will need to be deposited to ensure your account is not closed.

LVI usually contacts inactive member groups once a year to see if they have reactivated or closed down, so after your SGM make sure they know who to contact.

If your group is incorporated then there will need to be a minimum level of annual activity maintained to comply with the legislation, otherwise the group may need to close down. During your period of recess, the usual annual report to Consumer Affairs Victoria will still need to be submitted.

It is important to talk to your Landcare support staff before making any decisions about your group's options when considering going into recess or becoming inactive.

More details about Going into Recess and Becoming Inactive can be found in the following link: <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/state/lvi/going-into-recess-merging-and-closing-down/>



# Health & Safety Responsibilities

## Commitment to Health & Safety

Landcare's strength is attributed to being a community grass roots program that encourages the adoption of sustainable natural resource management practices within a framework of community participation.

Many of the Landcare events and activities that are carried out in Victoria require specific risk prevention and safety advisory procedures to meet these requirements. This information establishes guidelines for the Victorian Landcare community to consider in creating a safe working environment for all individuals involved in Landcare activities, recognising that the health and safety of all participants is a broad, and shared responsibility

*This section has been adapted from the Victorian Government Risk Prevention Toolkit. For a full range of WHS resources go to <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/health-and-safety>*

*Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Work Health and Safety (WHS) are fundamentally the same thing. WHS was a term adopted after January 2012. The principle OHS law in Victoria consists of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and is supported by Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017.*

All Victorian Landcare groups and networks have a moral and legal obligation to ensure they provide a safe working environment to prevent risk or injury to any person/s involved in formal Landcare activities.

When Landcare groups host any Landcare activity, they must be sure to protect the health and safety of all participants. Landcare groups employing personnel (including contractors) must also have in place appropriate OH&S policies and procedures and recognise that they are responsible in ensuring that all employees and/or contractors adhere to and conform to such procedures.

This section outlines the relevant roles and responsibilities that each Landcare partner has in relation to health and safety within the Victorian Landcare environment.

### **Landcare groups and networks**

All Victorian Landcare groups and networks have a moral and legal obligation to ensure they provide a safe working environment to prevent risk or injury to any person/s involved in formal Landcare activities. When Landcare groups and networks host any Landcare activity they must be sure to protect the health and safety of all participants.

Landcare groups and networks employing personnel (including contractors) must also have in place appropriate OH&S policies and procedures, and recognise that they are responsible in ensuring that all employees and/or contractors adhere to and conform to such procedures.

Landcare groups and networks must consider OH&S as a core function of the organisation and include within meeting procedures, appropriate time for the lodgement, communication, consultation and resolution of OH&S matters.

Landcare groups and networks must also maintain appropriate systems for recording and filing of OH&S documentation.

### **Landcare group and network office bearers and executive committees**

Office bearers and/or executive committee members of Landcare groups and networks have a responsibility to ensure that the organisation has in place suitable risk prevention measures as well as complying with the *Victorian OH&S Act 2004*.

As part of the organisations structure, it is recommended that a delegated person/s be responsible for the coordination of and record keeping of OH&S policies and procedures.

### **Government and Non-Government landlords**

Many Landcare employees are housed as tenants within a range of Government and Departmental offices such as Local Government, Department of Sustainability and Environment and/or Non-Government organisations such as Greening Australia and Industry Bodies. Landcare employees in these instances must comply with the relevant office or worksite OH&S policy and procedures in addition to meeting the OH&S requirements of their respective Landcare employer.

### **Employees**

Landcare support persons or “employees” are persons that receive financial remuneration for the provision of a service to a Landcare organisation. This includes Landcare Coordinators, Facilitators, Project Managers employed either as part time or full time, or contract-based service providers. Employees also include on-ground contract service providers, such as machinery operators, spraying contractors, work crews etc.

Effective communication between employers of Landcare support persons and employees needs to take place to ensure that all OH&S policies, procedures, legislative requirements and training needs are followed.

### **Landcare members**

There are approximately 60,000 financial Landcare members and 600 groups in Victoria

Each Landcare member has a responsibility to comply with the relevant Landcare OH&S policies and procedures applicable to the organisation of which they are a member.

Financial members of Landcare groups or networks have a responsibility to themselves, other members and all other participants when at a Landcare workplace. A member’s personal conduct must not create potential to harm or increase the likelihood of an accident or injury to either themselves or others at any Landcare worksite/activity.

# Risk Prevention

## Victorian Landcare Groups, Members and Participating Volunteers

In Victoria there are approximately 600 Landcare groups that comprise over 60,000 members.

Collectively, the support programs and personnel are committed to promoting and providing guidance and support to Landcare groups, members, landholders, volunteers and visitors in risk prevention to ensure the health, safety and well being of all participants involved in Landcare activities.

Landcare groups are incorporated organisations that have individual responsibility for governance and implementation of their activities.

This information provides the framework from which Landcare groups should consider their obligations in developing risk prevention strategies.

### Landcare Groups and Volunteers

Landcare groups carry common law obligations in relation to the activities that they undertake and facilitate. It is expected, so far as practicable, that organisers of events and activities will create a working environment to protect their own health and safety and for the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

To achieve this, Landcare groups, members and participating volunteers are advised to:

- Comply with specific Landcare safety guidelines and procedures, including the disclosure of any pre-existing injury or medical condition that might be aggravated by participation in Landcare activities.
- Create a culture of open communication and maintain a culture of risk prevention.
- Participate in the process of identifying hazards and initiating appropriate risk control strategies.
- Wear the personal protective equipment recommended for the task being undertaken.
- Report any hazards or injuries to the activity/event supervisor.
- Send Incident/accident/near miss reports to the Regional Landcare Coordinator.
- Maintain records.

### Worksite Induction

All persons participating in Landcare activities must be inducted into the worksite. This ensures that effective and consistent communication of site safety requirements and other general information is conveyed. The level of induction will vary depending on the complexity of the activity, however the following items should be considered as minimum induction requirements:

- Introduction to key personnel
- Site Co-ordinators, Facilitator, Project Manager (as applicable)
- Site tour to identify key areas

- Emergency evacuation points
- First aid equipment
- Fire fighting equipment
- Chemicals register
- Risk assessment register
- Amenities
- Storage

(It is recommended that all worksite inductions are documented on the Field Day Checklist document found on page 66 of this handbook)

### **Injury Reporting**

All injuries are to be reported to the relevant activity / event supervisor to ensure prompt treatment and are to be formally recorded on the 'Injury Record' document

### **Incident Reporting**

All incidents/accidents/near misses are to be reported to the relevant activity / event supervisor to ensure prompt corrective action. These issues are to be formally documented on the 'Incident Report' form and forwarded, for further action, to the Network Coordinator. .

(A template for Injury reporting can be found on page 77 of this handbook.)

### **Risk Assessments**

All activities are to have a formal documented assessment conducted prior to commencement of the activity. The purpose of this process is to identify tasks which have the potential to cause harm to participants and others in the vicinity of the activity and to implement control measures to minimise the risk of injury. These items are to be recorded on the 'Risk Assessment Form' which shall be maintained on-site. (A template can be found on page 64 of this handbook)

### **Chemicals**

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be obtained for all chemicals being used as part of Landcare activities. Where a chemical is recorded, on the MSDS, as a 'hazardous substance' or placarded as 'dangerous goods' this information must be included on the activity risk assessment and appropriate controls implemented.

All storage and use of chemicals (including the use of PPE) will be in accordance with the MSDS and substances will be stored in their original containers with the label intact at all times.

### **Electrical Equipment**

All portable electrical appliances (i.e. tools, extension leads etc) will be maintained (i.e. 'tagged and tested') in accordance with the requirements of AS/NZS 3760.

## Plant & Equipment

Equipment including static (stationery) and mobile plant can be hazardous to workplace safety. In order to comply with OH&S Legislation, all plant and equipment brought onto Landcare activity sites are to be registered (where appropriate), have up to date log books and are to be operated only by persons with appropriate licensing/ticket. Plant information is to be included on the site risk assessment with appropriate control measures implemented.

Where plant and equipment is hired the same OH&S requirements as those specified above are to be adhered to.

## Personal Protective Equipment

Standard Landcare Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) considered necessary should include:

- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Hat
- Safety glasses
- Boots and or suitable footwear for the task being performed
- Gloves

Additional Landcare activities may also require specialist PPE.

Activities such as working adjacent to or along roadways require specialised PPE (i.e. high visibility vests).

## First Aid & Fire Equipment

### First Aid Kits

It is recommended that Landcare groups be equipped with a First Aid kit. All participants are to be informed of the kits location. A St John's outdoor first aid or equivalent is deemed suitable for Landcare related activities. It is also recommended that a nominated person or persons at Landcare activities have at least basic First Aid qualifications.

### Fire Extinguishers

An appropriate fire extinguisher should be available at all Landcare work sites. The extinguisher is to be serviced and maintained in accordance with AS1851.

In the situation of fire danger periods or worse in days of total fire ban the activities planned must identify the fire risks associated with the work to be performed. Notification to the local fire brigade may also be advisable in some cases.

## Further Resources

### Landcare Note Series

The Landcare Note Series contains a wide variety of useful information about all aspects of running a group. Topics covered include: effective meetings, strategic planning, funding options, grants guides, financial management, project management, and more.

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/landcare-notes-managing-a-successful-group/>

### Victorian Landcare Gateway Resources

The Landcare Gateway is a place where groups share resources or ideas which have worked for them.

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/>

### Landcare Share Centre

The Landcare Share Centre makes it easier for Landcare to help Landcare by providing the means for individuals and organisations to share useful resources, ideas, contacts and opportunities for collaboration. Within the centre, we call these share-worthy things 'Gems'. Gems have, through real world application, been identified by landcarers as probably being useful to other landcarers.

<http://www.landcaresharecentre.org.au>

### In Safe Hands Toolkit

The In Safe Hands Toolkit is a safety management system for community groups involved in environmental activities, and is available for purchase:

<https://conservationskills.org.au/in-safe-hands-toolkit/>

### Our Community Group

The Our Community Group provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities.

<https://www.ourcommunity.com.au>

They also have a number of Free Financial Help Sheets including record keeping, budgeting for treasurers, and strategic planning:

<https://communitydirectors.com.au/tools-resources/finance-for-treasurers>

### Not-for-profit Law

Not-for-profit Law is a specialist legal service for community organisations. They have a range of information regarding governance, compliance and legal issues.

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au>

### **Landcare Australia**

Landcare Australia has a wide range of useful resources including links to available funding opportunities, fundraising opportunities and national Landcare publications.

<https://landcareaustralia.org.au>

### **Landcare NSW**

Landcare NSW has a range of useful factsheets, templates and toolkits. As always, please check that the guidelines and advice contained within these resources are applicable to groups in Victoria.

<https://landcarensw.org.au>


Landcare groups in other states also have resources which your group may find useful.

SECTION TWO

# Forms





A close-up photograph of a person wearing a green jacket, pointing their right index finger at a tray of small green seedlings in a black plastic nursery tray. The tray is filled with many small plants in individual compartments. The background is slightly blurred, showing other trays and the structure of a greenhouse.

*All forms are available to download from the electronic version of this handbook which will allow committee members to easily make changes to the forms and templates.*

# Membership Form

## *(GROUP NAME)* LANDCARE GROUP

Membership entitles you to: participate in decision making and activities, voting rights, a regular newsletter, access to group equipment and assistance with land management (*change as appropriate*). New members are very welcome!

For further information call *(name)* on *(phone number)*.

Membership is only \$*(amount)* per household (*if your group has individual memberships, amend details here*).

Please note: LVI rules state 1 vote per membership.

Name: .....

Names of all family members (for family membership):

.....  
 .....

Postal address: .....

.....  
 .....

Residential address: .....

.....  
 .....

Telephone number(s): .....

Email: .....

Would you like to receive Landcare notices and information by email? (*please circle*)

**YES      NO**

If paying by direct deposit, please use your name as the payment description and deposit \$*(amount)* for *(group account name)*, BSB: *(number)*, account: *(number)*. Please also fill out and attach this form to an email and send to *(email address)*.

If paying by cheque, please make the cheque for \$*(amount)* payable to: *(group name)* and post with this membership form and payment to: *(mailing address)*.

Completed forms and cash or cheques can also be given directly to the treasurer at a Landcare event. Please ensure that you enclose the form and cash or cheque in an envelope and write your name on the outside.

***Thank You!***







## Activity Planning Form

This form (list of questions) can be used to plan any activity, including social events, working bees and major publicity activities.

**Group Name:**

**Date:**

**Project Manager:**

Event Planning
Briefly describe the activity:
Where will the activity be held?
What equipment is required, and where will this be sourced?
Has the event been advertised?
Do you need to advise volunteers about any equipment or protective clothing/sunscreen they should bring with them?
Do you have an inclement weather plan, and a plan to communicate this to volunteers?
Have you obtained written permission from any landholders?
Have you advised local media?
Have you considered photographing your event for a future press release?
If so, have you lined up a volunteer to take photos, and someone to write a press release to send to the local paper?
Is there mobile phone coverage at the site? If not, what arrangements have been made to ensure that emergency services can be called if required?
Have you sighted up-to-date insurance certificates of currency of any contractors for the event?
Will you have an up-to-date first aid kit at the event? If so, how long since the kit has been checked?

Event Planning
Are you aware of any volunteers who have undergone first aid training?
Do you need wheelchair or pram access to the event?
Where are these locations close to the event? Nearest public toilet to the event  Nearest crossroad (if it is necessary to call an ambulance or other emergency service)  Nearest vehicle access
Do all event organiser hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC)?

## Committee Member – Volunteer Hours

Names of committee members who have been involved in planning this activity	Number of hours this volunteer spent in planning the activity



## Risk Assessment form

Landcare takes safety very seriously and seeks to mitigate risks wherever possible.

This document is to be completed on-site before commencing the activity.

**Activity:**

**Date:**

**Participants:**

**Overseen by:**

**Date:**

Hazard Identification Will you be exposed to any of these hazards today?	Have these hazards been assessed for risk? Are these hazards controlled well enough?		Risk Control List the extra controls you need to make to work today safe. Use over the page if more room is required	Who is responsible? For ensuring controls are implemented	When Controls to be implemented
	Yes	No			
<b>Manual Handling</b> (ie, lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, throwing, carrying & repetitive work)					
<b>Plant &amp; Equipment</b> Hazardous substance / Dangerous Goods / Asbestos					
<b>Loud or excessive noise</b>					
<b>Potential to fall from height</b>					
<b>Animals / Infectious Diseases</b>					
<b>Electrical Wires</b> Overhead / Underground					
<b>High Pressure Equipment</b> Fluid/ Air / Gas					
<b>Slips / Trips / Falls</b>					
<b>Contractors / General Public</b>					
<b>Traffic Conditions / Traffic Management</b>					
<b>Extreme Weather Conditions</b> Heat / Cold / Storms					
<b>Site Conditions</b> Access / Egress / Terrain / Canopy / Roads					
<b>Exposure to Excessive UV / Sun</b>					
<b>Communication Issues</b>					
<b>Welfare of Individuals</b> Fatigue / Stress / Hydration					
<b>Other</b>					

**Can these hazards be appropriately controlled and the activity undertaken safely?**

**YES** – proceed with activity

**NO** – what else do we need to do so that we can?

***Doing nothing and hoping that everything will be ok is not an effective approach!***

## Safety of Children

Landcare takes its responsibilities to children very seriously and is committed to ensuring the safety of children at all times. As part of this commitment, all committee members at the event undertake to observe the interactions and behaviour of the children and adults attending the event.

*N.B It is a requirement that the event organisers have a current Working with Children Check in place. (See page 81 for Landcare Victoria Inc Child Safety Policy)*

## Field Day Checklist

Checklist item	YES	NO
Is the weather going to be good enough to continue with your planned activities?		
Have you completed a risk assessment?		
Have you organised for a list of participants involved in your activity to be recorded?		
Has a briefing been provided to inform participants of the day's activity & tasks?		
Are all participants involved in the activity capable to undertake the planned tasks?		
Is all personal protective equipment available and in appropriate working order?		
Have you organised a first aid person?		
Has an emergency plan been developed?		
Is there adequate food and drink available?		
Have you got water and soap for hand washing for food breaks?		
Worksite Induction	YES	NO
Participants have completed a worksite induction in the following areas:		
Induction to key personnel (Site coordinator, Landcare staff )		
Site tour to identify key areas		
Emergency evacuation point		
First Aid Equipment		
Fire Fighting Equipment		
Chemicals register		
Risk Assessment Register		
Amenities		
Other		

**If you answered NO to any of these questions, please ensure that before your activity starts the answer is YES to all these points!!!**

Remember:

Sunscreen  
 Repellent  
 Hats  
 Footwear  
 Gloves etc



## Event Record Form

This form is to be completed by the project manager at the conclusion of each event. It is useful to capture this information to be used in reporting and for communication and media.

Event Planning
Briefly describe the activity:
Was all or most of the planned work finalised today?
How many committee members attended the activity?  How many hours were committee members on site?
How many general volunteers attended the activity?  How many hours were general volunteers on site?
Was your network facilitator present?
Were there any safety issues? Please detail what these were and how they were addressed:
Were there any other issues? Please detail:
Are there tasks which need to be finalised? This can include such things as equipment to be returned, people to be contacted about the works, publicity regarding the event, or other tasks:

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes Template

<b>Meeting of the _____ Landcare group committee</b> Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____ <b>Welcome to the meeting by Chairperson</b> <i>This may include acknowledging the traditional owners of the land</i>		
<b>Present:</b> <i>Names of people at the meeting</i>		
<b>Apologies:</b> <i>Names of people who gave notice that they couldn't attend</i>		
<b>Conflicts of Interest:</b> <i>Any member present who may benefit from activities of the Landcare group</i>		
<b>Minutes (from previous meeting)</b> <b>Moved:</b> <i>Name of a person who has read the previous minutes and is happy to place on record that they believe the minutes are true and correct</i>  <b>Seconded:</b> <i>Name of a person who agrees with the mover and is happy to place on record that they believe the minutes are true and correct</i>  <b>CARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT CARRIED <input type="checkbox"/></b> <i>(A show of hands that all agree, or a formal vote if it seems evenly split)</i>		
Item / Discussion	Action	Who
<b>Business Arising (from previous minutes):</b> <i>Items needing discussion following on from the last meeting</i>		
<b>Correspondence in/out:</b> <i>A list of correspondence received by either letter or email and any actions which need to be taken</i>		



# Annual General Meeting (AGM)

## Minutes Template

If your group is incorporated, an Annual General Meeting is required to be held each year within five months of the end of the financial year. If your group is not incorporated, such a meeting is not essential, however it is good practice to hold one annually if possible. The AGM serves as a chance to inform members of the activities and direction of the group and is the forum where new committee members and office bearers are nominated and elected.

Depending on the rules of your group, the committee elections can occur annually or at larger intervals such as every two or three years.

### **Prior to the AGM:**

- Have all members been informed of the meeting well in advance, and has any publicity about the meeting been arranged? (Publicly advertising the meeting is not required but can help to raise the profile of the group and attract new members.)
- Has the venue been booked?
- Have guest speakers or catering been organised? These are optional but are often welcome additions to the AGM, and can assist in attracting people to the meeting.
- If a guest speaker has been booked, has a gift been organised to thank them? And who will introduce and thank the speaker (this is usually the president but can be other members if preferred).
- Have the president and treasurer developed written reports? Have sufficient of these reports been printed for attendees?
- If using, has the Health Check for Landcare Groups (Appendix page 62) been completed?

### **After the AGM:**

- Ensure that the minutes are written up and distributed as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Ensure that all items which need to be followed up are attended to promptly.
- Arrange for handover of any changing committee roles, and for support to be given to any committee members who may be new to their roles.
- If changes to signatories for bank accounts are necessary, this should be attended to as soon as possible.
- If your group is incorporated, the public officer will need to upload the annual statement and fee to Consumer Affairs Victoria.



# Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes Template

## Annual General Meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ Landcare group committee

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Welcome to the AGM by Chairperson

*This may include acknowledging the traditional owners of the land*

### Present:

*Names of people at the AGM*

### Apologies:

*Names of people who gave notice that they couldn't attend*

Is there a quorum? Yes  No

*An AGM is only valid with at least 50% of members +1 present*

### Conflicts of Interest:

*Any member present who may benefit from activities of the Landcare group*

### Minutes (from previous AGM)

#### Moved:

*Name of a person who has read the previous minutes and is happy to place on record that they believe the minutes are true and correct*

#### Seconded:

*Name of a person who agrees with the mover and is happy to place on record that they believe the minutes are true and correct*

CARRIED  NOT CARRIED

*(A show of hands that all agree, or a formal vote if it seems evenly split)*

Item / Discussion	Actions needed	Who will perform this task
Business Arising (from minutes): <i>Items requiring discussion following the last AGM</i>		
<i>summarise it for the meeting</i>	Seconded:	Yes/No
<b>Treasurer's report</b> <i>The treasurer needs to provide a written financial statement, and summarise it for the meeting</i>	Mover:  Seconded:	<b>Treasurer's report accepted?</b>  Yes/No
<b>Business Arising (from minutes):</b> <i>Items needing discussion following the last AGM</i>	<b>Actions needed</b>	<b>Who will perform this task?</b>



## Financial Report for AGM

**Please Note: Items in bold are required for the LVI Renewal paperwork and a financial report from the AGM containing this information will be accepted in lieu of the completion of the group details on the LVI renewal form. Figures are not required to be audited if income is under \$250,000 per annum unless required by the group membership.**

**Group Name:**

**AGM Date:**

**Income Total:** \$

**Grant Income:** \$

Membership: \$

Interest: \$

Other: \$

**Financial Period Covered:**

**Expenditure Total:** \$

**Staff Costs:** \$

**Number of Staff:**

**Independent Contactors:**

**Number of Contactors:**

Other:

**Assets Total:** \$

Bank Balance: \$

Petty Cash: \$

Property: \$  
(Asset Register attached)

Amounts Owed: \$

**Liabilities Total:** \$

*(Contracted Commitments)*

Unspent Grant Funds: \$

Staff Entitlements: \$  
*(Leave provisions etc)*

Amounts Owing: \$

Other: \$

### NOTES

Other Committed Funds: \$

Comparison to Budget: \$

Projected Budget Position:

### SIGNED

Treasurer:

Committee Member:





# Incident Report form

## Please indicate category

Near Miss
  Hazard (Potential)
  Incident

## Site Details

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Incident Details

Plant / Equipment Involved (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Near Miss / Hazard / Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Remedial Action

Immediate action taken to eliminate / reduce hazard / re-occurrence of incident or near miss:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed future action to eliminate / reduce hazard / re-occurrence of incident or near miss:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Complete this section, ONLY if reporting a Near Miss or Incident*

## General Information

Date of near miss / incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of near miss / incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather conditions at time of near miss / incident: \_\_\_\_\_

## Personnel Details

Persons Involved in Near Miss/Incident:

\_\_\_\_\_

Persons Sustaining Injuries & Description of Injuries:

Name/s	Description of injuries
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## WorkSafe Victoria notification

Part 5 of the OHS Act requires notification to WorkSafe Victoria for all serious workplace incidents. In respect of such incidents, the Act also requires preservation of the incident site until an inspector arrives or issues a direction, subject to some exceptions.

**In summary, the Act requires:**

- Immediate notification of a notifiable incident to WorkSafe (phone 13 23 60).
- Written notification within 48 hours.
- Preservation of the incident site until an inspector arrives or directs otherwise.

Additional information is contained overleaf.

Notification Details: (i.e. Date, Time & Who Contacted)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**IMPORTANT:**

Record details of all injuries sustained on an Injury Record found in the Injury Register at each worksite.

Attach a copy of the Injury Record (if applicable) to this form prior to distribution (path identified below).

**Raised By:**

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....



# Appendix







# Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy

All Landcare groups are required to have a child safety policy and a code of conduct which includes addressing sexual harassment and bullying.

You have several options to develop these:

- Your group can write your own policies
- You can work with your local Network representative to write them.
- With permission, you can use the policies from another organisation.

LVI have policies which groups can use. These are reproduced on the following pages.

*Landcare Victoria Inc. is the independent representative body for Landcare in Victoria and exists to secure increased recognition, resourcing and support for the Landcare movement.*

## Landcare Victoria Inc. – Code of Conduct

### PREAMBLE

Central to the success of Landcare are good people who demonstrate a high standard of professional conduct, which is evident in their dealings with both organisations and people. This code of conduct is written to help support both LVI at the State level as well as regional networks and local groups to be effective and skilled at managing the range of issues referred to in the code.

LVI requires by its rules that all member groups adopt a code of conduct. This document is designed to be endorsed by member groups as their own code of conduct. The most recent copy of the code will be available on the LVI website and the Victorian Landcare Gateway.

The essence of this code is to capture:

1. Set general principles of behaviour and ensuring that respect is a central part of landcare activity.
2. Having appropriate child safe policies in place,
3. Establishing procedures through which sexual harassment and bullying issues are firstly minimized and secondly dealt with appropriately if required.

Breaches the code of conduct must be addressed by the Member Group, who should advise the person breaching the code to cease such actions. Where the code of conduct is breached in a serious or repeated manner this should trigger disciplinary action, including, if appropriate suspension of membership. Complaints regarding code of conduct breaches must be handled in a timely, responsive and sensitive manner.

If a Member group fails to address breaches of the code of conduct then this may be grounds for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion of the Member Group from Landcare Victoria Inc.

## 1 General Code of Behaviour

LVI Members, volunteers and staff, including those of an affiliated Member Group, must meet the following requirements in regard to their conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by LVI, including by an affiliated Member Group and in any role they hold within LVI or a Member Group:

- a. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others, and value their ideas and opinions;
- b. Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealings with others;
- c. Conduct themselves in line with Landcare Victoria Inc. values;
- d. Maintain a duty of care to others involved in LVI or the Member Group's programs (where a duty of care applies)
- e. Be professional in, and accept responsibility for, their actions ;
- f. Comply with LVI and affiliated Member Group guidelines , including this Policy, regarding appropriate conduct
- g. Show concern and caution towards others who may be sick or injured ;
- h. Operate within the Rules of the landcare movement which govern LVI and the Member Groups
- i. Report any unlawful, threatening or violent behaviour to the appropriate authorities

LVI Members, volunteers and staff, including those of an affiliated Member Group must not:

- j. Engage in any unlawful, threatening or violent behaviour
- k. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade any person;
- l. Engage in any form of harassment of others; and
- m. Unlawfully discriminate against any person;
- n. Use their involvement with LVI, or a Member Group to promote their own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are inconsistent with those of LVI or a Member Group .
- o. Do anything that brings the landcare movement or Landcare Victoria Inc. into disrepute

## Child safety policies

### Context to the Code

Landcare Victoria Inc. (LVI) and its member organisations strive to be Child Safe, with no tolerance for child abuse and a commitment to children's best interests. All children who participate in our activities have a right to feel and to be safe. We encourage children to express their views and we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them.

Physical or sexual abuse of a child is a crime and will be reported to police, including grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years. All adults who form a reasonable belief that such a sexual offence has occurred have an obligation to report it to police.

This Code complies with the Child Safe Standards. LVI recognises that there are key risks to Child Safety being:

- Physical or Sexual abuse
- Grooming (abuse of trust usually occurs where there is an ongoing relationship of trust)
- Inappropriate child-to-child or adult-to-child physical or verbal contact
- Circulation of sexually explicit material.

### Managing these risks

In order that these risks are managed effectively, all groups/networks need to:

- a. Consider child safety risks in their event/activity planning
- b. Actively work to mitigate any risks
- c. Ensure they have people appropriately qualified to work with children as applicable
- d. Model appropriate behaviour towards children
- e. Listen directly to children and respond to them appropriately
- f. Report any complaints, concerns or disclosures through LVI.

LVI Members must not:

- g. Engage in any activity with a child that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them ;
- h. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves
- i. Be alone with a child unnecessarily and for more than the shortest possible time
- j. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature or use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- k. Show favouritism to children through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention

*See attachment 1.1, tips and tools for creating a child safe event.*

## Sexual harassment, bullying and respect

### Context to the Code

All employees and volunteers in Landcare are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. LVI has a commitment to provide a healthy and safe working environment free from workplace bullying and sexual harassment at all levels of Landcare in Victoria.

### Managing these risks

In order for landcare groups/networks to effectively manage these risks, they will need to:

- a. Be aware of potential situations where such behaviour can occur in planning events/ activities,
- b. Actively plan to manage such potential situations
- c. Provide a clear pathway for a matter to be raised within the organization
- d. Ensure processes maintain confidentiality and protect people's identity.

*(See attachment 1.1, 'Risks to be managed in reducing the risk of sexual harassment and bullying')*

### Conclusion

This policy is designed to aid all organisations in Landcare to conduct safe activities by recognizing risks across a range of areas and working actively to mitigate these in their planning.

LVI is able to provide support to groups as applicable in relation to this Code of Conduct.

## Attachment 1.1 To LVI Code of Conduct

### Tips and tools for creating a child safe event

The following are a range of tips and tools for groups to consider in their planning and conduct of events. It is important that the matters raised are all considered in the planning and conduct of an event.

1. Be upfront about child safety to deter inappropriate behaviour (mention it in activity briefings, put it on your website etc)
2. Listen if children report feeling uncomfortable
3. Make sure children and adults know who to go to if they have concerns (for big events have signs that are at a variety of eye levels, and ensure organizing staff are clearly distinguishable)
4. If families bring children to activities, immediately advise the parent or carer that they must directly supervise the child at all times
5. Ensure all unaccompanied children work in groups of three or more with either two or more adults or with children of a similar age
6. Ensure that no child is alone with only one other person at any time other than their parent or designated carer
7. Include an 'under 18' checkbox on your activity participation sheet
8. Design activities so there are clear sightlines and limit access to any hidden places that could conceal inappropriate conduct.

### Risks to be managed in reducing the risk of sexual harassment and bullying

The following are identified risks and potential solutions that can be adopted to deal with these matters:

1. The workplace / organization is not alert to the risk of such issues.  
**Potential actions:** Overt emphasis on these issues in policies, reporting (i.e. part of OHS reports) and discussion at committee of management. Written part of employment agreements with staff. Regular training / refreshers in these matters with both staff and volunteers.
2. The organization has no policy framework to deal with an issue.  
**Potential actions:** Adopt and follow this Code. Have appointed person(s) who are clearly identified as those to whom issues are reported. Maintain effective records of events, meetings and activities. Seek support of LVI as applicable.
3. The organization does not understand the nature of such matters.  
**Potential actions:** Ensure group understands that behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, humiliating or that degrades, ridicules or insults or otherwise causes a detriment to the health and safety of a staff member or volunteer is incorporated in planning and training.

4. The workplace is conducive to such behaviour. A challenge is that a significant portion of Landcare work is done by single employees, dealing with individual people, sometimes on a frequent basis over a short space of time.

**Potential actions:** Good procedures and support for staff in this environment. Clear communication with members/volunteers regarding their responsibilities. Care by key individuals to observe behaviour of people in group settings for indications of potential issues.

5. The workplace and social environment are closely linked. Landcare Group members are also neighbours, CFA volunteers and have children at school together.

**Potential actions:** Ensure these other groups (as you can) are also discussing these issues as a matter of course. Be alert to the behaviour of individuals in other settings as these may provide an indication of potential issues.

6. A person's privacy is breached during the process. In contrast with normal committee business, such matters must be kept confidential in order to protect all parties.

**Potential actions:** Have clear people who can have such a matter reported to. Seek help as soon as practical when an issue arises from LVI.

7. The group does not have the skills, resources or separation of interests to deal with the issue raised.

**Potential actions:** Group seeks support to work the issue through. This may involve LVI, an independent person (either locally or externally), depending on the situation. Be prepared to act in a timely manner, in order to minimize further risk, as well as to try and resolve the matter.

#### **Approved LVI CoM – 19 April 2018**

*Landcare Victoria Inc. is the independent representative body for Landcare in Victoria and exists to secure increased recognition, resourcing and support for the Landcare movement.*

## Landcare Victoria Inc – Child Safety Policy

### Statement of Commitment

Landcare Victoria Inc (LVI) is a Child Safe organisation, with zero tolerance for child abuse and a commitment to children's best interests. All children who participate in our activities have a right to feel and be safe. We encourage children to express their views and we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them.

Physical or sexual abuse of a child is a crime and will be reported to police, including grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years. All adults who form a reasonable belief that such a sexual offence has occurred have an obligation to report it to police.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to keep children safe at Landcare

### Context

This policy complies with the Child Safe Standards. LVI recognises that there are key risks to Child Safety being:

- Physical or Sexual abuse
- Grooming (abuse of trust usually occurs where there is an ongoing relationship of trust)
- Inappropriate child-to-child or adult-to-child physical or verbal contact
- Circulation of sexually explicit material.

LVI understands that all children are vulnerable and will consider the increased vulnerability of: Aboriginal children, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with disabilities.

### Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Code of Conduct will result in a warning or a suspension of membership. Persons who repeatedly breach the code of conduct will no longer be eligible for membership.

### Do

- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Model appropriate adult behaviour
- Listen to children and respond to them appropriately
- Welcome all children and their carers and be inclusive
- Report any complaints, concerns or disclosures regarding Child Safety to the Executive Officer. Alternate contact is the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) 1300 78 29 78
- Respect privacy of children and only disclose information to people who need to know.

**Don't**

- Do not ignore or disregard any complaints, concerns, or disclosures regarding child safety
- Do not develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism with gifts or inappropriate attention
- Do not exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking site or email addresses with children.

**Risk Management**

LVI will:

- Be upfront about child safety to deter inappropriate behaviour (mention it in activity briefings, put it on your website etc)
- Listen if children report feeling uncomfortable
- Make sure children and adults know who to go to if they have concerns (for big events have signs that are at a variety of eye levels)
- If families bring children to activities, immediately advise the parent or carer that they must directly supervise the child at all times
- Ensure all unaccompanied children work in groups of three or more with either two or more adults or with children of a similar age
- Ensure that no child is alone with only one other person at any time
- Include an Under 18 checkbox on your activity participation sheet
- Design activities so there are clear sightlines and obstruct any hidden places that could conceal inappropriate conduct
- Have a Code of Conduct covering child safety and make it a condition of membership
- Make sure all activity organisers/leaders have Working with Children Checks (only adults who are participating in the activity in the same way as a child do not need a check).

*Adopted by resolution of LVI Committee of Management*

**Relevant Rules**

The CoM resolved that compliance with the Code of Conduct be made a condition of membership in the Rules and that breaches of the Code of Conduct be a basis for a warning or a suspension of membership.

*(OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES: Code of Conduct, Work Health and Safety)*



# Health Check for Landcare Groups

The Governance Health Check below is not compulsory; however, groups may find it useful.

It has been designed to give Landcare groups a tool to identify good governance practices and measure their progress in these areas.

It could be useful to complete this check annually, perhaps prior to your AGM.

Essential Actions	N/A	No	Needs Attention	Yes
<b>GOVERNANCE – refer Page 19 of handbook</b>				
The group has a folder of key documents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificate of Incorporation (if applicable)</li> <li>• Contact details of members</li> <li>• List of current committee members</li> <li>• Details of insurance held</li> <li>• Assets owned by the group</li> <li>• Bank account details</li> <li>• Names of bank signatories</li> <li>• Constitution and policy documents</li> </ul>				
Records are kept for at least 7 years and are stored securely.				
A Hire Agreement is used for the hire of any assets owned by the group.				
<b>MEETINGS</b>				
The group holds meetings regularly (for example, once every 2-3 months).				
All members are notified of each meeting date well in advance (at least 2 weeks prior).				
Minutes are recorded for all meetings and distributed in a timely manner: general meetings to all members, committee meetings to committee members.				
The minutes of the previous meeting are confirmed as correct at the commencement of each meeting and this is noted in the minutes.				
A financial statement is presented at each meeting.				
<b>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – refer page 26 of handbook</b>				
All funds that come into the organisation are used in ways that are consistent with the constitution.				
Committee members understand the financial position of the organisation and are encouraged to ask any questions they may have.				
All payments have the written authorisation of at least two committee members.				
A minimum of two signatories apply on bank accounts.				

Essential Actions	N/A	No	Needs Attention	Yes
<b>INSURANCE – refer page 32 of handbook</b>				
The group has a suitable level of insurance cover to protect the group, volunteers, equipment, and members of the public.				
The adequacy of the insurance is reviewed regularly.				
Any equipment owned by the group is insured.				
<b>WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY – refer page 48 of handbook</b>				
The group completes a risk assessment for all activities prior to commencement and retains a copy.				
All injuries or adverse events, and the actions required to be taken following these, are recorded and these records are retained on file.				
Safe work method statements exist for any tools or machinery which is hired out or used in Landcare activities.				
<b>REPORTING – refer page 33 of handbook</b>				
If incorporated, the organisation has submitted its annual fee and statement to Consumer Affairs Victoria Landcare Victoria Inc and ACNC (if applicable).				
If registered for GST, BAS is lodged for the most recent reporting period.				
If incorporated, the group has a current public officer and details are correct at Consumer Affairs Victoria.				
The group is registered with the local council community groups register.				
The group is registered on the Victorian Landcare Gateway.				
<b>INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS</b>				
Agreements are developed with contractors and held on file.				
Copies of public liability insurance for all contractors are sighted.				
Workers compensation insurance certificates of currency for contractors is sighted.				
Copies of contractors' relevant licences (for example chemical user's accreditation) are sighted.				
<b>COMMUNICATIONS – refer page 37 of handbook</b>				
The group communicates to its network via a regular newsletter or other channels.				
Consent is obtained from individuals for any images or personal information which is used in communications.				
If the group uses social media to promote its activities, any users of social media are endorsed by the committee.				
Social media login details are shared by a minimum of two individuals in the group.				
The group is aware of the Regional Catchment Strategy.				

# Cultural Heritage Information

## Partnerships with Traditional Owners in the West Gippsland Catchment

WGCMA, Landcare, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) have worked together in West Gippsland to create training and resources for Landcarers to ensure they are protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage when planning and carrying out environmental projects.

An on-country training session and Cultural Heritage Information packs (CHIPs) have been designed to assist Landcarers to protect Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in all the projects they undertake across the West Gippsland Catchment region.

To register for a training session and for more information please contact your Regional Landcare Coordinator

### Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country. It can be given by both non-Indigenous people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There are no set protocols or wording for an Acknowledgement of Country, to pay respect to the Traditional Land-Ownning groups within the West Gippsland Catchment the following wording may be used:

If the meeting is significant and relates to whole-of catchment management, the following text is recommended, or if the meeting is in an area of the WGCMA catchment which is outside of a determined RAP area:

***"I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the WGCMA area: The Gunaikurnai, the Bunurong / Boon Wurrung and the Wurundjeri" I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, future and to the Elders of other communities who may be here today."***

Additionally, in meetings held in the Wellington and Latrobe Shires east of Warragul, the recommended text for an acknowledgement of Traditional Ownership is

***"Our meeting (conference workshop, etc.) is being held on the Traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai and I wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, future and to the Elders of other communities who may be here today."***

In meetings west of Tarwin River, substitute "Bunurong / Boon Wurrung".

***"Our meeting (conference workshop, etc.) is being held on the Traditional lands of the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung and I wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, future and to the Elders of other communities who may be here today."***

Please refer to the Cultural Heritage Information Pack (CHIP) at the back of this handbook.

# Network Information

