



WARRAGUL TENNIS CLUB

Warragul Tennis Club

Strategic Plan
2021- 2026



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Prepared by
GippSport Community Solutions



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STRATEGIC PLAN 2021- 2026

Acknowledgments

The Warragul Tennis Club acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government in the development of this strategic plan through the Sport & Recreation Victoria Sporting Club Grants Program.



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

We also acknowledge the staff at Baw Baw Shire Council, Tennis Victoria and other important stakeholders for providing background information and support for this planning project.

Introduction

The Warragul Tennis Club is situated in the heart of West Gippsland and includes two venues, one on Burke Street opposite the Leisure Centre and the second on Charles St in Brooker Park in Warragul. Each facility has 6 synthetic grass courts which are always open to the public.

The Warragul Tennis Club is managed by a volunteer committee which is affiliated with Tennis Victoria. They are supported by a professional coaching service, providing a range of tennis programs including; Junior and Senior Saturday competition and Wednesday Night Social Tennis.

Warragul is in Baw Baw Shire which is one of Victoria's fastest growing municipalities. Located 100 kilometres to the east of the Melbourne CBD, the shire offers a mix of rural and urban living with affordable housing, scenic views and relaxed lifestyle making it an attractive option for new residents, leading to unprecedented growth.

Baw Baw Shire covers approximately 4,027 square kilometres of high quality farmland, national parks and residential areas. The current population in Baw Baw of 50,000 is expected to rise above 70,000 by 2030. Most of these people are in the towns along the rail and road corridor of Warragul, Drouin, Longwarry, Yarragon, and Trafalgar.

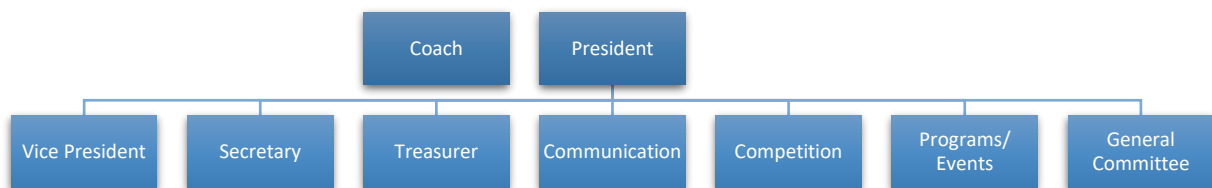
Tennis is the 7th highest participated sport in Baw Baw as anticipated in the Recreation Strategy with forecasted growth of around 4%. Tennis Australia in the State of Play report also shows that participation reaches across all age groups, demographics and continues to grow across the country.

The Warragul Committee are committed to growing the club to be more inclusive, well managed and ensuring that everyone that participates at the club has a positive social experience and that their volunteers are supported with balanced workloads. This planning process has explored all of these goal areas to map out a framework for future club development.

Organisational Structure

The Warragul Tennis Club is an Incorporated Association, managed by a volunteer committee under the new model rules. There is a professional coach that provides services for the club and the local tennis community under a contract. The tennis courts are owned and managed by Baw Baw Shire Council and there is a positive working relationship between the club and Council, with the facilities open to the public at all times, as well as catering for the club's programs and competitions.

The organisational structure looks like:



The club has other appointed roles as needed to undertake volunteer roles that include Association Delegates, Volunteer Coordinator, Tournament Director, Child Safe Officer, First Aid Officer, and there is currently no paid administrative staff employed at this time. Team selections are currently being done by the competition manager- with support from the coach for the junior teams.

Present Strategy

The club did not have a Strategic Plan in place prior to this process however they have completed a Club Health Check with Tennis Victoria which included the development of an action plan which has been considered as part of the planning project.

Some of the key reasons for developing the plan was to;

- Grow participation
- Spread the volunteer workload across more volunteers
- Effectively plan for the future, with a key framework for decision making

The Local Landscape

The club is located in Baw Baw Shire which is experiencing rapid population growth. This presents a fantastic opportunity for the club to grow participation. The Baw Baw Advocacy Strategy identifies Recreation as one of the 7 focus areas for Council;

- ✓ Recreation- Sporting precincts, Logan Park cycling precinct, Indoor Stadiums, Tracks and Trails and Female Friendly Facilities.

The Baw Baw Recreation Strategy 2017-2027 identified that:

Tennis Victoria have previously worked with Council on the Tennis Strategy developed in 2005. The organisation aims to continue to have strong working relationships with Councils as tennis courts are most commonly on Council land. Tennis facilities in Baw Baw are considered to be good quality and underutilised. The strategic aim of Tennis Victoria is to have more people playing tennis, more often. There is scope for an increase in participation in social tennis. Programs such as Book a Court (online booking software linked with pin pad access at venues) is a great opportunity for clubs to increase their accessibility to the community.

Tennis Participation

TENNIS AUSTRALIA VISION

Tennis Australia released *Tennis 2020: facility development and management framework for Australian tennis*.

The framework outlines Tennis Australia's vision and approach to nurturing and advancing the prospects of tennis and its facilities in partnership with our state and territory Member Associations, clubs, government and other stakeholders.

The future foundation for Australian Tennis:

- Better planning, better strategies
- More and better national infrastructure
- Better management practises

The results:

- More active players
- More great champions
- More devoted fans
- Healthier communities

The current marketing brand for tennis is a "A Match for All".

Tennis Australia have released ClubSpark which is an online tool designed to simplify club's administration duties., ClubSpark can manage: website, court hire, memberships and events. Warragul have recently started using the system which will streamline future operations.

Tennis Victoria is the governing body for tennis in Victoria.

Warragul Participation Numbers

- Membership numbers 103 total – Increasing
- 25% female/ 75% male
- 12 seniors
- 74 juniors
- Coaching Numbers- increasing and up to 83
- Social members – up to 18
- Members generally live within 10 minutes of Warragul

Club Operations

The range of programs and services is increasing, the club predominantly run over the summer season however social tennis and coaching continues over winter as well.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Tournament Team Training	Social Tennis	Mid-week Ladies	Social Practice	Junior Comp	
	Coaching	Coaching/ Hot Shots		Coaching	Senior Comp	

Consultation Findings

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

The club faced challenging questions around

- How can the workload be shared across more people?
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive club with only very limited volunteer and staff resources.
- Good Governance- which areas to focus on first

Why do members choose Warragul?



SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis was developed in consultation with the Committee after review of the survey results and stakeholder feedback.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated and experienced committee, which a shared purpose and drive • Social media following increasing • Strong positive leadership • Professional Coach contracted • Social Tennis Program • Dedicated volunteers • Good facilities, in great locations with strong Council support for facility use and maintenance • Court availability for members, free court hire • Add value to the local Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex issues being faced by a volunteer committee • Financial constraints/ stability • Size of facilities for social functions • Reliance on volunteers • Formal Club Governance practices • Ideally membership numbers would be higher to ensure sustainability • More club documentation is needed • Lack of member diversity • Shade/ seating available
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on opportunities being created by the great professional coach • Possible opportunities for partnerships with other sporting clubs • Clear priorities for facility development/ future plans with supporting documentation • New member mentoring/ welcoming packs • Membership growth • Modified programs/ events/ formats • Improved marketing & promotion • Clinics with the local schools • Access for All Ability Programs • Local population growth and forecasted growth in tennis • Partnership with Tennis Victoria and Club Spark utilisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer burn out • Reputational damage or people chose other sports/ activities • Rebuilding the club again post COVID • Other recreational opportunities detracting from tennis clubs • Redevelopment of facilities reduces the numbers of courts available • Professional coach moving on



Strategic Plan

Vision:

“To provide and grow inclusive, fun and safe tennis opportunities through our friendly community club”

Goals:

Warragul Club will strive to be a well-managed community tennis club by:

1. Attracting & retaining new members and visitors to the Club by providing an inclusive and welcoming experience to all.
2. We value the partnerships that we have made and will build on those to ensure we can advocate for our club, for tennis and to develop the facilities
3. As a community tennis club, our people are important and as a team we; develop, play and look after each other.
4. Sustainable financial performance underpinned by stable governance and documentation, whilst operating the Club in a transparent, compliant manner.
5. Utilising technology to promote, communicate, save costs, manage business information, and derive revenue wherever possible.

Club Core Values:

- ✓ We value our volunteers, so the workload is shared, and everyone is supported
- ✓ We want to involve the broader community in all that we do, tennis is for everyone
- ✓ We will be well governed, safe, and sustainable

Implementation Plan

Following is a series of actions that have been developed in line with the Warragul Tennis Club's values and the Tennis Victoria Health Check to be implemented over the coming five years.

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

Goal 1: Attracting & retaining new members and visitors to the Club by providing an inclusive and welcoming experience to all.

1.1	Clarify the new members process and welcoming procedure.	Very High
1.2	Work with the Tennis Association to ensure that the competition structures are suitable to the needs and wants of the members. Select teams fairly with clear processes.	Very High
1.3	Consider ways to partner with the Tennis Coach to transition clients to purchase a club membership	High
1.4	Ensure that the club promotional materials, club house and information is easy to read and reflects a broad demographic of users.	High
1.5	Continue to try new strategies to welcome community social members.	Medium
1.6	Target specific areas for membership growth i.e. women, Access for for All Ability, social and design information and options that will better meet their needs	High
1.7	Through consultation, it was agreed that social functions at the club would have the focus of club building rather than income generation. It is currently a low priority for members.	Ongoing

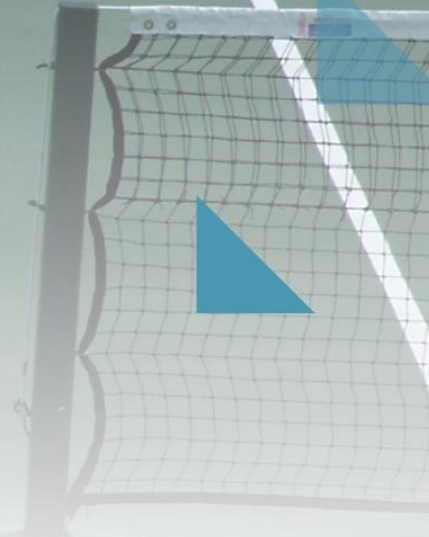


Goal 2: We value the partnerships that we have made and will build on those to ensure we can advocate for our club, for tennis and to develop the facilities

2.1	Provide input into all Council master planning/ asset management projects with justification to help advocate for the development of future facilities.	Medium
2.2	Ensure that Council facility hire / lease agreement conditions are met and provide feedback about what is needed by the club to improve their use and any documentation. This could include feedback around cleaning/ court cleaning and canteen facilities which are current issues.	Medium
2.3	Partner with tennis professionals, Tennis Victoria, GippSport, program providers or other clubs to deliver a broad range of tennis offerings to suit the local need.	Very High
2.4	Explore other options for community partnerships that would be of mutual benefit, i.e. reciprocal memberships, shared services or programs including schools and service providers.	Medium
2.5	Maintain a well-documented/ managed contract in place with the Tennis Coach that outlines clear roles and responsibilities.	High
2.6	Explore ways to host future tennis tournaments or other events to generate income and activity with suitable partners.	Medium

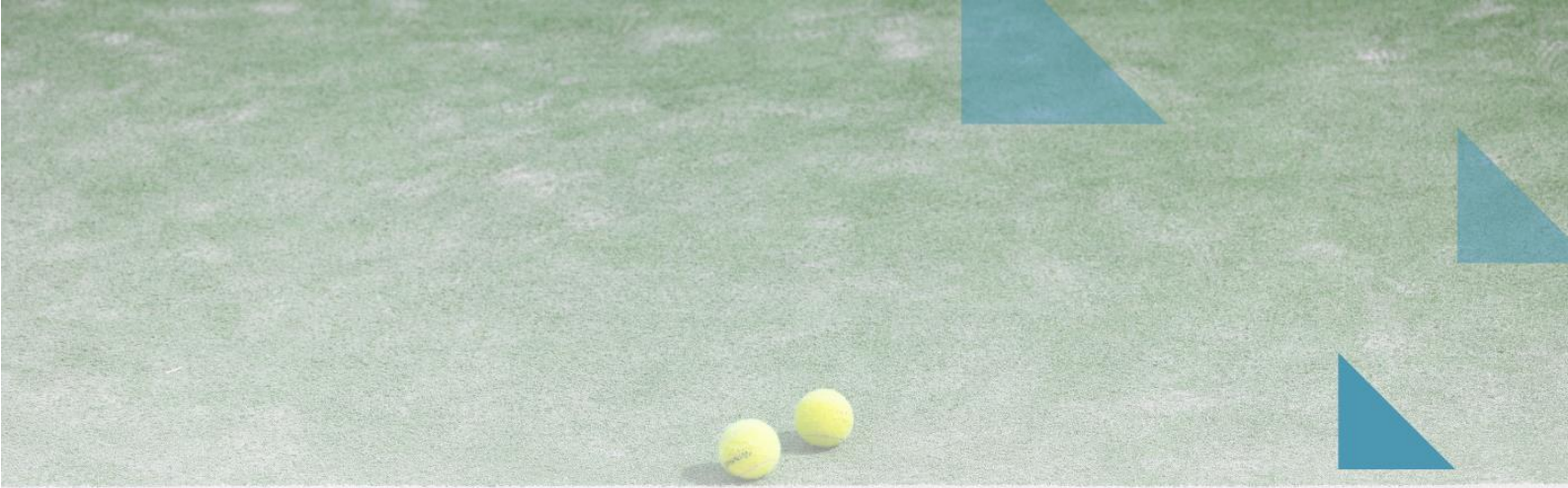
Goal 3: As a community tennis club, our people are important and as a team we; develop, play and look after each other.

3.1	Further develop the club organisational structure and document, in line with industry standards and the club's needs. Review every 6 months to ensure that the workload is shared across the organisation.	High
3.2	We recognise, thank and value the contribution of all volunteers.	Very High
3.3	Consider the appointment of a Volunteer Coordinator to monitor and support all work completed by volunteers. This role could develop and manage the volunteer roster.	Medium
3.4	Develop role descriptions for all volunteers to ensure that their workload is clear, realistic and achievable and aligned to the club strategic plan.	High
3.5	Utilise Tennis Victoria standard policies and procedures to include; Code of Conduct, Child Safety, Member protection etc. to ensure that everyone is safe and any issues are dealt with promptly and with clear documented processes.	High
3.6	Run club training/ education sessions for; volunteers, members and parents to promote important current sport practices and club policies.	Medium
3.7	Purchase signage/ A frame signs to promote positive messages about sideline behaviour and supporting volunteers	Very High



Goal 4: Sustainable financial performance underpinned by stable governance and documentation, whilst operating the Club in a transparent, compliant manner.

4.1	Ensure all expenditure is matched with a detailed business proposal/ or in line with the club budget.	Very High
4.2	Develop a long term financial plan that allows for contributions to future facility upgrades.	High
4.3	Benchmark fees against similar clubs, increase with CPI and develop diverse income streams to maximise revenue in line with what it costs to operate the club. Available including a new sponsorship package and explore grants for new initiatives.	High
4.4	Utilise the Strategic Plan to make future decisions and measure performance annually. Formally update the plan after 5 years.	High
4.5	Monitor industry and Council policy, programs, procedures, strategies and plans that provide opportunities for the Club and implement where possible to strengthen club operations.	Ongoing as needed
4.6	Review all club documentation to ensure that it represents the clubs culture and values. This includes an update of the constitution.	Ongoing
4.7	Communicate the club's vision so that members have realistic expectations about how the club can be managed and developed in the future.	Very High
4.8	Implement good governance practices including; <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Committee calendar of activities➤ Member feedback surveys/ processes➤ Sound meeting procedures➤ Risk Management processes➤ Committee succession planning➤ Consumer Affairs paperwork	Ongoing



Goal 5: Utilising technology to promote, communicate, save costs, manage business information, and derive revenue wherever possible.

5.1 Utilise and develop use of the Club Spark system and analyse information that it can provide to the club. Very High

5.2 Complete regular updates to the website and ongoing use of social media platforms to promote the club and facilities. Very High

5.3 Continue to communicate to all members and stakeholders, especially good news stories via a succinct newsletter. Formalise this into a communication plan. High

5.4 Consider options for external bookkeeping or financial tracking software packages to ensure budgeting and ongoing regular monitoring. Medium

5.5 Communicate with members clearly and regularly using their preferred method. High

5.6 Investigate cloud based software for filing and record keeping to enable volunteers and staff to work flexibly and remotely. Medium

Appendix

1. Summarised Survey Results
2. Supporting information

Tennis Australia- The State of Play 2019

- Tennis is the 7th most popular sport
- Tennis is ranked in the top five sports for 5-8 year olds
- The peak participation rate was among 15-17 year olds both male and female
- Tennis has a greater percentage of adult participation in remote or very remote regions when compared to the overall Australian adult population
- Adult tennis participation is slightly skewed towards males, however participation was high among females
- Two thirds of adult participation in tennis was organised, with the majority taking place in sports clubs
- Tennis is less exposed to the age related decline in participation common to many other sports
- Adults 15 years or older who participated in tennis had a median frequency of 26 sessions per year (about once every two weeks) and a median session duration of 90 minutes
- The dominant motivation to participate in tennis was fun/enjoyment. Social reasons and physical health or fitness were also strong motivators

Disclaimer of liability

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

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

References

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

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