



**AGM Friends of Lorne Draft Minutes
for 15 November 2025 at 4pm at Qdos**

1. Welcome. Penny Hawe acknowledged that we were meeting on the traditional lands of Gadubanud people. She thanked the members for attending and gave special thanks to Gillian Oliver and Graeme Wilkie for hosting us at Qdos.

Present. Karen Pitt, Sandra McComb, Lynette Zalcborg, John Wilson, Wendy Wilson, Suzanne Diviny, Kevin Diviny, Barbara Barber, Wendy Hutchison, Janet Goud, Chris Cairns, Tony Dunin, Jo Dunin, Penny Hawe (Chair), Lindy Pearce, Mary Rose Yuncken (Minutes), Graeme Wilkie, Gillian Oliver

Apologies. Andrew Strang, Philippa Strang, Janis Cocking, Malcolm Cocking, Bill Youl, Eva Youl, Mary Lush, John Wilson, Valerie Wilson

Proxies. Matthew Boland, Kerry Boland, Helen Clark, Janine Haddow, Deb Burns, Jay Owers, Graham Brawn, Graham Blashki, StJohn Sutton, Evelyn Firstenberg, Jane Orr, Andrew Orr, Rosamund Grady, Peter Bardsley, Michael Anderson, Marilyn McKenzie, Colin Leitch, Alan Shiell, Elizabeth Quinn, Jim Quinn, Suzy Freeman- Greene, David Glynn

2. Minutes of the AGM of 2024 were accepted. Proposed: Kevin Diviny. Seconded: Karen Pitt
Carried

3. Minutes of the Special General meeting of 29 September 2025 were accepted. Proposed: Mary Rose Yuncken. Seconded. Lindy Pearce. Carried

4. Financial statement and Treasurers report. The full version is on the website Lindy Pearce noted that we had 155 financial members at 30 June 2025. We have a slight surplus (\$102.22). We had more outgoings this year given that we support the Lorne Sculpture Exhibition only every two years. We put \$6,000 in a term deposit. Note that some of the outgoings that are marked as a “donation” are for services or goods (such as the file storage at Lorne Community Connect and expenses associated with the hooded plover protection). The Treasurer’s report was accepted; Moved Suzanne Diviny. Seconded Janet Goud. Carried.

5 President’s report.

Full version of report is on website. Today, to be brief, I will just present my overall impression, the break throughs and aha moments, the frustrations, and the high points.

5.1 Overall impression is that **WE ARE DOING A LOT**, even more than last year.

We have had 8 committee meetings. 4 full Newsletters and 21 quick updates; 5 articles in the *Lorne Independent*. We're on Pt Grey Community Reference Group, Great Ocean Rd Communities Network, Committee for Lorne, Barwon Water planning for Lorne community Reference Group. We have done submissions to Barwon Water on water supply to 2070; Surf Coast Shire Community Vision (treed and preserve special character. Two submissions on Pt Grey to GORCAPA. Submission to the Inquiry into the Supply of Homes in Regional Victoria. Submission to Resources Victoria objecting (again) to the possibility of gas exploration in the Otway Basin. We have had two open webinar meetings for our members. One on vegetation and habitat management by GORCAPA (to try to see the logic of strategy and a health check on the areas they manage). One with the new GORCAPA CEO and I extended that invitation to CfL as well (as we don't get the opportunity often as a community to host the GORCAPA CEO)

5.2 THE BREAKTHROUGHS AND AHA MOMENTS

- The school. Last year they discovered us – we were the heroes of their play, a satire of the whole town. We were the “hoodie-loving retirees with imagined superpowers.” This year we have had members joining from the school community and attending our webinars (or trying to, people had tech difficulty joining the habitat and vegetation one) We have also received an invitation to visit the school and see if the projects of the environment science students and our own work can start to coincide (eg, opportunities like citizen science)
- Aha moment – This was a realisation about *why we have been struggling* with GORCPA about vegetation management. GORCAPA has been telling us stuff which is true (eg the coastal tea tree are non-indigenous to Lorne) but that in and of itself does not explain why they want to take it out (or some of it anyway.) It was only when I spent time talking to the head of the field staff, that I started getting a functional explanation which I understood. Eg while they are young, tea tree provides dense habitat (good). But as they age then nothing can grow beneath them, and it means at a fox at one end of a patch of tea tree can see all the way along to the small mammals and birds at the end who have nowhere to hide. So, we need more functional explanations for how and why habitat is being managed the way it is Lorne. We need more logic as opposed to just being told policy (eg, this has to come out, or this can be cut and left here). Then we can engage with the science and evidence that supports that logic. Or argue with it, if the science is contested, as it may well be.
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5.3 FRUSTRATIONS and LOW POINTS

1. We are waiting to hear back from DEECA about what monitoring of rare and threatened species they are conducting in the burn zone (Otway Smooth Frog and Yellow Bellied Gliders). The Otway Smooth Frog was only classified as a new species in 2023. It is not found in any other part of Australia. Our Yellow-bellied Gliders may be particularly special, because Otway populations differ from those in other parts of Victoria
2. Swimming pool. There will be stronger lease compliance penalties. But we have still not secured heating in terms of water temperature as opposed to how framed before now (type of heating installed)

3. There's a new hoodie nest on beach (hooray) but we are concerned because of our capacity to protect it is limited
4. Pt Grey. Over 175 people attended last Sunday's community meeting organised by the Committee for Lorne. So, hats off to Committee for Lorne for mobilising their networks. However, people were shown a draft of the co-op building's internal layout—an outdated version that GORCAPA had previously indicated to us that they would revise. The group voted against that old draft. They don't want such large toilets (neither did we). They want more space for history telling. Ditto.

I came prepared to speak at the meeting, at the CfL invitation. When the meeting summary came out it did not include any of the undertakings Friends of Lorne have secured from GORCAPA so far.

It was also suggested in the meeting Notice, and at the meeting, that the draft plans we had commented on had been released “inadvertently” and viewed by only a “select few.” In fact, the draft plans were made available at a public consultation on 8 September, the final consultation in a long series. There was only seven or so people at the meeting, but anyone could have requested a copy. We did and we shared it with CfL after mentioning it at their September meeting. This was the same day we invited CfL to our Meet-the-GORCAPA-CEO meeting on 2 October.

One development we believe deserves celebration is GORCAPA's commitment to restore the Pt Grey crane. Originally slated for demolition, it was saved in 2007 by Friends of Lorne and relocated to Mt Sabine Road. The Men's Shed has taken a look and said that restoration is beyond their scope. Happily, GORCAPA has committed to a professional restoration/rebuild, and one of our members has generously offered to fund it. The same with bringing back a cuta boat, if GORCAPA can find a place to put it. There are four more meetings of an art and history planning subgroup to figure this out and more. We are represented on that group. One of our member's suggestions to the first meeting of the art and history group was that GORCAPA secure the services of a professional historian (curator).

5.4 HIGH POINTS (other than what we have secured at Pt Grey)

1. Housing for key and essential workers. The idea of land tax discount trial to coax 5% of short-term rental properties across to long term rental for 3 years is a FoL idea that started in July and by October it was passed by Council. This means that \$50k has been allocated to work this up alongside the more conventional idea to build some accommodation soon some public land parcels in Lorne.

FoL members put up their hands in droves to be involved in the community meetings which discussed and deliberated over housing options. Two members of our members (recruited from the beach during hoodie season) turned out to be particularly valuable for their experience and skills in the design and evaluation of public policy experiments and governance, Peter Bardsley and Ros Grady. This is really important, because this council has never done a policy experiment before so there was a risk that something that is unfamiliar would be difficult to pitch. The good thing about this option is that 95% of homeowners in Lorne could decide not to take part and it would still yield us 20-25

houses. There are properties on the market right now for reluctant sale because land tax is just too high for some. So, our sense is that we will get sufficient take-up. If we were only going down the route of neighbouring towns, that of finding government land and building town houses, then the wait for a solution may be a long time. For example, Aireys Inlet is still in line waiting for \$17m grant after two years. But the land tax option might be implementable sooner.

But I acknowledge that members might look at us and might say “I thought we were an environmental organisation??? Why are we do all this housing stuff?” The answer is (1) the viability and liveability of the town is also our concern; and (2) *this is environment stuff* because we are steering decision makers to use existing housing stock in preference to building new.

- 2 Other highpoint - we were invited to appear before Parliamentary Inquiry into the Supply of Homes in Regional Victoria. Environment and Planning Committee. Legislative Assembly. We were the only community organisation in our region to appear. In particular we criticised the state government’s recent program, the Regional Worker Accommodation Grants. This is a state government grant scheme to build worker accommodation. But the grant recipients only have to keep new accommodation built under the scheme exclusively for workers for 5 years. So, the scheme potentially results in a taxpayer-sponsored stepping stone to build more holiday accommodation and to make matters worse for workers overall.

The session was live streamed - so we got emails from Sydney about how well home equity purchase schemes are working in high price markets (like Lorne). Richard Riordan was listening, driving from Colac to Melbourne. He phoned up and agreed with us about the flaw in the Regional Worker Accommodation Grants. He agrees that the grant conditions should be revised so that long term availability for workers is secured.

Me, I just enjoyed the opportunity for the first time in my life to shoot my mouth off while under the benefits of parliamentary privilege!

- 4 WHO does all this work? Well, you do! Here is who. Our committee is Mary Rose Yuncken Lindy Pearce and StJohn Sutton. Mary Rose is on the Pt Grey community reference group and she is planning group convenor.

Deb Burns is our Membership secretary. She makes a huge difference to managing our data. Our work in water supply planning with Barwon Water is done by Colin Leitch. He is our representative on the Community Reference Group and Janet Beard assisted when it came time to writing our submission. Eva Youl writes our Nature Notes section in the Newsletter. This year, on our behalf she hosted a group of visiting secondary college students from Ballarat here (among other things) to find out how we manage local environment issues. Eva designed their half day science-learning in Lorne experience. Mary Lush and Sheryl Lewis put together our enquiry to DEECA about population monitoring of rare and endangered species (Otway Smooth Frog and Yellow-Bellied Gliders). DEECA manages both fire safety and habitat conservation. Mary also mapping YBGs in Lorne and liaising with people who cut down trees for a living to tell them where the YBGs live and give tree cutters and homeowners some choice, when they ask for those trees to be removed.

Ron Billard, Graham Brawn, Ian Farran, and Jane Orr have led on planning matters (reviewing policy and looking at how to encourage better planning). Steve Bayley, Peter Bardley and Ros Grady participated as Friends of Lorne in the community workshops facilitated by the Council on essential worker housing and Peter subsequently provided briefing materials that we used in getting Council staff and Otway Councillors up to speed with policy experiments, including what a Lorne Land Tax Rate Discount Trial could look like. There were other FoL members who participated in the housing meetings with other hats on (Janet Gould, Graham Brawn)

Karen Pitt has joined me as “co-beach lead” for the hooded plover protection. Friends of Lorne hoodie volunteers are Deb Burns, Sheryl Lewis, Peter Lewis, Alan Shiell, Mary Lush, Eva Youl, Sophie Buchanan, Liz Quinn, Jo Dunin, Amanda Place, David McCormack, David Harper, Linton Ferguson, Mike Anderson, Helen Clements and John Clements. Ross Dimsey and Janine Haddow have put their hands up too, but we have not had a nest survive long enough for them to get on the beach very much.

Thanks also to new members, Lara Bardsley and Rob Deguara – put together materials on the different penalties across Victoria imposed by different local government areas for tree removal without a permit. We would like to see harsher disincentives in Lorne for tree removal. All the latest tree removal culprit got was a stern letter from the Council. So, you will see more on that soon.

So, a big THANK YOU to everyone who takes part and especially those of you have come today to review it, ask questions, offer suggestions and to celebrate. This organisation runs on good will. The time you give up is very much appreciated.

The President’s report was accepted. Moved Jo Dunin. Seconded Wendy Huchison. Carried.

6 Election of Office Bearers and Committee Karen Pitt assumed the role of Chair and returning officer, and PH stood down. The Chair noted that only one nomination had been received by the nomination date for each of the positions of President, Treasurer, and Secretary. That was Penny Hawe, Lindon Pearce, and Mary Rose Yuncken respectively. So, they were declared elected. For the five positions on the committee three nominations were received by the nomination date: Penny Hawe, Lindon Pearce and Mary Rose Yuncken. So, they were declared elected. The Chair called for nominations for the committee from the floor of the meeting of the meeting for the two vacant positions. It was noted that StJohn Sutton had nominated prior to sending his apologies for the meeting. Jo Dunin nominated herself from the floor, much to the delight of all concerned. There being no more nominations, the positions on the Committee were declared filled and Karen thanked the nominees for their willingness to work for Friends of Lorne. PH resumed the Chair.

7 Consideration of motions

Motion 1. That annual subscription fees remain unchanged, at \$25 for family membership and \$15 for a single.

Motion 2: That new members joining after 1 January in any year pay only half the full subscription fee.

Motion 3. That the total number of people coming on to the Committee for the coming year be 5 (including Treasurer, Secretary, President). That is that we have 2 “ordinary” members

Motions were all carried. Proposed Penny Hawe. Seconded Mary Rose Yuncken

The meeting ended at 5pm.

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