

# ROYAL BRIGHTON YACHT CLUB

## Strategic Plan

### A Vision Towards 2030

*Prepared January 2020*



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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this Strategic Plan document is to provide Royal Brighton Yacht Club with a strategic direction and high-level plan so that resources can be directed to the highest priorities given the desired focus and outcomes of the club.

Membership engagement has been considered critical in the development of our Strategy. As a first step we invited members to participate in a questionnaire. This was followed by a Focus Group on 20 July and member and staff workshops on 30 July, 4 August and 7 August. In total 60 people participated in one or more workshops.

The workshops discussed the 2030 vision and associated points for each seven key Strategic Pillars, taking the outputs from the focus group and questionnaire as a base, recognising that Strategic Pillars in aggregate provide strength and support for the overall vision of the Club.

The vision and desired outcomes for each pillar was informed by workshop outputs.

In summary, the strategic pillars and desired outcomes are as follows;

### Shared Values

*Shared Respect in the enjoyment of our waterfront location*

- *Well known to be an active club where people want to be*
- *Proud of our sailing history*
- *Inclusive and welcoming*
- *Excellent facilities and programs*

### Sailing Pathways

*A learning culture and active engagement to foster enjoyment and participation in the sailing community*

- *Multiple pathways and options for all interests and levels of experience*
- *Mentorship for casual sailors, elite sailors and volunteers*

### Membership

*Members feel recognised as members*

- *Members of all ages and interests value their membership*
- *Members feel comfortable as part of the RBYC community and proud to be part of it*

### Marina, Beach & Hardstand

*The destination of choice across the Bay*

- *Full utilisation supported by an active program of activities*
- *An integral part of the harbour precinct plan*
- *Meeting the needs of our member base with an appealing offering*

### Clubhouse

*A memorable, cohesive, well-utilised hub*

- *Members feel at home*
- *Welcoming to the broader community*
- *An enjoyable place to be*



## **Catering & Functions**

*An attractive catering venue for both members and non-members*

- *A key financial platform*
- *Provides for a variety of catering options and events*
- *Wide range of competitive offerings for members and the community*

## **Community**

*A valued element of the community*

- *Active partnerships with community organisations*
- *Well recognised and highly regarded brand*

Each year it is the responsibility the General Committee to establish projects and initiatives to progress the strategy, develop detailed plans of action in targeted areas, monitor progress, and review and amend the strategy. The Strategy will provide guidance for operational planning but is considered a living document which must be critically assessed on an ongoing basis.



## Context

Royal Brighton Yacht Club Inc. is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. RBYC is a not for profit Community Use organisation whose purpose as defined in the Club Rules are:

*“The objectives of the Club shall be the promotion and encouragement of the sport of yachting generally and racing between sailing yachts in particular and doing all things incidental to or not inconsistent with the foregoing. The Club’s income and property shall be exclusively applied in the promotions of the objectives of the Club.”*

The RBYC has operated as a true not for profit community use organisation for 144 years in that:

- All surplus funds are directed towards furthering the Club’s purpose.
- No surplus funds have ever been distributed to members.
- If ever wound up, no payment can be made to members, any funds distribution must go to a similar natured organization.
- Membership is open to all who have a genuine interest in the Club’s objectives.
- The Club operates principally as a service to the community and general community benefit.
- The Club’s facilities are open for the benefit of all community organisations.
- The Club is managed by unpaid volunteer members elected by the members to form a General Committee. The General Committee appoints a salaried General Manager to manage the day to day operations of the Club.
- RBYC is independent of any business commercial or otherwise and independent of government or semi-government institutions.

It is acknowledged that the wording of the purpose statement in the Club Rules may not resonate as well with members today as it has in the past. Royal Brighton Yacht Club has seen significant change and development in recent years. To continue the positive momentum, we need a clearly articulated future vision which will:

- Ensure the club direction and plans are in line with a long-term view that is embraced and understood by all
- secure long-term support amongst our broad range of external stakeholders
- attract members of all ages

The Club’s continued activities are totally dependent on its location and access to Port Phillip Bay, and its seabed facilities, subject to the Parks Victoria lease, are inextricably linked to its land based facilities, subject to its lease with the City of Bayside, which is due for renewal on 31 December 2035. This latter lease was granted to the Club for the maximum period allowed at the time (75 years) under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1958* in recognition of the prior and proposed future capital investment in the site and the considerable human investment of time and energy of the Club’s members to provide a safe and well maintained facility within the local community.

Given the substantial investment with the build of the new floating marina and associated further upgrades and extensions during the current lease, and its expected build life of another



15 to 20 years, the RBYC would reasonably expect to be able to enjoy the benefits of its substantial investment during the next long term lease that is being sought. Planning for further substantial future capital investment to replace and upgrade facilities that have reached their build life will be undertaken during the proposed new long-term lease.

With surety going forward, the Club, as a major stakeholder is actively progressing the opportunity of working with Parks Victoria, the City of Bayside and other stakeholders in the long-term planning for the whole Brighton Harbour Precinct.





## Situational Analysis

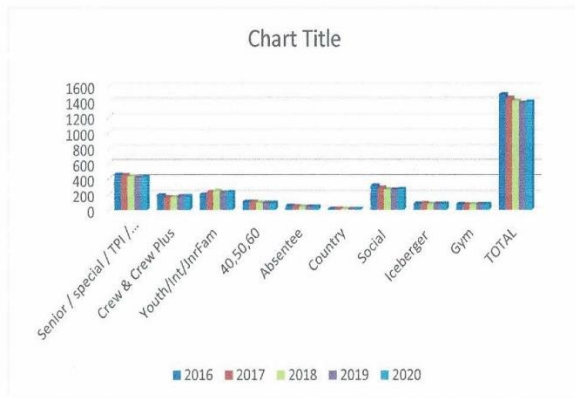
The strength of a club is in its membership. RBYC membership numbers have not changed markedly over the past five years, as can be seen in the tables below.

### Membership - January-February 2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Senior / special / TPI / HLM	459	451	438	425	431
Crew & Crew Plus	194	169	167	178	182
Youth/Int/JnrFam	205	233	251	228	232
40,50,60	103	100	94	89	89
Absentee	50	45	41	40	38
Country	15	17	14	13	13
Social	317	287	267	266	271
Iceberger	79	81	74	76	79
Gym	72	69	71	72	73
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1494</b>	<b>1452</b>	<b>1417</b>	<b>1387</b>	<b>1408</b>

%	Ave
	431
13%	182
16%	232
6%	89
3%	38
1%	13
19%	271
6%	79
5%	73
	1408

		Senior
322	Senior	431
86	senior family	
14	senior special	Crew
12	40	182
43	50	
34	60	Youth/Jnr/Int
6	honorary life	232
13	senior country	40,50,60
38	senior absentee	89
158	Crew	Absentee
24	Crew Plus	38
138	Youth U18	
74	Intermediate 18-29	Country
73	Gym	13
203	Social	Social
64	Social extra	271
20	Junior family	Iceberger
79	Iceberger	79
3	TPI	Gym
4	sponsors	73
<b>1408</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1408</b>



% Voting Members  
41%

A membership survey asked the following questions;

- What is your favorite feature of RBYC - our number one strength as a Club? e.g. what do we do best, what are we known for, what is our competitive advantage in 2030?
- What worries you most for the Clubs future - our greatest weakness? e.g. what are we lacking, what don't we do well, what in your view should we stop doing?
- What is the most exciting aspect of our Clubs future? e.g. what trends can we pick up on, what current activities/services can be improved, what additional activities can we pursue, what positive changes can we make to be a strong, viable Club in 2030
- What is the biggest challenge to our future success in 2030, our barrier to success, our blind spot?

The outcomes were categorised along 7 strategic pillars;

### Shared Values

- Camaraderie and friendships were considered of high importance
- The club catering for different ages and interests was valued
- Need to value our proud history but also move forward and be in touch with community expectations (move with the times)
- Need to be inclusive
- Need to support sustainability



## Sailing Pathways

- Need to develop pathways to cater for all ages and interests
- People appreciate the great race management and competitive racing, as well as Club coach and training capability assisting members to improve their skills
- There is a need to bridge the gap between programs for children and adults (pathways for young people) – it was noted young people often leave the club in their early twenties
- While many identified the youth program as a strength, others felt it detracted from support for keelboats who bring in most of the membership dollars
- Some felt that recent OTB success was misleading as not “home grown” and that we still had work to do to foster sailing skills at an early age
- The cruising group has strong camaraderie
- Some powerboats feel neglected while they are clearly part of our future as a club
- Race management Volunteers need a pathway also

## Membership

- The club needs to be financially viable while at the same time many people value the feeling of a “club” vs a business
- There is a wide range of attitudes to membership fees – some felt they were too high and prohibitive while others were concerned people were sailing or using the club without being members
- Some felt it was great to get the public onboard while others felt it devalued their membership
- The diversity of membership is generally seen as a good thing (ie. different classes of membership)
- The major issue is aging membership, but there was some variance of views regarding whether we should be focused on targeting youth or older adults
- It is recognized that people have so many other interests competing for their attention
- Camaraderie and friendships were highly valued (esp. Icebergers, youth and cruising group)

## Marina, Beach & Hardstand

- The marina is not full and there is a lot of competition for marina space – need a way of differentiating and marketing our marina offering
- The marina is a key asset which is a high priority to maintain - Some felt the marina should be better maintained
- Some keelboat owners made comment on the lack of haul-out facilities
- The question of marina security was raised
- The condition of the pier and beach was also a concern (though not maintained by the club)

## Clubhouse

- The clubhouse is a key asset which needs to be maintained to a high standard
- Most people like the café/ restaurant, but commented that the members bar is less inviting, especially for young people
- Some members felt we were neglecting the members area with the greater focus on the restaurant and function areas





- Icebergers commented on the facilities in a positive way (gym, change rooms, sauna)
- Parking and space constraints for OTB were mentioned as concerns

### **Catering & Functions**

- There is a recognition of needing to run functions and a restaurant for the purpose of generating income
- This was probably the topic with the lowest consistency of responses - Some were very complimentary about the restaurant while others wanted more variety (there is a disconnect between those who want to keep things simple and those who want a broader offering)
- Some felt the focus on the restaurant and functions appealing to the public was at the expense of the yacht club – though most recognized these were essential to remaining financially viable

### **Community**

- There was a recognition that we needed to build stronger links to the community
- Some felt there was still a great deal of stigma attached to a yacht club (i.e. elitism)
- Some felt we were out of touch with community expectations in terms of diversity & inclusion as well as sustainability
- The condition of the pier and beach was a concern



## Progression of Initiatives to support Strategic Imperatives

Since the questionnaire, workshops and subsequent consultation with the broader membership and General Committee, several high priority initiatives have been progressed to support each of the strategic pillars.

### Shared Values

*Shared Respect in the enjoyment of our waterfront location*

- *Well known to be an active club where people want to be*
- *Proud of our sailing history*
- *Inclusive and welcoming*
- *Excellent facilities and programs*

The RBYC is being clear with all stakeholders that it takes understands its responsibility to be a responsible and reliable community-based tenant. It aspires to provide first class facilities for its members that foster a spirit of friendly competition and tradition of sailing excellence and opportunities for enjoyment of these club amenities by the public at large.

The Club has a 144 year history in Brighton Harbour, with a full range of sailing on offer, developing yachting for all levels from Olympic representatives, National and International regattas, keelboat racing and cruising, a huge off the beach dinghy area, disabled yachting and working closely with schools and junior sailing. The Club wants to ensure the future of all that work and secure the continued operations and commitments of this community-based activity facility into the future. The General Committee and all members are increasingly aware of this direction, which has been acknowledged anecdotally in several recent engagements with the broader community.

### Sailing Pathways

*A learning culture and active engagement to foster enjoyment and participation in the sailing community*

- *Multiple pathways and options for all interests and levels of experience*
- *Mentorship for casual sailors, elite sailors and volunteers*

The Sailing program is being continually reviewed in light of members expectations and preferences. Keelboats race twice a week throughout the year, starting from the breakwater tower and out on the centre courses. Many races are interclub competing with neighbouring clubs on the Bay. The Cruising Group offers monthly cruises, an annual adventure out into Bass Strait and a regular monthly program of social events.

The one design fleets of Etchells and Dragons race every week and off the beach fleets have training programs through the week, working with local schools with over 100 participants, and the summer “Tackers” programs attracted 146 participants this season. RBYC has also developed a learn to sail keelboat “Bootcamp” program which has equally attracted over 100 new sailors many of whom have stayed on and joined the Club to become crew on the keelboats.



The RBYC is very active in managing and staging yachting regattas every year. Last year the Club has hosted the following:

- Sail Melbourne (December): 369 boats
- Stonehaven Cup (January): 19 boats
- 2.4 Mt. Nationals (January): 12 boats
- BLISS Women's Skipper Regatta 24 boats
- George Mac (February): 130 boats
- Optimist States (March): 110 boats
- Property Industry Foundation Charity Regatta. 30 boats

This season 2019-2020 the Club has already hosted the following regattas:

- Finn Gold Cup – 67 boats from all Olympic countries.
- George Mac Regatta
- Etechells National Titles. – 35 Boats.

For the 2020/21 season the Club has already begun planning for Sail Melbourne and George Mac and, in the future, the 2023 Etechells Worlds.

## Membership

*Members feel recognised as members*

- *Members of all ages and interests value their membership*
- *Members feel comfortable as part of the RBYC community and proud to be part of it*

RBYC has no significant restrictions on membership. While the Club's rules require applicants to have a proposer and seconder, the Club makes every effort to support any and every applicant. The Club has an Inclusion and Diversity Advisory Group which reports to General Committee. Kitty Chiller former Olympian and past Chef de Mission for Australia at the Rio Olympics, who is independent from the Club, has been commissioned to ensure the Club is meeting best practice.

In addition to the extensive sailing programs and membership categories, the Club offers other membership categories:

- "Iceberger" Members: an institution that has developed at RBYC is the open water swimmers who have an extremely active program running throughout the year, many of whom swim on a daily basis with a number of designated swimming events including swimming for charities and very popular social events.
- Gym Members: RBYC has invested in new equipment to support the Club's sailors but has also opened a membership category for the general public to join the Club for purely fitness reasons.
- Social Members: Have access to all Clubhouse facilities, members bar, library, billiard table and member discounts on food and beverage. A great way to enjoy the Club's social life without being an active sailor.



## Marina, Beach & Hardstand

*The destination of choice across the Bay*

- *Full utilisation supported by an active program of activities*
- *An integral part of the harbour precinct plan*
- *Meeting the needs of our member base with an appealing offering*

As a proactive step in development of a harbour precinct plan, RBYC, has submitted an application for the renewal of its current lease with Parks Victoria. This is in recognition of the need to provide surety for longer term planning and to provide a level of comfort for current and potential members that if they invest in boating equipment that they have access to a reliable, accessible and well-maintained facility.

Although the RBYC's current lease with Parks Victoria for the marina site does not expire until April 2023, there are compelling reasons why a lease renewal is reasonable and appropriate at this time. The current Parks Victoria lease area needs to be redefined to include the RBYC's hardstand area previously held under a direct from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). Since the slipway has now been demolished and removed, there is a need to clearly clarify responsibility for dredging of the eastern channel to the pier berths which is not fully contained within the current Parks Victoria lease. There is also the requirement to clarify the inclusion or otherwise of the Telstra Communication facilities on the race tower, and the need for surety for financing ongoing investment for improving and maintaining the leased facilities for its members and for general public access where permitted.

It has been noted that in 2009 - 2010 the Club completed dredging of the whole marina area to a depth of 3.5 metres and including the pier access channel to a depth of 3.7 metres which has provision for further maintenance dredging until 2020, specifically the access channel to Brighton pier on the east side of the marina. This channel is not wholly within the current RBYC leasehold with Parks Victoria and has been a matter for further discussions with Parks Victoria regarding future responsibility for such dredging. In meeting with Parks Victoria in September 2019 it was generally agreed that the area of the seabed and waters to the east of the existing hardstand and marina that is used for the mooring of RBYC boats and that forms part of the area that has been regularly dredged by the RBYC and would be included in the new proposed lease.

Evidence would suggest that both the Brighton Harbour and Brighton Baths may completely silt up without regular dredging. The RBYC, at additional cost to the Club, has engaged Water Tech Consulting regarding the immediate dredging issue and to consider long term effects.

The issue of responsibility for dredging of the whole of the subject boating channel needs to be clarified as part of the negotiations of the proposed new lease for the RBYC's seaward facilities.

With the marina having an estimated remaining lifespan of between 15 to 20 years and the hardstand in sound condition based on a 2014 report, RBYC proposes to undertake planning for further substantial future capital investment to replace and upgrade facilities that have reached their build life. These substantial works will most likely include the rebuild of the



attenuator, replacement with wave wall, extension of the marina to the north of its current location to keep pace with the growing demand for marina pens in Port Phillip Bay and the Yarra, replacement of the 3rd crane and extension of the hardstand to the west.

Such planning would be undertaken in consultation with Parks Victoria and would be subject to obtaining all the necessary planning and Marine and Coastal Act approvals

Race Tower replacement is not yet costed. The building is in poor condition and there is a need to begin planning for the replacement of the tower which has the Telstra facilities on the roof. In the meantime, maintenance works are planned for the race tower.

## Clubhouse

A memorable, cohesive, well-utilised hub

- Members feel at home
- Welcoming to the broader community
- An enjoyable place to be

In the early 2000s, the Club's General Committee developed a long-term Master Plan to upgrade the Clubhouse in a number of stages. Stage one was completed in 2007 with a complete overhaul of the southern end of the Clubhouse building and upgrades to the Bayview major function room, entrance and offices. At a cost of \$4.9m it was largely funded by the sale of neighbouring properties that the Club had invested in over the years and some borrowings.

Stage two was completed 2017 at a cost of \$2.5m with the removal of the slipway and the maintenance boat yard, which was redeveloped to open the Club for large dinghy storage area and for the development of the new Olympic restaurant.

There are two more stages under the current Master Plan which are under review. Stage 3 involves a rebuild of the Bayview room, new kitchen, new offices downstairs, new keg room and new frontage with circular driveway with a cost estimate of \$2.5m and minimum time frame of 9 months. Stage 4 involves the Jock Sturrock Centre renovation of the second floor at a cost estimate of \$2.4m.

## Catering & Functions

*An attractive catering venue for both members and non-members*

- *A key financial platform*
- *Provides for a variety of catering options and events*
- *Wide range of competitive offerings for members and the community*

Recognising the importance of function revenue to the ongoing financial viability of the club, it is proposed to add a circular driveway to front garden of the Clubhouse, to improve access for disabled, aged and for function access. This includes a significant stormwater drainage upgrade. Permits are in place.

## Community

A valued element of the community

- Active partnerships with community organisations



- Well recognised and highly regarded brand

It is noted that the important recreational boating opportunities and associated social activities provided by RBYC promote and contribute significant individual, family and community health/social benefits both physical and mental.

The RBYC is open to the public and welcomes members and visitors alike to its facilities on the shores of Port Phillip Bay.

The Club's passion for the sport of sailing has remained undiminished since 1875. The style of yachts may have changed, but the wind in our sails, friendly competition and adventurous cruising further afield, continue to attract countless Melburnians and visitors to the Club on the beachfront at Brighton.

The RBYC has an extensive sailing program, which provides opportunities for young and old, male and female, racer and cruiser to go sailing. For those new to sailing there are children's or adult learn to sail, while for the more experienced there is racing, or cruising, or a combination of both. Besides the club's active keelboat and one-design fleets, the Club has an extensive range of dinghy classes for beginners, juniors and youth sailors with a very strong focus on teaching, coaching and training.

The Club has over its history been largely built on the efforts of volunteering members and this still plays a huge part in all the Club's programs and an active social program, Club racing, cruising, mentoring, "Iceberger" open water swimming and even maintenance to the facilities. The recent redevelopment of the yard and Olympic restaurant have further opened the Club and its facilities to the general public to enjoy all that there is to offer.

RBYC makes available the visitor berths for Police and Emergency Vessels such as Fire Management Vessels and Coast Guard.

Local Community Groups, Lions and Rotary have for many years used RBYC for meetings, dinners and fund raising with the Club's support. The Great Australia Day Swim is one of Rotary's major fundraising events where RBYC is the key supporter through the use of the Club's facilities.

The Club's other charity work includes a swim to raise funds for Beyond Blue and the Feb 2020 dinner to raise support for the Bush Fire Appeal with 100% of the income going to Red Cross.

The Club has been a major partner for the Property Industry Foundation's signature Charity Sailing event for the past 9 years. RBYC is also a major supporter of the 2.4 mt Class, which is designed for disabled sailors, and held the National Class Regatta in January of this year.

The Club also regularly works with local schools to develop sailing programs for their students.

Monash University Marine Biology Department has been conducting studies on the health of Port Phillip Bay from the northern end of the Club's marina, which will hopefully assist the Club to better understand its operations in a coastal environment and implement any changes or





upgrades to existing facilities that will help to minimise any possible detrimental impacts on the environment in which the Club operates.

The Club has consulted widely with Maritime Coastal Engineer Gerry Byrne and Dr. Andrew Mc Cowan of Water Technology to understand coastal processes within the Bay and the potential long-term impact on the Brighton Harbour precinct.

The current General Committee of the RBYC has commissioned the installation of a 97-kilowatt Photo Voltaic solar panel system to support electricity usage. The installation is planned for February 2020. The Club has reviewed all electrical, gas and water usage and upgraded refrigeration, lighting and is planning to adopt best practice for air-conditioning.

RBYC also has adopted standard waste management procedures for recycling and reducing waste to landfill. Metals are recycled, and batteries, emergency flares and EPIRB's are delivered to respective approved depots.

As part of RBYC's continuing operations and activities and any future upgrades or development of its facilities, RBYC will take into account any findings or any associated recommended actions that may result from studies that the Monash University Marine Biology Department has been conducting on the health of Port Phillip Bay from the northern end of the Club's marina.

The RBYC will also continue to look at reviewing and improving its waste and stormwater management and maximise the use of recyclable materials where possible.

The RBYC is well aware of the need to minimise any potential adverse effects on the environment, and acknowledges that any future developments proposed by the RBYC within its leasehold premises will need approvals under the Marine and Coastal Act 2018 taking into account the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014 and associated Siting & Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast.

## Next Steps

It is the responsibility of the General Committee to;

- Ensure the annual operational plan and budget supports the Strategic Plan and establish appropriate aligned business plans and projects
- Actively engage the membership in ongoing Strategic Plan review
- Monitor and communicate progress of the plan to the membership