



Ballarat Golf Club is Australia's oldest continually played course and caters to players at all levels. The course has ranked amongst the top 100 public access course in Australia, and the club includes a bistro and bar, a pro shop and conference and function facilities.

Ballarat Golf Club has over 830 members (795 males: 41 females). Governed by a Board of Directors with nine voluntary delegates, the club included a focus on the principles of gender equity and equal opportunity under their Corporate Governance pillar, in its 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.

Established in 1895, Ballarat Golf Club has created a space for the local community to play golf for 122 years. With a strong history, the club has in recent years demonstrated a commitment to gender equity, recognising it takes a whole of community effort to stop violence against women. The influence of sporting clubs on community attitudes represented a great opportunity for the club to become a leader in this area.

What are some of your achievements?

With an explicit commitment to gender equity formally cited and endorsed, the dedication to being a model of excellence for promoting and achieving gender equity in a golf club setting has resulted in the club being proactive in making their actions and vision a reality.

With a detailed Action Plan developed by an internal Gender Equality Working Group, the golf club has already achieved changes that benefit gender equity.

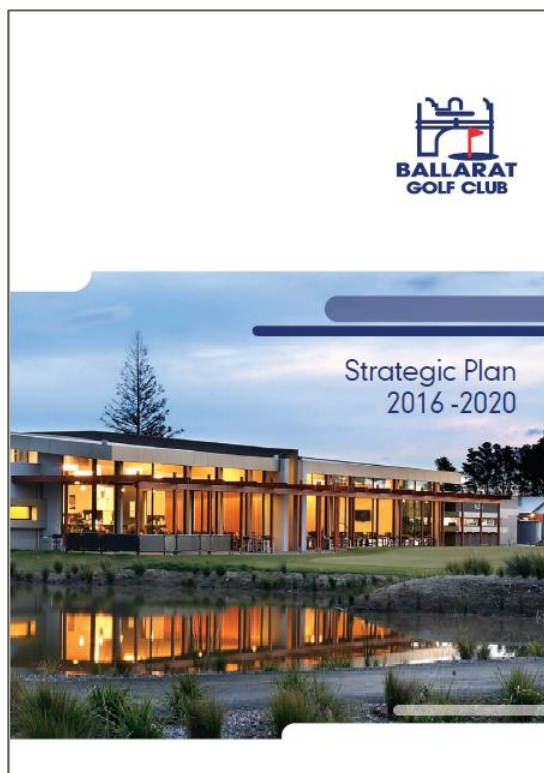
The club recently appointed its first ever female Vice-President; introduced new membership categories with reduced fees to attract more females to the clubhouse; introduced female only clinics to support beginners and create social opportunities for women in regional areas; has set targets for women in senior leadership (i.e. board of directors and subcommittees); and created open time sheets for competition days, allowing full and equal access to the course for both men and women.

What were the key enablers that helped you progress work in line with your plan?

The leadership and persistence of Ballarat Golf Club's president and broader clubhouse representatives has led to the continued prioritisation of gender equity and the topic remaining at the forefront of the club's agenda.

The establishment of a Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG) has further solidified this commitment, creating champions for advocacy, and allowing for collective input into the direction and actions the golf club can take to promote equality.

The ongoing support of Women's Health Grampians in supporting the GEWG and club to understand the issue of violence against women and evidence-based practice to promote equality has strengthened the capacity of the club to implement meaningful and sustainable actions for change.



What have been the major challenges for the workplace, and how did you overcome them?

Some of the messages associated with the issue of gender equity and violence against women were initially quite challenging for some members. It is hoped with continued communications and education, and the benefits as the action plan becoming evident, as it is implemented, members will become increasingly comfortable with the topic.

The composition of the GEWG was initially primarily women. It was agreed that in order to broaden the diversity of perspectives and voices for the action plan (that affects all members) some male members needed to be invited onto the group. Representatives from the GEWG nominated specific people and this was followed up individually with a personalised approach successfully leading to more men now being on the group.

Ballarat Golf Club takes action across the 5 Essential Action Areas outlined in the national framework *Change the Story*, and the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) *Taking Action* guide.

Internal (workforce)	External (business and networks)
Challenge VAW	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed a Leadership Statement detailing to staff, members, and partners the club's position on preventing violence against women (PVAW). Became a member of CoRE. The delivery of a PVAW Leadership Briefing to the Board of Directors (in progress). Clubhouse staff to undertake Bystander Training to learn how to intervene in instances of sexism, discrimination and violence against women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged a Communications Plan to allow for consistent and regular reference to preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media release on CoRE (in progress). Display of CoRE materials around the clubhouse. Permanent reference to CoRE/gender equity on the website (in progress). Display of the Leadership Statement in the clubhouse, particularly above the bar for patrons to observe. Engaged the broader golf network (specifically other golf clubs) to inform them of the issue of violence against women and encourage them to declare a similar commitment (ongoing).
Empower women and girls	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a Gender Audit of the clubhouse's processes, systems and culture. Developed an extensive Gender Equity Action Plan to guide the efforts of the GEWG. Constitutionalising targets for women in senior leadership, specifically the percentage of women on the Board and Subcommittees (in progress). Management actively encouraging women to apply for non traditional gendered roles and positions i.e. greenkeeper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created new membership categories to encourage women and men to come to the clubhouse. The provision of female-only clinics to support women to enter the golfing environment, enjoy the sport and make social connections. Modified course availability through open time-sheets to allow both men and women to equally enjoy the benefits of playing golf.
Challenge stereotypes and norms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golfing clinics for children, men and women are run by an accredited instructor who is female. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of female golfing clinics alters the perception that only men can, and are welcome to play golf. Will perform a gender analysis of stock imagery to ensure promotional material is reflective of the community (i.e. diversity) and is not perpetuating stereotypes.
Build respectful relationships	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended policies i.e. Code of Conduct to reference respectful relationships (in progress). 	
Promote gender equality	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEWG champion and promote progressive views around gender roles and fairness. Use design principles to modify the clubhouse to create an environment (physical and cultural) that is diverse and inclusive (in progress). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The club's president is a regular attendee of WHG Community of Practice to learn new innovative ways to promote equality. The club's president is a regular guest speaker at events to highlight the shift of the club in terms of gender equity, thereby supporting other organisations to do the same.

Acknowledgement

Thank you Greg Anders (President of Ballarat Golf Club) for supporting and assisting in the development of this local story.