

Annual Report

24/25



Vision: Designing Geelong's best future.

Mission: An independent catalyst for the success of Geelong and to design a world-class city that is vital, inclusive, progressive, smart and sustainable.

Who We Are:

-  Forward Thinking
-  Independent
-  Brave
-  Accountable
-  Innovative

How We Act:

-  We connect people and ideas
-  We look out for each other
-  We build community
-  We advocate and inspire
-  We are leaders. For Geelong



Acknowledgement of Country

The Committee for Geelong acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the lands, waters, seas, and skies on which we operate. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Nations people. We commit ourselves to working for reconciliation with First Nations People and supporting them in having a voice.

Thank you to the ongoing support of our Corporate Plus Members





Contents

Chair Report	4	Events, Briefings and Submissions	13
CEO Report	5	Green Heart	14
Member List	6	Community Leadership	16
Major Events	8	23/24 Financials	20
Corporate Plus Member Stories	12	Auditor's Report	22

Committee for Geelong Ltd

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Chair Report



As I conclude my term as Chair of the Committee for Geelong, I reflect with pride on a year marked by resilience, renewal, and a deepened commitment to our region's future.

The 2024-25 financial year has seen CfG consolidate its strategic direction while continuing to advocate for Geelong's long-term prosperity. Our values—forward-thinking, independent, brave, accountable, and innovative—have remained central to our work, guiding our engagement with stakeholders and shaping our leadership programs.

Despite ongoing economic pressures and the continued absence of government funding for our leadership initiatives, CfG has made meaningful progress. We've strengthened member engagement, enhanced program delivery, and moved closer to returning to an operating surplus—an achievement that reflects sound governance and collective effort.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to the entire CfG team. Their dedication, professionalism, and passion for our region have been instrumental in delivering our mission. From leadership development to communications, finance, stakeholder engagement, and operations—every member of the team has played a vital role in our success.

To my fellow Board members, thank you for your support, insight, and stewardship. Your commitment to CfG's strategic direction and financial sustainability has been unwavering.

And to our members—Corporate Plus, general, and community—thank you for your continued belief in CfG's purpose. Your support has enabled us to remain a strong, independent voice for Geelong.

It has been an honour to serve as Chair. I leave confident in CfG's future and excited for what lies ahead as we continue to advocate for Geelong's best future.

Warm regards,

Clive Pugh

Chair
Committee for Geelong



CEO Report



This past year has been one of purposeful momentum for the Committee for Geelong. As we continue to design Geelong's best future, our focus has remained on delivering meaningful impact through leadership, collaboration, and strategic advocacy.

The 2024–25 financial year saw us build on the foundations laid in recent years, with our strategic framework guiding our work across policy, partnerships, and leadership development. We've sharpened our voice on key regional issues—from infrastructure and housing to innovation and workforce development—ensuring Geelong's priorities are heard at all levels of government. It was particularly pleasing to collaborate so strongly through the Federal Election campaign to provide a strong and united voice for Geelong.

Our community leadership programs remain a cornerstone of our mission. The Leaders for Geelong and Activate programs continue to empower emerging leaders with the skills, networks and confidence to shape our region's future. It was particularly pleasing to host our first Future Geelong Leadership Awards, celebrating community leadership in our region.

This year's highlights include:

- The Inaugural Future Geelong Awards, with Dan Simmonds the 2024 Frank Costa Leadership Award Recipient
- Annual Dinner and Leadership Graduation with Anna Meares
- International Women's Day with Gina Chick
- Annual Dinner with Hugh van Cuylenburg
- Going from strength to strength with our Activate Leadership Program
- Releasing our vision for the Green Heart on the Market Square site
- Our submission into Plan for Victoria and leadership role in coordinating a response to its release

- Collaboration with G21 and CoGG on key Federal Election Priorities

I want to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our CfG team. Their professionalism, creativity, and commitment to our purpose have been central to everything we've achieved this year. I also thank our Board for their strategic guidance and stewardship, particularly as we navigated financial planning and risk review processes with clarity and confidence.

To our outgoing Chair, Clive Pugh; thank you for your leadership, integrity, and unwavering belief in CfG's mission. Your tenure has been marked by thoughtful advocacy and a steady hand during a time of transition. We are grateful for your service and legacy. Personally, I have enjoyed working with you, learning from you, and discussing the great issues of the world. I hope our discussions will continue beyond your tenure.

And to our members—thank you for your continued support. Your engagement and investment in the Committee's work allow us to remain a strong, independent voice for Geelong.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to bold ideas, collaborative leadership, and shaping a future for Geelong that is prosperous, inclusive, and resilient.

Warm regards,

Michael Johnston
Chief Executive Officer
Committee for Geelong

Member List

Corporate Plus Members



Community Members

Active Geelong Limited
 Advanced Fibre Cluster Geelong
 AFL Barwon
 Anam Cara House Geelong
 Back to Back Theatre
 Barwon Health Foundation
 BATForce
 Creative Geelong
 G21 Geelong Region Alliance
 Geelong Community Foundation
 Geelong Connected Communities
 Geelong Foodshare
 Geelong LLEN
 Geelong P-TECH
 Geelong Sustainability
 Geelong Waterfront Film
 Give Where You Live Foundation
 Lifeline Direct – Geelong & South West Victoria
 Meli
 Northern Geelong Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
 Ocean Mind
 Rights Information and Advocacy Centre
 Runway HQ Limited
 The SAFV Centre
 Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA)
 Victoria Police
 Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
 Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative Limited

Corporate Members

Alcoa of Australia Limited
 AMDA Foundation Limited
 Anseed Pty Ltd
 Arcadia Landscape Architecture
 Arthur St Digital
 Arup
 Balmoral Quay
 Barwon Health
 Barwon Water
 Bree Gorman Consulting
 Built
 Centuria Capital Ltd
 Circ Consulting
 City of Greater Geelong
 Colliers Geelong
 Commonwealth Bank of Australia
 Corio Waste Management Pty Ltd
 Costa Asset Services Pty Ltd
 Coulter Legal
 CSIRO
 Cultura
 Cunningham Pier Pty Ltd
 Curlewis Golf Club
 Enterprise Monkey Pty Ltd
 Epworth Health Care
 Executive Travel Management
 Fagg's Group Pty Ltd
 Flame Security International Pty Ltd
 Flying Brick Cider House



Fruit2Work

Geelong Arts Centre

Geelong Broadcasters K Rock

Geelong Chamber of Commerce

Geelong Football Club Limited

Geelong Gallery

GeelongPort

genU

Gforce Employment & Recruitment

GHD Pty Ltd

GMHBA Ltd

GMIC Ltd Trading as Geelong
Manufacturing Council

Gouge Linen & Garment Service

Graincorp Operations Ltd

Hamilton Group

Hamlan Homes

Hanlon Industries

Hanwha Defense Australia

Harvest Talent Recruitment
& People Solutions

Harwood Andrews

Heinz Law

Incitec Pivot Ltd

Jack Rabbit

Kane Construction Pty Ltd

Kardinia International College

Kardinia Park Stadium Trust

Knight Frank

Ladcom T/A Leura Park Estate

Lake Advisory

LBDG Developer Pty Ltd

LBW Business & Wealth Advisors

Leisure Networks

MAB Corporation Pty Ltd

Maddocks

Miepol Pty Ltd

Mt Duneed Estate

Novotel Geelong

Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention
and Event Centre

Orchestrated

Paul Kelly Creative

Plenary Conventions (GCEC) Unit
Trust

Preston Rowe Paterson Geelong

Quest Geelong Central

Quintessential Asset Services
Pty Ltd

Ratio

Riordan Group Pty Ltd

Royal Geelong Yacht Club

SCAADA

SMEC Australia Pty Ltd

Spiire Australia

St John of God Health Care

Telstra

The Gordon TAFE

Tourism Greater Geelong
and the Bellarine

Tract Consultants Pty Ltd

Truffleduck Pty Ltd

TT-Line Company Pty Ltd
(Spirit of Tasmania)

Urbis Pty Ltd

Villawood Properties

Viva Energy Australia

Vopak Victoria Energy
Terminal Pty Ltd

Western Victoria Primary
Health Network

Winchester Australia Limited

WT Partnership Australia

Major Events



2024 Project Presentation Breakfast Tuesday 8 October

On Tuesday 8 October our 2024 Leaders for Geelong cohort presented their five community projects to 180 people at Kardinia Park Stadium.



2024 Annual Dinner and Leaders Graduation Thursday 5 December

On Thursday 5 December we held our 2024 Annual Dinner and Leaders Graduation, sponsored by TAC, at Kardinia Park Stadium.

Our 200 guests celebrated the 2024 Leaders for Geelong and then heard from Anna Meares OAM who shared her story of overcoming serious injury to become an Olympic champion along with her recent leadership journey as Chef de Mission for the Australian Olympic team.





2025 Annual Dinner Thursday 19 June

Our inaugural stand-alone Annual Dinner, sponsored by TAC, was held in June at 1915, Federal Mills, MC'd by Joel Carnegie with very special guest Hugh van Cuylenburg who discussed gratitude, empathy, and mindfulness.

International Women's Day Breakfast Friday 7 March

Our sold out 2025 International Women's Day Breakfast, sponsored by Spirit of Tasmania, GMHBA, and Comm Bank was held at Kardinia Park Stadium with special guest Gina Chick – writer, rewilding expert and winner of Alone Australia Season One. Gina led the room of 500+ in a chorus of song demonstrating how community can come together for the greater good.



2024 Future Geelong Leadership Awards

The inaugural Future Geelong Leadership Awards were held in September 2024, in conjunction with Geelong Advertiser. Sponsored by Bisinella Developments and 1915 Federal Mills.

These awards are designed as an opportunity to honour the exceptional leaders in our community and inspire the next generation to propel our region towards a bright and sustainable future. Nominations were submitted by the general public and a panel of judges determined each category winner.

Judges: Kate Barlow, Giulia Baggio, Roxie Bennett, Michael Betts, Stephanie Davie, Andrew Deane, Nicholas Ellul, Matthew Fletcher, Amy Gillett, Michael Johnston, Simon Loader, Tamara McDonald, Lisa Neville, Gail Rodgers, Emma Standen and Diana Taylor AM.

2024 Future Geelong Leadership Awards Winners:

Frank Costa Award – Dan Simmonds

A leader who exemplifies outstanding achievements across multiple facets of regional progress. This is awarded annually by the Committee for Geelong board.

Dan Simmonds accepted the award from Scotland via video message saying he was 'thrilled and honoured to be the 2024 recipient'. Dan said he has always 'strived to achieve the best possible outcomes' both in his professional role as a lawyer and in his community work for the region.



People's Choice Award & Livability Leader – Michelle Gertz

People's Choice Award: A leader chosen by the community for their impactful contributions and popularity.

Livability Leader: Has contributed to the quality of life in our region such as leaders in housing and planning but also healthcare, education, essential and emergency services, community organisations, etc.

Michelle, General Manager at Read the Play is all about youth mental health, using sports as a platform to engage and educate. She's also been a strong voice in AFL Barwon. Michelle talks the talk and walks the walk, making sure our youth have the support they need.



Under 25 – Imogen O'Shannessy

An up-and-coming leader under 25 who is already having a significant impact in their local community such as their school, neighbourhood, sports group, etc.

Imogen O'Shannessy is a force for change at just 16. She's a passionate advocate for LGBTIA+ youth and has played a key role in launching the Unsung Hero Award. Imogen's leadership goes beyond advocacy; she's co-authored a bill on disability education and continues to enhance inclusivity and cultural opportunities for young people across Geelong.

Corporate Citizenship Leader – Barwon Water

An organisation, small or large, that demonstrated outstanding or significant leadership in Geelong or the wider region.

Barwon Water, led by CEO Shaun Cumming, is setting the standard for environmental leadership. They're not just about water; they're about sustainability. From Australia's first public hydrogen refuelling station to innovative water projects, Barwon Water is ensuring our region stays green and our water supply stays reliable. Their leadership is all about future-proofing Geelong.



Workplace Leader – Linda Wong

Creates job opportunities, cultivates a dynamic workplace culture and/or fosters innovation and entrepreneurship, all of which propel the city's growth. This can be across any sector.

Linda is the driving force behind Runway HQ and a co-founder of Hands of Change. Linda's leadership has been crucial in expanding social learning opportunities across Victoria. She's guided Runway through some tough times, but her commitment to innovation and community impact never wavered. Linda's work is about creating work spaces where ideas grow and people thrive.

Connectivity Leader – Matt McDonald

Has advocated for and achieved safe, fast and sustainable ways for residents to navigate the city or created innovative technology that connects residents.

As CEO Searoad Ferries, Matt led the charge on the Queenscliff Ferry Terminal expansion. Matt's leadership goes beyond ferries; he's deeply involved in community engagement and sustainability, making sure our region is not just connected but thriving. Congratulations Matt!



Cultural and Recreation Leader – Corrina Eccles

Has advanced the region's cultural and recreational opportunities including in sectors such as arts and culture, sport, heritage and hospitality.

Corrina Eccles is a proud Wadawurrung woman and the Cultural Strengthening General Manager for Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. Her leadership empowers First Nations people, promotes Aboriginal culture throughout Geelong, and fosters meaningful community dialogue.

Corporate Plus Member Stories

Avalon Airport

Avalon Airport is proud to stand alongside the Committee for Geelong as a corporate partner, working together to champion the growth, resilience, and long-term prosperity of our region.

The Committee's role in fostering collaboration between business, government, and community mirrors Avalon's own mission: to be more than an airport, but a driver of opportunity and innovation for Geelong and beyond.

The future of Avalon is built on diversification. While we remain committed to providing accessible and affordable passenger services, we are equally focused on becoming a strategic economic hub for Victoria and Australia. The arrival of global leaders like Hanwha, with its armoured vehicle manufacturing, and now Lockheed Martin, who have recently established warehouse operations at Avalon, highlights our airport's unique role in supporting national capability and local jobs. This investment brings with it highly skilled employment opportunities, technology transfer, and new supply chains that will benefit Geelong's economy for decades to come.

Beyond defence, Avalon is positioning itself as a logistics powerhouse. Our vast landholdings and direct road connectivity create the ideal environment for major warehousing and freight operations. With e-commerce and global trade reshaping supply chains, Avalon offers a nationally significant site where businesses can scale and operate with efficiency.

At the same time, Avalon continues to serve the travelling public, connecting our region with interstate destinations. And we are confident too that international services won't be far away. The combination of passenger growth, freight expansion, and advanced manufacturing partnerships ensures that Avalon is not reliant on a single stream of activity, but is building a robust, multi-faceted economic base.

As a proud partner of the Committee for Geelong, Avalon is committed to shaping a stronger future for our city and region – creating jobs, attracting investment, and ensuring Geelong is firmly on the national and international map.

Ari Suss,
CEO, Melbourne Avalon Airport

KPMG

KPMG is proud to be a Corporate Plus Member of the Committee for Geelong, with KPMG Geelong as one of two Victorian offices dedicated to supporting local businesses.

Led by local partners Paul Robson, Claire Richards, and Luke Snowdon, our Geelong office is a hub for innovation, collaboration, and community impact. Their deep local knowledge and shared passion help to drive our regional growth.

KPMG's purpose—Inspiring Confidence. Empowering Change.—also guides our approach in delivering global expertise to regional Victoria. We solve complex challenges, support client success, and offer capital city careers in a regional setting, helping us attract and retain top local talent.

Our partnership with the Committee for Geelong allows us to support organisations of all sizes—from large enterprises to family businesses. Through our local team, we offer tailored services to mid-market firms, not-for-profits, and regional entrepreneurs, ensuring access to world-class insights.

Initiatives like the “Regional Risk Workshop” have allowed us to collaborate with the Committee and equip local organisations for an evolving risk environment. KPMG's “Geelong Economic Blueprint” and “Geelong Risk Landscape” reports have also provided valuable insights.

The Committee for Geelong has helped KPMG in further understanding the region's evolving priorities. Our involvement provides valuable understanding of the local economy, emerging sectors, and community needs. Several of our team are proud graduates of the “Leaders for Geelong” program, reflecting our strong commitment to the region's future.

Whether you're a growing family business, regional manufacturer, Government entity, or not-for-profit, KPMG Geelong is a partner that understands your market and speaks your language. We don't advise from the sidelines—we work alongside you to build stronger, smarter businesses.

We also host CFO roundtables, engage with schools and universities, and support career pathways for local graduates. Our team is growing, with a strong pipeline of future leaders and lateral hires.

As Geelong evolves, KPMG remains committed to offering trusted advice, meaningful partnerships, and long-term investment. We believe in local leadership powered by global insight—and we're here to help the region meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Events, Briefings & Submissions



Plan Victoria Briefing with Planning Minister Sonia Kilkeny.

2024

July

Djilang Advertiser

Activate Leadership Program 2024 Round Two commenced

August

Plan Victoria Submission

September

Future Geelong Leadership Awards

2024 Frank Costa Leadership Award Recipient Dan Simmons Announced

Exploring Offshore Wind Opportunities for Geelong

October

Project Presentation Breakfast

Board and Corporate Plus Luncheon with Victorian Liberal Leader John Pesutto

Annual General Meeting

November

Climate Action Briefing with Minister Lily D'Ambrosio

Lara Waste to Energy Project Breakfast

Canberra Advocacy visit

December

2024 Annual Dinner and Leaders for Geelong Graduation with Keynote Anna Meares OAM

2025

January

Commencement of the 2025 Leaders for Geelong Program

February

Major Events Forum #2

G21 Federal Election Priorities Collaboration Launched

Get Ready for AI Breakfast with KPMG

March

International Women's Day Breakfast with Gina Chick

Future Geelong Forum

Economic Outlook Briefing with KPMG

Market Square Redevelopment Plan Released

April

Activate Leadership 2025 Round One commenced

May

Plan Victoria Briefing with Planning Minister Sonya Kilkeny

2025/26 Victorian Budget Analysis

2025/26 Federal Budget Analysis

June

Committee for Geelong 2025 Annual Dinner with Hugh van Cuylenburg



2024 Annual General Meeting with special guest Brand Tasmania's Todd Babiak.

Green Heart

Committee for Geelong unveils vision for market square transformation.

March 6, 2025

The Committee for Geelong has revealed an ambitious vision for the redevelopment of the Market Square site.

Following on from their submission to the City of Greater Geelong's Market Square Master Plan process, and developed over the past 12 months, the vision aims to create a vibrant city heart for Geelong. A place that restores the site to its former role as an open meeting place for the community in the heart of the city centre.

The proposed vision includes:

- the demolition of the existing shopping centre and refurbishment of the heritage buildings and clock tower on Moorabool, Malop and Little Malop Streets.
- the creation of a 5000 square metre green open public space, hosting weekend markets, live events, and extend the Little Malop St dining precinct across Moorabool Street.
- a high-rise apartment building on the current car park site, featuring over 300 apartments, car parking, and mixed-use spaces, which will deliver essential housing stock for Central Geelong.

The vision has been developed with the support of several Committee members, led by planning and design experts Tract Consultants with support from WT Partnership and Preston Rowe Paterson. Bringing their local knowledge and expertise to the vision, these project partners have helped the Committee for Geelong bring to life an ambitious and catalytic project that can stimulate wider investment and development within Central Geelong.

Michael Johnston, CEO of the Committee for Geelong, stated, "This is about getting back to the Committee's roots; bold and ambitious ideas to fuel Geelong's growth and economic prosperity."

"The revitalisation of Central Geelong requires just that, a bold and creative step. Our city centre needs to be opened up to create a better flow, linking the waterfront and Westfield, the Little Malop entertainment and cultural precincts, the health services precinct, and the Ryrie Street dining and retail strip."

"This vision provides this by creating the large public open space our city lacks. A meeting place. Somewhere that can be activated on weekends. A place that will bring people into the city centre."

"Geelong has many amazing spaces in the city; Johnstone Park, the Waterfront, and we will soon have Nyaal Bunyal Geelong Convention and Event Centre. What we don't have is a city heart, and there is only one location that makes sense for this to be located. There is no other site in Geelong located so centrally, sitting on a single title of land."

Johnston added, "The green heart will feed off the green spine, and create urban renewal that can accommodate increased residential living in Central Geelong. We know there are several projects that can't get off the ground in the current environment, and this is a circuit breaker, a project that would unlock over \$1 billion in investment."



Proposed design renders of Market Square by Tract Consulting showcases a vibrant urban space with landscaped areas, modern architecture, and communal seating, promoting a blend of leisure and commerce.



"This concept is one that current Market Square owners could embrace, or it could be picked up by other interested parties. Given the scale of the project, it would feasibly need to be a public-private partnership, with all levels of government working alongside a development partner to bring this vision to life. But our work has shown that this is feasible and could be delivered."

Simon Loader, Senior Principal at Tract Consultants, commented, "Through visionary planning and inspired design, we are shaping a place where our past and future meet—an urban park that honours

our history, enriches our present, and welcomes generations to come. This is more than a redevelopment; it is a legacy of connection, culture, and community.

Through these artistic impressions, we have transformed the Committee's vision into visual concept that brings to life a future where the Market Square site provides a dynamic, connected, and celebrated place for all members of our community."

Cam Hamilton, Managing Director of Hamilton Group, expressed his support, saying, "As a property owner in central Geelong, I am

excited about the potential this project has to transform our city centre. The proposed green space and residential development will not only enhance the liveability of Geelong but also attract significant investment and economic growth. Additional investment in car parking in the centre of Geelong will support tenancies and help draw people back to the heart of the city."

City of Greater Geelong Mayor Stretch Kontelj OAM has re-opened dialogue with the Market Square owners with an understanding that close collaboration between all key stakeholders will be vital for the project's success.

"The redevelopment of Market Square is crucial for the revitalisation of our CBD. We need more people living in central Geelong, and a multilevel, mixed-use redevelopment of Market Square has the potential to transform the culture of our CBD."

"Now that Council have recommenced positive dialogue with Market Square's owners, we are keen to work with them and other key players to make this happen."

Community Leadership

The Leaders for Geelong program is designed to cultivate and connect a diverse network of leaders who are passionate about shaping the future of the Geelong region.

The program provides a rich learning architecture that blends experiential activities, facilitated workshops, community engagement, and leadership development, ensuring participants gain the skills, insights, and relationships needed to make a lasting impact.

Now in its 19th year, the Leaders for Geelong program explores core leadership domains that support both individual and collective growth:

- **Place**

Participants gain insights into the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental forces shaping the Geelong region and beyond.

- **Connection**

Participants build relationships with a diverse community of peers while deepening their connections across the Geelong region.

- **Leadership as an Action**

Participants develop the confidence and practical skills needed to step into leadership roles wherever they are needed.

- **Inner Development**

Participants enhance their self-awareness, resilience, and presence, recognising that effective leadership is shaped by their inner condition.

In the 2024/25 financial year, twenty-nine participants continued their Leaders for Geelong program, experiencing a range of events from July to December including:

- Arts and Culture night – a VIP experience and performance of *The Mousetrap* at the Geelong Arts Centre
- Innovation and Creativity Day – hosted by Deakin University
- Presentations to Inspire – workshop conducted by Catherine Bell
- Equity and Wellbeing Day – with presentations from organisations such as WorkSafe, Art of the Minds, and Geelong Community Foundation
- Project Presentation Breakfast
- Building Blocks of Leadership – facilitated by Damien O'Malley
- Canberra experience – hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister, Richard Marles MP
- Graduation event (held in conjunction with the Committee for Geelong's Annual Dinner)

Community Projects

Each year, Leaders for Geelong participants work on a community-based project of regional significance. Each project has a Project Champion who is the representative of the organisation to whom the project is handed over for subsequent ownership and implementation. Additionally, the project teams are supported by an Alumni Mentor (Leaders for Geelong program Alumni).

One of the reasons why Leaders for Geelong participants undertake the program is because they are interested in the community service aspect of leadership. They are keen, devoted and take great pride in these projects. This opportunity provides growth for the participants and also for the community organisations, with some of the most talented, energetic and skilled professionals in Geelong supporting them.



2024 Leaders for Geelong Graduation.



2024 Leaders for Geelong – Project Presentation Breakfast.

2024 Projects

Active Geelong – 'Move More' Directory for Workplaces

This project team created a free, online Active Geelong Move More Directory, to help workplaces recognise what their physical activity challenges are, develop a physical activity strategy, and access resources to help to get their workplaces more physically active.

Geelong Connected – Communities Social Impact Report

This project developed a well-researched, evidenced based and compelling social impact report that articulates the positive impact that Geelong Connected Communities has had on communities in the Geelong region.

Barwon Water – Creating New Employment Pathways

This project assessed the feasibility of a central employment agency that works with organisations in Geelong to provide school leavers with access to varied work experience and an opportunity to undertake a qualification over a 12-month period.

Lazarus Community Centre – What Works Best for Clients at Lazarus – Part 2

The 2023 Leaders for Geelong participants provided an evidence-based research report that assisted with grant applications and community exposure. In year 2 of this work, Lazarus Community Centre looked to build on this project and trial expanded drop-in nursing service and provide increased care to clients where they are.

Give Where You Live – Creating a Fairer Community Through Workplace Giving

The Workplace Giving Program is one of the largest fundraising streams for the Give Where You Live Foundation, however it has slowly declined in recent years. This project focused on reinvigorating the Workplace Giving Program, with the goal to increase workplace givers by 10% in the first year.



*2024 Leaders
for Geelong visit
to Canberra.*

2025 Leaders for Geelong

The first half of the 2025 program has demonstrated strong progress and meaningful impact for the twenty-four current participants. The *Opening Retreat* in February brought participants together for two days of immersive learning and connection, and introduced the cohort to the opportunities and challenges facing the region, and included a session with Wadawurrung Woman Corrina Eccles to strengthen cultural awareness and connection to Country.

In March, the first *Building Blocks of Leadership* session, *Leading Self*, was delivered following a preparatory masterclass. This workshop focused on personal leadership, self-awareness, strengths-based approaches, growth mindset, emotional intelligence, and effective communication—equipping participants with the tools to align values with actions and lead authentically.



2025 Leaders for Geelong on the Spirit of Tasmania as part of Pivot City Day.

The program's Community Days have provided valuable opportunities to engage with the region's history, identity, and future potential. The *Pivot City* day explored Geelong's transformation from its manufacturing heritage to a hub of innovation and creativity, with visits to sites such as the Federal Mills precinct and insights from leaders at Geelong Port. Participants reflected on the region's evolving brand and discussed ways to shape Geelong's identity moving forward.

June marked the second *Building Blocks of Leadership* focus: *Leading Teams*. Preceded by a masterclass on fostering collaboration, building trust, and leveraging team strengths, this workshop offered practical tools for enhancing group performance and navigating the pressures of deadlines and deliverables.

Through these first six months, the program has created a strong foundation of knowledge, trust, and shared purpose among participants. The events to date have set the 2025 cohort up to focus on their community projects for the remainder of the year.



2025 Leaders for Geelong, Opening Retreat.



April 2025 Activate Leadership Program.

Activate Leadership Program

The eight-week Activate Leadership Program was successfully delivered twice during the reporting period: from August to October 2024 and again from April to June 2025.

The refreshed program, offered through a dynamic blend of in-person and online sessions, explores contemporary leadership themes with a strong focus on practical application and personal growth. A key highlight of the program is the final group project, where participants collaborate to interview a regional community leader and present their insights—bringing their learning to life in a meaningful and engaging way.

Participation grew across both intakes, with seventeen emerging leaders completing the program in August–October 2024, followed by twenty participants in the April–June 2025 cohort.

The Community Leadership team extends sincere thanks to the regional leaders who generously shared their time and experiences with our participants, enriching the program and inspiring the next generation of community leaders:

- Lauren McKirdy, TAC
- Rhys Holden, Geelong Arts Centre
- Stephanie Davie, Costa Asset Management and Lazarus Community House
- Simon Loader, Tract Consultants
- Dan Simmons, Mast Lawyers
- Coco Eke, Murran Hub
- Marcus King, Geelong Cats
- Bill Mithen, Neighbourhood Economics
- Linda Wong, Runway HQ

The Leadership Portfolio is grateful to:

Partners:

WorkSafe
Kane Constructions
GeelongPort

2024 Grant provider:

Regional Development Victoria

2024 Scholarship Providers:

Hugh Williamson Foundation
CFA
GMHBA
Lake Advisory
In-Kind Supporters
The Gordon
Barwon Water

We are also extremely grateful to the many organisations, local leaders and facilitators who support the *Leaders for Geelong* and *Activate Leadership* programs.



Lauren Carnegie
Community Leadership
Director



Karen MacAdie
Community Leadership
Coordinator

24/25 Financials

Statement of Financial Position – As at 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	336,167	432,716
Trade and other receivables	50,948	46,572
Other financial assets	245,220	218,347
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	632,335	697,635
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	17,898	18,557
Intangible assets	5,250	7,500
Right of use assets	35,049	48,617
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	58,197	74,674
TOTAL ASSETS	690,532	772,309
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	40,238	53,571
Lease liabilities	13,442	11,534
Employee benefits	30,795	25,671
Other financial liabilities	85,655	101,232
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	170,130	192,008
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Lease liabilities	25,696	39,138
Employee benefits	360	223
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	26,056	39,361
TOTAL LIABILITIES	196,186	231,369
NET ASSETS	494,346	540,940
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	494,346	540,942
TOTAL EQUITY	494,346	540,942

Statement of Profit or Loss – For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
INCOME		
Income	892,127	836,310
Interest income	13,902	16,363
Other Income	161,094	175,299
TOTAL INCOME	1,067,123	1,027,972
EXPENDITURE		
Operating expenses	(300,314)	(309,630)
Leadership portfolio expenses	(105,177)	(139,169)
Employee expenses	(708,227)	(628,368)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(1,113,718)	(1,077,167)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(46,595)	(49,195)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	(46,595)	(49,195)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**TO THE DIRECTORS OF COMMITTEE FOR GEELONG LIMITED****Opinion**

We have audited the financial report of Committee for Geelong Limited (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the declaration by those charged with governance.

In our opinion the financial report of Committee for Geelong Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act), including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Standard and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ACNC Act, the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, which has been given to the directors of the Company, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

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Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report in accordance with the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Stephen Kirtley
Director

Dated this 21st day of October, 2025

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