

# AFL OUTER EAST STRATEGIC PLAN

Connecting, developing and growing our communities, through the games of Australian Rules Football and Netball.



# INTRODUCTION

Sport in Victoria is ever changing. Whether it is the rapid growth of female football, the introduction of the AFL Next Generation Academies or the increase in Junior Netball numbers, it is an exciting time to be involved in community Football and Netball competitions.

As the landscape changes, so must our plans.

In 2018, the AFL Yarra Ranges initiated a review to examine the sustainability and viability of the competitions in the AFL Yarra Ranges Commission.

This involved an extensive club consultation process, which ultimately led to the inclusion of six SENFL clubs and the creation of the AFL Outer East.

This document summarises our strategic direction moving forward, linking our vision, mission and values with our core strategic pillars that aim to support football and netball at all levels across the region.

Aaron Bailey  
Region General Manager  
September 2019



# VALUE OF A COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB

The Centre for Sport and Social Impact (CSSI) at La Trobe University was commissioned by AFL Victoria in 2016 to determine the social value of a “typical” community football club; specifically its social, health and community impact.

## SOCIAL OUTCOMES

Football clubs provide an environment where people are more socially connected at every age group, compared to other Victorians, and are 3 times more useful for developing social networks than work, education or other community groups. Football club social networks provide individuals, particularly those aged 15 to 24, with significantly increased chances of securing employment.

## HEALTH OUTCOMES

Football clubs are important and effective vehicles for delivering health and safety campaign messages to young people. Individuals associated with a football club have a greater level of self-reported wellbeing at every age group compared to a sample of the Victorian population. The self-reported mental health of people aged 18-24 associated with a football club is substantially higher than the general population; given the higher incidence of mental health issues among young people, it could be argued that ‘football clubs help those at greatest risk of poor mental health’.

## COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Football clubs are increasingly engaged with their communities, delivering a range of services such as school holiday clinics and health awareness programs in schools, while supporting other community groups’ events and fund raising efforts, supporting health awareness and education campaigns and helping socially disadvantaged members of the community participate in football. A football club’s reach is significant and extends beyond its players, coaches, administrators and volunteers; for every 1 player, football clubs reach 10 people in their community, generating increased civic pride. Football clubs are considered the hub of a community, particularly in rural and regional areas, are a focal point for community efforts in times of crisis and celebration and are considered by club and community members as central to shaping the identity of a township or area.

## ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

As highlighted under social outcomes, football clubs create direct employment opportunities for their communities. Football clubs are large consumers within their own communities, supporting local businesses such as bakeries, cafes, hotels, butchers, restaurants and local trades people. The average community football club in Victoria makes an annual economic contribution of \$630,000<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Street Ryan Economic Contribution Assessments of Australian Football



**FOR EVERY \$1  
INVESTED IN  
RUNNING A  
COMMUNITY  
FOOTBALL CLUB...  
THERE IS AT LEAST  
\$4.40 RETURN  
IN SOCIAL VALUE  
IN TERMS OF INCREASED  
SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS,  
WELLBEING, AND MENTAL  
HEALTH STATUS;  
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES;  
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT;  
PHYSICAL HEALTH; CIVIC  
PRIDE AND SUPPORT OF  
OTHER COMMUNITY  
GROUPS.**

# OUR VISION

*Our stakeholders and our people sit at the heart of what we do and the decisions we make.*

*We strive to be industry leaders, respected for our innovative, collaborative approach to delivering outstanding outcomes for our community.*

*Accessible, inclusive and affordable, our games can be enjoyed and participated by all.*

# OUR MISSION

*Connecting, developing and growing our communities, through the games of Australian Rules Football and Netball.*



# OUR VALUES



## APPROACHABLE

We *engage* with our community through genuine, open and honest conversations

Through *feedback*, we strive to improve everyday

We will show the *joy* we have in what we do

## SUPPORTIVE

Through *active listening*, we seek workable solutions

We find ways to *help* and accept that help

We will act with *empathy*

## CONNECTED

Building *strong relationships* underpins everything we do

We value, appreciate and *acknowledge* the contribution of others

We *value* the message, by always valuing the messenger

## ACCOUNTABLE

We will be *transparent* about who we are, what we do and our successes and failures

We *own* our actions, outcomes and behaviours

We will deliver long-term positive *results*

## TRUSTED

We *magnify* each other's strengths and empower others

We make *brave*, transparent decisions that are focused on outcomes

We are consistent and show *integrity*

# STRATEGIC PLAN PILLARS



## COMMUNITY

*Vibrant, sustainable and inclusive environments, where clubs and stakeholders, who are the heart of our regional communities, can flourish.*



## PATHWAYS

*Clear pathways for players, coaches, umpires, and volunteers, that encourage and enable all, to reach their potential.*



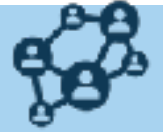
## PARTICIPATION

*Innovative development programs tailored to introduce, recruit, transition and retain participants in Australian Rules Football & Netball.*



## FACILITIES

*A network of facilities that are fit for purpose, functional, welcoming and support growth of both male and female participants.*



## ORGANISATION & PEOPLE

*The development of our people underpins everything we do, building the capacity of our members, across all levels.*

## AFL KEYS TO SUCCESS

### Embedding Diversity

in everything we do across gender, culture and ability

### Ultimate Collaboration

All football stakeholders working together in regions to grow the game

### Easy Accessibility

and clear pathways to participate and progress through the game



# COMMUNITY



*Vibrant, sustainable and inclusive environments, where clubs and stakeholders, who are the heart of our regional communities, can flourish*



- Identify and implement operational efficiencies that will assist in the decline in volunteer workload.
- Increase engagement and promotion of Football and Netball across the region.
- Ensure that AFL Outer East and its members have a responsible, sound, and sustainable business model to enable long term growth of football and netball in the region.
- Implement measures that promote long term sustainability and viability of clubs within our region.





# PATHWAYS



*Clear pathways for players, coaches, umpires and volunteers, that encourage and enable all to reach their potential.*

- Develop and support pathways that promote transition, improve retention, increase participation and facilitate the growth of Australian Rules Football & Netball.
- Establish Talent programs, that utilise best practice and identify, attract and develop participants.
- Promote, develop and implement best practice coaching throughout the region through education, training and development.
- Build the capacity of umpiring in the region through coaching and umpire development.



# PARTICIPATION



*Innovative development programs tailored to introduce, recruit, transition and retain participants in Australian Rules Football & Netball.*

- Provide clear competition pathways, with accessible entry points across all levels, that maximise participation.
- Increase connections between clubs and local community groups, including schools, to grow participation.
- Develop and implement initiatives that facilitate player retention in transitional age groups
- Create clear pathways for female participants across all levels.





# FACILITIES

*A network of facilities that are fit for purpose, functional, welcoming and support growth of both male and female participants.*

- Continue to enhance the relationship between football, netball and government in the planning, provision and funding of facilities and programs
- Increase the quality and functionality of, and maximise the use / carrying capacity of existing facilities.
- Increase capacity of clubs and volunteers to develop local facilities.
- Drive facility development and infrastructure planning with local governments, through a Regional Facility Development Plan and Female Facility Plan.

# ORGANISATION & PEOPLE



*The development of our people underpins everything we do, building the capacity of our members, across all levels.*

- Build the capacity of clubs, people, culture and governance through education, mentoring and recognition programs.
- Develop stakeholder and community engagement initiatives that add social value, promote equality and provide inclusive, safe club environments for all participants.
- Promote, manage, and develop Australian Rules Football and Netball in the region through innovative leadership, direction, and governance





Kilsyth Centre of Excellence  
95 Colchester Road, Kilsyth, 3137, VIC

9735 5448

[admin@afloutereast.com](mailto:admin@afloutereast.com)




@afloutereast



@AFL\_OE



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