

Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan 2020 - 2030 *Revisited*



Updated in 2025 by a Community Action Network Working Group. Created in 2019 by Deans Marsh Community Cottage & Peter Kenyon, Bank of I.D.E.A.S



DEANS MARSH & DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN 2020–2030



OUR COMMUNITY VISION

To have a thriving community that balances care for the land and its people

Our Guiding Values



Caring & Connected

We celebrate and share our unique community spirit



Custodianship

We respect and protect our natural environment



Resilience & Adaptability

We aim to build the resilience and adaptability of our community, local economy and environment



Collaborative & Creative

We are resourceful and proactive



Rural Identity

We are committed to retaining our rural landscapes and rural village lifestyle

Our Priorities

Our Community

Support social connection, inclusion and wellbeing

- Celebrate community events and activities
- Build engagement through connections



Our Environment

Protect and enhance our natural assets

- Promote sustainable practices
- Support climate resilience through land use and planning initiatives



Our Economy

Support and strengthen our local economy

- Support local business
- Encourage local spending
- Attract external support



Contents

Introduction	4
What is the The Deans Marsh & District (The Plan)	
Why we have The Plan	
How did The Plan come about	
The Plan update process	
About Deans Marsh	5
Location	
Communities	
Facilities	
Businesses	
Map	
Demographics	
Who we are and what matters to us	
Our Community Vision	9
Guiding Values	10
Priorities	11
Our local communities	
Our local environment	
Our local economy	
Key Successes	19
Moving Forward	20
Appendices	21
Acknowledgements	
History of Deans Marsh	
The MaDCAP Process	
Natural and Cultural Heritage	

Introduction

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Deans Marsh and District, Gadubanud & Gulidjan People of the Eastern Maar, The Wadawurrung People, and their Elders and leaders. Recognising their unceded sovereignty, cultural heritage, and continuing connection to Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present and commit to ensuring Aboriginal peoples feel safe and welcome in our spaces.

What is The Deans Marsh & District Plan (The Plan)

The Community Plan, created by our community for our community, captures what makes Deans Marsh special and sets out our shared vision for the future. It guides the steps we'll take to nurture our town, strengthen connections, support local businesses, celebrate creativity, and ensure Deans Marsh remains vibrant and welcoming for all.

Why we have The Plan

A community plan helps inform decision-making and clarify the direction for our town, providing a guiding vision for everyone—long-time residents and newcomers alike. It encourages and inspires our community while offering a clear, shared document that partners and supporters can use to understand how best to contribute to our goals. The plan also helps protect and strengthen our community.

How The Plan come about

The Deans Marsh and District Community Action Plan (the Plan) was developed in 2019 through the MaDCAP campaign led by the Deans Marsh Community Cottage. An extensive consultation process was carried out across the community over a number of months. For more details see Appendix.

The Plan update process

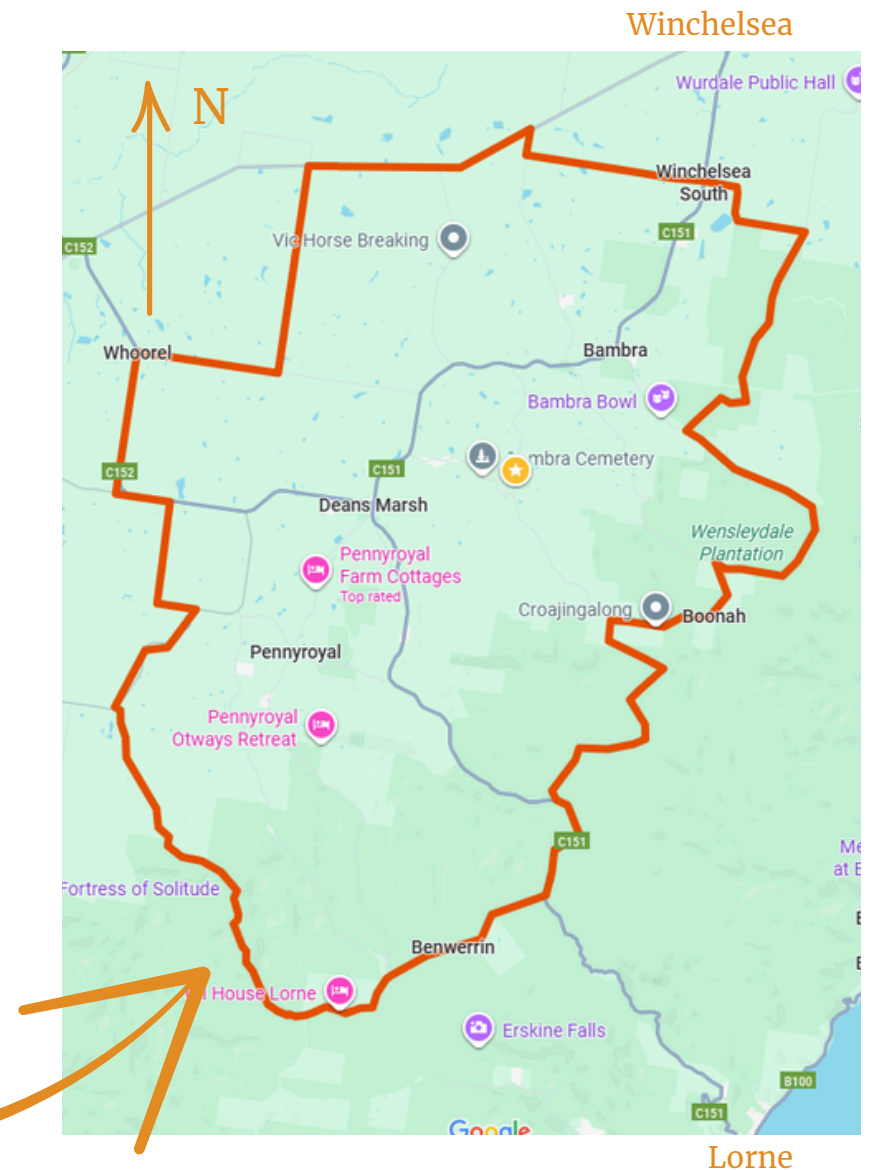
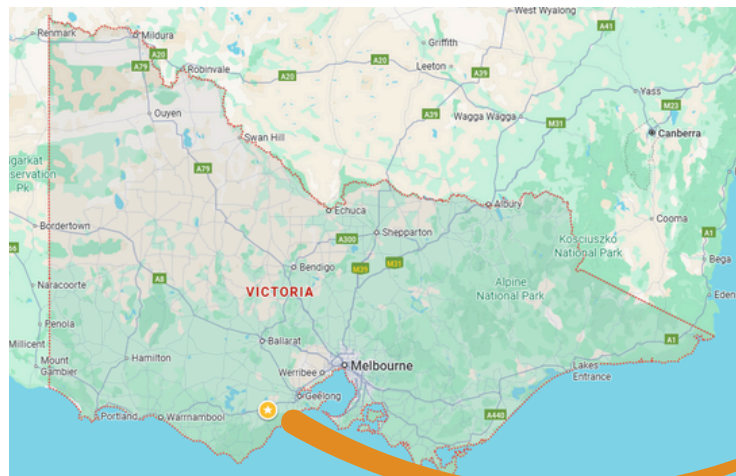
In 2025, the Surf Coast Shire committed funds for a Community Working Group to review The Plan. Given the comprehensive nature of the initial process the purpose for the review was to not rewrite The Plan, but to reshape the existing document. The aim was to make The Plan more accessible, update changes to circumstances, and to enhance The Plan's effectiveness in meeting its purpose. The Community's Vision, Guiding Values & Priorities remain unchanged. The following document Deans Marsh & Community Action Plan 2020 - 2030 Revisited and the accompanying 2025 Mid-Point Review are the result of this process

About Deans Marsh

Location

Deans Marsh is a small rural township nestled in the northern foothills of the Otway Ranges in south-west Victoria. Surrounded by gently rolling, lightly wooded hills, it sits at the heart of a broader district of smaller localities, including Bamba, Pennyroyal, Boonah, and Murroon. The town enjoys a balance of seclusion and accessibility, located within a 2 hour drive to Melbourne, 1 hour drive to Geelong and 25-minute drive of Lorne, Colac, and Winchelsea, offering both a quiet rural lifestyle and convenient access to services.

More than just a township, Deans Marsh is the social and cultural hub for its wider district. Strong connections are built through school, sport, local events, and community groups, drawing people from across the surrounding area. Locals often define "Deans Marsh and district" not by official boundaries, but by the shared sense of identity and belonging that links these communities together.



Community Organisations & Groups

There are many community groups that help make Deans Marsh dynamic, connected and community-focused. These include:

- Community Asset Committee (CAC) - That works in partnership with the Surf Coast Shire to manage key public facilities.
- Deans Marsh Primary School (DMPS) - The school is one of the most representative and widely supported groups in the district.
- Deans Marsh Country Fire Authority (CFA) - A volunteer operated arm of the federal organisation managing local Fire & Emergency response services.
- Deans Marsh Community Cottage (DMCC) - A funded neighbourhood house supporting community centric programs, projects & events.
- East Otway Landcare

In addition to a number of other groups including, SPaRK Arts Group, Cricket Club, Tennis Club & Grow Make Gather.

The Community Action Network (CAN) - Is a representative group composed of nominees from each of the community groups in the district that come together to share information across the community.

Facilities

Deans Marsh is fortunate to have a wide range of valuable community facilities—many of which exist thanks to the dedication and hard work of local residents, with strong support from the Surf Coast Shire. At the heart of these is the Deans Marsh Community Hub (The Hub). The Hub is a collection of spaces which comprises of the Deans Marsh Community Hall, Family Daycare, and The Deans Marsh Community Cottage.

A new Hub facility has been designed and endorsed by Council in 2024. Efforts are now underway to secure funding for the construction of the new facility. See the Mid-term Review document for more information.

A full list of current groups and facilities can be found at www.deansmarshcottage.org.au/our-town

Businesses

Local businesses play a vital role in Deans Marsh, supporting jobs, services, and community life while attracting visitors to the district.

Farming remains the backbone of the local economy, complemented by ventures in produce, home-based businesses and contractors, accommodation, and creative industries, all of which add diversity and character. Hospitality venues, including the general store, highlight how business and community are closely intertwined, shaping both the identity and future of Deans Marsh.

Deans Marsh & District Demographics



706 People



49.7% Male
50.3% Female



47 years Median Age



185 Private Dwellings
2.5 People Per House
92 Families
92% English/Australian/Scottish



41.9% Full Time / 45.3% Part Time Work
23.9% Professionals
18.8% Managers
15.9% Trade Workers
16% Are Carers
29% Volunteer

Bambra



115 People



51 yrs Median Age



64 Dwellings

Boonah



18 People



46 yrs Median Age



15 Dwellings

Deans Marsh



368 People



47 yrs Median Age



185 Dwellings

Pennyroyal



110 People



47 yrs Median Age



53 Dwellings

Murroon



95 People



48 yrs Median Age



48 Dwellings

Who We Are and What Matters To Us

A clear and strong identity is the common thread that joins us together as a community. It informs our actions and helps us celebrate our shared values and passions. This identity can then be projected beyond our community helping to increase desirable forms of support, investment, and visitation.

The Deans Marsh way of doing things...



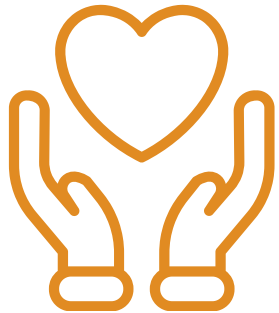
Our Community Vision

To have a thriving rural community that balances care for the land and its people.

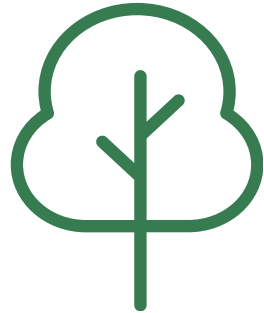
*“If our community was currently music...
It would have a slow, soulful rhythm...
In the future it needs to have a bit more pace to it,
more layers and more instruments...”*



Our Community Guiding Values



We are a caring and connected community who celebrate and share our unique community spirit



We are responsible custodians who respect and protect our natural environment



We act to build the resilience and adaptability of our community, our local economy and our environment



We have a collaborative, creative, resourceful and proactive culture



We are committed to retaining our rural landscapes and rural village lifestyle

Our Priorities

The Deans Marsh and District community's priorities directly flow from the MaDCAP process. Our community can work together to bring the projects of the Community Action Plan to realisation. In doing so the Deans Marsh and District Community will be able to realise our community goals.

- **Support Local Business**
- **Encourage Local Spending**
- **Attract External Support**



- **Community Connections**
- **Community Infrastructure**

- **Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation**
- **Land use & planning**
- **Streetscapes**

Priority One

Our Local Community

1.1 To broaden and deepen our community connections.

A wide variety of age groups and family structures are present within the Deans Marsh community. We are committed to providing support to our youth, families and elderly population to ensure that residents can live a connected, productive, independent and enjoyable life as part of this community.

We acknowledge the vital importance of community connections and lasting friendships in preserving the mental health and wellbeing of our residents. We value our primary school, childcare and Out of School Hours Care (OHSC) programs and the role of these institutions in supporting families and growing the potential of our young people. We value the contribution and retention of our youth population and hope to improve the social opportunities and support the growing independence of our young people.

The Deans Marsh community seeks to provide greater support for its ageing population and foster relationships between generations. The community hopes to facilitate stronger support and social networks for parents of pre-school age children. What makes Deans Marsh special is our strong sense of community. The residents of Deans Marsh strongly value the development and maintenance of strong community connections and opportunities to gather as a community.

We desire to be a friendly place to live where all residents are welcomed and supported to make connections with and contribute to the community. Many members of our community are passionate about sharing their skills and learning from one another.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Create opportunities for community members to share skills and knowledge
- Facilitate opportunities to share and trade resources
- Facilitate a program of regular community social occasions
- Develop and deliver programs for our young people
- Early Years Reference Groups including Deans Marsh principal/ prep teacher/ welfare teacher
- Kindergarten Readiness and School Readiness programs through Lorne Kindergarten
- Playgroup established through First Time Parents Group

- Extend SCSC/Deans Marsh Primary School Children’s Week collaboration Local Food Program
- Develop and deliver programs to enable older residents to age in place
- Develop and deliver a program of social learning for pre-school aged children
- Develop and deliver multi-generational social gatherings and groups

Snapshot of what we’ve achieved at 2025

- The Deans Marsh Community Cottage continues to provide a platform for local people to share skills & knowledge.
- Grow, Make, Gather Pantry at the Cottage allows community to trade produce.
- Cottage, and community groups such as Landcare, CFA, SPaRK and the Cricket Club each have a program of community social occasions.
- Multi-generational gatherings at events such as: History chats, Community Dinners, Winter Solstice, Markets, Deans Marsh Festival, Run the Marsh, etc.
- An active Deans Marsh Youth Group.
- School holiday activities facilitated through The Cottage.
- Deans Marsh Primary School is delivering school readiness with Kinders in Lorne, Birregurra and Winchelsea.
- Weekly Playgroup at the Hall, facilitated by social services non-profit Meli in 2024/2025.
- Positive Aging program being delivered.

1.2 Our infrastructure supports the needs of all community members – now and in the future.

The Hub is a collection of spaces which comprises of the Deans Marsh Community Hall, Family Daycare, and The Deans Marsh Community Cottage. Public and community transport is a key consideration and need in creating an age friendly community and providing connection and accessibility. Public transport has been a key long term issue for local residents. Community transport models have been highlighted as a priority to facilitate.

Pathways play a vital role in promoting healthy communities. Pathways are most effective when they form a comprehensive and interconnected network. Where possible pathways should combine to form loops within the path network. A network of paths can help improve:

- Connectivity and mobility within the community
- Interaction between community members
- Physical and mental wellbeing
- A sense of character and place
- Tourist appeal

There are multiple potential users of pathways including; pedestrians, bikes, horses and wheelchairs. New pathways may run beside existing roads or travel 'cross country'. An inner network of paths around the centre of Deans Marsh could branch off to connect other local population centres and the broader landscape.

The town has clearly identified the need for a warm, welcoming multi-purpose community space suitable for gatherings of all sizes, particularly during the cold, wet months. This space will enable a range of community learning, engagement and social opportunities which will improve the connectedness of the community. There are a range of public halls and buildings within the district available to be activated.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Trial and evaluate community transport and public transport services.
- Design a colour coded network of possible pathways with a funding plan.
- Develop existing and new spaces that foster our community.

Snapshot of what we've achieved at 2025

- A new Community Hub has been designed and approved by Council with seed funding available.
- Colac to Lorne bus continues to be promoted and run in summer.
- Pathways Working Group consulted with the community and landholders and developed a plan with potential pathways.
- Footpath delivered along Deans Marsh - Birregurra Road, as far as Railway Terrace.
- Maering-myre Pavilion (stage space) constructed and in active use.
- CFA Meeting Room and Cottage Lounge area now available for community meetings.

Priority Two

Our Local Environment

2.1 Our natural environment is resilient and supports our industries - land use & planning

Through the MaDCAP process, the community has shown strong support for a more flexible planning scheme. The Deans Marsh district needs greater adaptability in shire planning and housing permits to encourage new enterprises and innovative land use. This flexibility can create fresh opportunities, attract younger people to the area, and support the long-term sustainability of the community.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Further explore key community concerns and potential solutions to increase land use flexibility.
- Identify and analyse useful examples from other rural communities.
- Investigate the available planning mechanisms available to facilitate our preferred outcomes.
- Lobby state and local Governments, where appropriate, for changes to current planning restrictions.
- Engage Surf Coast Shire Council to negotiate the best course of action to gain support.

Snapshot of what we've achieved at 2025

- Working Group established and commenced informal discussions on planning issues.
- Presentation (at Yan Yan Gurt West) to Councillors on a district visit in 2023.
- Surf Coast Shire policies have changed - regulations now facilitate second dwelling to 60m2 on the same lot, depending on zoning.

2.2 We all contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures

Being able to adapt to a changing climate is imperative if our community is to remain resilient. Our community has expressed a clear desire to act to meet this challenge.

A healthy population is diverse. It includes a wide range of demographics, with people of all ages, lifestyles, skill sets and interests able to live here. The population size should reflect the community's identified need to be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

Creating an environment that maximises the number of community members contributing to community climate resilience activities is a clear foundation to becoming a carbon neutral community.

Minimising our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering gases where possible is critical in becoming a carbon neutral community who can demonstrate to others how we can live comfortably with carbon neutral systems.

Priorities include investigating and actioning our community becoming 100% off grid, independent and self-reliant using renewable energy sources. Additionally, waste and seeing it as a resource to be recycled, for example, sewerage/green waste composted to feed back into agricultural systems, compost used as a heat source, plastic free community, and water recycled for irrigation.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Take action for our community to become 100% off grid, independent and self-reliant using renewable energy sources
- Deliver a comprehensive workshop, education and information program
- Facilitate the Deans Marsh Township Sustainability Plan
- Work together with Fire Agencies on township/district-based planning and community identified shelter options
- Support the development of a range of target Initiatives including community compost, local waste management and water recycling
- Create an adaptation plan for food and fibre security
- Develop a food hub/ education centre
- Create a regenerative agriculture action plan

Snapshot of what we've achieved at 2025

- PowerMaD Phase 1 (Renewable Action Plan) & Phase 2 (Community Energy Audit). Grants funded and activities delivered.
- Geelong Sustainability Workshop & Home Assessments conducted.
- Community changed focus from 100% off-grid to increasing uptake of renewables.
- Dean Marsh Hall is a Surf Coast Shire Rescue / Relief location - provided Tool Kit, (located under sink in main kitchen).
- Deans Marsh Primary School 5&6's Emergency Leadership Course.
- CFA holds regular Open Days and Information Sessions.
- Surf Coast Shore compost bins are in place.
- Recycling Station at Cottage and School for "hard to recycle" items has been in operation for 5 years.
- Grow Make Gather Pantry at the Cottage allows for food swapping.
- Community verge garden and food garden at the Memorial Reserve established and being maintained.

2.3 Our streetscapes reflect our community identity

Create vibrant streetscapes personalized to the unique character of Deans Marsh. Improve our streetscapes to help strengthen a sense of place and identity, both for our community and for those visiting our community.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Develop a streetscape concept plan
- Erect new community designed signs at the entrances to town
- New street tree plantings
- Encourage more street art
- Where possible reduce the number of existing Council signs

Snapshot of what we've achieved at 2025

- Streetscapes Working Group developed concept plan and secured \$40,000 from Surf Coast Shire to plant street trees.
- Artistic carving of the tree in playground (Community Initiatives Grant 2024).

Priority Three

Our Local Economy

3.1 Support our producers in local, regional and international markets

Small scale regenerative farming has brought interest, diversity, economic growth and social connectedness. There has been a change in land uses over the last 30 years, shifting from dairy, sheep, beef cattle and pear and potato production on large swathes of land to smaller industries such as native plant nursery, wineries, cellar door sales, berry, olive, garlic and vegetable growing, bee keeping and honey production, short stay accommodation, cafes, agroforestry farms.

Young people need support to establish leaseholds and to participate in rural enterprises. Deans Marsh district residents identified many opportunities to involve farmers and growers in small scale agricultural industries to generate agriculture and culture related employment opportunities.

3.2 Support local businesses

The Deans Marsh District community is vibrant and creative, with a variety of land based and creative arts activities operating at a community and commercial level. These complementary economies, including ceramics and other fine arts offer many tourism related opportunities. An additional commercial business would be good for community morale and could contribute to increased tourist traffic. The closing of Martians has had a significant effect on the community. With a small amount of capital investment existing community spaces could be made more functional to allow community and semi-commercial uses.

Key Actions from 2020 - 2030 Plan

- Encourage spending locally
- Attract more visitors
- Seek additional Government Assistance

Snapshot of what we've achieved at 2025

- Local Business Group convened and discussed ideas to promote Deans Marsh as a foodie destination (e.g. a mushroom festival).
- Meetings with Surf Coast Shire and advocacy within the community for initiatives to encourage people to spend time in town.
- The Store support a Gravel Grind Bike Ride, other ideas included overnight camping at the Reserve
- Explored establishing a ParkRun.

Key Successes



Community Hub Redevelopment

In partnership with key community stakeholders, the Surf Coast Shire has undertaken a project to shape the future of the Deans Marsh Community Hall and Cottage (including the early learning / childcare space). After significant community engagement a concept design was produced in 2024, which aims to achieve an outcome that is a balance of all evidence, expertise and the community feedback throughout the entire project, and will provide a fit-for-purpose facility reflecting the current and future community needs identified through the engagement process. Council endorsed the Concept Plan in March 2024 and the project is now considered investment-ready.

Community Streetscape Vision

The Deans Marsh Community Streetscape Vision is a community-led project to enhance the town's vibrancy and sense of place through initiatives like street tree planting, a history trail, town entry signage, and community art and memorials. Key community priorities include expanding the urban forest through the "Branching Out" project, which has now been funded and involves planting 80 trees along the main streets in Deans Marsh. Find out more at: <https://yoursay.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/branching-out>



PowerMaD Initiative

Starting with a desire for Deans Marsh to be entirely off-grid, the PowerMaD initiative has gone through two phases of community engagement, workshops, surveys, home energy audits and collective learning to work out what is really important to our community in terms of energy security and sustainability. Since 2020 our focus has shifted from being off-grid to making a fast and affordable transition to renewable energy sources. Our new aims can be found in the **Deans Marsh Renewable Action Plan** and we've been working with Geelong Sustainability to offer residents a detailed energy efficiency audit and gain a collective understanding of energy usage within our Community.

Moving Forward

2025 Mid-Term Review Document

Alongside The Plan, the Working Group has prepared a 2025 Mid-Term Review (The Review). The Review shares progress so far including a status update for all actions, highlights changes in the community, and reflects on key lessons learned. It also offers guidance and ideas to help community members stay involved and continue driving actions forward.

The Review highlights strong progress and ongoing commitment to the community's long-term vision. Of the 35 actions in The Plan, around 60% are either complete or well underway, with visible achievements in community connections, infrastructure, environmental initiatives, and creative projects. Some recommendations are for consideration now, while others may shape the next version of The Plan in 2030.

Moving Forward and How to Get Involved

It is intended that the 2020–2030 Community Plan - Revisited will spark renewed energy and commitment to the actions within The Plan. While there is no formal governance structure for the Plan beyond local, state, and federal laws, the Community Action Network (CAN) now supports its implementation.

CAN meets bi-monthly and brings together representatives from local groups. Although not a decision-making body, CAN represents a broad cross-section of the community and provides a central place for new ideas, working groups, questions, and feedback to guide the ongoing evolution of the Plan.

If the 2020–2030 Community Action Plan – Revisited or The 2025 Mid-term Review has sparked any thoughts, concerns or ideas you'd like to pursue, you're encouraged to attend a CAN meeting. Details of the meetings are available at deansmarshcottage.org.au, in The Croaker Newsletter, and on community noticeboards.

You can view the 2020–2030 Community Action Plan – Revisited and the 2025 Mid-term Review at deansmarshcottage.org.au/communityplan.

Appendices



Acknowledgements

2020 - 2030 Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan

The original 2020-2030 Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan was initiated and led by the Deans Marsh Community Cottage under the guidance of Cottage Coordinator, Lisa Jarvis. The success of this project would not have been possible without tireless efforts and enthusiasm from everyone involved. A special acknowledgement also to the huge number of community members who took part in the process by providing their feedback, ideas and support. We also acknowledge the extensive work of Peter Kenyon from the Banks of I.D.E.A.S, the funding from Regional Development Victoria's Stronger Regional Communities Program, and the Surf Coast Shire Council, without which The Plan would not have come to fruition. While prepared in good faith, the Plan does not guarantee total accuracy and should be used alongside ongoing research, consultation, and professional advice.

The original 2020-2030 Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan can be found at deansmarshcottage.org.au/communityplan

2025 Plan Review Working Group

The Community Action Network with support from The Surf Coast Shire made a public call for community members to be involved in The Working Group. The group met for 5 two-hour meetings.

The 2025 Review of the Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan has been funded by the Surf Coast Shire, facilitated by Helen Jennings from Wayfarer Consulting and a working group of community members including: Liza Bush, Jamie Comley, James Maund, Virginia Morton, Julie Ryan, Caroline Shelbourne, Toni Stevens. The aim has been to refresh the plan taking into account changes that occurred since the plan was originally written in 2020.

Natural & Cultural Heritage

Our community acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the Deans Marsh and District—the Gadubanud of the Maar Nation and the Wadawurrung of the Kulin Nation. We honour their unceded sovereignty, cultural knowledge, deep connection to Country, and the continuing impact of colonisation. DMCC is committed to creating a culturally safe and welcoming environment for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporations are the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) for the region, recognised under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. As guardians of cultural heritage, RAPs manage protection of significant sites, advise on cultural heritage matters, and enter into land and intangible heritage agreements. Our community is committed to working with both RAPs in community projects involving cultural heritage and Country. We also acknowledge The Colac Otway Aboriginal Corporation.

Gadubanud Country encompasses most of the Otway Ranges, including Deans Marsh. The Yan Yan Gurt kinship group, whose name connects to the life-giving waterways of the region, has lived in relationship with sacred springs, mountains, and landscapes for tens of thousands of years. To the north, Wadawurrung Country includes areas such as Boonah and Bamba. Both nations maintain strong cultural connections to the land and continue to guide local understanding, care, and respect for Country.

See The 2020 - 2030 Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan for more information.

History of the Deans Marsh Township

European settlement in the Deans Marsh district began shortly after colonisation in Port Phillip in 1835. William Roadknight, one of the first squatters, passed through the area in 1837 and returned in 1838 to establish the 16,000-acre Yan Yan Gurt pastoral run. Over time, this large property was subdivided and sold, forming the basis for local settlement. According to local historian Ron Millard, the district's name derives from Charles Dean, a shepherd who grazed sheep across the surrounding marshlands, including Pennyroyal.

By 1862, Deans Marsh had grown into a small township of around 40 houses. Further land sales expanded settlement into nearby areas such as Bambra, Boonah, Benwerrin and Wymbooliel. By the 1880s, Deans Marsh was a thriving rural centre with essential services including a store, butcher, blacksmith, church, school, and hotel. The 1889 arrival of the railway boosted local agriculture and visitor travel, with further development in the 1890s and early 20th century, including tearooms catering to tourists.

The 1932 opening of the Great Ocean Road shifted tourist traffic, and the 1956 railway closure reduced through travel. Nonetheless, Deans Marsh remained a strong farming hub. Since the 1970s, new residents with a focus on sustainability have revitalised the community, contributing to its cultural and social vibrancy today.

See The 2020 - 2030 Deans Marsh & District Community Action Plan for more information.

The MaDCAP Process

Between October and December 2019, a community consultation and engagement campaign called MaDCAP was conducted. The campaign was about connecting, listening, and generating ideas about how our community can work together to shape our future. The overall aim of the campaign was to utilise the ideas and opinions generated as the basis for the Deans Marsh and District Community Action Plan.

Madcap Engagement Activities

- Launch of MaDCAP process community dinner - 22 attendees
- Cottage AGM – Guest speaker on community planning - 48 attendees
- MaDCAP promotion at Market/CFA day - 200 people received opportunity to hear about MaDCAP and receive information from entry to event and information table set up at market
- Social Media Regular posts on Cottage Facebook - Ongoing, averaging three posts per week
- Posters on Community Noticeboards
- MaDCAP email update - fortnightly
- Media Release in the Croaker - Two articles and MaDCAP update inserts
- Media Release in the Colac Herald - Two feature articles
- Media Release in Groundswell - One article
- MaDCAP Surveys - 140 responses
- My BIG Idea postcards - 180 responses
- MaDCAP Conversations - Nine focus groups, 80 participants
- Mighty MaDCAP Café Conversation - 73 participants
- MaDCAP Open House - 8 participants
- MaDCAP Engagement Review Working Groups - 25 participants
- Draft plan reference group - 10 participants



The total output excludes the numerous informal conversations held in community spaces, around kitchen tables and on the shop corner.

