

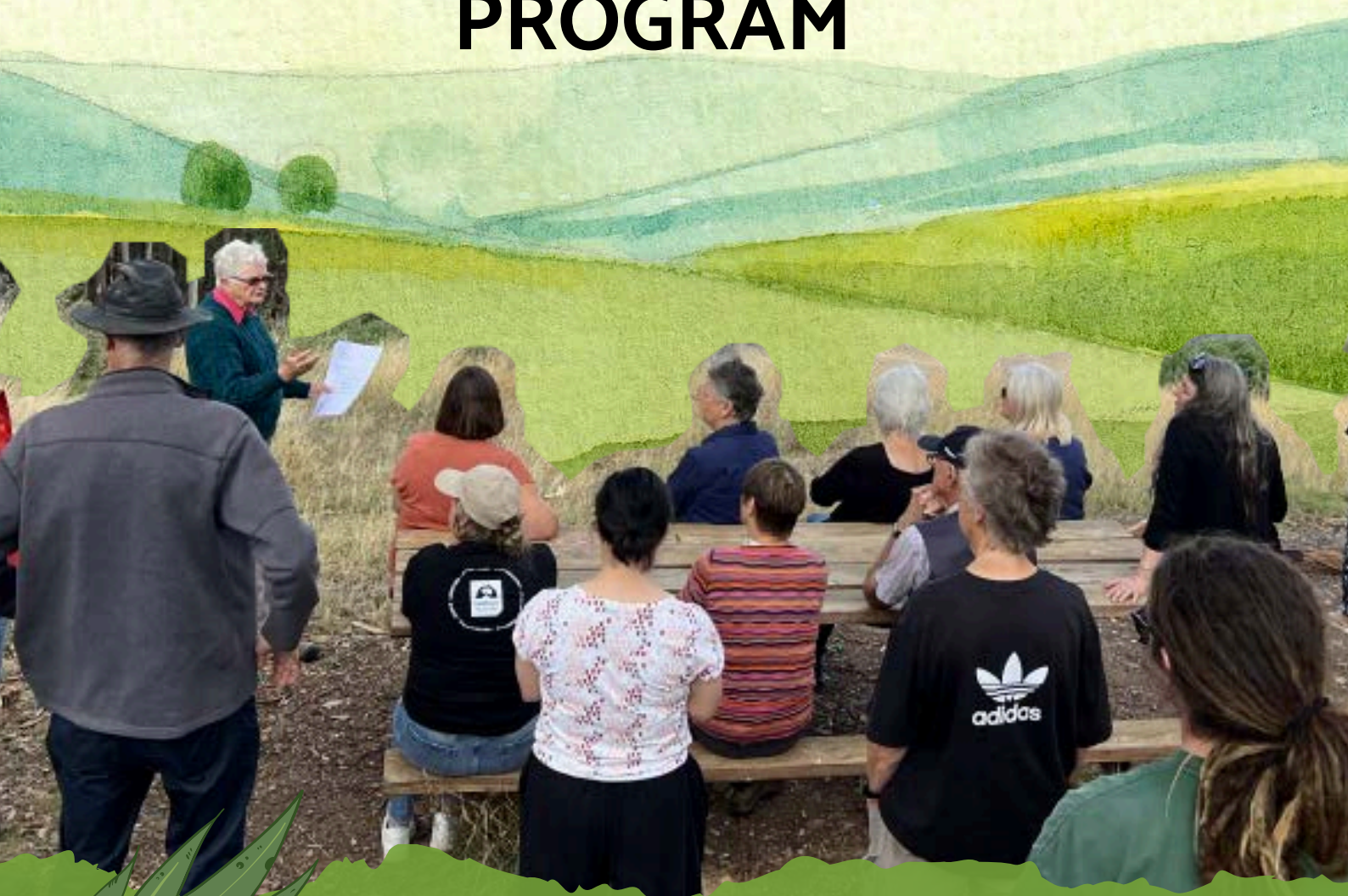


2024 Victorian Landcare Forum

# ***GROWING LANDCARE***

9 AND 10 MAY, BENDIGO

## **PROGRAM**





## About Landcare Victoria Inc.

Our vision is for rich and diverse Victorian landscapes, supporting productive farming, healthy ecosystems and thriving communities.

Landcare Victoria Inc. represents community landcare in Victoria. We support landcare to be strong, connected and effective. We are an influential voice for the Victorian landcare movement, supporting landcare communities to achieve integrated sustainable agriculture and environmental outcomes.

Landcare Victoria supports governance, strategy, advocacy, project development, training and professional development for our landcare networks and groups across the state.

With over 600 member groups, representing more than 17,000 households and an estimated 60,000 individuals, Landcare Victoria is one of the largest environmental volunteer organisations in Victoria, fostering on-ground community led action.



**600+ Member Groups**



**60,000+ individual landcare members**



**390,000 hours of volunteer time in 2022**





### **Victorian Landcare Forum Working Group:**

Paul Foreman (Wedderburn Conservation Management Network, Landcare Victoria Board)

Christine Kilmartin (Castlemaine Landcare Group, Landcare Victoria Members Council)

John Rowlands (Ullina Landcare Group, Landcare Victoria Members Council)

Sandra Nichols (Clunes Landcare & Waterways Group, Landcare Victoria Members Council)

Andrea Montgomery (Upper Barwon Landcare Network, Landcare Victoria Board)

Belinda Pritchard (North Central Catchment Management Authority)

### **Landcare Victoria Committee of Management (Board):**

Jane Carney (Chair) - North East

Leanne Jackman (Deputy Chair, Operations) - Wimmera

Paul Foreman (Deputy Chair, Partnerships) - North Central

Beth Ripper OAM (Secretary) - East Gippsland

Alice Night OAM - Corangamite

John Birse - Port Phillip and Westernport

Ric Oldham - West Gippsland

Andrea Montgomery - Professional Landcarer

Kerri Robson - Professional Landcarer

Robert Spittle - Skills Based

### **Landcare Victoria Staff:**

Claire Hetzel - CEO

Ana Pimenta - Landcare Development Coordinator

Amanda Grace - Office Coordinator

Anthony Gallacher - Project Manager

Sarah Vella - Communications and Engagement Coordinator

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# Sponsors



Contributions from our sponsors are vital in ensuring the success of this forum. With our sponsors and supporters, the landcare community can come together to exchange learnings and showcase the wonderful work of landcare.

## Event Partners



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Central  
CMA**



**wela**




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*For environment, farming and society.*



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**TreeProject**



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# Program

Day 1 - Thursday, 9 May



From 8.30am

## **Registrations**

9am - 9.30am

## **Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country - DJAARA**

9.30am - 9.45am

## **Welcome** - Claire Hetzel and Jane Carney, Landcare Victoria

9.45am - 9.50am

## **Agenda overview**- Claire Flanagan-Smith , MC

9.50am - 10.15am

## **Opening address** - Jill Karena, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal *Landcare and placemaking*

It seems everyone wants to strengthen the connection between communities and the places that they share these days - from the urban, rural and neighbourhood level to massive multipurpose spaces. We know that landcare has been doing this for decades, with diverse communities in catchments and landscapes across Australia, and could probably teach others a thing or two about what it takes to inspire and motivate people to work together to make places better.

10.15am - 10.45am

## **MORNING TEA**

10.45am - 12pm

## **Workshop Sessions - attend one of the following sessions**

### *Collaborating and combining land management practices*

Join Oli Moraes from DJAARA, who will discuss and showcase partnerships and projects on Country featuring collaboration with private landholders. The session will highlight what principles would apply to landcare and different forms of engagement with First Nations groups. An overview of case studies and a snapshot of cultural competence training will be followed by a discussion, providing time to talk about what works well and the importance of relationship building as first steps to engagement with Traditional Owners.

### *Aggregating action for landscape scale impacts*

Landcare Networks have been driving a number of Landscape Restoration Projects across Victoria with support from philanthropy, government and their local communities. The wide-ranging requirements and support needed to get large scale projects off the ground means landcare has had various degrees of success in implementing such projects in the past. Be it financial, policy settings, coordination of resources or landholder uptake, there are various lessons to be learnt from such projects. This session will explore how landcare can make an impact at scale.



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# Program

Day 1 - Thursday, 9 May



12pm - 1pm

## LUNCH

1pm - 2.30pm

## Panel Session - Water in the Landscape

A panel of practitioners, including Sophie Bickford (Biolinks Alliance), David Hardwick (Soil Land Food), Erin Healy (Mulloon Institute), Rohan Hogan (North Central CMA) and Ross Colliver (landcare volunteer), will contribute to a discussion around the practice of returning and retaining water for the landscape. The panel will discuss what the contribution of landcare to the field of rehydrating the landscape might look like in the future, and how it may reshape our work, skills, policy and financing.

2.30pm - 3pm

## AFTERNOON TEA

3pm - 4.30pm

## Peer to Peer Facilitated Learning Session

- Up to 5 local landcare groups/networks, each giving a lightning presentation (5 minutes).
- Facilitated round table discussions on the topics discussed in presentations.

4.30pm

## CLOSE

6pm - 9pm

## DINNER (All Seasons Resort) - Geoff Park, Natural Decisions

Geoff's presentation will focus on the Moolort Plains wetlands and the history, values and conservation efforts that have been led by the Moolort Landcare Group. It will feature a fantastic video showing drone footage of the wetlands taken in January 2023. 2022 was the wettest year on record for the Moolort Plains, and the filling of the wetlands led to an influx of significant bird species, many of which bred successfully during this time.



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# Program

Day 2 - Friday, 10 May



By 9.45am

**Arrive at Bendigo Exhibition Centre**

10am

**Buses depart**

**Bus Tour 1 - exploring Landcare in Bendigo**

- **Stop one:** Ironbark Gully - restoration of landscapes degraded by mining
- **Stop two:** Strathfieldsaye - short walk and talk
- **Lunch:** Emu Creek Recreation Reserve
- **Stop three:** Axe Creek - collaboration between small landholders to build linkages across landscapes

**Bus Tour 2 - showcasing partnerships between Traditional Owners and Landcare**

- **Stop one:** We will travel to Wanyarra Dum, where Djaara woman Bec Phillips will showcase traditional women-led projects and practices, highlighting a recent partnership between Djaara Women and Mount-Korong Eco-Watch, around cultural burning and women's digging stick farming practices. This will be followed by a tour of the frog ponds if time permits.
- **Lunch**
- **Stop two:** Pilcher's Bridge Conservation Reserve

2pm

**Buses return to Bendigo Exhibition Centre**



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# Speaker Bios



## MC - Claire Flanagan-Smith, RMCG



Claire is a Principal and Director of RM Consulting Group, a business renowned for its multidisciplinary approach to supporting regional communities and landscapes. For two decades, she has worked with and learned from a diverse range of stakeholders – including environmental agencies, Traditional Owners, farmers, and all levels of government – to improve community strength and environmental sustainability. Claire is a skilled facilitator, whose approach is grounded in system theory: the understanding that it is only by working together with interdisciplinary knowledge and experience, and the willingness to learn that we can protect what matters most and solve the complex challenges of our time.

## Opening Address - Jill Karena, FRRR



Having grown up in a farming community in New Zealand, Jill has lived and worked in rural and regional communities throughout her life. Her strong commitment to strengthening how communities prepare, react and respond to change and crisis, particularly in rural and regional areas, has seen her take the lead on community recovery after major emergencies such as the Black Saturday fires in Bendigo and multiple bushfires in the Macedon Ranges. Jill has worked in the private and not-for-profit sectors and all levels of government. Her previous roles have also included journalism, wool classing and natural resource management. She has a Post Graduate Diploma in Rural and Regional Planning and is a graduate of the LGPRO Executive Leadership Program. Outside of work, Jill and her partner enjoy life on a rural property in Elphinstone with lots of animals including the Bullmastiffs that she breeds and shows.



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# Speaker Bios



## Claire Hetzel - CEO, Landcare Victoria Inc



Claire is the CEO of Landcare Victoria Inc, the peak body for landcare in Victoria, representing 600+ Member Groups and over 17,000 households and 60,000+ individual members. With almost 20 years' experience working in a broad range of not-for-profit organisations, Claire has a passion for enabling community-driven initiatives. Her diverse skill set has been honed working across landscape restoration, urban forestry and urban agriculture, as well as in the education and health sectors. Claire brings a dynamic and forward-thinking approach to the CEO role and is committed to supporting the organisation's Member Groups, while enhancing the collaborative impacts of landcare and its partners.

## Jane Carney- Chair, Landcare Victoria Inc



Jane is a livestock producer from Rosewhite in northeast Victoria where she runs a beef enterprise on 426 hectares with a focus on breeding high performance Angus cattle. Jane grew up with intensive irrigated agriculture and has spent her professional career working within the agricultural sector in Australia and the USA. Jane believes that farmers as land stewards have a responsibility to the community to farm sustainably and in doing so, have an opportunity to be part of the solution for climate change. Jane has been Chair of the Landcare Victoria Inc. Board since May 2021.



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# Speaker Bios



**Workshop Session - Collaborating and combining land management practices**

## Oli Moraes - Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation



Oli works at the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) as program manager for Galk-galk Dhelkunya (forest gardening). Oli has experience working with First Nations and local communities on natural resource management, conservation and restoration across Australia and Pacific Island Countries. Oli is passionate about enabling Traditional Owner leadership and self-determination.

**Workshop Session - Aggregating action for landscape scale impacts**

## Lori Arthur - Connecting Country



Lori is the current Director at Connecting Country, based in the Mount Alexander region in Central Victoria. She came to Connecting Country after working in various conservation and land management roles, largely with local government in Melbourne, including on-ground delivery of natural resource management projects, biodiversity planning and community engagement. Her passion is working with community and connecting people with nature at the grassroots, with a keen focus on working with landcare and other community groups, intersecting with the government and philanthropic sectors. When she's not working, she's kept pretty busy with family life, often riding, bushwalking or paddling in and around the local environs with her two young boys and her kelpie, Dusty. Any spare time is spent in the garden with Lizzie, the resident blue tongue.



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# Speaker Bios



## Marney Durie - Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network



Marney is an Arts/History major from LaTrobe University, a farm manager in Wycheproof, and the proud chairperson of the Wycheproof and District Landcare Group. She joined the Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network's committee in 2021, was elected the vice president of the Network in 2022 and worked as a project facilitator for the BNGLN's inaugural 'Galngga Dja Dja Wurrung Festival' in 2023. Marney was awarded the BNGLN's Carrie Jessie Award in 2024. She is passionate about community building and environmental conservation, and enjoys bushwalking and the quiet company of her cats in the garden.

## Anthony Gallacher - Landcare Victoria



Anthony is a project management and engagement practitioner with over a decade of experience working in non-profits in the environment and emergency management sectors. He has worked as a Landcare Facilitator, Volunteer Coordinator and has experience as a Project Manager at the peak body for fire and emergency services. Anthony joined Landcare Victoria in August 2023 and has carriage of the New Futures Project and other organisational development projects.

## Tess Grieves - North Central CMA



Tess grew up in the bushland around Castlemaine, and developed a keen interest in the natural environment, particularly birdlife and river environments. Tess held the role of Regional Landcare Coordinator from 2014-2023 and was honoured to receive the Steadfast Young Landcare Leadership Award in 2022. In 2023, she took on a new opportunity to lead the CMA's integrated catchment projects- A Healthy Coliban Catchment and Tullaroop Creek Restoration Project. Tess is keenly interested in river restoration partnerships, community engagement, environmental interpretation and storytelling science.



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# Speaker Bios



## Alham Johnson - Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action



Alham is Manager of Biodiversity Community Programs at the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. These programs aim to support and grow the landcare and environmental volunteering community through a range of investments, including the [Victorian Landcare Program](#) and [Environmental Volunteering Plan](#). Alham has background in economics and environmental sciences and has worked across a range of State Government portfolios, including Regional Development, Climate Change and Bushfire Recovery.

## Vanessa Malandrin - Granite2Goulburn Group



Vanessa moved to Australia from Italy eight years ago and has been working with the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative Landcare group since 2022. With a master's degree in Ag Science, Vanessa was employed for 10 years at the University of Pisa, where she worked with students from all over the world in the International Master in Rural Development, and she has co-authored book chapters, papers and peer-reviewed articles. In 2023, Vanessa was a recipient of an Our Catchment Our Communities leadership development grant and she is now working as the Landscape Coordinator with the Granite2Goulburn group for the New Futures project. Vanessa is also the president of BEAM - Mitchell Environmental Group. To keep the balance in her life she spends time with plants and swims all year round at Nagambie Lake.



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# Speaker Bios



## Panel Session - Water in the Landscape

### Sophie Bickford - Biolinks Alliance



Sophie is a Conservation Ecologist deeply motivated to apply her expertise to real world ecological-social problems. After completing her PhD at The University of Adelaide, Sophie spent 7 years researching distribution patterns of biodiversity at the CSIRO Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research. She was appointed a Lecturer in Biogeography at Monash University in 2007. Sophie worked for Carbon Planet as their Chief Scientist, developing methodologies for conserving ecological-services using climate (carbon) and biodiversity markets. As Executive Director of Biolinks Alliance since 2010, she relishes the challenge of growing an emerging organisation to implement large-scale and tenure blind conservation in Victoria.

### Ross Colliver - Riddells Creek Landcare



Ross is prototyping ways for landcare groups in the Jacksons Creek and Deep Creek catchment of the upper Maribyrnong to appreciate waterways and understand how water is managed in the landscape. *Creek Stories* tells the stories of creeks and the people looking after them. The idea here is that *to do more, first appreciate what's being done already*. The *Water Think Tank* brings together environmentalists across the two catchments to understand how water is managed in all of its manifestations - as creeks, water supply, waste water, stormwater and groundwater. The guiding idea is *to improve management of water, understand how it works*.



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# Speaker Bios



## David Hardwick - Soil Land Food



David is a professional agroecologist and Director at Soil Land Food, a small agroecology consultancy. For over 20 years he has worked on rural landscape, farming and food systems projects. He develops and delivers many of the extension projects for Soil Land Food across Australia. He worked in community development and then horticulture before completing a dairy traineeship on an organic dairy in NSW. Since then, he has had a wide-ranging career working in both extension, management and technical roles. These include Landcare extension, agronomy, soils, agribusiness, biofertiliser R&D and manufacturing, organics, training, and consulting positions. For many years he also helped run a regional farmers market business with his wife. Recent projects he has worked on include the Mulloon Institute's capacity building projects, the HASH Soils project and developing the Rural Landscape Logic approach to rural planning. David's passion is agroecology and empowering farmers with knowledge and skills so they can make decisions that make a difference!

## Erin Healy - Mulloon Institute



Erin is an environmental engineer experienced in landscape remediation, natural resource management and agriculture through her work in environmental consulting and involvement with NSW Local Land Services and Landcare. Erin is a graduate from the University of Newcastle with honours and has recently completed postgraduate studies with Southern Cross University in Regenerative Agriculture. Erin is passionate about the role of agriculture in restoring and improving ecosystem health and landscape resilience. Erin uses her technical skills and ability to read the landscape to support the preparation of Landscape Rehydration Plans.



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# Speaker Bios



## Rohan Hogan - North Central CMA



With more than 30 years of expertise, Rohan has extensive experience across various natural resource management domains, encompassing natural resource management strategy, integrated catchment management, river health, water for the environment, land and water management, salinity Management, and water policy. Rohan is responsible for overseeing the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) including collaborating with Traditional Owners, catchment partners, and the community to achieve RCS aspirations. Additionally, Rohan's strategic thinking and people management skills are key to leading a successful team, to fulfill their responsibilities related to Landcare, Citizen Science, Traditional Owner engagement, climate change, monitoring and evaluation, and floodplain management.

**Dinner - All Seasons Resort**

## Geoff Park - Natural Decisions



Geoff has more than 35 years of experience in facilitation, teaching, research, extension and policy interaction within government and private enterprise. He is an ecologist and Director of Natural Decisions, which conducts projects across areas of water management (quality and quantity), climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, management of feral species, agricultural land management and improved fire management. Geoff has a long-standing passion for the flora and fauna of the box-ironbark country, especially birds. He is a firm believer in helping people observe, appreciate and understand the environmental values of local landscapes as a means of developing a stronger sense of place, and in turn to better care for the land.



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# The venue

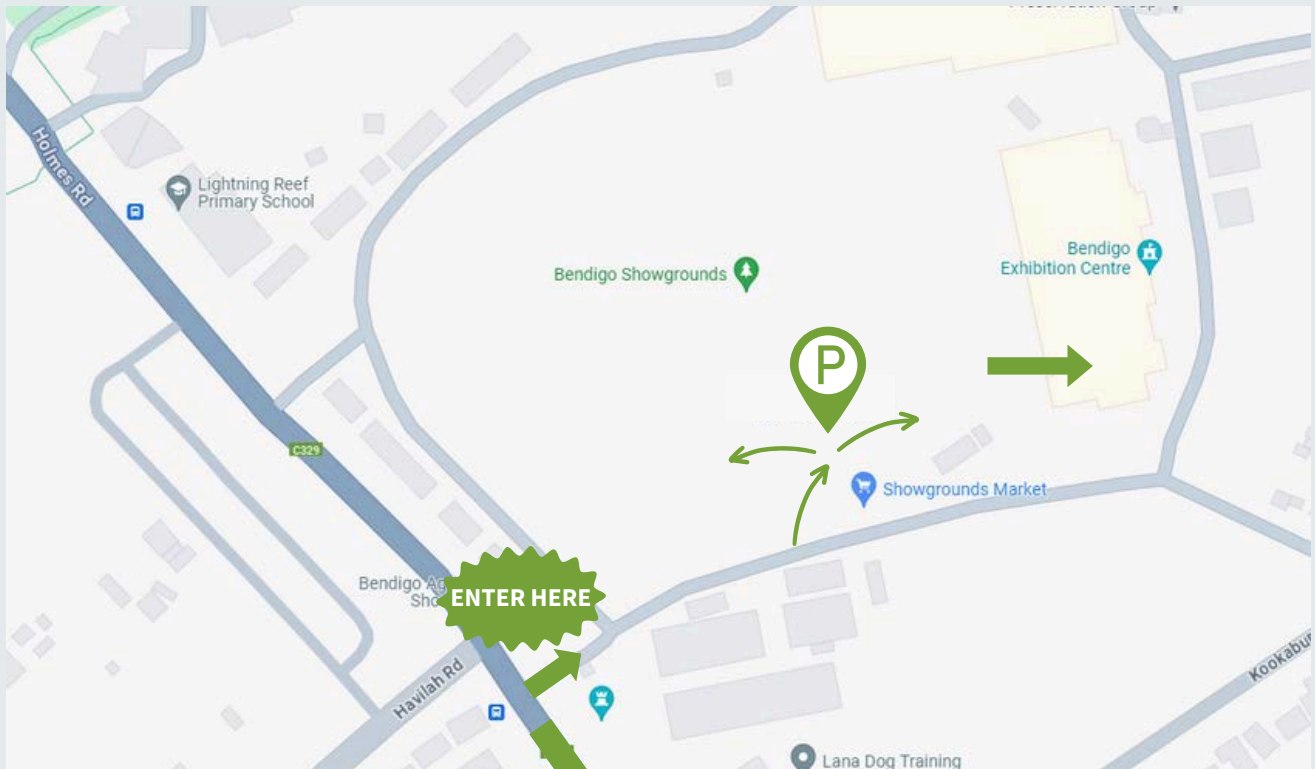
Bendigo is a comfortable 90 minute drive from Melbourne

## The Venue:

Bendigo Exhibition Centre  
Holmes Road  
Bendigo

## Getting there:

The venue is 3.1km from  
the centre of Bendigo



Bendigo (3.1kms)

**Parking:**   
available on site



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# Contact us



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## ***GROWING LANDCARE***

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