



# AIDA

August 2021 • [www.aireys-inlet.org](http://www.aireys-inlet.org)

Urquhart Bluff • Aireys Inlet • Fairhaven • Moggs Creek • Eastern View



## AIDA 2021 AGM report

Fifty-eight of AIDA's approximately 450 members attended the 2021 AIDA Annual General Meeting on Saturday 10 April at the Aireys Inlet Community Hall. A further six members who were not able to attend provided proxy voting forms, all indicating their approval of the formal motions that had been advertised in advance in the emailed meeting papers. We explored having an option for members who could not attend in person to join using Zoom if they wished. Unfortunately, this was not possible as the hall does not have dedicated internet access and insufficient bandwidth could be obtained to facilitate Zoom access.

In the unavoidable absence of AIDA president Charlotte Allen, outgoing vice-president Barbara Fletcher welcomed members as well as guests Libby Stapleton, mayor of the Surf Coast Shire and councillor of Anglesea ward; Gary Allen, councillor of Lorne ward; and Libby Mears, chair of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (the Authority). Apologies were received from our other Anglesea ward councillor, Mike

Bodsworth, and acting CEO of the shire, Anne Howard.

The mayor presented an excellent review of the council's activities, especially those pertaining to our district. She later kindly provided the full text of her SCS mayor remarks at AIDA AGM, a summary of which is provided in the AIDA AGM 10 April 2021 minutes. Libby then welcomed questions from members, and responses from Libby and Councillor Allen are also included in the minutes document.

During the formal portion of the AGM the minutes of the 2020 AGM were accepted as a true record of that meeting and then Barbara Fletcher read out Charlotte Allen's president's report for 2020. Treasurer Frieda Wachsmann then presented her AIDA 2020 annual financial report, which was formally received by the members. After the members had approved the continuation of our practice of having a maximum of twelve committee members in addition to the four office holders, the election of the 2021–22 committee was held. There being no more than one person nominated for each position on the committee, the new AIDA Committee was declared to have been

elected and new member Ian Laging was welcomed to the committee. Then, on behalf of Charlotte Allen, newly elected vice-president Annette Comte thanked retiring vice-president Barbara Fletcher for her fourteen years of service on the committee, including seven years as AIDA president. Barbara was presented with a card and a gift, then thanked again by enthusiastic applause from everyone at the meeting.

The formal portion of the AGM was followed by a question-and-answer session. A request from a member for an update on the Eden Project elicited responses from Chris Ryan, Libby Stapleton, Gary Allen and Libby Mears, which are summarised in the minutes document.

Finally, guest speaker Libby Mears outlined the new Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority's (the Authority) immediate and long-term plans for the Great Ocean Road, providing an early indication of how the Authority will approach its task of protecting the road's environment and local communities, as well as long-term plans for tourism along the road.

*Mary Jane Gething, Secretary*

## President's report 2021

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung people and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome to our ward councillor and mayor, Libby Stapleton, and Lorne ward councillor Gary Allen, whose ward includes Eastern View and Moggs Creek. Our other ward councillor, Mike Bodsworth, and acting CEO Anne Howard are apologies.

Welcome AIDA members. Where do I start after the challenging year 2020 was for everyone?

When the pandemic first hit, the Surf Coast Shire set up a number of on-line community meetings to identify areas where there was community need and where they could assist. The Aireys Inlet and district group met every two weeks with ward councillors, shire staff and community contacts such as AIDA, the school, community garden, the church, and representatives from our traders and real estate agents. These meetings for the shire and the community were valuable and they will continue each month into the future even when the pandemic is behind us. They provide an excellent forum to raise issues and share ideas directly with the shire, our ward councillors and with others in the community: a lasting positive from a horrible year. It was through this forum that we heard about the establishment of the wonderful Rubbish Rangers who are doing so much to keep our area free of litter. When we heard that they were looking for some funding the AIDA committee was pleased to be able to provide this.

Covid-19 meant that the AIDA committee meeting last night was the first time we had met in person all year and it was good to see the new committee members elected at the last AGM in person.

Our Zoom meetings were productive and we have had a busy year.

The committee followed the establishment of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority with interest given the important role it will play in the future of our communities, the road's environment and the future of tourism. It is very pleasing to have the Authority's chair with us today to tell us something of its initial plans.

One of the noticeable impacts of the pandemic has been the significant reduction in tourist numbers and traffic in our area. We believe this has presented a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a tourism-strategy reset.

We need to encourage fewer tourists, spread throughout the year, and hope that those who do come linger on their trip to enjoy all the coast and its hinterland have to offer. It would be a lost opportunity if there is a return of the convoys of large buses making the one-day dash to the Twelve Apostles and back. They contribute nothing to the community and are an impost on our resources and environment.

This year AIDA initiated the formation of the Great Ocean Road Communities Network so that all communities along the road can work together and present a united voice to the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority, local government and government agencies. The network has been warmly welcomed and it is exciting to think about what it might achieve. So far twenty community groups have joined.

We have also initiated quarterly meetings with senior DELWP [Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning] staff to discuss common issues of interest and these meetings have been very helpful in keeping us informed about their plans and programs. It was here that we first heard about the strategic fire-break program for Anglesea, Aireys and Lorne. From the feedback we have received it is obvious opinions are divided about this program. There are many who have welcomed it but there are those who question it. While the scale of the strategic fire-break works is confronting we are assured that the regrowth will repair much of the visual damage. However, there are continuing discussions about the removal of vegetation at Bristlebird Reserve in Moggs Creek.

We were very pleased to be able to work with the Friends of Lorne on their three-part on-line series 'Fire Unplanned' as well as our own session looking at a scenario 'what if' there is a fire in the Aireys area. If you didn't join these very well attended sessions you can still

find them on the websites of Friends of Lorne and AIDA.

The committee has begun the process of applying for our area to be recognised by the International Dark Sky Association as a dark sky community. This will have many far-reaching benefits for the community, and the environment. Other communities that have received this accreditation have used it to promote events and tours of the night sky, astrophotography and astronomy. Environmental benefits include the encouragement of species that depend on a level of darkness to find their food sources.

To achieve accreditation AIDA will need the support of the local community and council. Our recent survey of community attitudes had almost 84 per cent of respondents wanting protection of the night sky against light pollution so we're off to a good start. It is also very positive that the shire's planning scheme's Local Planning Policy is highly unusual in that it includes three clauses to protect the night sky from artificial lighting.

Our community-attitude survey results were released in March and provide an excellent insight into what the community appreciates and loves about our area as well as concerns for the future. About half of the respondents were not AIDA members and one of the important and striking things about the results is the consistency of views between AIDA members and others in the community. The results have been shared widely and we hope that the Shire, GORCAPA and other government agencies will use the data when developing their plans and strategies for the Great Ocean Road and our communities. I encourage you to look at the results if you haven't already done so.

The application for a private bridge over the Painkalac Creek has continued as an issue during the year. Council refused the application but it has been appealed to VCAT and a two-day hearing is set down for the end of June. Many thanks to the AIDA members who provided their views on the bridge proposal to council and VCAT. AIDA will be represented at the hearing by its lawyers and we will keep you informed.

The Moggs Creek bridge replacement finished this year and, thanks to much lobbying by AIDA and the community, it is in the same position as the old one. VicRoads is to be commended for responding to community concerns about its original plans for the bridge and its intrusive lighting.

I would like to thank committee members Suzanne Cavanagh and Chris Ryan for the hours they put into analysing the community-attitude survey results. And a thank you to Ian Godfrey for completing the longitudinal analysis – and for always being willing to share his knowledge and history of AIDA's work.

Once again thanks to Lecki Ord for all she does

as membership secretary and to Nan McNab for presenting AIDA so professionally with the production of our newsletters and the survey results.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone on the committee for their contributions during what was an extraordinary year.

Barb Fletcher is not renominating for the committee this year and we're very sorry to see her go. Barb has been on the committee for fourteen years – seven as president. For most of that time she has been involved in the important role of checking all planning applications and where necessary submitting objections and appearing at VCAT on AIDA's behalf. She will be missed.

*Charlotte Allen*

## Zero Emissions Ideas Fest for Anglesea, Aireys Inlet communities

**SUNDAY 22 AUGUST 2021**

# ZERO EMISSIONS IDEAS FEST!

**FOR ANGLESEA AND AIREYS INLET COMMUNITIES**

**ANGLESEA COMMUNITY HALL**  
Join us for a family friendly event bringing together local community groups, businesses and community members to share ideas, be inspired and celebrate action on climate change as we launch the process of developing local community action plans for a zero emissions future.

**FREE ENTRY**

**ZERO EMISSIONS IDEAS FEST!**  
**11AM - 2PM** Community sharing, expert speakers, stalls, education, kids activities, information on green products & services, Electric Vehicles, food & drink + More!  
**"GETTING TO ZERO" COMMUNITY FORUM**  
**2PM - 3.30** A forum inviting members of the community to begin the process of drafting a Zero Emissions Action Plan for Anglesea and Aireys Inlet communities.

scan QR code or click here to register



A group of community volunteers involved with the Surf Coast Shire's Community Climate Mobiliser Program (CCMP) has formed Zero Emissions Surf Coast to start a community dialogue around the development of a Zero Emissions Community Action Plan for Anglesea and Aireys Inlet.

Members of environment, conservation, sustainability, business and community groups and the

local community are invited to a Zero Emissions Ideas Fest and community forum at the Anglesea Memorial Hall on Sunday 22 August, 11.00am–2.00pm. This will be followed by further meeting from 2.00pm–3.30pm that will aim to develop community action plans for Aireys Inlet and Anglesea to get to zero carbon emissions as soon as possible.

There will be a number of guest speakers doing talks and presentations on the day including:

- Taryn Lane, Hepburn Wind/Hepburn ZNet
- Kitty Walker, founder of the Queenscliffe Climate Action Group
- Sean Keown, Climate and Sustainability Officer, Surf Coast Shire

There will be an interactive activity for people to contribute ideas. The group is asking what do you think a zero-emissions community would look like? What would you like to see happen in Anglesea and Aireys Inlet?

All ideas will be noted and it is planned that key stakeholders and interested community members will be invited to a discussion at the conclusion of the festival to begin the process of developing the community's plans.

## Bushfire resilience



Bushfire Resilience Inc. (BRI) is a local community organisation whose aim is to provide bushfire information to households based on science, experience and best practice. This will enable households to acquire knowledge, and by being better informed, empower them to make better decisions in preparing for, and responding to, the threat of bushfire.

BRI creates best practice webinars that include quality topics that are practical, helpful and relevant. Our webinars involve the best presenters and panel members in Australia and include a robust audience engagement. BRI's program has the support of the CFA.

BRI's 2020 activities including feedback from households can be found at: [bushfireresilience.org.au/about/](https://bushfireresilience.org.au/about/) BRI would like you to register for their 2021 webinar series.

We would like you to encourage your neighbours, friend, relatives and the community groups you belong to that are living with bushfire risk to register for the webinars. The following information may assist you: [bushfireresilience.org.au](https://bushfireresilience.org.au)

*Janelle Hunt*

*Bushfire Management & Shelter Policy Coordinator*

*T: 03 9262 8935 E: [j.hunt@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:j.hunt@cfa.vic.gov.au)*



## Surf Coast Shire review of its Community Amenity Local Law

Community members who followed the recent comments on Facebook about council's requests for the removal of canoes on the banks of the Painkalac and the 'kindling kennel' at the entrance to Aireys could be interested in providing input into council's review of the Community Amenity Local Law. This local law legitimised the removal requests.

The local law covers a wide range of topics including caravan and boat storage, backyard fire pits and pizza ovens, burning off, nature-strip usage and smoking in public spaces. View the current Community Amenity Local Law at:

<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/council-community-amenity-local-law-no-1.pdf>.

The council says previous community input has indicated the following topics are of particular interest:

- use of nature strips
- storage of boats, caravans and trailers
- backyard fire pits and pizza ovens
- burning off in township areas
- recreation vehicles
- camping
- management of building sites.

Council invites your feedback on the Local Law by 12 August. This link <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Your-Say/Community-Amenity-Local-Law-Review> will take you to the feedback form.

## Speed limits: Aireys to Fairhaven

In our last newsletter we reported that we had written to council requesting that the speed limits on all local roads in Aireys, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek be reduced to 40 km/h and we had also written to VicRoads requesting that the Great Ocean Road speed limit through Aireys and Fairhaven be reduced to 50 km/h. This would bring the area into line with all other townships along the Great Ocean Road.

Unfortunately, our request to council was not successful but we will continue to push for a 40 km/h limit on our local roads. We had an on-line meeting with Department of Transport staff about the speed limit through Aireys and Fairhaven but have not had a formal response. We have also raised this with the shire's new CEO Robyn Seymour, noting that the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan (2015) includes the following statement as one of the Plan's Key Actions:

Request VicRoads to apply seasonal speed limits of 50 km/h between Boundary Road, Aireys Inlet and SLSC in Fairhaven and 60 km/h between Eastern View and Fairhaven.

*Charlotte Allen*



Wye River beach

This link <https://youtu.be/3QXwl2iR33A> will take you to a very informative video of Zoe Daniel (former ABC journalist) interviewing Associate Professor Dr Daniel Ierodiaconou, the Authority's board member and marine scientist, about the erosion at Wye River.

*Charlotte Allen*



## Coast and cliff erosion

Many members will have noticed some increased erosion recently along our beaches, particularly at Fairhaven, Eastern View and Spout Creek. There has also been some significant loss of sand at Wye River in front of the surf club, at Apollo Bay, and no doubt other areas as well.

One of AIDA's members raised this with us and the Great Ocean Road Community Network is organising a series of webinars to explore the issue. Planning is in the early stages but it is hoped the series will provide information about the erosion and its causes, what can be done to address the problems and responses of authorities such as DELWP and the Authority. Once the details are finalised you will be advised of the dates so as many of you as possible can attend.

## Surf Coast safer cycling strategy

Surf Coast Shire is preparing the shire's first bicycle strategy. Over 500 community members completed the recent survey or sent in submissions to inform the strategy. Council will soon release a summary of community feedback. A draft strategy is planned for release in August inviting further community input. AIDA intends to respond to the draft.

The cycling strategy aims to improve safety and connections for the growing number of commuter and recreational cyclists in Surf Coast Shire and create a cycling network suitable for all ages and abilities. Safety is a key priority of the strategy with its funding coming from the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). The strategy will review cycling infrastructure

on the roads, streets and paths and identify gaps.

The strategy responds to Council's Road Safety Strategy and Climate Emergency Actions, extensions to the Surf Coast Walk to Grey River and then Apollo Bay; and expands on the Pathways Strategies and the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan.

Benefits for the Aireys and wider Surf Coast communities from improving cycling opportunities are:

- complementing aspirations for Aireys as a walking town with slower more eco-friendly tourism
- responding to AIDA Community Survey support for more bicycle routes (non-trail bike)
- more liveable communities where active travel is safer and more popular for all ages
- non-car drivers have more independent transport options
- under-represented groups – women, kids and new riders – feel safer to cycle
- parents can reduce the burden of ferrying kids
- reducing greenhouse-gas emissions from transport, which are exceptionally high in Surf Coast
- reducing car-parking demand and traffic
- planning for the increasing popularity of many different types of cycling and e-bikes which can assist in riding up hills and help new and older riders
- catering for older riders: e-bikes and safe paths could enable Aireys residents to continue to live in our community if they stop driving.

*Catherine McNaughton*

## Climate change and transport

The Surf Coast faces significant threats from climate change. Transport is the second biggest and the fastest growing greenhouse-gas emitting sector in the area while other sectors like electricity are declining. Transport is responsible for 28 per cent of Surf Coast community greenhouse-gas emissions compared to Australia's average of 19 per cent. Rising transport emissions cancelled out the decrease in Australia's electricity-sector emissions between 2005 and 2019 (Infrastructure Australia 2019). The shire's cycling strategy is a key opportunity to improve community awareness and infrastructure for living with less reliance on fossil fuels and cars and enjoying safer, lower-speed local streets.

The Victorian Government Climate Change Strategy 2021 plans a major increase in walking and cycling trips to 25 per cent of all trips by 2030 – up from 17 per cent in 2018. Weekend trips are even more of a challenge with only 15.7 per cent of weekend trips walked and 1.2 per cent ridden. [Victoria's Climate Change Strategy](#).

*Catherine McNaughton*

## Climate emergency response plan

The Surf Coast Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan has been released. The Plan has been developed following Council's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019 in response to a community call for urgent and extensive action on climate change. The plan says:

Climate change is a threat to our health, wellbeing and environment, and poses economic risks to our local businesses and industry.

The increasing frequency and intensity of heat events, and more days with higher bushfire risk, are particular concerns for our area.

Immediate action is needed to reduce the emission of harmful greenhouse gases and adapt to a changing climate.

Council must play its part to help our community and environment to thrive in a safe climate for generations to come. The Climate Emergency Corporate Response Plan 2021-2031 sets out important goals for us to Achieve. The Plan can be accessed [here](#).

*Charlotte Allen*



## Lifting tourism's cloak of invisibility

One of AIDA's committee members, Suzanne Cavanagh, is a tourism industry strategist. In a recently published article, 'Lifting tourism's cloak of invisibility', she shared why, after a number of years in the sector, she has 'an irritating pebble' in her shoe.

In the article Suzanne argues that the current tourism industry model is unsustainable, that systemic change is urgently needed and that the industry is both a contributor to the causes of the problems facing it, as well as a casualty of their impact. Her position is aptly captured in a Chinese proverb she quotes – 'If we don't change our direction we are likely to end up where we are headed'. Many of you will be interested to read the article here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/lifting-tourisms-cloak-invisibility-suzanne-cavanagh>

*Charlotte Allen*

## GORCN gains momentum

GORCN, the [Great Ocean Road Communities Network](#) is a voice of advocacy for the communities along the length of the road. It was formed in August 2020 and currently has twenty members across nine Great Ocean Road organisations. It seems from the activity over the last couple of months that the value of co-operation is already in evidence.

### Strength in co-operation

It has been long recognised that each community along the Great Ocean Road has a distinctive character and that this is its strength, giving the Great Ocean Road its vitality. However, the communities along the Great Ocean Road are increasingly realising there is much benefit in working together co-operatively, e.g., sharing experiences and knowledge in relation to thorny issues that arise such as fire mitigation, working collaboratively on projects for the benefit of our local communities and delivering strong and effective community-driven advocacy to government on critical issues affecting the future of the Great Ocean Road.

### GORCN on the move

#### Prinetown Wetlands

During the last meeting of GORCN, the Prinetown Wetlands organisation raised a [concerning issue](#) regarding a proposed development of a tourist facility next to the fragile wetlands known nationally for their strong ecological values. In essence, the developer is seeking to build the facility on a nationally recognised wetland, near the Gellibrand River estuary and at the doorstep of the Great Otway National Park.

GORCN's media statement said:

Wetlands are increasingly being recognised as significant habitat for numerous species. These wetlands need to be protected. Any new tourist facilities along the Great Ocean Road must be appropriately located, be accepted by, and not dominate, any local community.

The community say the developer has ignored some conditions to the planning permit including not conducting a proper coastal-hazard assessment, designing or building access to the site, providing enough car parking and outlining how potable water will be provided.

The Prinetown community recognises the need for development but say this is not the right site.

GORCN is watching this matter carefully.

### Wye River

Wye River reported extensive storm damage and coastal erosion which has undercut the disability ramp and is threatening the lifesaving club. The Wye River team, Greg Hocking and Peter Christoff, outlined the frustrations experienced in gaining prompt action to arrest the very serious erosion, as well as their deeper concerns about mitigation of the impact of further storm surges.



### GORCN – learning from each other

The above two issues – inappropriate development and risk of environmental damage, are but two examples of issues that are experienced more widely along the GOR and have provided opportunities to support each other's communities where appropriate and to learn from each other.

### GORCN – helping build community knowledge

Furthering the successful model of the Friends of Lorne – AIDA Fire Forum webinar series of last year, GORCN will be staging a webinar series this year on climate change and short-term and long-term projections and strategies regarding coastal erosion – a very pressing issue for the Great Ocean Road. More details on the GORCN-sponsored webinar are provided elsewhere in this newsletter.

*Suzanne Cavanagh*

### DELWP, the Authority 'hit their straps'

Change, simplicity and harmonisation will be hallmarks of the governance and management of a redesigned future for the Great Ocean Road.

The Great Ocean Road attracts some 6.6 million domestic and international visitors<sup>1</sup> each year.<sup>2</sup> Hamlets have swelled, especially during the summer months and holiday season and the volume of tourism visitation and people migrating to the coast have meant that the governance of the road has become increasingly turbid, complex and fragmented.

1 <https://corporate.visitvictoria.com/resources/regional-insights/great-ocean-road>

2 Year ending June 2019

That governance has involved some thirty responsible entities with accountabilities covering strategy, land-use planning, infrastructure delivery, asset maintenance and destination promotion and brand stewardship ... and eleven different Crown land managers! To that fragmented and often duplicated management, has been added the fallout from environmental risks, particularly those driven by climate-change adaptation, the stresses accompanying regional population shift and the environmental damage created by unbridled tourism. It was time for a simpler, more coherent governance structure! To that end, a taskforce was established by the Victorian government which ultimately brought forth eighteen key recommendations that would enable the Great Ocean Road to function as a 'single integrated and living entity', reflecting the interrelationship of all of the GOR communities and entities.

The establishment of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (the Authority) was one of the key recommended actions of the Great Ocean Road Taskforce and Action Plan. The Authority, established through its own legislation, came into existence on 1 December 2020. Former local mayor and Aireys Inlet resident, Libby Mears was appointed as Chairperson along with eleven skills-based board members. In July, the Authority's inaugural CEO, Jodie Sizer began work. A long-term Torquay resident and proud Djab Wurrung/Gunditjmara woman, Jodie is a proven leader of transformational change. The current board of the Authority was appointed by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change in November 2020. On day one, the organisation was the amalgamation of the previous two existing coastal committees, the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) and the Otways Coast Committee. The Authority's full role and powers will be confirmed with the passing of the second tranche of legislation due in the coming months.

The Authority has three core functions:

- 1 public land and coastal management
- 2 responsibility for policy and planning of the visitor economy
- 3 co-ordinating general functions

As the dedicated parks and coast manager the Authority is responsible for public estate management. Over a number of years Crown land parcels will be transferred to the Authority from the eleven different land managers. It has overarching responsibility to meet the challenges of 'increasing visitor numbers, forces of nature and the impacts of climate change'. It will manage, protect, rehabilitate and foster resilience of the natural, cultural and heritage values of coastal Crown land and marine waters along the Great Ocean

Road. The Authority will be responsible for the safety of people on the public land it manages, for the visitor economy, the sustainable tourism strategy for the Great Ocean Road and will take a lead role in the engagement of local communities with the development of the Strategic Framework Plan.

## The collaboration

### DELWP, the Authority and local council

As we move through a transition period of the new Great Ocean Road design, and the implementation of the associated reforms, a clear understanding of the purpose, scope and role of the various GOR bodies is paramount, particularly as it will take some time for the organisations to fully meet their briefs.

A strong collaboration of the Authority, the local communities and the traditional owners, supported by a range of other agencies that work with the Authority, will be the cornerstone of the road's successful future.

AIDA meets quarterly with DELWP and is in frequent direct discussion with the Authority and the Surf Coast Council. At June's DELWP-AIDA meeting, one of the topics of discussion initiated by AIDA was the need for greater clarity on the roles and scope of DELWP, the Authority and local council, as the new integrated entity 'hits its straps'. In essence, our understanding is outlined below.

DELWP plays an important role overseeing the marine and coastal policy about the planning, management and sustainable use of our coastal and marine environment to guide decision-makers such as local councils, land managers and the Authority on a range of issues, for example dealing with the impacts of climate change, population growth and ageing coastal structures.

DELWP will also be providing the overarching strategic direction, protecting the natural, heritage and cultural values and distinctive landscapes of the Great Ocean Road via the Strategic Framework Plan<sup>3</sup> (SFP) and is revising the planning schemes along the coast to provide greater consistency and harmonisation of methodology. The SFP is based on a fifty-year outlook and will have ten-year reviews. The development of the SFP will be in accordance with the Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Bill 2019 and is required also to be developed in conjunction with the key agencies (five local councils, Parks Vic., the Catchment Management Authorities and Transport), with a number of responsible entities such as emergency services, and with the community.

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3 [https://www.vgls.vic.gov.au/client/en\\_AU/search/asset/1299747/0](https://www.vgls.vic.gov.au/client/en_AU/search/asset/1299747/0)



The Great Ocean Road Taskforce and Action Plan seeks to implement the recommendations of the original Taskforce<sup>4</sup> through five key reforms:

- 1 **legislation** to protect the great ocean road, its land and seascapes
- 2 a new dedicated marine and coastal parks authority [the Authority]
- 3 a new **overarching planning framework** of the region that legislates community involvement in the development of shared objectives and a framework to provide future direction to the region
- 4 a **better planning approval process** with an independent expert advisory committee that projects and stops inappropriate proposals in their early stages
- 5 a range of supporting initiatives.

The Marine and Coastal Guidelines and the Coastal Design Guidelines will be embedded into the development of the Strategic Framework Plan.

AIDA invited the the Authority chair, Libby Mears, to speak to the community at its AGM earlier this year. Libby provides background and insights into the future approach of the Authority. You can watch a video of her presentation here: [Libby Mears Speaks To The Aireys Inlet Community](#)

## Local council

There are five local councils in the Great Ocean Road region and many are responsible for coastal management, including rubbish removal and toilet cleaning. These local councils remain the responsible local planning authority body, as is the case currently, in accordance with the planning scheme under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Whilst the policy intent is to have greater application of planning methods and tools along the Great Ocean Road, the outcomes of decisions will be context-driven by the towns. The Strategic Framework Plan will be developed with the involvement of these local councils.

*Suzanne Cavanagh*

## AIDA welcomes the Surf Coast Shire's new CEO

The shire's new CEO, Robyn Seymour, started in her new role on 12 July 2021. Robyn has extensive leadership and management experience across several roles, including her most recent position as Deputy Secretary Network Planning and Head Road Safety Victoria, where she led a team of more than 400 people. She also

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4 [https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.vic-engage.files/8215/5927/2049/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Taskforce.pdf](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.vic-engage.files/8215/5927/2049/Fact_Sheet_Taskforce.pdf)

served as Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive of VicRoads.

Robyn has moved to the Surf Coast. AIDA welcomes her into our community and looks forward to developing a constructive working relationship with her.

*Charlotte Allen*

## Lighthouse precinct heritage

The Split Point Lighthouse is a unique and iconic landmark for locals and travellers along the Great Ocean Road, defining the landscape of the Aireys Inlet promontory and reflecting its nineteenth-century history.



Following the Split Point Lightstation Heritage Report and associated Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay in the 1990s, AIDA has taken an active interest in planning for the precinct, including the development of the joint Surf Coast Shire – GORCC Split Point Lighthouse Precinct Master Plan in 2008 and Traffic Plan in 2012.

A further review of the precinct is now required, to strengthen protection of its unique historical and scenic landscape and views. The current planning provisions have gaps, wrong mapping of heritage places and leave the iconic lighthouse precinct open to development that would undermine its heritage, scenic and tourism values, particularly the setting for the lighthouse, the lighthouse keeper's cottages and gardens, Pearse pioneer graves and Surf Coast Walk and the coastal reserve.

VCAT recently approved a re-subdivision of part of the head lighthouse keeper's cottage gardens against a refusal by Surf Coast Shire and submissions from AIDA and an adjoining neighbour. VCAT required easements to be included to facilitate access for future development from Reserve Road in addition to an existing vacant lot facing Federal Street.

Heritage Victoria and Queenscliff Borough have recently extended heritage protection for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse to its surrounding precinct to recognise its heritage significance. When the lighthouse was listed in 1982 just the lighthouse building was listed on the Victorian Heritage Register without its surrounding land – just like the Split Point Lighthouse. Now Split Point Lighthouse needs similar updated protection.

AIDA was unsuccessful in its request for council funding for a review of planning controls in this years budget to:

- review, update and extend heritage controls in the lighthouse precinct including the land forming the setting of the heritage buildings – the heritage overlay currently protects the lighthouse, lighthouse keeper’s houses and Pearse graves but misses the critical land between them
- protect views, setting and scenic values of these historic buildings and cairn from all vantage points, including from the lighthouse and the Surf Coast Walk.
- plan now for potential future development:
  - define preferred building envelopes and forms and subdivision/consolidation – even a single-storey building on land closest to the lighthouse and coast would seriously affect the precinct’s heritage, coastal tourism values, views and the Surf Coast Walk
  - investigate funding options to purchase key sites for heritage and public use
- amend the Surf Coast Planning Scheme to protect the precinct and ask the Minister for Planning for interim heritage controls while planning work is underway
- correct mapping errors and gaps in heritage overlays and planning scheme zoning for the lighthouse, cairn and the former commonwealth land along the foreshore on Eagle Rock Parade to protect this coastal reserve.



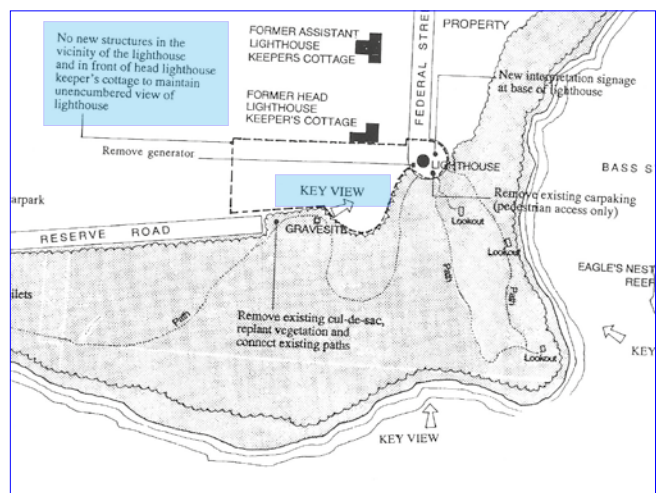
AIDA hopes that Surf Coast Shire can progress this heritage work in its Strategic Planning work program and seek the assistance of DELWP and the Authority.

This Split Point Light Station Report identified parts of the head lighthouse keeper’s garden (14 Federal St and 25 Reserve Road) for ‘no new structures in the vicinity of the lighthouse and in front of the lighthouse keeper’s cottage to maintain an unencumbered view

of the lighthouse’

The Management Plan Conservation Policy recommends:

Essentially the area surrounding the lighthouse should be kept free of structures as should the area in front of the head lighthouse keeper’s cottage so as to maintain the unencumbered view along the cliff (see Fig 48). Elsewhere the design, siting, views, scale mass and orientation, materials, colours and textures of any new structures should be carefully considered to ensure that they are sympathetic with and appropriate to their proposed setting. This is particularly critical in the case of new residential development on the private land along Federal Street and Reserve Road. [and] in managing the reserve in the future, the relationship between individual elements and the reserve as a whole needs to be consciously addressed, as does the interface between the visual relationship of the lighthouse and the surrounding area.’



Split Point Light Station Report – Heritage Conservation Analysis and Masterplan 1997 page 63 Fig 48 Allom Lovell – our blue highlighting

*Catherine McNaughton*

## VCAT bridge application hearing

The VCAT hearing on the Blazing Saddles bridge application was held in front of two Senior Members on 30 June and 1 July. In all, the bridge would cover an area of 63 x 3 metres of Crown land, public reserve and public waterway. It would not allow public access.

AIDA was represented by its lawyers. Several individuals and the Surf Coast Shire also presented objections to the application and referred to a range of issues, including:

- 1 failing to satisfy the purposes of policies and regulations including those in the Rural Conservation Zone, Public Conservation and Resource Zone, and

the Environmental Significance Overlay

- 2 being inconsistent with a range of state policies, including those pertaining to Protection of Biodiversity, Coastal Crown Land, and Water Bodies and Wetlands
- 3 being inconsistent with local policy including the Aireys Inlet to Eastern View Structure Plan (2015)
- 4 providing no community benefit as the use of the bridge would exclusively benefit the applicant for its private use
- 5 being inconsistent with relevant provisions of the Crown Lands (Reserve) Act 1978
- 6 having a detrimental impact on the flora, fauna and water quality of the Painkalac Creek and Valley
- 7 having a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the Painkalac Creek and its surrounds.

We will not know the outcome of the hearing for some weeks. AIDA members will be alerted promptly once the result is known.

Late in the hearing the lawyer for the Surf Coast Shire produced some fascinating historical documents to add weight to the argument about the purposes of Crown Land. These were the Crown Lands Act 1884, by which the Victorian Parliament gave the Crown the authority to remove from sale Crown lands 'required for any public purpose whatsoever', whether temporarily or permanently. Clause 10 listed these grounds as including 'for watercourses', 'for the use or benefit of the aboriginal people', and 'for the recreation, convenience or amusement of the people'. Subsequently the *Government Gazette* of 18 May 1888, p. 1511, detailed such land to be set aside 'for public purposes' on the western bank of 'Airey's Creek'. In all, this land was about fifteen acres running along the length of the creek to a width of at least one 'chain' (a chain is 66 feet or about 20 metres). The *Government Gazette* of 15 June 1888, p. 1981, then detailed in italics that this land was to be set aside 'permanently'. A 2002 decision by VCAT refers to public reserve for conservation purposes of at least 10 metres on both sides of the creek.

*Peter McPhee*



## Sick and dying frogs

Please help scientists discover the cause of the recent wave of sickness and death amongst east-coast frogs. Frogs may be seen out in the daytime, or appear thin, darker or lighter than normal, slow, with red bellies or feet, or sloughed skin.

You can send reports and photos of any sick or dead frogs you may find to the national citizen science project FrogID, or email [calls@frogid.net.au](mailto:calls@frogid.net.au), or contact Dr Jodi Rowley at the Australian Museum.



Ewings tree frog found in Fairhaven SLSC underpass





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