



# Strategic Plan

2019–2022



REMEMBRANCE PARKS  
CENTRAL VICTORIA



**REMEMBRANCE PARKS**  
CENTRAL VICTORIA

# Our vision

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Nurturing enduring remembrance

# Our mission

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Working with our community we will:

- **Deliver quality and caring service with compassion and;**
- **Create and maintain enduring and accessible remembrance into perpetuity**

# Our values

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Board members, staff and volunteers of Remembrance Parks Central Victoria uphold the values of:

- **Compassion**
- **Community**
- **Integrity**

# Table of Contents

Preface .....	3
A joint message from Chair & CEO .....	4
RPCV at a glance.....	5
Overview.....	6
Our Stakeholders .....	6
Products and Services .....	7
Governance.....	8
Management .....	9
Locations .....	10
Strategic and Annual Plan Framework.....	11
Key Challenges and Risks.....	12
Our Strategic Objectives .....	15

## Preface

This Strategic Plan has been developed in accordance with sections 18O and 18P of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 (the Act). It expands on the strategic direction for Bendigo Cemeteries Trust, trading as Remembrance Parks Central Victoria (RPCV) that was adopted in 2016.

Remembrance Parks Central Victoria is an established Class A Cemetery Trust in accordance with s.5 of the Act and performs the functions of a Class A Trust outlined within s.12A of the Act. The organisation is governed by a Board appointed by the Governor-in-Council in accordance with the provisions of s.6A of the Act.

All Cemetery Trusts are a Statutory Authority within the Department of Health and Human Services and the appropriate Minister.

## A joint message from Chair & CEO

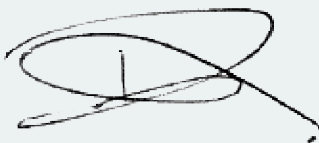
The core of this strategic plan is very much aligned to our vision of Nurturing Enduring Remembrance and our values of Compassion, Community and Integrity.

Remembrance Parks Central Victoria is committed to serving all communities in our regions. The communities that make up these regions are diverse and have differing expectations. As a regional Cemetery Trust we seek to ensure that our new Strategic plan contains actions that will carry us through the period 2019 –2022, providing direction and strategies that will help us connect with community expectations and ensure we are able to meet our obligations as custodians of heritage and history.

The strategic plan is focused on four key pillars that will be our over-arching guide over the next three years. The priorities and actions developed under each of these pillars will form our annual work plans and allow us to measure our progress towards the successful implementation of our strategic objectives.

The Strategic Plan 2019–2022 will guide the organisation into the next three years, with a clear plan for maximising opportunities and managing emerging risks. This plan is a refresh of the existing strategic plan, with a continuation and alignment of strategic themes from the previous period, with input from the RPCV Board, management and staff.

We encourage you to review our new strategic plan and let us know how we are doing. Your feedback is always welcome.



Dean McElroy

CEO



Pam Macdonald

Chair

## RPCV at a glance



**3,800+**  
Volunteer  
hours



**328**  
Memorial  
conversions



**19**  
Community  
engagement  
events



**1,171**  
Cremations



**\$230,000**  
Invested in  
improving  
community  
assets



**351**  
Burials



**\$63,000**  
In Government  
grants received

# Overview

Bendigo Cemeteries Trust, trading as Remembrance Parks Central Victoria (RPCV), is a government-owned enterprise established as one of five Class A Cemetery Trusts under the provisions of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 (the Act). RPCV is accountable to the Minister for Health through the Department of Health and Human Services and is responsible for the direct management of nine sites.

RPCV also has a broader responsibility to provide leadership, support and assistance to the 205 Class B Cemetery Trusts within the Loddon Mallee and Hume Regions.

## Our Stakeholders

We understand our obligations and the expectation to deliver quality products, services and value to all our stakeholders. Our values, mission and strategic priorities are aligned and considered to ensure we meet or exceed these expectations.



## Products and Services

RPCV offers a broad range of services to the community in accordance with the respective provisions of the Act. These services are tailored to the unique nature of the funeral services industry, the operating environment and to meet the needs of the community it serves.

The following graphic provides a snapshot of the current and future RPCV products and services:



In recognition of changes in community attitudes to the breadth of our products and services, this plan continues the strategy to enhance the suite of products and services offered by RPCV. This includes engaging with like organisations (within and outside of the sector) to deliver co-produced products and services to the community in a collaborative and seamless manner.

## Governance

RPCV is classified as a Class A Cemetery Trust under the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 (the Act). RPCV is responsible to the Minister for Health, and governed by trust members appointed by the government on recommendation of the Minister of Health.

Trust members are accountable for the good governance of the organisation, including:

- setting the strategic objectives of the trust
- risk management
- determining all material policies governing operations
- reviewing the progress and performance of the trust in meeting its strategic objectives.

In consultation with the trust, members participate in a number of trust committees.

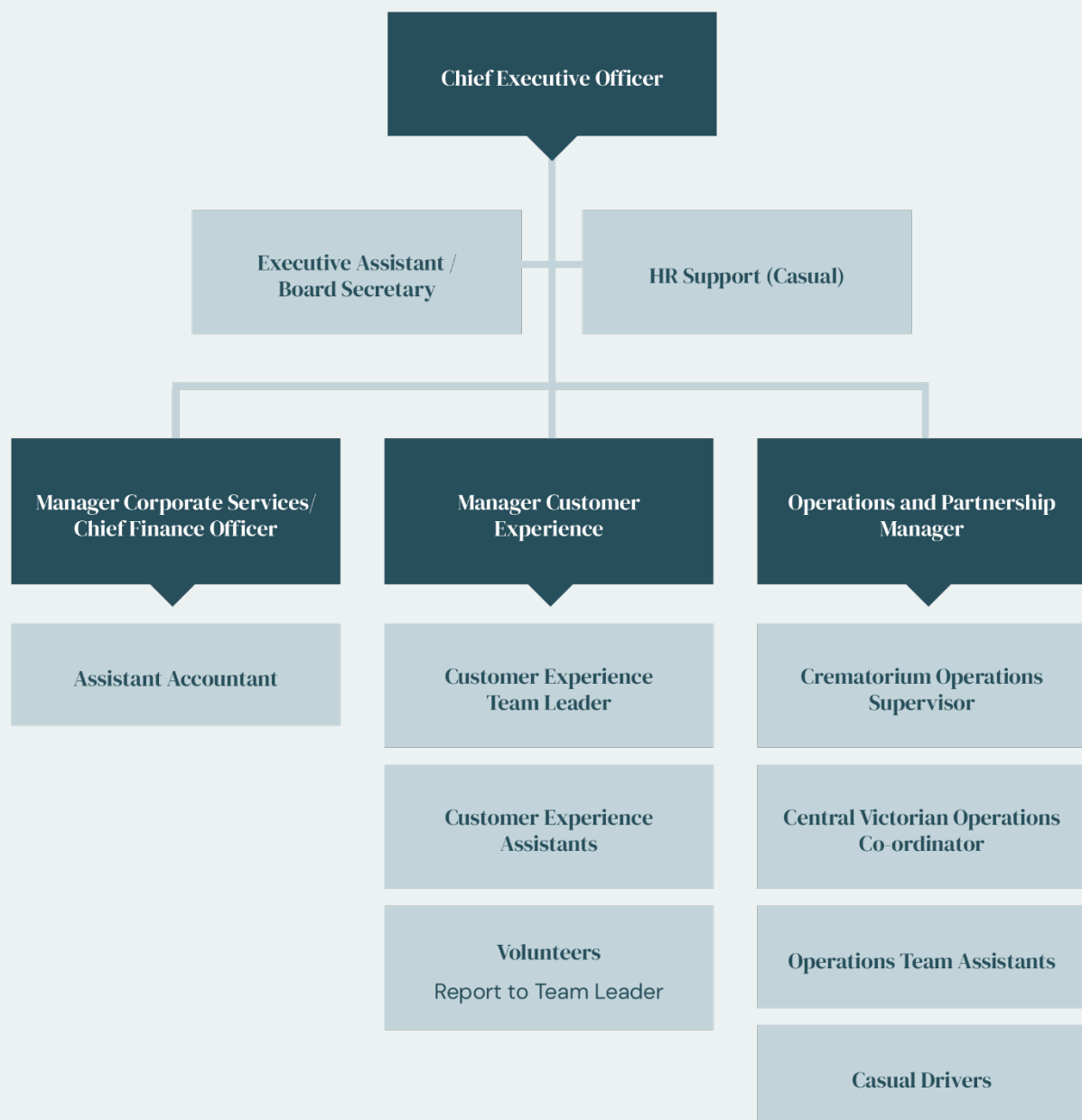
These committees provide review or advisory services to help execute Trust responsibilities.

The current trust committees are the:

- audit and risk management committee
- community advisory committee
- executive performance and remuneration committee
- finance and investment committee

## Management

A Chief Executive Officer, appointed by and responsible to the Board (s.18L of the Act) manages the organisation and its resources (s.18M of the Act). In addition to the responsibilities outlined for the CEO in the Act, the Board has delegated its powers according to s.15 of the Act to the CEO. The CEO manages the organisation through the following organisational structure:



## Locations

The following locations are managed by Remembrance Parks Central Victoria:

### **Axedale Remembrance Park**

including Axedale Catholic  
& Axedale Public Cemetery  
Cemetery Road, Axedale

### **Bendigo Remembrance Park**

70 Carpenter Street, Bendigo

### **Eaglehawk Remembrance Park**

5 Victoria Street, Eaglehawk

### **Emu Creek Remembrance Park**

Emu Creek Road, Emu Creek

### **Kangaroo Flat Remembrance Park**

33–49 Helm Street, Kangaroo Flat

### **White Hills Remembrance Park**

Corner of Holdsworth Road and Plumridge  
Street, White Hills

### **Pine Lodge Cemetery**

1600 Midland Highway, Shepparton

### **Kialla West Cemetery**

7374 Goulburn Valley Highway, Kialla West

These cemeteries are currently being managed under service agreement arrangements:

Axedale Catholic Cemetery	<b><i>Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst</i></b>
Pine Lodge Cemetery	<b><i>Greater Shepparton City Council</i></b>
Kialla West Cemetery	<b><i>Greater Shepparton City Council</i></b>

The following provides an overview profile of the six locations managed by Remembrance Parks Central Victoria:

	Bendigo	Eaglehawk	White Hills	Kangaroo Flat	Axedale	Emu Creek	Pine Lodge	Kialla West
<b>Established</b>	1858	1864	1853	1855	1868	1869	1880	1884
<b>Area</b>	21ha	22ha	20ha	4ha	2ha	4ha	15ha	2ha

# Strategic and Annual Plan Framework

Class A Cemeteries in Victoria are required to ensure that Strategic and Annual Planning follows the guidelines set by the Department of Health & Human Services: **Strategic and annual plan guidelines – November 2014**.

RPCV will ensure the following planning framework is implemented to support the Department of Health and Human Services and organisational requirements:

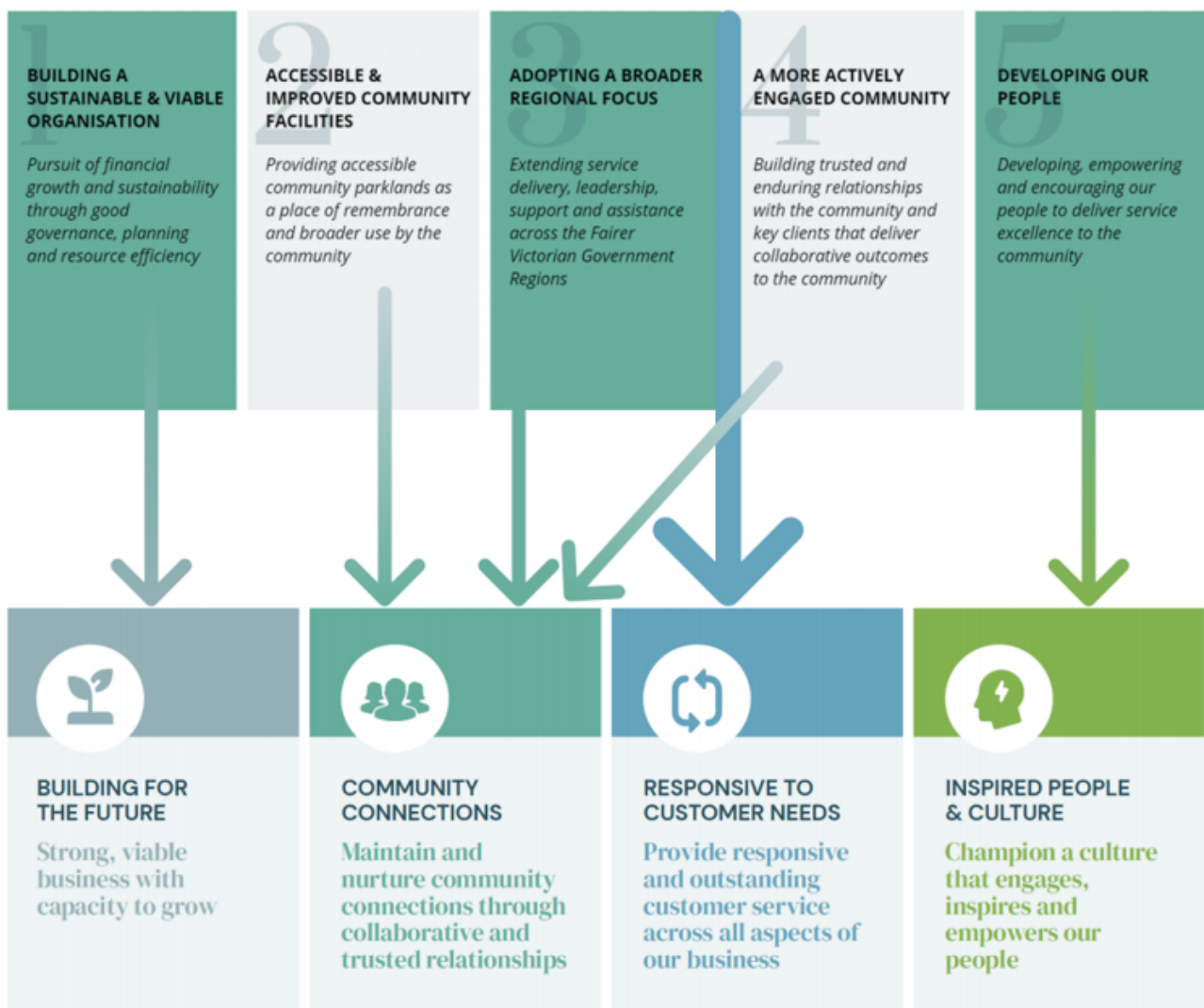


# Refreshing our Strategic Focus

This Strategic Plan is a refresh of the existing plan. It remains aligned to our current strategic themes, but with a greater focus on performance, community and service delivery.

When considering the refresh of the current strategic objectives our goals are to:

- Continue the intention and focus of the current Strategic Plan
- Emphasise the focus on our people, culture and service delivery
- Ensure the plan is relevant, forward looking with consideration of our capacity and capability
- Reflect on opportunities and risks
- Ensure a stronger customer focus
- Help define changes in organisation culture



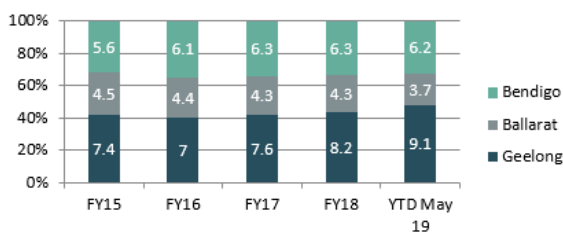
## Key Challenges and Risks

RPCV has identified a range of key challenges and risks over the coming period that could potentially impact our ability to achieve some of our key strategic objectives. These key challenges include:

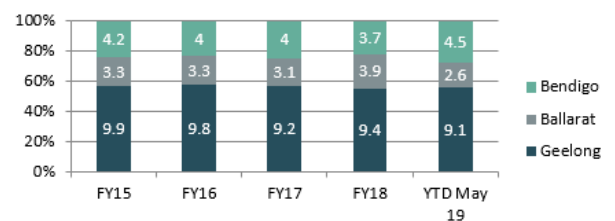
- 2019 statistic show that the sector is down approximately 3% compared to 2018
- The latest industry data available shows that approximately 12% (2,500) of all cremations in Victoria are going interstate to be cremated. If this trend increases RPCV volume could be impacted.
- Sector evidence indicates that consumers are choosing cheaper products and services i.e. no service cremations instead of burials.
- Competitive pricing in local and interstate crematoriums have the potential to significantly impact our expected volumes.
- RPCV market share remains relatively consistent (based on previous five years):

Cremations	<b>Average 6.1%</b>
Burials	<b>Average 4.0%</b>
CR Interments	<b>Average 2.3%</b>

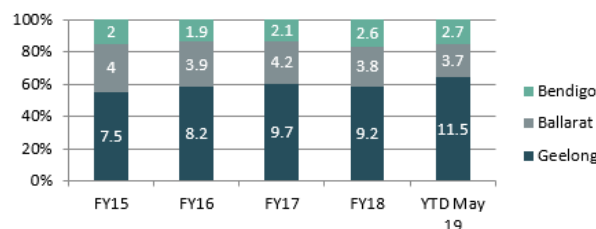
**Regional Cremations  
% of Market Share**



**Regional Burials  
% of Market Share**



**Regional Interments  
% of Market Share**



NB: Greater Melbourne Cemetery Trust and Southern Metropolitan Cemetery Trust account for a market share of over 80% on average of the five years in all three services

### **Change in operations of other Class A cemeteries.**

Cremation pick up services are starting to operate within metropolitan and regional areas from both interstate and Victorian based cemeteries. Currently, our pickup service provides for almost 50% of all cremations performed at RPCV. If the pickup service is impacted by these alternatives, the flow on effect will also negatively impact our cremation numbers and budget objectives.

Budgeted numbers are typically based on historical and sector performance. With emerging risks identified, this potentially may impact our ability to achieve our targets. Where budgeted numbers and targets are not realised, there will likely be a negative impact on finances.

### **Class B Trusts**

As required under the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 we have an obligation to provide a level of support to Class B cemeteries. An increase in requests of support over the past period provides some business opportunities with a fee for service consideration, although the majority of requests require a time allocation of both resources and costs.

### **Pricing Structure**

Annual increases continue to be approved for adjustment in line with CPI only. Historically, the CPI adjustment does not align with the increased costs of key expense items, specifically utility services such as gas, electricity and water, as well as fuel and wages. The Trust is committed to continually reviewing our fee structure and to support regular pricing reviews by external contractors. The next review will be considered during the 2019 – 2020 period.



# Our Strategic Objectives

Over the next three years, RPCV will focus on being aligned to customer and community expectations. We will focus on developing our culture within the organisation and defining how we intend to operate through leading, engaging, listening and being responsive.

 <p><b>BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE</b></p> <p>Strong, viable business with capacity to grow</p>	 <p><b>COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS</b></p> <p>Maintain and nurture community connections through collaborative and trusted relationships</p>	 <p><b>RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER NEEDS</b></p> <p>Provide responsive and outstanding customer service across all aspects of our business</p>	 <p><b>INSPIRED PEOPLE &amp; CULTURE</b></p> <p>Champion a culture that engages, inspires and empowers our people</p>
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## Strategic priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing our financial resources and assets to deliver the best possible outcomes</li> <li>Fair and equitable decision-making processes are in place</li> <li>A well-governed, efficient and responsive organisation</li> <li>Actively involved and provide leadership to sector-wide reform across regional areas</li> <li>Increase the level of sustainable development and revenue generating use of our assets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for involvement in our activities for groups and individuals within the community</li> <li>Collaborative, transparent and trusted relationship with key stakeholders</li> <li>Accessible community educational opportunities to increase understanding of after-life care and remembrance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver efficient and effective services where customers are the focus</li> <li>Improve the accessibility and beautification standards of our assets and establish them as community parklands</li> <li>Provide increased leadership, support and assistance to Class B trusts</li> <li>Improve and strengthen our strategic regional partnerships to ensure our ongoing financial viability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An organisation that demonstrates community-inspired leadership</li> <li>Encourage diverse volunteerism to create active, confident, engaged, informed and resilient communities</li> <li>Attract and retain an engaged workforce</li> </ul>
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# Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities underpin each of the four pillars for 2019 – 2022.

Each of these pillars will provide the focus and intent which will guide us to successfully implement this strategic plan over the next three years.

The priorities will include performance indicators which will be reflected in our annual planning process.



## BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

**Managing our financial resources and assets to deliver the best possible outcomes**

- Cash backing of reserves
- Revenue sustainability
- Investment decisions for above-market returns

**Fair and equitable decision-making processes are in place**

- Multi-year planning
- Stakeholder & community education

**A well-governed, efficient and responsive organisation**

- Governance structures and processes
- Risk management frameworks
- Organisational capability
- Be actively involved and provide leadership to sector-wide reform across regional areas
- Shared services
- Advocacy and thought generation

**Increase the level of sustainable development and revenue generating use of our assets**

- Site development
- Revenue generation



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**Provide opportunities for involvement in our activities for groups and individuals within the community**

- Community advisory committee
- Create a healthy volunteer cohort
- Public participation

**Collaborative, transparent and trusted relationship with key stakeholders**

- Funeral director and related services

**Accessible community educational opportunities to increase understanding of after-life care and remembrance**

- Events and open days
- Community remembrance



## RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER NEEDS

**Deliver efficient and effective services where customers are the focus**

- Customer service
- Aligned products and services

**Improve the accessibility and beautification standards of our assets and establish them as community parklands**

- Lawn area improvements
- Community facilities
- Lawn alternatives

**Provide increased leadership, support and assistance to Class B trusts**

- Class B engagement and support

**Improve and strengthen our strategic regional partnerships to ensure our ongoing financial viability**

- New service delivery model
- Establish regional partnerships



## INSPIRED PEOPLE & CULTURE

**An organisation that demonstrates community-inspired leadership**

- Training and development
- Customer and safety focussed culture
- Innovation performance and accountability
- Succession planning

**Encourage diverse volunteerism to create active, confident, engaged, informed and resilient communities**

- Broader roles and membership
- Collaborative opportunities
- Recognition

**Attract and retain an engaged workforce**

- Onboarding process
- Induction plans

## What we will achieve over the next 3 years:

Priorities	Strategic Objective: <b>BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE</b>	
Manage financial resources and assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful cash backing of reserves</li> <li>• Revenue sustainability</li> <li>• Evidence based investment decisions</li> </ul>	
Effective decision-making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-year planning</li> <li>• Stakeholder and community engagement and education</li> </ul>	
Efficient and effective organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance structures and process in place and monitored</li> <li>• Risk management frameworks</li> <li>• Capability of organisation through skill alignment</li> </ul>	
Provide sector leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and lead shared services opportunities</li> <li>• Increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery</li> <li>• Advocate effectively on significant issues affecting RPCV and its communities</li> </ul>	
Sustainable development and use assets to generate revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site development to provide alternative options for burial and remembrance</li> <li>• Revenue generation through increased usage in facilities</li> <li>• Efficiencies through sustainability initiatives</li> </ul>	
Priorities	Strategic Objective: <b>COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS</b>	
Involve community in a range of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and grow engagement of the Community Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Connect with community and continue to build on our strong and committed Volunteer workforce</li> <li>• Grow our general public participation in events and business opportunities</li> </ul>	
Respected relationships with our stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a stakeholder engagement policy</li> </ul>	
Provide easier access to educational information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure our event calendar is focused and aligned to deliver industry learnings</li> <li>• Provide ease of access to information on a range of subjects including after life care, issues of historical importance</li> <li>• Content to ensure options for remembrance are communicated</li> </ul>	
Priorities	Strategic Objective: <b>RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER NEEDS</b>	
Customers are our focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence in service across our business</li> <li>• Align products and services to meet the diverse customer needs</li> </ul>	
Create community parklands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create areas of relaxation and reflection for visitors attending cemeteries</li> <li>• Spaces that reflect our values and vision, Compassion, Community, Integrity and Nurturing Enduring Remembrance</li> <li>• Forefront in consideration for all future planning</li> </ul>	
Expand our support to local Class B cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and build on our engagement and level of leadership to Class B cemeteries</li> </ul>	
Seek opportunities for greater regional partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue additional opportunities within the region to build on our current services</li> <li>• Identify and welcome new opportunities within the region</li> <li>• Consider improvement opportunities to current services to better meet our stakeholder requirements</li> </ul>	
Priorities	Strategic Objective: <b>INSPIRED PEOPLE AND CULTURE</b>	
Our people are community focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the individual cultures and sensitivities within the communities that we serve</li> <li>• Provide encouragement and support through development and implementation of individual workplans.</li> </ul>	
Expand our focus on volunteer opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for greater engagement of volunteers within RPCV</li> <li>• Align with other volunteer organisations on issues of relevance</li> <li>• Celebrate the efforts of our volunteers</li> </ul>	
Develop an engaged workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff engagement survey</li> <li>• Implement a tailored training and development plan for all management and staff</li> <li>• Build capable staff through coaching and review</li> <li>• Communication and engagement plan for staff</li> </ul>	

