



**PONY CLUB**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# Strategic Plan

## 2025 - 2029

Traditional values and modern opportunities





## Message from Chairperson - Kate McCarthy

As Chairperson of Pony Club Western Australia, I am proud to present our 2025–2029 Strategy, a bold and future-focused plan grounded in the values that have guided us since 1959: community, education, and a deep respect for the horse.

This strategy is more than a roadmap; it is a reaffirmation of our commitment to strong governance, inclusive growth, and sustainable impact. At its heart, it empowers every rider, coach, club, and volunteer to take ownership of Pony Club’s future – one built on integrity, transparency, and shared purpose.

Our vision is clear: to be the equestrian organisation of choice for youth and young adults in Western Australia. That means creating spaces where everyone feels welcome, where horse and rider welfare is non-negotiable, and where best practice underpins every ride, rally, and competition.

We’re setting a course that honours the past while embracing innovation and building a resilient organisation ready to adapt, evolve, and lead. Whether you're a long-standing club or a first-time member, your voice matters. Together, we will continue to foster confident, compassionate equestrians and ensure that Pony Club WA thrives for generations to come.

Let’s ride forward – united, empowered, and ready for what’s next.



## Message from General Manager - Tanya Appleby

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I introduce Pony Club WA's 2025–2029 Strategy – a strategy built not only on strong foundations, but on the voices, passion, and experiences of our members across Western Australia.

From quiet mornings at rally days to the adrenaline of competition, I have witnessed firsthand the connection our community has to each other, to our horses, and to the values that bind us. This strategy reflects those moments. It's about continuing to grow a movement that empowers youth and young adults, fosters excellence, and makes every member – no matter where they come from or what they ride – feel seen, supported, and inspired.

We are focused on creating real value for clubs, coaches, volunteers and riders through clear leadership, meaningful partnerships, and accessible opportunities. We are championing inclusion, not as a buzzword, but as a lived experience. We are putting sustainability and horse welfare at the centre of everything we do – because our future depends on it.

This is not just a plan on paper. It is a collective vision shaped by our passion, your feedback, your hopes, and our love of the sport. I am incredibly excited for where we are heading, and even more grateful to be taking this journey with all of you.

Here's to a thriving, connected, and confident future – for our people, our horses, and the Pony Club legacy we all share.







# Our Vision for the Future

Since 1959, Pony Club WA has built a community that connects generations through their love of horses and equine skill.

This strategy honours our past while preparing us for a bold, inclusive, and sustainable future.

We strive to be the equestrian organisation of choice for the youth and young adults of Western Australia by championing **inclusion, community** and **best practice** in **equine welfare** while inspiring **confident, compassionate** equestrians for life.

This strategy outlines our roadmap for success, ensuring sustainable growth and value for all members.



**Pony Club Western Australia is the state peak body for pony clubs in Western Australia. It is dedicated to fostering a love of horses and equestrian skill, while promoting youth and young adult engagement and personal development through structured education and competition.**

## **Educational Programs:**

Members receive instruction in riding and horse care, following the internationally recognized Pony Club Australia syllabus. This includes proficiency certificates that can contribute to Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) requirements.

## **Competitions:**

Members can participate in over 400 events statewide, including disciplines such as dressage, show jumping, eventing, mounted games, and tetrathlon. Opportunities also exist to compete at state and national levels.

## **Community and Leadership:**

The club emphasizes values like fellowship, citizenship, and loyalty, encouraging family involvement and offering pathways for members to develop leadership skills.

## **Membership Options:**

Pony Club WA offers various membership categories to cater to different needs, including:

- Mounted Memberships: Ready2Ride, Junior, Senior, Adult, Top-Up, Open Rider, Come and Try, One Event.
- Unmounted Memberships: Supporter Member.
- Coaching Memberships: Paid and Unpaid Coach.
- Officials Membership: For those involved in officiating events.



# The benefits of Pony Club beyond learning to ride

## Reduction of Anxiety and Stress

- Scientific studies show that being around horses lowers cortisol (the stress hormone) and promotes relaxation.
- The rhythm of riding and the non-verbal communication required with horses can help calm the nervous system.
- Grooming and groundwork activities are particularly effective at reducing anxiety.

## Improved Emotional Regulation

- Horses mirror human emotions, they react to fear, calmness, frustration, and happiness. Riders must learn to control their emotions to communicate effectively, which builds self-awareness and emotional control. This "biofeedback" loop is why horses are often used in therapy for PTSD, ADHD, and emotional trauma.

## Enhanced Confidence

- Handling and riding a horse, builds personal confidence.
- Success in riding skills, horse care, or competition translates into greater belief in one's ability to handle life challenges.

## Connection, Empathy, and Relationship Skills

- Horses require trust-based, non-verbal communication.
- Riders develop empathy, patience, and mutual respect, which improves human relationship skills, especially for children and teens.
- Regular horse interaction reduces feelings of isolation and loneliness.

## Physical Exercise and Outdoor Exposure

- Riding, groundwork and horse care provide structured physical activity and time outdoors, both of which are independently proven to improve mood and reduce depression.
- Natural settings combined with purposeful tasks create a "double benefit" for mental health.

Working with horses improves **stress management, emotional resilience, confidence, empathy, and social connection** — all of which are key factors for positive mental health.



# Our Core Purpose

These guiding principles drive our actions and aspirations.

## Mission

To deliver accessible, high-quality equestrian **education** and **experiences** for all youth and young adults of WA.

We foster **personal growth, lifelong skills**, and the highest standards of **horse welfare** and **ethical riding**.

## Values

Member Empowerment

Respect and Welfare

Inclusion

Excellence

Sustainability





# What We Stand For

## Member Empowerment:

We support members to lead, learn, and grow.

## Respect and Welfare:

We prioritise horse and rider welfare, ethical horse management and respect of each other, in all we do.

## Inclusion:

We welcome all equestrians, regardless of background, age, ability, or access to a horse.

## Excellence:

We commit to best practice across safety, coaching, and competition standards.

## Sustainability:

We protect our environment and equestrian community for future generations while building lasting partnerships with members, communities, and the equestrian industry to secure Pony Club WA's legacy and leadership for generations to come.

*Our values are the foundation of our success*





# Our Strategic Focus

For 2025 to 2029, our key strategic priorities include:



Stakeholder  
Engagement  
and  
Legacy Leadership



Equine Welfare  
and  
Ethical Skill



Responsible  
Governance and  
Sustainable  
Operations



Inclusion,  
Diversity  
and Accessibility

*These priorities align with our mission and vision.*

# Strategic Initiative Impact

Strategic Priority Area	Objective	Key Initiatives
Stakeholder Engagement and Legacy Leadership	To foster authentic, two-way engagement with members, clubs, sponsors, volunteers, zones, coaches, officials, families, and partners; ensuring all voices are valued in shaping the direction of Pony Club WA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement annual member and club surveys to inform decision-making.</li><li>• Host biannual state-wide forums and club/zone consultation sessions.</li><li>• Launch a Pony Club WA Senior Network, Future Leaders Program and Life Member Advisory Group.</li><li>• Celebrate and preserve club histories as part of our legacy storytelling project.</li><li>• Develop a Club and Zone Partnership Toolkit to support shared initiatives.</li><li>• Create and communicate our various Value Propositions.</li><li>• Create a New and Renew Membership Pack</li><li>• Reinvalidate Annual Awards Night</li></ul>
Equine Welfare and Ethical Equestrian skills	To embed global best practices in equine care and training across all levels of Pony Club WA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate and educate welfare guidelines across zones and clubs.</li><li>• Deliver education sessions with specialists, veterinarians and other welfare experts.</li><li>• Highlight and promote positive reinforcement and ethical training in coaching syllabus.</li><li>• Provide support through Code of Conduct / Expected Behaviours to support clubs, volunteers and coaches to implement and enforce these standards.</li><li>• Introduce annual information sessions for all incident and related reporting processes for Clubs and Zones</li></ul>
Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility	To ensure that Pony Club WA is welcoming and inclusive for all communities, regardless of location, background, age, discipline, ability or access to a horse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch targeted programs and resources for creating inclusive environments and limiting bullying and bias.</li><li>• Expand unmounted and adaptive riding programs.</li><li>• Provide mental health resilience training to all youth and young adult members.</li><li>• Provide inclusion training for volunteers, coaches and officials.</li><li>• Increase inclusion culture at Club level</li><li>• Create a calendar of key DEI dates with posts around visibility, awareness, inclusive language and behaviours.</li></ul>
Responsible Governance and Sustainable Operations	To ensure that Pony Club WA's operations, events, and organisational delivery are environmentally responsible, financially resilient, and governed with transparency, accountability, and integrity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support clubs to adopt green practices (recycling, water use, transport).</li><li>• Diversify funding streams via grants, sponsorship, and digital platforms.</li><li>• Implement Sponsorship and Funding Processes for all applications and requests</li><li>• Articulate framework for Partner and Sponsorship Care</li><li>• Review alignment of Zones and Regions against funding models and requirements.</li><li>• Ensure all key stakeholders to PCWA have appropriate governance tools and resources</li><li>• Ensure all internal governance framework is complete, aligns with best practice and is regularly reviewed.</li><li>• Assist Regions in long-term infrastructure planning.</li></ul>





**Let's shape the  
future love of horses  
and equine skill**



Thank you for your time and commitment to our shared vision