

# Summary of Club Connection Meeting - 27 February 2025

The latest Club Connection meeting covered several key topics aimed at improving collaboration between clubs, attracting new members, and addressing administrative queries. Below is an overview of the discussions and outcomes from the session.

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## 1. New Ways for Clubs to Interact and Share Ideas

### Proposal for a Private 'Clubs Forum' Facebook Group

- Richelle Olsen (Bushwalking Victoria) introduced the idea of a **private Facebook group** to facilitate ongoing communication among clubs. This would be optional for clubs.
- The private group would allow club representatives to share insights, eg:
  - share first aid training in order to satisfy minimum numbers,
  - share any excess capacity they may have for lodge/base camp trips,
  - share experiences of 3rd party accommodation/tour providers
  - Share insights on how clubs use PLB's and other shared resources
- The proposal includes structured administration, with Bushwalking Victoria and club volunteers managing membership and content.
- The Facebook group would only be viable with volunteers from clubs willing to help with small amounts of administration of the group.
- Clubs were invited to express their interest in participating and help shape the group's structure. Most responses were positive, with some responses highlighting that they do not use facebook.
- Alternative options, such as a website-based forum, were considered but deemed less accessible due to user engagement habits.
- Next steps - BWV will set up the Facebook Group as a trial, and will request 2-3 volunteers from clubs to help with small amounts of administration
- There was some confusion around the difference between a Facebook Page, and a Facebook Group - [here's a great explanation.](#)

## 2. First Aid Discussion

The meeting included an in-depth discussion about first aid training for bushwalking clubs. Various club representatives shared their experiences, challenges, and recommendations for arranging first aid courses, particularly those relevant to remote and wilderness scenarios.

### 2.1. Challenges in Organising First Aid Training

- Several clubs reported difficulties in securing suitable first aid courses that specifically address bushwalking and remote-area needs.
- A primary concern was finding providers with relevant wilderness experience rather than just standard first aid training.

- Cost and availability were mentioned as barriers, with some providers being in high demand and difficult to book.
- Clubs with smaller memberships struggled to meet minimum participant requirements for group training sessions.

## 2.2. Recommended First Aid Providers

- Survive First Aid was identified as a well-regarded provider for remote-area first aid, but they were noted as being difficult to schedule due to high demand.
- Wilderness First Aid in Blackwood was also mentioned as a possible option, though feedback on their training quality was limited.
- First Aid HQ (based in Footscray/Truganina) was recommended by the Essendon Bushwalking Club for its affordability (\$85 per person) and flexibility in course arrangements.
- First Aid Management in Forest Hill was suggested by Waverley Bushwalking Club, offering courses for around \$115 per person and tailoring content specifically to bushwalking scenarios.

## 2.3. Funding Opportunities

- Bushwalking Victoria provides partial subsidies (\$40 per participant) for first aid training, clubs need to cover the remaining costs.
- State government sporting grants were highlighted as a possible funding source to subsidise first aid training costs. Melbourne Walking Club successfully accessed funds from an earlier grant round, and clubs were encouraged to apply for the [Sporting Club Grants program](#) before the 27 March 2025 deadline.

## 2.4. Potential for Collaboration Among Clubs

- The proposed Facebook group could help clubs share provider recommendations and organise joint training sessions.
- Smaller clubs, in particular, could benefit from collaborating with neighboring clubs to meet participant minimums and reduce costs.

# 3. What Potential New Members Want - Lessons from Try Bushwalking Month

### Key Findings from the Initiative:

- 256 new participants attended walks, with 72 directly contacting clubs.
- A significant number of participants (44%) were very likely to join a club, and 38% were somewhat likely.
- Over 90% of clubs found Try Bushwalking Month valuable for promoting bushwalking and recruiting members.
- Many clubs found success by incorporating new members into existing walks rather than creating separate events.
- Challenges included last-minute cancellations, participants from outside club areas, and weather-related disruptions in November.

### Suggestions for Future Improvements:

- Move Try Bushwalking Month to September for better weather conditions.
- Enhance the advertising strategy and highlight club diversity.
- Streamline the walk submission and booking process.
- Provide additional resources and guidance to clubs to ensure a smooth experience.

## 4. Your Questions Answered & Insurance Renewal Questionnaire Updates

### Improvements to the Insurance Process:

- Bushwalking Australia now has regained direct oversight of the insurance renewal questionnaire, reducing delays caused by insurer-managed processes.
  - The 2025 questionnaire will be distributed by each state peak body via a direct link rather than a fixed email address, allowing more flexibility in club responses.
  - The deadline for submission is expected to be mid-April, giving time for a review of data before finalisation with the brokers in May.
  - No major changes to insurance costs are anticipated.
  - Clubs were reminded to ensure members complete risk acknowledgment forms, ideally integrated into their membership and renewal processes.
  - Clubs are reminded to report 'multiple club' members correctly.
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### Conclusion

The meeting highlighted the importance of collaboration among clubs, the success of Try Bushwalking Month in recruiting new members, and steps taken to improve the insurance renewal process. Clubs are encouraged to participate in the proposed Facebook group, refine strategies for attracting new members, and ensure smooth insurance renewal processes.

For any follow-up questions or to express interest in the initiatives discussed, clubs are encouraged to reach out to Bushwalking Victoria at [admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:admin@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au).