



NEWSLETTER October 2025 (Year 24 Vol 39)

Editorial

Following on from the success of our 2024 AGM, we have decided to hold this year's AGM at the same venue (more information below). We would love to see everyone in attendance.

This edition of our newsletter covers a variety of matters.

Maintenance is an on-going issue. Members are asked to keep an eye out for any items that require servicing or repairs and report the issue as soon as possible. It goes without saying that with all the resources present on the Bunkers, their usage comes with certain responsibilities.

A variation, to the original agreement of purchasing a trailer, was taken up. The option of acquiring a small truck became available. The additional cost of purchased was defrayed somewhat through a wonderful \$10000 donation from an anonymous donor. The truck will offer greater flexibility with all the variety of jobs we have on the Bunkers.

Visitors to the Bunkers will note the wide variety of resources we have in place. Work involved in establishing these resources and maintaining them requires a degree of work power. We are forever thankful to the volunteer efforts from our membership and friends, however, the number of workers is relatively small. In his section, Kym asks members to consider their membership and what it actually means to you.

Conservation-wise, our camp site area is looking a treat. After several years of seed collection and propagation, our plantings are taking shape. We must remember also, that a lot of time and volunteer energy has gone into travelling up to the Bunkers in the warmer months to water the plants.



Photograph 1 – some of the plantings near our camp ground.

Throughout 2025, reports have come in on the expansion in numbers and colonies of our Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies. Further, a recent report has just reached me on confirmation of a sighting of the rare Short-tailed Grasswren living happily on the Bunkers. This is outstanding news. As you recall, a huge part of our mandate with the purchase of the Bunkers was to return the landscape to its natural state and promote the growth and expansion of the native flora and fauna. We have come a long way in our dream. We have a long way to go.

Shane Fantinel (Editor)

2025 AGM Announcement



Image 1 – Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby

Following the successful new AGM format in 2024, our 2025 AGM will be held at the Fullarton Park Community Centre on

Sunday 26th October 2025.

Commencement time is 12.00 noon, with a sausage sizzle. Finishing time will be around 3.30pm.

Please mark the date in your calendar. We would love to see your attendance as a member, friend or sponsor of the YFRWPA.

See the Flier at the end of the Newsletter. Thank you.

Thank you to '[Yellow tail]' for their on-going support with a further donation of wine for our up-coming AGM raffle.



Photograph 2 – A sample of our items for the raffle from our marvellous sponsor, '[Yellow Tail]'.

Reminder to bring your gold coins for raffle and soft drink purchases.

Katrina Windebank (Membership Officer)

President's Report

Once again the AGM is upon us. I ask that as many members as possible attend. This is your club and the AGM is an important event. It will inform you about what's going on; what's been planned for the next twelve months; and election of the Management Committee.

Last year's AGM was a great turn out by members. Moreover, it was an enjoyable day.

If you are unable to attend please ensure you lodge a Proxy Vote with the secretary as soon

as possible. This will give Jim enough time to log all proxies. If you are given a proxy by another member please email Jim with a copy of the proxy as soon as you are given the proxy.

I hate delivering bad news, but recently we found that the YFRWPA utility had been severely damaged by person or persons unknown. As a result, Grant travelled up to the Bunkers to commence repairs. I had to cut short my return from being away and turn left at Port Augusta to travel to the Bunkers to assist Grant. While undertaking the repairs we found that the radiator had been hit by the fan rupturing the radiator.

It was very obvious, by the damage to a subframe in the front of the utilit, and a bent cross bar on the Bull Bar, that the utility had hit something significant at speed. Accordingly, another trip was planned once we had the radiator repaired. Thanks to Grant for chasing the repair; the repairs were effected in the last week of August.

So with in excess of 3000kms travelled by myself and Grant and a cost in excess of \$600 for parts and many hours spent by Grant and myself the utility was back and fully operational. All up the cost of repairs was in excess \$1500 to YFRWPA.



Photograph 3 - Our club utility after extensive repairs.

This is just not good enough at any level. We have several options open to us as a Management Committee. For example, it may mean the utility will not be able to be accessed without direct permission from the committee with the keys being locked up. This is not desirable.

I again remind all members that the utility is only to be used for Committee authorised projects and work. It is not there to be used as a substitute for your own vehicle. This incident has required a substantial repair and effort to source parts.

The membership authorised the purchase of a machine and a tipper trailer some time ago. We finally purchased a machine 2024 but not a tipper trailer, as we did not have the finances to do so.

Earlier this year the Committee was advised of a possible generous donation to the organisation of \$10,000. This donation, however, came with conditions. That is, that the money be put toward the purchase of a truck. The donor wished to remain unnamed. With this in mind we started looking for a suitable truck. Eventually, with the donation plus the expected purchase price of a trailer (\$17 to \$18,000,) we were able to purchase a light truck. This acquisition will enable us to undertake far more than what would have been possible with a trailer.



Photograph 4 - The light truck that was recently purchased.

It should be noted that the truck is not to replace the utility. Down the track when finances permit, we will be looking for a suitable replacement for the utility.

A couple of final notes on membership. If you are considering selling your membership please contact Membership Officer, Katrina, or our Secretary, Jim. We do have an active waiting list, therefore, we really do need more active members.

With regard to your membership, do you have a succession plan in place with your membership? For example, both my membership and Jacquie will be going to our adult children eventually, and then onto our grandchildren as they are all active in helping out with projects on the Bunkers Conservation Reserve. Indeed, they share our passion for the Reserve.

For our existing members, most of the activities are listed on the calendar in the members area on the YFRWPA website. Please get involved. We have an active group of approximately 30 members out of 100. This is somewhat poor. The work load falls constantly on the same dedicated people and we do need extra members to help.

But it's not all work. Some of members are also listing 'recreation' as a reason for visiting. This is obviously a good reason to visit.

We have several policies that determine several things, in particular, with the use of your membership key. For example, camping at the Bunkers along with taking friends to the Reserve. Taking friends to the Bunkers is encouraged but there are conditions. Today, like most things these days, it is a user-pays. If your friends want to go around the Caernarvon Track they need to pay the standard track fee of \$70 and complete a Conditions of Entry Form (the form is essential for friends). Further, friends when camping or using the rooms at the Bunkers are required to pay camping fees as per Policy YF-PI-01.

Maintenance and Construction

We constantly find, upon arrival at camp, that the camp, bore water tank is close to empty. And with the lack of wind this year, the tank at Pinnacle Bore is more often than not, not full. We have written instructions and, indeed, videos on how to operate the Diesel Pump at Pinnacle Bore. The job of pumping water to the camp tank, and how to operate the windmill at Pinnacle Bore, is not rocket science. The instructions can be followed by my grandchildren!

We have found a couple of toilets were left running. This was not reported by anyone. Accordingly, this depleted water in the camp,

bore water tank. Please ensure that, when using the facilities, the water is not running on in the amenities, especially the toilets after being flushed.

With respect to turning power and water on and off at camp, there are simple, printed instructions and videos on how to undertake these jobs upon arrival and departure at camp. This ensures that both water and power is turned off properly upon departure.

At the beginning of May, a 22700 litre rain water tank was installed to the rear of the shed. This will secure a large amount of rain water for the camp and other requirements.



Photograph 5 - Volunteer members transporting the rain water tank to the Bunkers.

Preparation for the tank required the construction of a large earth pad for the tank to sit on. The tank was then carefully placed in position and plumbed to the shed catchment.



Photograph 6 - Rain water tank in place next to the shed.

Finally, a water pipe was run to the front of the shed to act as a stand pipe. This was a huge job undertaken with the efforts of Grant D, James K, Bob T, Brandon S, and a group of Volunteers from the Copper Triangle.



Photograph 7 - Standpipe from the rain water tank at the side of the shed.

A substantial amount of extra river rubble has been brought up to the camp ground. This has helped complete the existing camp sites. It has now been spread out. Without the machine, which we purchased last year, none of this work would have been possible. We were able to move a large amount of dirt to build the pad for the tank, but we had to hire a tip truck to transport the dirt; the truck was invaluable to enable this work.

The truck that has been purchased will enable us to undertake work like this without having to hire one in the future. We already have a small list of jobs that will be undertaken with the truck and it has now been delivered to the Bunkers.



Photograph 8 - This image shows the removal of the previous steps and installation of the barrier fence. In the background are additional plantings by our volunteers.

Where the old steps used to go down to the camp kitchen at the southern end of Davey Hut those steps were removed due to being eaten out by white ants. The area has been tidied up. The hitching, rail barrier has been extended to protect people from the drop off.

If you have been to the Bunkers in recent times, you would have seen some significant plantings of trees and bushes. This is due to the work by Brandon Sumner and Grant Davey in collecting seed on the Bunkers then propagating the seeds at home into seedlings, all this at large expense to themselves. They planted the trees and shrubs on site and undertook watering on site. I will provide more info on this in my AGM report.

Kym Groves (President)

Vice President's Report

Since our last Newsletter in May 2025, no Hazard or Incident Reports were filed.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, all WHS documents were reviewed and updated.



Image 2 – A sample image of our camp ground telephone

Early in the year, an issue cropped up regarding usage of the **telephone at Davey Hut**. The Telephone system used at Davey Hut is provided by Active8 using the Sky Muster NBN system via satellite communications and comprises of a NBN router and a voice over internet protocol telephone.

The plan allocation is 1.25GB Peak and 11.25GB Off Peak per month which is generally adequate for normal day to day business and usage, however on several occasions the limit has been reached in just a couple of days after receiving a new month of data allowance. When this happens and the system is slowed, the telephone becomes basically useless and will constantly

drop out and conversations become unintelligible.

All data usage is monitored and included in the monthly invoice, so the committee is aware of the date and time of its consumption. As a result the committee must stress that internet usage at Davey Hut be limited to emergency communications and Caernarvon Track business only when members and friends visit for recreational purposes.

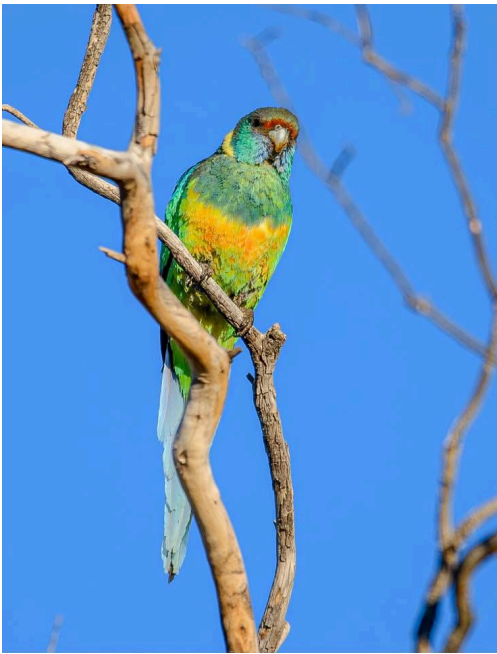
Mobile phones and devices should have automatic updating disabled and be turned off while not in use to ensure that no unintentional downloading occurs.

Having said that there could be some allowance for checking emails and messages provided there are no large downloads, but uploading images to social media, surfing the net and watching YouTube video's deplete data very quickly and must be avoided.

In an emergency or if communicating is necessary, the telephone is the best option, however, it also consumes data. Local and national calls are free, but calls to mobile numbers incur a cost of 38c per minute. If it's necessary to call a mobile number ask the other person to call you back as incoming calls incur no fee.

For more information on Internet and Telephone Usage at the Bunkers Campground, please visit the yellowfoot.org member's area under "Policies".

Better rainfall during 2025 has resulted in a broader coverage of greenery across the BCR. This development has benefitted our native flora and fauna. Yellow-foot numbers continue to increase. Associated with this was an increase in browsing goat numbers. Over 250 goats were dispatched during the year – some by the annual aerial shoot, the rest from ground efforts by members. Livestock incursions from pastoral properties were evident, however, regular mustering activities (two involving the use of an aeroplane) has seen their removal.



**Photograph 9 – Native parrot
(acknowledgement Randy Reid)**

Increased, vegetation growth becomes a topic of interest with the forthcoming fire danger season. The BCR is reasonably well placed with fire fighting resources located round the Reserve. If members or visitors do go up to the Reserve over the warmer months then they should familiarise themselves with the document entitled, *Bushfire Readiness at Davy Hut Campground*.

Importantly, campers must remember that Davey Hut has been designated as a safe refuge should a bushfire suddenly threaten the campground.



Photograph 10 - Firefighting trailer hooked up to the new truck.



**Photograph 11 – Native finches
(acknowledgement Randy Reid)**

YFRWPA is now in its 25th year of existence. In early 2026, I hope to apply for recognition with the Conversation Council of South Australia. The BCR has come a long way in the preservation of its unique flora and fauna. Hopefully, this initiative from members and friends will receive the recognition it deserves.

Shane Fantinel (Vice President)

Conservation

Yellow Footed Rock Wallabies on the BCR

In 2015, Lethbridge *et al.* provided a report to the then Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

This report focused on browsing on the Bunkers Conservation Reserve and included some walking transects searching for yellow footed rock wallaby presence.



Photograph 12 – a local resident, Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby (acknowledgement Randy Reid)

At that time, seven sites were searched for yellow footed rock wallabies. All of these sites showed signs of the species being present, with Pristine Gorge having 30 animals sighted. At each of Minitinni Springs, Love's Mine and a site near Moxam's Hut only one yellow footed rock wallaby was seen.

It has been noted that the common driver of rock wallaby presence in the Flinders Ranges is the abundance of food resources. Each of the survey sites examined by Lethbridge *et al.* showed high levels of resources, and included known food plants such as *Ptilotus obovatus* (Cotton bush – Figure 1)



Figure 1 *Ptilotus obovatus* (Observation © steph7109 · [some rights reserved](#))

and *Sida petrophila* (Rock sida – Figure 2).



Figure 2 *Sida petrophila* (Observation © David Spencer Muirhead · [some rights reserved](#))

In September 2025, four of the seven sites searched for yellow footed rock wallabies in 2015 were reassessed for yellow footed rock wallaby occupancy (Figure 3).

At all 4 sites, (site 3 in Figure 1 includes 2 search areas – Minitinni Creek and Pristine Gorge) Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies were sighted. The Pristine Gorge transect recorded 30 animals. The three other sites all showed an increase in number yellow footed rock wallaby (Table 1).

Pristine Gorge occupancy appears to be stable, with consistent numbers of around 30 being recorded over an 11-year time span.

More pleasingly, the other sites appear to have increased numbers of animals. This would suggest that colonies are present, rather than just animals passing through. This supports the anecdotal evidence that Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies are not only dispersing across the Bunkers Conservation Reserve but are establishing colonies at sites that may have previously only supported transient animals.

The recent reassessment is a solid review of what's happening with Yellow -footed Rock Wallabies on the Bunkers Conservation Reserve. This current work also provides known transects/sites for reviews over time.

These findings are good news. We have had some severe droughts and incursions of both feral goats and domestic sheep over these years. Yet Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies are not only still present at previously identified sites but, based on anecdotal and ground survey evidence, appear to be on the increase.

Site	Yellow footed rock wallaby sighted 2015	Yellow footed rock wallaby sighted 2025
Minitinni Springs	0	6
Pristine Gorge	30	30
Loves Mine	1	6
Near Moxan's Hut	1	5

Table 1 - Indication of Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby occupancy at sites searched in 2015 and 2025.

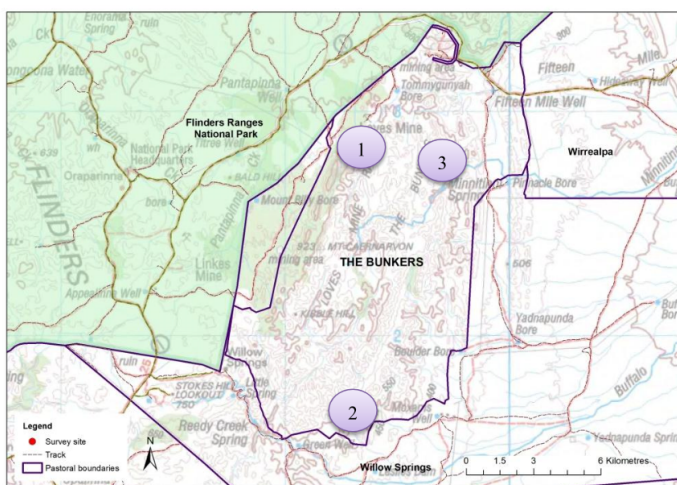


Figure 3 Areas revisited in 2025 based on the original map presented by Lethbridge et al. (2015)

Acknowledgments:

Thanks to the volunteers who undertook the walking transects – Peter and Judy Knapp, Peter Baker, Marcus Agaciak, Ian Lochert, Brendan and Deb Jones, Mark Petrusma.

Reference: Lethbridge, M., Andrews, L. and Stead, M. 2015. *The Bunkers Conservation Park Goat Browse Assessment, June 2015. Report to the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.*

Straight From the Field! – Environmental Portfolio Update

Some outstanding news about our *Short-tailed Grasswrens* straight from the field.

Our wonderful members, David Pearce and Renate Faast, conducted a survey for Short-tailed Grasswrens between 18th – 24th September 2025 at the Bunkers Conservation Reserve (BCR).

They saw, recorded and photo'd a Short-tailed Grasswren!



Photograph 13 – Short-tailed Grasswren
(<https://ebird.org/species/shtgra1>)

Their survey was professionally conducted and well documented. We are lucky to have them as members.

What they have done is:

- confirmed that Short-tailed Grasswrens are still present on the Bunkers Conservation Reserve, relatively close and south of their sighting in 2024;
- The bird was recorded in similar habitat, similar weather conditions and similar time of day to the 2024 sighting.

David and Renate believe that the birds show a preference to spinifex communities with a reasonable amount of shrub cover. They have recommended that we target sites with similar habitat characteristics when employing future acoustic recorders.

Definitely a recommendation to take on board.

Thanks to you both for all that hard work.

Weed spraying and wild dog baiting

Weed spraying and wild dog baiting dates have been set for next year.

For those interested in attending, please let me know (jeanine@yellowfoot.org).

The dates are in the yearly program and are: 15-22nd May 2026 and the 4-11th September 2026.

Jeanine Baker (Conservation Group)

Walking Tracks Approved

The committee have approved the marking of two walking tracks on the Bunkers Reserve.



Photograph 14 – Metal trail marker used on the Heysen Trail
(<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/heysen-trail-sign.html?sortBy=relevant>).

These are not public tracks and will only be for members and visitors on the Reserve to use, as safely defined return tracks.

The tracks will have minimal impact and as such will not be constructed but simply have clearly visible markers for walkers to follow.

Minnitinni Creek

This has previously been marked and in places there is a defined single track which we will re-establish.

Pristine Gorge

This is a branch creek that runs intersects with Minnitinni Creek and the walk will simply follow the creek line.

Call to Action

If you, your family, or friends have experience in establishing, designing, documenting or installation of walking tracks we'd love to hear from you. Within twelve months we anticipate several weekend working bees to install the markers and trail head signage.

We'd love to hear from you. Please contact me at philip@yellowfoot.org or 0406 321 655.

Member Contribution: The Bunkers Conservation Reserve – Our Story

It all started, in 1993, when Willow Springs Pastoral Station invited SSAA SA CWMSA Inc. (then SSAA SA H&C Inc. under Gil Hartwig's leadership) to carry out a feral goat cull on its property.

During this activity, a couple of shooters crossed the Cleft and descended down into Minnitinni springs from the north. Amongst the watering sheep, they also spotted their first sighting of the unusually, coloured Wallabies.

This sighting was reported to the Reynolds family who commented that these were Yellow-footed Rock Wallabies. The family reported that their grandfather had recalled them being numerous in the past.

Thus, the idea of a conservation project by SSAA was soon born. Unfortunately, the price of the "Bunkers Block", and associated costs, was in the order of \$250,000. As such, the project was temporarily shelved while options were investigated.

A survey of members indicated that about 70 would commit to the formation of a conservation group. A membership in the order of 100 at \$1,000 was feasible with temporary funding of 30 memberships (\$30,000) provided by SSAA SA Conservation and Wildlife Management Inc. (C&WM Inc.), who also

donated \$3,000 for the creation of an independent project management group – the Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby Preservation Association Inc. (YFRWPA Inc.).

And so, on 4th October 2001 our organisation came into being. Gil received a plaque from the Federal Minister of the Environment, Hon Robert Hill.



Photograph 15 – Gil receiving the YFRWPA Establishment Plaque from the Federal Minister for the Environment Hon Robert Hill on 4th October 2001.

Conservation-minded supporters advised that the Bunkers Block could qualify for inclusion in the National Reserve Scheme (NRS), and may receive a 2:1 funding assistance from the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT).

I made two applications for this funding assistance (copies available), on behalf of YFRWPA Inc. resulting in funding of up to \$156,000.

Such funding comes with conditions as detailed in our Financial Agreement and Associated Encumbrances - some of which are as follows:

7.5.1 If the Organisation ceases to continue managing the Land to the standard specified in this Agreement prior to the end of 999 years from the date of signing this Agreement the Organisation shall be liable to repay to the Commonwealth the Funds. The Commonwealth may by notice in writing to the Organisation, instead of repaying the Funds, require the Organisation to transfer the Land to another association or body which is an Appropriate Environmental

Organisation which must enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth in substantially the same terms and conditions as those contained in this agreement in which that other body agrees, inter alia, to use the land for the same purpose and implement the approved Plan of Management.

8.2 The Organisation

agrees/acknowledges that the land is to be managed in perpetuity in accordance with the following general principles for the management of protected areas:

- preserve and protect the land in its natural condition as part of the National Reserve System**
- preserve and protect indigenous flora and fauna and habitats.**

The Financial Agreement also stipulates:

- that it is to be a private protected area for nature conservation, with limited public access and recreation activities,**
- a schedule reviewed (Commonwealth) Department of Environment agreed Plan of Management,**
- a reviewed and agreed Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding with DEW.**

Compliance with the Financial Agreement conditions is critical, as is compliance with the laws of South Australia.

As we are an Incorporated Association – ensuring compliance is substantially the responsibility of the Committee.

Every prospective and existing YFRWPA Inc. member should also be aware of the Financial Agreement specified conditions so as to have realistic expectations of YFRWPA membership and activities in the BCR.

Kaz Herbst OAM – member.

Yellow-Footed Rock Wallaby Preservation Association

Annual General Meeting 2025



On the back of the success of the 2024 AGM, we will continue to create an opportunity for members and supporters to gather in a more relaxed environment and catch-up to share stories.

The AGM will be held on a Sunday afternoon, 26th October 2025

Please extend this invitation to any supporters who have helped the association over the year.

To ensure we have a shorter and effective AGM, we please ask members to read the committee reports prior to the meeting, which will be sent out by the Secretary.

We hope you can join us.

Catering

Free sausage sizzle

BYO drinks, additional food

Coffee and tea provided

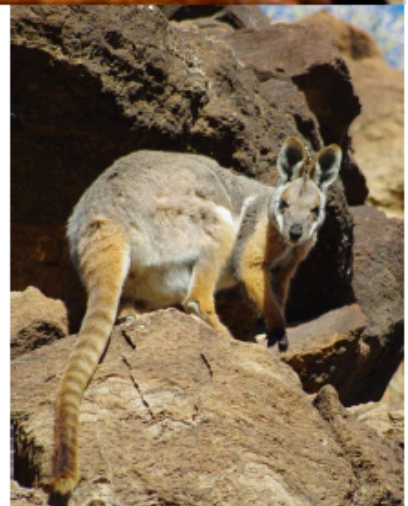
Soft drinks will be for sale

(along with raffle tickets)



Program

12:00 – 1:00pm	–	Sausage sizzle
1:00 – 3:00pm	–	AGM
30 mins	–	Quiz – during counting of the votes
3:00 – 3:30pm	–	Raffle draw



Location

Fullarton Park Community Centre

In the 'Lounge Dining & Kitchen'

*(South/West corner of the building
side access on the southern side)*

411 Fullarton Road, FULLARTON

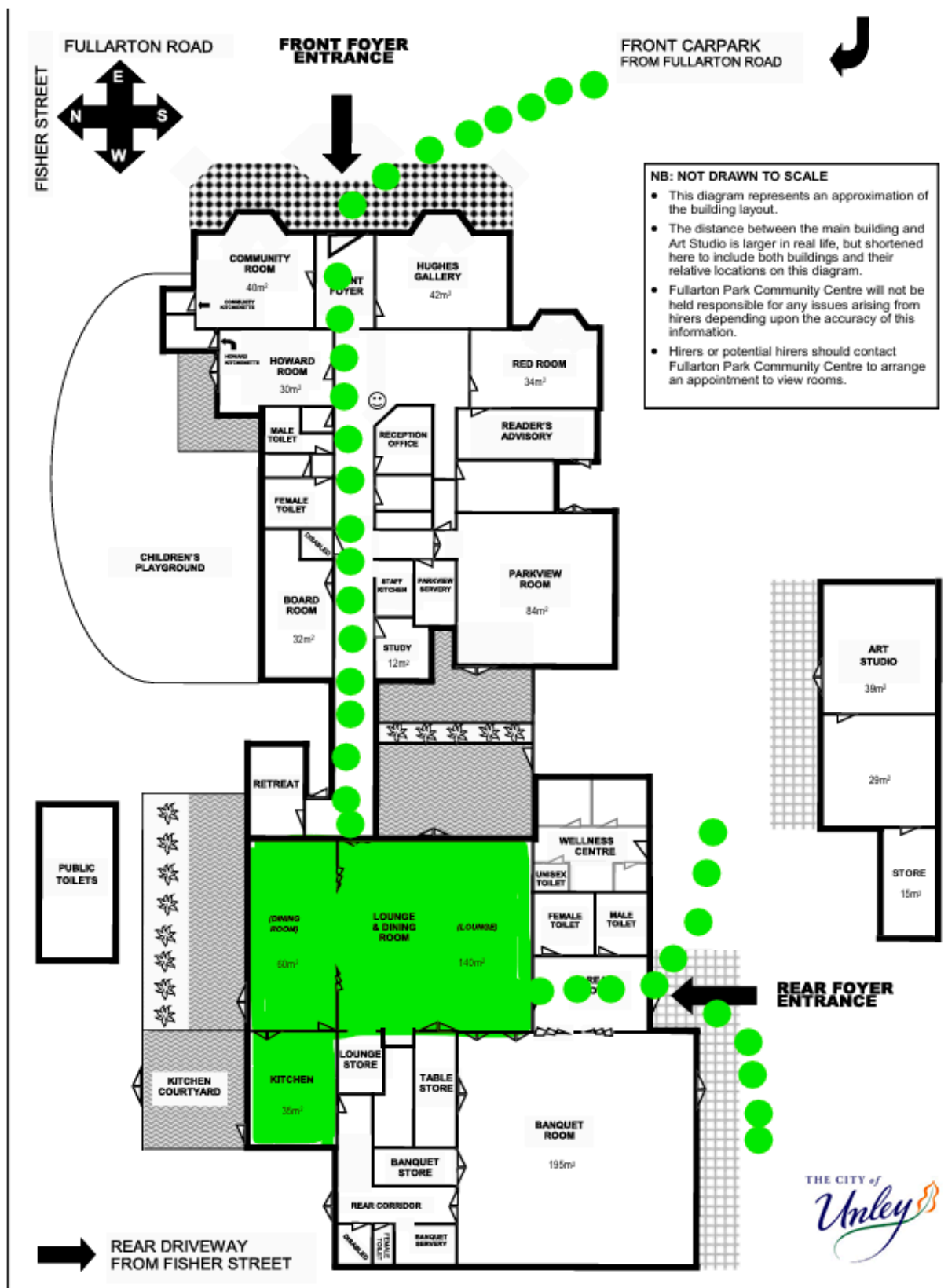
Easy parking in the grounds
or nearby street parking

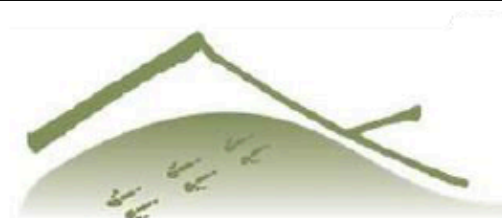


Yellow-Footed Rock Wallaby Preservation Association
Annual General Meeting 2025



Fullarton Park Community Centre





Mission Statement

The Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby Preservation Association exists to ensure the long-term survival of the Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby and the protection of its unique habitat within the Bunkers Conservation Reserve.

- **Conservation Commitment:** We are dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural habitat of our flagship species, the Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby, ensuring a sustainable future for the species and other threatened species.
- **Scientific Research:** We support and conduct research to understand the behaviour and ecological challenges that threaten flora, fauna, and unique geological formations, using data to implement informed conservation management strategies.
- **Collaboration:** We collaborate with government agencies, researchers, traditional owners, and like-minded organisations to maximise conservation outcomes.
- **Custodianship:** We recognise our role as custodians of the Bunkers Conservation Reserve and honour the traditional landowners, the Adnyamathanha people.
- **Public Access:** We promote responsible public access that fosters education and environmental appreciation while maintaining ecological integrity.
- **Member Benefits:** We engage and empower our members as active stewards of the land and in the management of a critical conservation area that protects indigenous flora, fauna, and habitats.