Henry Lawson Football Club – AGM 2025

When: Thursday 6th November 2025

Location: The Henry Sports – Auditorium

In Attendance: Amanda Shepherd (President), Aaron Shepherd (Sponsorship), Brendan Rae (Comp Sec), Nicole Ellison (Secretary), Dale Stokes (General), Susan Stokes (Canteen 2ic), Leah Gilliver (Junior Vice), Hope Seabrook (General), Bronwyn Burnell (Canteen), Greg Nielsen (Treasurer), Matt Scotton (General), All other members signed in on Attendance Roll (Checked againsted Registration sheets)

Absent: Dee Tushuizen (Registrar), Mitch Cannon (Senior Vice), Mishelle Gray (General)

Opened: 7:10pm / **Closed:** 8:22pm

Minutes

- Amanda welcomed Steve Martin (HLFC Life Member) to RO the AGM
- Nat's report from AGM in 2024 read out, copies of AGM handed out through the room for all to view & read
- Acceptance of 2024 minutes, passed by Bronwyn Burnell, Second by Amanda Shepherd
- Dee & Mitch will not be returning in their positions next season

President Report – Amanda Shepherd

This was my first season as President, and I made it my goal to bring the club back to being the family-friendly, community-oriented club that Henry Lawson should have

been known for, while also getting to know as many of you as possible. Whether it was catching up on the sidelines, chatting during training, answering your messages, or helping out with more personal matters, I've tried to be an ear, a shoulder for everyone, in the good moments, the tough ones, and everything in between.

My hope is that each of you have felt supported and heard this year, because that's what being part of the Henry Lawson family is all about. As we wrap up the 2025 season, I want to take a moment to reflect on a year filled with growth, resilience, and genuine community spirit, both on and off the field. Our Community This year, Henry Lawson showed once again what being a community club is all about.

We hosted some incredible events that brought people together, celebrated our players, and gave back to the wider community.

- Our Sonic Movie Night was a huge success, giving families and kids a fun night out under the stars.

- We proudly supported the Playing in Purple campaign for PanKind, raising awareness and funds for pancreatic cancer research.

- We also proudly aligned with WestCare, strengthening our ties to local support networks and showing that Henry Lawson stands for care, connection, and inclusion.

Our Gala events were a highlight of the year, celebrating our players and volunteers, and when other clubs had to cancel due to bad weather, we were proud to host games that would have otherwise been washed out. That's the Henry Lawson way, always stepping up and helping where we can. This year also showed how strong our community spirit truly is. Over the Anzac Day long weekend, after our only real graffiti issue at the clubhouse, our local community immediately banded together, offering to come down and help clean up, knowing council might not be there in time. That simple act of support summed up what this club means to people.

We also supported each other through more difficult times, particularly during the tragic circumstances involving the discovery of a body near the fields. The care, respect, and compassion shown by our members and families during that period was remarkable and deeply appreciated.

Every weekend, we had non-committee helpers turning up to assist with setup, game management, and pack down, cooking on BBQ's or helping in the canteen - showing their commitment without ever needing to be asked. Your continued help has not gone unnoticed and truly makes a difference.

Our Cadet Referee Program also deserves recognition. In hosting this program for our region, we seen just under 100 cadets brave the cold night to have fun and learn, almost 3 times more then any other hosted cadet program.

A handful of our own young legends continued their training and stepped up to help officiate games each week, learning, leading, and showing great maturity. They represented the future of this club with pride.

Moments like these remind us that Henry Lawson is built on more than football. It's about people, community, and the willingness to look out for one another. Facility Improvements and Club Development

This year, we focused on making real improvements to our grounds and facilities so our players and families have the best possible environment.

We installed new goals on every field except our two full-sized fields, modernising our setup and improving both training and game experiences.

We also made big strides in upgrading our canteen facilities by introducing the Square point-of-sale system. This has allowed us to better track ingoing and outgoing products, making stock management much more efficient. We also introduced an updated EFTPOS machine and a portable unit, opening up a new level of flexibility for sales. Most importantly, it has created an online sales portal, helping us reach supporters and members even during bad weather or when games aren't played at home.

Behind the scenes, the committee worked together to introduce new procedures and policies aimed at strengthening how we operate as a club. While there were a few teething issues and a couple of ups and downs along the way, for the most part everything has worked out for the best and added true value to the future of Henry Lawson Football Club.

We also strengthened support for our coaches and team managers, ensuring they have the resources and confidence to keep developing players and upholding our strong club culture. In addition to the Coaches and Managers Seminar held at the start of the season, we introduced a group WhatsApp chat, which, while a bit noisy at times, became a great networking tool. It allowed everyone who opted in to ask for advice, seek help, and share guidance, creating a real sense of teamwork across all age groups.

This year, we also hosted a combined First Aid Course for our coaches, managers, trainers, cadet referees, and committee members, helping to build confidence and ensuring that anyone first on the scene in the event of an injury is well-prepared and supported.

Another standout achievement was inducting local kids as park rangers. Giving young people a sense of pride and ownership in their club has made a real impact, leading to a huge decline in vandalism and misuse of our facilities. It is proof that when the community works together, great things happen.

Council Works and Future Improvements

I'd also like to share some important updates from Penrith City Council about improvements to our grounds.

• Southern Field Repair and Remediation: Sprigging of the southern field next to the community centre is planned for the offseason. The City Presentation team will confirm timing once finalised.

• Irrigation System Repairs: While the irrigation system is operational, a few stations on the northern field will be reinstalled to improve turf health and water coverage.

• Safety Measures: Council reviewed the request for blue lighting in amenities. Based on expert advice, this would not effectively reduce activity, but they will continue to monitor the area. The club is encouraged to report any concerns through the MyPenrith portal, and a safe disposal location for syringes has been provided nearby.

• All lights have now been fixed, repointed and are ready for use

• Upgrading the fencing around the mod fields is at the club's discretion. Council have approved this upgrade but will not pay for it.

We are grateful for the council's ongoing support and will continue advocating for upgrades that make our club safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

Celebrating Our Club Events

Our Junior Presentation might not have been the big end-of-season celebration we had hoped for, but it was still a meaningful day for our young players and their families. While other clubs chose to go against council recommendations, I simply couldn't take that risk with our children's safety by having rides on wet ground.

Even so, the day was as great as it could be given the circumstances, and it reminded us that it's not the rides or the weather that make a celebration, it's our people. Maybe for 2026, our end-of-season event should be well outside the "wet zone"!

Our Senior Presentation and Sponsors Thank You Night was a real highlight of the year. We celebrated in style with a full buffet dinner, entertainment from Australian ventriloquist Darren Carr, and a night full of laughter, appreciation, and connection. It was wonderful to see our senior players, volunteers, and sponsors all in one room, recognising the commitment and support that make this club so strong. Our senior players truly deserve the same recognition and celebration that our juniors receive, and I hope next year's event will be even bigger and better.

To finish off the year, the final event for the 2025 Committee will be the Werrington Twilight Christmas Fair on Friday, December 12th, from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm. This is another chance for our local community to come together, with Christmas carols, activities for the kids, food vendors galore, inflatables, a visit from Santa, and so much

more. It's a wonderful way to end the year surrounded by the people who make this community so special.

Our Valued Sponsors and Supporters

A huge thank you to our incredible 2025 sponsors and supporters who have been by our side throughout the 2025 Season.

Sponsors:

• Ray White United

• Fat Boys Quality Cuts

• Sports In Focus Photography

• The Henry Sports Club

Major Sponsors:

• Big Swing Golf Penrith

• Drummond Golf Penrith

• Markwater Plumbing

And our loyal supporters who continue to back us year after year:

• Brewed Besties

• I Print Group

• WestCare

• Sinalli

Your generosity, belief, and ongoing support help us grow and give our players and families the best possible club experience.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Looking ahead, we have some exciting goals and projects planned for the 2026 season.

• Upgraded fencing around the Mod Fields to improve safety and organisation on game days.

• More opportunities for sponsorship and advertising to help strengthen our financial stability and continue improving our facilities.

• Continued collaboration with council on ground and irrigation improvements.

• And most importantly, continuing to grow as a family-focused, community orientated club that welcomes everyone.

Henry Lawson has always been a place where people connect, make friends, and feel part of something bigger. That sense of belonging is what makes us strong.

Before I finish, I just want to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this season possible. Especially my husband and kiddies, who are there every weekend from start to finish, helping the club and supporting my vision for what I wanted it to be.

We've achieved so much together in 2025, and with the same passion and teamwork, I know 2026 will be even better.

Thank you all for being part of this incredible club.

I'll now hand over to our Executive Committee, who will share a bit about their roles and some of their experiences throughout the season.

Vice President's Annual Report – Leah Gilliver

It has been a wonderful year for the Henry Lawson Football Club, and I'm proud to share some of our highlights and achievements from the season.

This year we saw fantastic community spirit both on and off the field. Our movie night was a great success, bringing players, families, and friends together for an enjoyable evening that showcased the strong sense of connection within our club. We also had the pleasure of hosting a girls gala day, which was a real highlight — celebrating the growth of female participation in football and providing an exciting day of competition and camaraderie.

Throughout the season, we were fortunate to have great weather, which made for excellent football conditions and plenty of fun-filled weekends. Unfortunately, the junior presentation couldn't go ahead as planned due to unexpected weather changes, but that didn't dampen the spirits — the day was still a huge success with plenty of smiles, laughter, and celebration of our young players' achievements.

This year we also proudly supported PanKind's Play in Purple campaign, raising close to $3000 for pancreatic cancer research. It was inspiring to see so many players and teams get involved, proudly wearing their purple socks and showing that our club is not only about football, but also about making a positive impact in the wider community.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers, coaches, managers, players, and families who continue to make Henry Lawson Football Club such a strong and supportive community. Your time, energy, and passion are what make this club thrive.

I look forward to another exciting season next year.

Treasurer's Report – Greg Nielsen

The club made a $850 loss this season, leaving $121,645 in nett assets. This is quite acceptable for a not-for-profit organisation of our size. Both income and expenses were in the order of $150,000+ so the bottom line figure is about 0.6% of this. Given the significant loss we made last year, the most pleasing outcome was that the things that made up these losses were largely addressed in the 2025 season.

I can only comment on the accounts since 2017, when I became treasurer. This year the canteen made much more than it ever has before, likely due to good weather, hard work and the Bunnings ventures. Also, sponsorship was the highest it's ever been.

We spent much more on equipment this season than normal; about $10,000 more. That included replacement of all the junior goals, new barbeque, bain-marie, Square terminal, tents and canteen furniture.

Registration fees increased about 10% nearly all of which was used to fund the training shirts.

Without the chocolate drive, we made much less on fund raising even if it didn't seem like it because of all the activities on show. Those activities included the movie night (funded by Penrith Council), Panthers box seats, first aid course (also funded by Penrith Council), shoosh banners, well-being week, Christmas in July and Pankind. They were not intended to raise money; rather to provide entertainment and instruction and mostly broke even. They appear in the accounts as "Special Projects"; a category I have never used before simply because we have never before embarked on such a wide array of projects.

Some of these changes have resulted in less work for the members, at least in the junior teams, namely no chocolates to sell and no goals to put up every week like there used to be. There are also twice as many marked fields, and the goals have been made available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Unfortunately, that comes at the cost of some vandalism which we've had to deal with.

It has been over 6 seasons since things have been reasonably normal. We've had co-vid, floods, multiple changes to registration systems plus the building extension to deal with. This last season has been back to normal in terms of external affects, but anything but normal in terms of new ventures. That's a good thing, but it makes planning a challenge and 2026 will likely be just as interesting.

Competition Secretary Report – Brendan Rae

Although this season may not have ended with any teams bringing home a Grand Final trophy or finishing as outright winners, it was still a year to be proud of for Henry Lawson Football Club. A handful of our teams made it through to semis and finals, playing exciting football and representing the club with passion with both our AAW2s and AAM9 White going down in extra time and penalties respectively. Results aside, the effort, growth, and attitude across the board were something as a club we should be proud of.

One major improvement I oversaw this year was our reduction in match sheet error fines. These decreased significantly, with the majority of fines now coming from red card sanctions rather than admin mistakes. This shows that our coaches and managers are becoming much more confident and consistent with the Dribl system and I believe this was largely aided by our coaches and managers meeting at the start of the year. Moving into 2026 we will continue to build on this and aim to tighten things up even further.

For me, this year was also about building on last year's learning of the Competition Secretary role and improving our own processes for 2025. I've also worked to blend my professional background in the youth and community sector into the operation of a football club and seeking additional opportunities for both our members and the wider community.

As part of this process, I wrote and secured a $2,500 community grant to provide 20 people (coaches, managers, and committee members) with accredited First Aid training. I also secured another $2,500 grant to run our Outdoor Movie Night which we delivered back in May.

In addition, I have brought in two further grants totalling $3,500 to run a Christmas Fair later in the year and a Colour Run in the lead up to next season. These events not only build club culture but also strengthen our presence in the local community.

Overall, it has been a productive and positive year in the role, and I look forward to continuing to improve systems, support our volunteers, and build on our growing momentum in 2025.

Secretary Report – Nicole Ellison

Good Evening Henry Lawson Community,

For those who don't know me, my name is Nicole Ellison, and I've had the privilege of serving as your Club Secretary for the 2025 season.

My family has been part of the HLFC family for seven years now. I first started out as just a parent on the sidelines, then went on to manage my eldest son's team for several years, helped out wherever I could, and this season took on the role of Secretary for the first time.

When we first joined, we were welcomed and shown what a true family club Henry Lawson is — and I hope that spirit continues for many years to come.

This season has been a huge learning experience for me. I've learnt a lot, and I'm sure there's still plenty more to learn. I've really enjoyed meeting and getting to know so many families within our community, especially those I've had the chance to chat with at the canteen on game days.

At the start of the year, the committee set out a plan for the season. While we may not have achieved everything we hoped for, we've continued to grow — learning more about organising, planning, and executing — all while ensuring our club remains a welcoming, family-focused space within our community.

This season we also had the honour of welcoming a new Life Member to HLFC. I had the privilege of meeting several of our existing Life Members throughout the year and look forward to learning more from you all about the rich history of our club.

The weather wasn't always on our side, but one of my personal highlights this year was a weekend of very questionable conditions. Despite that, we managed to go ahead with only one field closed for safety reasons. Seeing so many members of our community step in to help — even siblings not old enough to play yet — moving flags and lending a hand wherever needed — truly reflected the community spirit that makes HLFC special.

I want to thank everyone who has dedicated their time this season — from those cheering on the sidelines, getting kids to and from training, and supporting other parents who can't be in two places at once, to our incredible coaches, trainers, and managers. Most of all, thank you for showing respect, commitment, and support throughout the season.

To my fellow committee members — thank you for your countless hours of dedication both behind the scenes and on game days. There's so much that happens that our wider community doesn't see, and your hard work does not go unnoticed.

Prior to the close of nominations on 30 October 2025, which marked the final day for written submissions for the 2026 HLFC Committee, two nominations were received — one handed in person and the other submitted via email. These nominations are for the positions of President and Registrar. Both nominations have been properly seconded and will be presented once all positions are officially declared open.

As we officially wrap up the 2025 season, I again want to say thank you. To those who the community chooses to lead Henry Lawson into 2026, I wish you every success — and I have no doubt you'll continue to make HLFC proud.

Senior Vice President Report – Mitch Cannon (Read by Amanda Shepherd)

After accepting the role of senior VP I was privileged to take on a challenge that allowed me to see the inner workings of the day to day operations of a football club.

Seeing what it takes to keep the club running, successful and with the vision of the committee what it takes to grow and evolve.

Being able to be apart of that and adding my own efforts and ideas has been a fantastic experience. However due to work and life commitments I will unable to continue in this role

Registrar Report – Dee Tushuizen (Read by Amanda Shepherd)

This year we had enough registrations to create 30 teams this year 5x senior teams, 4 men's and 1 womens, 1x intermediate womens team and 24 junior teams including our first u7 girls team.

This year came with some challenges with members having to go through Play Football to register and to combat this we had some face to face registration days, this was also a great way to put faces to names and amazing to catch up with so many returning families. It was also a wonderful way to welcome new members and families to the club.

Next year registration should be an easier process with Play Football working out all the kinks from this year.

I wasn't going to come back as Registrar this year as it was a big job for me last year with my work. However, I came back as the system changed this year and I thought it would be easier to have someone in the role that already knew how it worked.

I have decided though that I will not be returning to the committee next year due to my work commitments. I will however still see you around the ground as my kids will still continue to play for the HLFC.

Minutes Continued

- Question from Warren Sammut: Did the Government vouchers being decreased this year affect the number of registrations for the club? Answer given by Amanda & Greg: Yes, but HLFC introduced Afterpay which helped gain some registrations, play Football this year were also part of our rego loss for this season.
- Amanda passed the chair to RO: Steve Martin
- Steve Martin thanked 2025 Committee for the thankless job they have done and asked for a round of applause for the Committee
- **27 Registered voters**
- **ALL POSITIONS DECLARED OPEN**

President:

1- Amanda Shepherd nominated by Aaron Shepherd

Second by Brendan Rae

Nomination accepted by Amanda Shepherd

2- Susan Stokes nominated by Tim Sammut

Second by Dale Stokes

Nominated accepted by Susan Stokes

President position appointed to Amanda Shepherd

Senior Vice President

Aaron Shepherd nominated by Amanda Shepherd

Second by Bronwyn Burnell

Nomination accepted by Aaron Shepherd

Senior Vice President appointed to Aaron Shepherd

Junior Vice President

Susan Stokes nominated by Amanda Shepherd

Second by Melinda Tornatore

Nomination accepted by Susan Stokes

Junior Vice President appointed to Susan Stokes

Secretary

Leah Gilliver nominated by Susan Stokes

Second by Bronwyn Burnell

Nomination accepted by Leah Gilliver

Secretary appointed to Leah Gilliver

Treasurer

1- Nicole Ellison nominated by Leah Gilliver

Second by Matt Scotton

Nomination accepted by Nicole Ellison

2- Greg Nielsen nominated by Brendan Rae

Second by Amanda Shepherd

Nomination accepted by Greg Nielsen

Treasurer position appointed to Greg Nielsen

Secretary position Relinquished by Leah Gilliver

Leah Gilliver nominated Nicole Ellison

Second by Bronwyn Burnell

Nomination accepted by Nicole Ellison

Secretary position appointed to Nicole Ellison

Competition Secretary

Brendan Rae nominated by Amanda Sheherd

Second by Leah Gilliver

Nominated accepted by Brendan Rae

Competition Secretary position appointed to Brendan Rae

Registrar

1- Melinda Tornatore nominated by Cristy Curtis

Second by Amanda Shepherd

Nomination accepted by Melinda Tornatore

2- Hope Seabrook nominated by Bronwyn Burnell

Second by Kylie Smith

Nomination accepted by Hope Seabrook

Registrar position appointed to Melinda Tornatore

Coaching Co-Ordinator

Matt Austin nominated by Brendan Rae

Second by Aaron Shepherd

Nomination accepted by Matt Austin

Coaching Co-Ordinator position appointed to Matt Austin

Sponsorship Co-Ordinator

Aaron Shepherd nominated by Amanda Sheoherd

Second by Steve Tornatore

Nomination accepted by Aaron Shepherd

Sponsorship Co-Ordinator position appointed to Aaron Shepherd

Equipment Co-Ordinator

Matt Scotton nominated by Susan Stokes

Second by Aaron Shepherd

Nomination accepted by Matt Scotton

Equipment Co-Ordinator position appointed to Matt Scotton

MPIO

Nicole Ellison nominated by Amanda Shepherd

Second by Greg Nielsen

Nomination accepted by Nicole Ellison

MPIO position appointed to Nicole Ellison

Field Maintenance Co-Ordinator

Tim Sammut nominated by Greg Nielsen

Second by Brendan Rae

Nomination accepted by Tim Sammut

Field Maintenance Co-Ordinator position appointed to Tim Sammut

Public Officer

Greg Nielsen nominated by Brendan Rae

Second by Melinda Tornatore

Nomination accepted by Greg Nielsen

Public Officer position appointed to Greg Nielsen

Fundraising Co-Ordinator

Position TBA

Canteen Co-Ordinator

Susan Stokes nominated by Steve Tornatore

Second by Melinda Tornatore

Nomination accepted by Susan Stokes

Canteen Co-Ordinator position appointed to Susan Stokes

Womens Co-Ordinator position

Samantha Tornatore nominated by Susan Stokes

Second by Melinda Tornatore

Nomination not accepted by Samantha Tornatore

Position TBA

Minutes Continued

- Steve Martin congratulated all Committee for Season 2026 who have accepted their positions, handed over to Amanda Shepherd

- Amanda Shepherd thanked Steve Martin for being RO for HLFC AGM, thankyou everyone who has attended for your support. Committee meeting Monday 10th November, 7pm, at The Henry Sports in Auditorium