Hanging Rock Strategic Advisory Committee
Member biographies

Nathan Alexander
Chairperson

Nathan has skills in management, strategic planning and spatial design. As a university student in 1985, he spent six months preparing a design and management plan for the Hanging Rock Reserve, and in 1986 established the Friends of Hanging Rock to assist in caring for the reserve. For the last few years he has been compiling an archive of historical information about the Rock. Nathan runs an urban design consultancy in Melbourne and lives in Kew with his family.

**Peter Bishop** is a chartered professional engineer and land use planner with current experience in developing future land use plans for government properties in Victoria. He has over 40 years’ experience in the planning, design and construction of major infrastructure projects globally and has worked in both government and private sector roles. Peter and his family have lived in the Macedon Ranges since 1973. He visited Hanging Rock as a child in the 1950s and has been a regular visitor since with his own children and with interstate and international visitors.

Current assignments being undertaken by Peter which are relevant to the Hanging Rock Strategic Advisory Committee are:

* development of risk & opportunity overlays for future land uses on government land in the Werribee region. Subsequent business case development for specific recreational use concepts on land with high ecological values (2013–ongoing).
* management of feasibility study and government funding application for upgrade of joint Parks Victoria/Melbourne Water recreation facilities at Kirk Point, Avalon (2015–ongoing).

**Jon Dight** has served on the Hanging Rock Development Advisory Committee for the last three years and has direct links with the site as Chief Executive Officer of the Kyneton and Hanging Racing Club. He has a Bachelor of Business (Management) majoring in marketing and tourism, and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Physical Education). He has worked for event companies and in small business management, then within the horse racing industry working at both club and industry levels. In partnership, Jon owns and operates a management consulting business that offers management services to several race clubs and venues throughout Victoria.

He believes that this is a great opportunity for the community to come together and develop a plan that will see Hanging Rock achieve and maximise its full potential as an event, tourism and natural conservation destination.

**(Mr) Val Pollard**

While Val’s initial qualifications were in agricultural economics, his professional career has been more broadly-based, focusing on aspects of rural development.

In the final decade of his working career, he was appointed Head of School and Deputy-Dean of the Institute of Land and Food Resources at the University of Melbourne. He was also heavily engaged as leader of project design teams for international rural development projects funded by the Australian Aid Program and the Asian Development Bank.

Now retired, Val and his wife have settled permanently in Woodend, and both wish to give something back to the community that has been so welcoming. Hanging Rock is of particular interest to them because it is an iconic community asset of economic, environmental, historic and cultural value for a wide cross-section of community stakeholders.

**Helen Relph** is a community leader, volunteer and corporate business person.

She moved to Mt. Macedon after purchasing *The Swan and Perch Restaurant* in 1979 (lost in the Ash Wednesday bushfires), raised her family and conducted hospitality and sporting businesses in the Macedon Ranges. Helen has served three terms as a councillor and one term as mayor of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

She is a director of Thorley Enterprises Pty Ltd, vice-president of Macedon Ranges Health (and member of their audit committee), and chairs Tourism Macedon Ranges. She has spent a number of years involved in organising fundraising events for charities, and being on the organising committees for the Mt Macedon Anzac Day Dawn Service and Mt. Macedon and Macedon Carol’s by Candlelight.

Helen has also been involved in many diverse projects and strategic committees such as Vic Roads Calder Highway Improvement Committee, RMIT’s Peri Urban Strategic Planning Group, Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, Macedon Regional Park Advisory Committee and Macedon Ranges Arts Advisory Committee.

**Penelope Roberts**

Details to be provided.

**John Williamson**

John has extensive experience working within the Victorian Government in the areas of Crown land management, land protection, environmental compliance and sustainable development with Parks Victoria, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), and the former Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE).

He has a strong interest in protecting the natural environment and the importance of places such as Hanging Rock in connecting people with nature for their physical and mental wellbeing. John’s interest in Hanging Rock is to ensure the protection of this important asset while providing a great visitor experience that complements and enhances the other natural assets and experiences in the Macedon Ranges.

**Representatives of the Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Traditional Owners are also members of the Advisory Committee.**