

The truth behind Lyndoch's immoral horse race sponsorship



Lyndoch executive members board chair Kerry Nelson and CEO Doreen Power at the presentation of the Grand Annual Steeplechase 2019, sponsored by Lyndoch. Image: [Racing.com/Getty Images](https://www.racing.com.au/getty-images).

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

Let's get straight to it. Lyndoch Living is a registered charity that has no right to spend more than \$150,000* sponsoring Warrnambool's Grand Annual steeplechase.

In fact, this immoral deal between our community-owned aged care home and the Warrnambool Racing Club makes a lie of an important promise made by Lyndoch to us 10 years ago.

Let me explain.

Contrary to [recent reports](#), there is no “commercial arm” of Lyndoch that will provide private money for Lyndoch to sponsor the Grand Annual Steeplechase for another three years, having already sponsored it for three.

The race is being sponsored by Waterfront Living, which are the [up-market retirement apartments](#) built by Lyndoch near the Hopkins River bridge and which first went on sale in 2014.



Lyndoch CEO Doreen Power, third from left, at the 2017 Grand Annual Steeplechase presentation.

Waterfront Living was built by Lyndoch using public money, is still managed by Lyndoch, and remains a full subsidiary of Lyndoch – the board and CEO who look after Lyndoch are also in charge of Waterfront Living.

Waterfront is not some sort of separate, private entity that gets to spend its money wherever it likes. It is a part of Lyndoch, which is a *charity*.

And here comes the crunch.

Why did Lyndoch build these apartments? To make money to put back into Lyndoch.

Former Lyndoch CEO Rhys Boyle, who retired in 2015, made this very promise to the community when the apartments were built.

This is what he said at the time:

“Every cent made by this project will go back into our business to keep it operational.”

Every cent.

And then this:

“This development isn’t about making profit for profit’s sake. Lyndoch as an organisation can’t be benevolent to our residents if we’re not making enough money **to put back into the business.**”

I added the bold type, because I need to shout these words from the page.

We are being duped.

We now have clear proof – from the very top of Lyndoch – that the money coming in to Lyndoch from the apartment sales was never intended to go toward a horse race.

It was to go toward caring for the residents.



Racing sponsorship, or some new “Princess” chairs to replace those worn out, as captured in this image taken by Lyndoch late last year.

There is no possible justification for such a sponsorship deal, especially when Lyndoch [is operating at a loss](#), which it has done for four of the past five years.

Any money from Waterfront – **every cent** – is to go back into Lyndoch so the hard-working staff can provide the best care to residents, including things like new, comfortable chairs, quality food, good coffee and yes, a steady supply of sheets, towels and face-washers.

I, for one, have had enough of the spin and the failure of the board to scrutinise every inch of Lyndoch’s spending on our behalf.

The board, if it needs reminding, is there to represent the community who still own Lyndoch, just as we have for more than

60 years.

The board is our voice and they are letting us down.

If there is one thing about our community, perhaps because we are surrounded by dairy farms, it's that we can smell the scent of bullshite and we know when things are not right.

Sponsoring a horse race with Lyndoch money is not right.



Photos taken inside Lyndoch last year show shortages of linen. The reasons have never been explained publicly, with Lyndoch refusing to comment.

As the ultimate owners of Lyndoch, it is time for the community to speak up on behalf of those who can't, because if we don't, we are letting down our loved ones in Lyndoch and we are letting down *all* of the residents and their families.

You can contact the Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, the Hon Luke Donnellan, here:

luke.donnellan@parliament.vic.gov.au

You can contact the Lyndoch chair, Kerry Nelson, here: knelson@mpower.org.au

And you can contact the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission here: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/raise-concern>

I wish I could say this was the end of the Lyndoch stories, but there is still a long way to go before everything is out on the table.

More soon.

* the cost of the sponsorship has never been declared by Lyndoch, but is believed to be around \$80,000-\$100,000 for each three-year sponsorship.

If you would like to support the Terrier, you can throw something in the tip jar below.

The Tip Jar