

ANNUAL REPORT

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Hiking is for everyone

ABOUT HIKEWEST

HikeWest is a not-for-profit association committed to encouraging the community to participate in safe and responsible bushwalking and to providing services to bushwalking groups, independent hikers and the wider community.

HikeWest advocates in the interests of anyone who bushwalks, hikes or walks in nature in Western Australia.

We also advocate for the conservation and effective management of the natural environment that the hiking community enjoys and values.

In 2023, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) recognised HikeWest as a State Active Recreation Organisation (SARO) and the pre-eminent representative organisation for hiking in Western Australia.

VISION

To see more people hiking in Western Australia more often.

MISSION

To encourage and support more people to pursue health and happiness by hiking in nature.

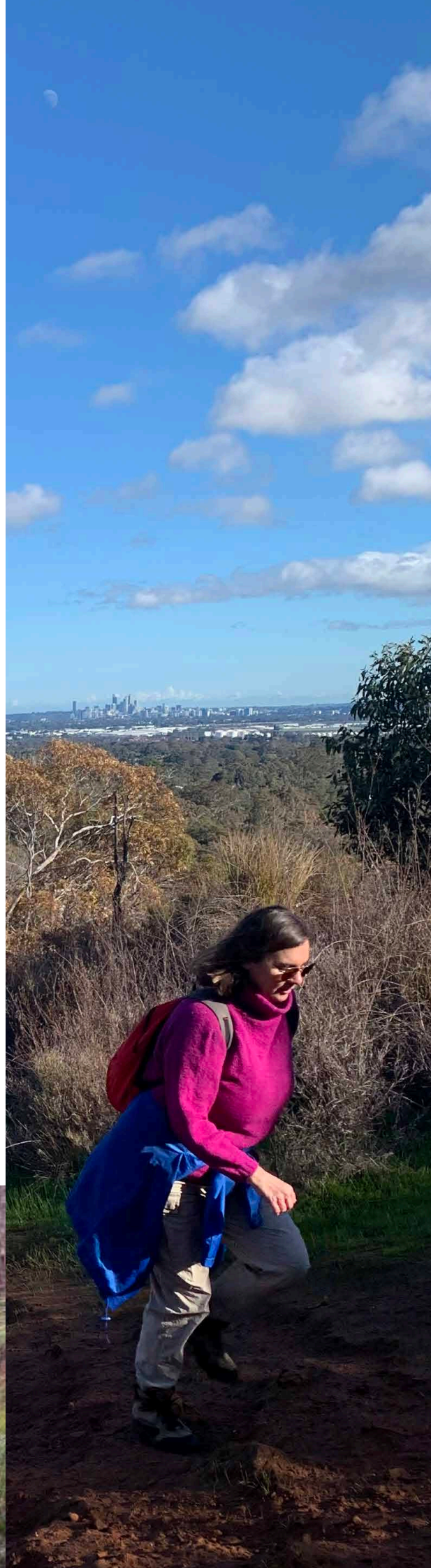
VALUES

- **Health:** We champion health, wellbeing and connection through hiking.
- **Inclusion:** We believe hiking is for everyone.
- **Knowledge:** We are committed to sharing our knowledge about hiking.
- **Environment:** We respect our natural environment.



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



“It has been a significant year of progress for HikeWest.”

On behalf of the HikeWest Board, I'm proud to share that it has been a significant year of progress for HikeWest. Following the State Government's recognition of HikeWest in late 2022 as a State Active Recreation Organisation, HikeWest has benefitted from increased access to organisational funding and project grants.

This recognition has been pivotal for HikeWest, enabling us to allocate more substantial resources throughout 2023–24 to advance hiking opportunities and participation across the state.

During the past year, we have invested in new programs, forged valuable partnerships, and created more inclusive and accessible opportunities for Western Australians to enjoy hiking.

I would like to express my gratitude to my fellow Board members and to our Executive Officer Meelee Soorkia – the initiatives outlined in this Annual Report highlight their dedication to expanding the reach of hiking and enhancing opportunities for all, ensuring that more people can experience the joys of walking in nature.

As you read through the achievements detailed in this report, I am confident that you will share my optimism about the strong foundation we have built. The progress we've made sets the stage for another exciting year ahead, and a bright future for HikeWest as we move into a new phase of organisational maturity.

Kathy Miller
President



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



“HikeWest is committed to making hiking inclusive for all.”

HikeWest has achieved a lot during the past year. In addition to continuing to support our hiking clubs, we launched two new community programs aimed at getting more people out bushwalking. These programs are designed to increase participation, especially among seniors and community groups from culturally diverse backgrounds, fostering a deeper connection to nature, health, and wellbeing through accessible hiking experiences.

These community-focused programs represent a significant step forward in our efforts to promote hiking statewide. We are grateful to have received more than \$70,000 in grants from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to support delivery of the programs.

We have also been looking at ways to encourage hiking participation in regional areas. For example, we have been researching the viability of holding a hiking festival in the Collie area. This research is still underway, though no doubt an event such as this would showcase the region's incredible trails and hiking experiences.

These new initiatives reflect HikeWest's commitment to making hiking more inclusive and accessible for all. We thank everyone who has contributed to the success of these initiatives and look forward to seeing the positive impact they will have in the future.

Meelee Soorkia
Executive Officer



STATE ACTIVE RECREATION ORGANISATION FUNDING

“SARO funding has enabled HikeWest to continue expanding our programs and outreach.”

Since 2022, HikeWest has been recognised by the Western Australian State Government as the pre-eminent representative organisation for hiking and a State Active Recreation Organisation (SARO). This recognition enabled HikeWest to apply for organisational funding under the Industry Investment Program (IIP) administered by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

The 2023–24 financial year marked the second year that HikeWest received

organisational funding of \$50,000, allowing us to continue expanding our programs and outreach.

The 2024–25 financial year will be the final year of funding under the current agreement; however, there is a strong possibility of continued financial support beyond this period. Ongoing support would position us to enhance our impact in the years ahead. HikeWest remains committed to making hiking more accessible and inclusive.



COMMUNITY HIKING PROGRAM



Since its launch, approximately 160 participants have explored parks and forests near Perth and in the Perth Hills through a series of introductory walks.

In 2024, HikeWest launched the Community Hiking Program designed to encourage newly arrived migrants, refugees, and individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to participate in hiking. This initiative is creating new pathways into bushwalking, enabling participants to join introductory bushwalking activities while fostering safe, responsible hiking practices. The program aims to build confidence and help participants connect with others who share an interest in outdoor activities.

Since its launch, approximately 160 participants have explored parks and forests around Perth through a series of introductory walks. The walks vary in duration and level of difficulty, depending on participants' fitness levels. HikeWest has collaborated with local governments,

community organisations and North Metropolitan TAFE's Adult Migrant English Program to recruit participants. For many, this program has provided their first opportunity to experience bushwalking and explore Perth's nearby forests since arriving in Australia.

During the 2024–25 financial year, HikeWest will expand its partnerships with organisations such as Ishar, Mercycare, Edmund Rice, and Chung Wah Community Care, providing further opportunities for new participants to experience the benefits of hiking.

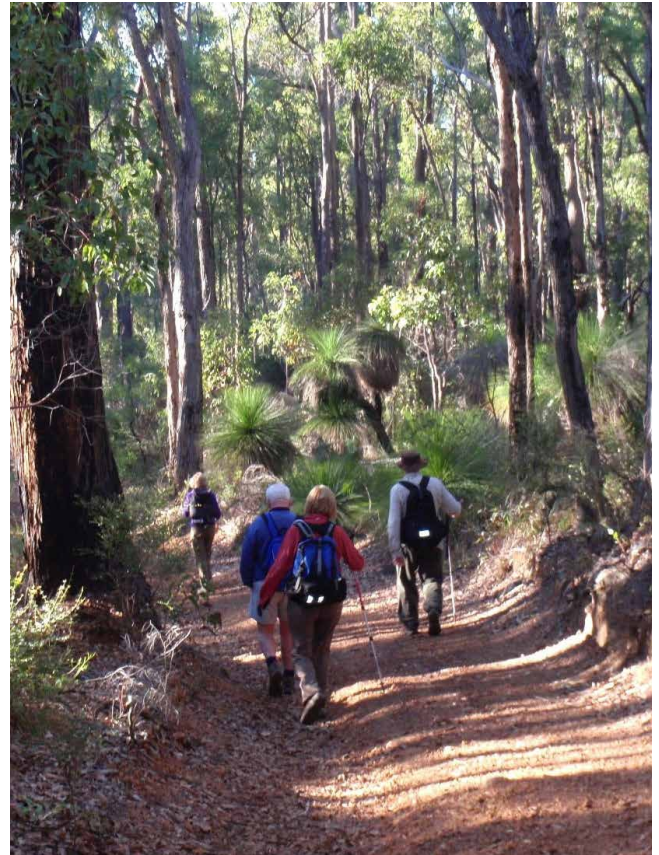
HikeWest is grateful to the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries for supporting this program through funding via the Outdoors Active Recreation Participation Program.

SENIORS HIKING PROGRAM

HikeWest launched the Seniors Hiking Program during 2023–24. Participants are encouraged to discover bushwalking through accessible, enjoyable, entry-level bushwalks in parks and reserves within easy reach of Perth. The newcomers are introduced to a range of hiking experiences and encouraged to continue participating through our member clubs.

The program of walks is being delivered in partnership with a number of HikeWest member clubs including Perth Bushwalking Club, Western Walking Club, Bushwalkers of WA and Bunbury Bushwalking Club. The club-led walks range from 8–10km, while HikeWest is leading walks of 3–5km for those who may initially prefer a shorter distance. So far, approximately 100 people have participated in the program.

HikeWest is grateful to the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries for supporting this program through a grant under the WA Hiking Participation Grants Program.



Participants are encouraged to discover bushwalking through accessible, enjoyable, entry-level bushwalks in parks and reserves within easy reach of Perth.



COLLIE HIKEFEST FEASIBILITY STUDY

HikeWest's vision for hiking extends across the entire state of Western Australia, with a particular focus on increasing hiking participation and opportunities in regional areas such as Collie. Our success in delivering the WA Hiking Expo in the Perth Hills in 2021 and 2023, and in Toodyay in 2024 (in partnership with Transcend), has demonstrated HikeWest's ability to engage a broader audience through major events. These expos have played a significant role in encouraging more people throughout WA to explore trails and hike more frequently.

As part of our commitment to promoting hiking in the regions, HikeWest has been researching the feasibility of hosting a new regional hiking festival in Collie.

This festival would showcase the high-quality hiking trails in the area and help to establish Collie as a prominent trail town. During the research phase, we are conducting stakeholder and community consultations, exploring potential venues and trail locations, and developing a business case for the event.

The festival has the potential to attract participants from Perth, Mandurah, Busselton, Bunbury, Albany, and local communities including Bridgetown, Nannup, and Balingup.

This project is supported by a grant through the Sport and Recreation Events Funding Program from the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries.



HIKING EXPO AT THE TRANSCEND ULTRA

HikeWest partnered with Transcend Trails to deliver the HikeWest Hiking Expo on 22 June 2024. This collaboration marked the first time HikeWest teamed up with a trail running organisation. The partnership highlighted the potential synergies between trail running and hiking, offering new opportunities to engage diverse outdoor enthusiasts.

The Expo took place at the event's finish line village near Cobbler Pool, west of Toodyay, and was free to attend. Participants and visitors enjoyed a vibrant outdoor experience, featuring a variety of exhibitors, trails experts, live music, and food and beverage offerings, creating a festive atmosphere for all who attended.

A highlight of the day was the free guided hike organised by HikeWest, allowing participants to explore the beauty of a local nature reserve near Toodyay. Visitors also had the option to camp overnight, making it a full weekend experience, with opportunities to enjoy additional short walks in and around the historic town of Toodyay.



ADVOCACY

HikeWest has remained committed to monitoring and advocating on key issues impacting hiking in Western Australia. Our focus continues to include the impacts of mining on the Northern Jarrah Forest, recreational access to drinking water catchments, and the need for additional trails in the forests of the Darling Range, particularly those close to Perth.

Key developments during the 2023–24 financial year included:

Forest Management Plan 2024–33:

The new plan, effective from 1 January 2024, includes a State Government commitment to substantially increase the extent of protected forests by 2033; however, HikeWest remains concerned about how this goal will be achieved, as little progress was made in elevating proposed reserve areas to protected status under the previous 10-year plan.

Operational Policy 13 Review:

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has advised that the anticipated June 2024 review of the State Government’s

“Operational Policy 13” will not proceed. This is concerning, as the policy imposes restrictions on recreational access and trail development within drinking water catchments in the Darling Range. The absence of a fresh review limits opportunities for community input and government reassessment.

Bauxite Mining Operations:

In December 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it would publicly assess Alcoa’s environmental management plans for their Huntly and Willowdale bauxite mining operations in the Darling Range, following public submissions, including from HikeWest. This will be the first such assessment in 60 years and is a critical step towards greater protection of WA’s natural environments.

HikeWest continues to engage with stakeholders to ensure that hiking opportunities are preserved and that environmental concerns are addressed in key decision-making processes affecting WA’s natural landscapes.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

PROFIT & LOSS

INCOME	2024	2023
Earned Income		
Advertising income	1,295.40	1,375.00
Bushwalking Australia Levy received	1,081.00	1,246.00
Expo sponsorship	-	4,000.00
Hiking Expo Walks & Stalls	2,600.00	5,316.54
Levy from Affiliated Clubs	5,405.00	6,270.00
Membership fee received	438.18	520.00
Total Earned Income	10,819.58	18,727.54
Government Funding		
DLGSC - SARO Funding	50,000.00	-
DLGSC - Project	39,973.00	-
DLGSC - Racing & Gaming	46,675.00	-
Government Grant received	-	50,000.00
Unexpended Grants Income	(74,808.77)	-
Total Government Funding	61,839.23	50,000.00
Philanthropic Income		
Donations	10,000.00	-
Raffle income	-	1,806.34
Sponsorship contributions	600.00	2,215.00
Total Philanthropic Income	10,600.00	4,021.34
Other Income		
Insurance recovered	10,138.64	11,438.26
Interest Income	1,929.34	519.73
Total Other Income	12,067.98	11,957.99
Total Income	95,326.79	84,706.87
GROSS INCOME	95,326.79	84,706.87

EXPENSES	2024	2023
Program Expenses		
Catering	4.20	-
Marketing / Promotion	1,339.50	97.00
Program equipment & materials	802.11	-
Transportation & Travel - Program	2,515.52	-
Total Program Expenses	4,661.33	97.00
Event Expenses		
Hiking Expo Expenses	73.25	28,041.23
Hiking Fair Costs	463.64	352.75
Total Event Expenses	536.89	28,393.98
Salaries & Employee Expenses		
Project Management Hours	2,090.00	-
Walk Lead Hours	1,567.50	-
Wages and Salaries	83,105.96	9,649.34
Superannuation	9,537.36	1,400.00
Leave Accrual Expense	5,974.83	-
Employee expenses	-	5,814.18
Total Salaries & Employee Expenses	102,275.65	16,863.52
Operating Expenses		
Bank Fees	-	1.88
Bushwalking Australia Levy	1,093.00	2,404.00
Fundraising Expenses	-	102.64
Grants paid out	(2,552.25)	14,165.76
Insurance for Clubs - Public Liability & Accident Insurance	10,251.19	11,796.76
PO Box Rental	-	153.00
Printing & Stationery	258.20	-
Software subscriptions	323.44	241.75
Recruitment	401.50	8,424.62
Rent	847.64	-
Sundry Expenses	-	200.53
Training, Accrediation & Certificates	54.89	-
Website Expenses	1,632.40	1,042.68
Workers Compensation Insurance	204.20	1,372.00
Total Operating Expenses	12,514.21	39,905.62
TOTAL EXPENSES	119,988.08	85,260.12
SURPLUS/LOSS	(24,661.29)	(553.25)



BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	2024	2023
Bank		
Cash Reserve	97,466.11	19,896.80
Operating Account	18,278.08	3,980.74
Term Deposit 12 months	20,852.33	20,000.00
Term Deposit 6 months	-	20,000.00
Total Bank	136,596.52	63,877.54
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	-	250.00
Prepayments	1,364.78	-
Total Current Assets	1,364.78	250.00
Total Assets	137,961.30	64,127.54
LIABILITIES	2024	2023
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	4,369.69	-
Unexpended Grants	74,808.77	-
ATO Liabilities		
GST	3,700.08	-
PAYG Withholdings Payable	7,171.00	3,684.00
Total ATO Liabilities	10,871.08	3,684.00
Employer Liabilities		
Provision for Leave	7,850.01	2,130.18
Wages Payable - Payroll	4,859.66	-
Superannuation Payable	1,295.02	-
Total Employer Liabilities	14,004.69	2,130.18
Total Current Liabilities	104,054.23	5,814.18
Non-current Liabilities		
Non-Current Leave Liability	255.00	-
Total Non-current Liabilities	255.00	-
Total Liabilities	104,309.23	5,814.18
NET ASSETS	33,652.07	58,313.36
EQUITY	2024	2023
Current Year Earnings	(24,661.29)	(553.25)
Retained Earnings	58,313.36	58,866.61
Total Equity	33,652.07	58,313.36



AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of the Hikewest Inc. which comprises the Balance Sheet at 30 June 2024 and a Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Committee's responsibility for the financial report

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Western Australia, Associations Incorporation Act 2015. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

The auditor's responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and to plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement. The audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedure selected depends on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether

due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. Audit evidence has been obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for the audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting the audit, the independence requirements of the Australian professional ethical pronouncements have been complied with.

Audit's opinion

In my opinion the financial report of Hikewest Inc. has been prepared in accordance with the Western Australian, Associations Incorporation Act 2015 including providing a true and fair view of the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.

25 September 2024.



Jayme Watson

Chartered Accountant

Member ID 580418

THE HIKEWEST TEAM

Board

President / Chair	Kathy Miller
Vice-President	Neil Gibson
Secretary	Pascal Veyradier
Treasurer	Amber Kaur
Director (elected)	Mark Pybus
Director (appointed)	Hecate Jay
Director (appointed)	Karen Tyson

Staff

Executive Officer	Meelee Soorkia
Walks Coordinator	Vanessa Moss
Accounts	Pauline Sikweti

OUR MEMBERS, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Member Clubs



Affiliated Organisations



Funding Partner



Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries

Sponsors



National Stakeholders



