



BUSHWALKING WA

Strategic Plan

2018-2021

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BUSHWALKING WA
(FEDERATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BUSHWALKERS INC)



Table of Contents

This Plan	2
Our History	2
Our Purpose	3
Our Conduct	3
Our Constituency	3
Our Vision	4
Our Mission	5
Our Goals and Strategies	6
Appendix: Planned Organisation Chart	10

Our Vision

Better Bushwalking for Western Australia

A large and diverse bushwalking community enjoying world-class walking opportunities across a wide range of WA landscapes.



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This Plan

Effective execution of this new strategic plan through the period 2018-2021 will ensure Bushwalking WA’s vision of “Better bushwalking for Western Australia” is widely embraced. The benefits of BWA’s promotion, support and advocacy of bushwalking will be:

- **more Western Australians will participate in bushwalking as a healthy, environmentally responsible and safe activity;**
- **bushwalking organisations will responsibly support the growth in bushwalking activity; and**
- **WA will be increasingly recognised for its range of attractive bushwalking opportunities and quality trails.**

The Plan is a living document, subject to regular review and update by the Board.

Our History

Bushwalking WA (‘BWA’) is the informal name for the Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc. founded in 1992 as the peak body for bushwalking in Western Australia. BWA is a volunteer run, not-for-profit incorporated association. Over most of the past 25 years the Federation primarily represented the interests of just its bushwalking member clubs and until 2015 was governed by a Council of Delegates from the clubs.

In 2014 an organisational and strategic review was carried out for the Federation by an independent consultant funded by DSR. As a result of the review, changes proceeded under a 2015-2017 strategic plan as part of which the Federation implemented a modern governance model and established a new Board of management replacing the former Council of Delegates. These changes now enable BWA to represent the wider bushwalking community in WA, beyond our traditional Club base and so pursue a broader, more comprehensive and more inclusive vision for bushwalking in the State.

BWA is a signatory to and supports the principles of the [Walk 21 International Charter for Walking](#).



Our Purpose

BWA’s Rules of Association outline the following purposes:

- Promote safe and environmentally responsible bushwalking to the community.
- Promote and actively work for the conservation and effective management of the natural environment, including National Parks, wilderness, coastal and other public land areas to enhance their bushwalking value to the community.
- Work to assist with the development, maintenance and protection of the integrity and accessibility of walking tracks and trails so as to enhance their bushwalking value to all.
- Provide services to Member Associations, bushwalkers and the wider community in furtherance of these objectives.

Our conduct

Core Values	Core Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, ethical, professional & accountable in all that we do • Inclusive and respectful of diversity • Respect & love of our natural bushwalking environment • Commitment & pride in BWA • Active in embracing change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate proactively as a leader in the bushwalking community • Respond to stakeholder needs & aspirations • Advocate for the community • Maintain best practice governance & management • Build an effective sphere of influence

Our Constituency

In advocating on bushwalking and related conservation issues in Western Australia, BWA collectively represents an estimated 65,000 Western Australians who go bushwalking (*1). A majority of WA’s bushwalking clubs are Member Clubs of BWA, with over 1000 individual members. BWA also welcomes as members non-bushwalking affiliate organisations, and individuals, sympathetic to the purposes and interests of BWA.



Our Vision

Better Bushwalking for Western Australia

A large and diverse bushwalking community enjoying world-class walking opportunities across a wide range of WA landscapes

Community participation - The significant health and other benefits to the community gained from more people walking more often in natural places are today widely recognised.

Walking is by far the most popular form of recreation or exercise in WA. But bushwalking in WA has historically ranked only fourteenth in popularity out of about fifty available recreational activities, whereas Australia-wide it has ranked eighth (*1). That relatively poor WA ranking may have improved, especially with the recent rapid growth in this State of large online Meetup bushwalking groups. BWA recognises this broadening of organised bushwalking beyond our traditional club base and the need to represent the interests of all bushwalkers.

Bushwalking for all - Bushwalking is generally seen as a life-long activity available to anyone with appropriate fitness levels, so bushwalking opportunities must reflect the needs of the young, aged and people with disabilities, as well as those seeking more demanding walking challenges.

Research (*2) confirms there is a wide spectrum of bushwalkers in Australia who do want a wide range of bushwalking challenges. They want access to world-class opportunities to enjoy and discover diverse landscapes and parks, ranging from easy short walks on well-constructed paths to multi-day off-track walks in remote areas. Popular walking areas require adequate amenities, parking and transport options, along with good signage.

Opportunities - Western Australia already provides some excellent bushwalking opportunities, including most notably, the long-distance Bibbulmun Track and Cape-to-Cape Track, plus many short family walk trails. But we have a dearth of developed, day circuit trails of good length to satisfy the many bushwalkers who are neither seeking a longer through-walk nor a very short walk. e.g. A majority of the existing designated walk trails in the Hills area near Perth are short walks at the least challenging end of the spectrum. Great potential exists for new trails.

Natural undisturbed environments - Bushwalkers also seek trails in a range of attractive natural environments free from excessive development, noise, or interference from other recreational users. Achieving new trails requires a willingness



on the part of all stakeholders to address access and other issues in the context of the greater community benefit.

Our vision encompasses all of this. Many issues are beyond BWA’s direct control so it is important that we advocate effectively on behalf of all bushwalkers and use our knowledge and resources to educate the community, decision makers and land managers on what is important to bushwalkers.

- (*1) Numbers derived from Aus. Sports Commission last ERASS Report (2010), in absence of easily accessible later ABS State-based data.
- (*2) Bushwalking Victoria Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Our Mission

To foster and promote bushwalking in Western Australia:

by inspiring motivation and confidence

- Inspire more people with the motivation and confidence to walk in natural areas for enjoyment, health, wellbeing and appreciation of our Western Australian environment.

by promoting the opportunities

- **For those with limited knowledge or ability:** Ensure they have access to good information and bushwalking organisations who can mentor them in finding suitable, safe opportunities.
- **For more experienced walkers:** Help them discover new places to visit and to access the resources needed to ensure they enjoy their bushwalking experiences and return home safely.

by supporting our organisations

- Support and promote our network of clubs and other bushwalking organisations so that more people are aware of the benefits of joining a club. Our clubs provide the WA community with opportunities to bushwalk responsibly.

by harnessing resources & support

- Ensure our community leaders and land managers recognise the health and wellbeing benefits of bushwalking and so provide the resources and support that will enable more people to bushwalk more often in more places.

by working for the community

- Use our knowledge and expertise to benefit the community; through helping facilitate new trails developments, and by educating the community on responsible bushwalking.



Our Goals and Strategies

Our high level goals and strategies for the period covered by this strategic plan are summarised in the table below:

GOAL 1 Bushwalking Popularity in WA Bushwalking is a popular activity & recognised by the community to be healthy, environmentally responsible and safe	GOAL 2 Bushwalking Opportunities in WA WA is recognised for its range of attractive bushwalking opportunities and quality trails	GOAL 3 Effective bushwalking Organisations in WA BWA and its member clubs are well resourced & effective organisations that support the bushwalking community
Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote bushwalking as an enjoyable activity suitable for all ages as part of a healthy lifestyle• Actively encourage more people to bushwalk by providing information on safety, responsible bushwalking and where to walk• Contribute our expertise for community benefit	Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work to proactively influence decisions that impact on bushwalking and bushwalkers in WA• Support the development of appropriate world class bushwalking experiences and facilities in WA	Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist member clubs to ensure their viability and their ability to influence and improve their operating environment• Secure funds and other resources necessary to support BWA activities• Ensure BWA further builds and maintains the management capability to execute this strategic plan



GOAL 1: Bushwalking Popularity in WA

Bushwalking is a popular activity & recognised by the community to be healthy, environmentally responsible and safe

Objectives	Key Tasks	Outcomes
Strategy 1: Promote bushwalking as an activity suitable for all ages as part of a healthy lifestyle		
1. Educate the public and decision makers about, and promote, bushwalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a promotional campaign • Appoint ‘ambassadors’ to assist in promotion • Convene WA hiking forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding by public and decision makers of benefits of bushwalking • BWA seen as the prime public contact for bushwalking
Strategy 2: Actively encourage more people to bushwalk by providing information on safety, responsible bushwalking, and where to walk		
1. Promote the benefits of walking with a bushwalking club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify guiding clubs that want to participate • Develop and implement campaign: audiences, key messages, channels / events, etc. • Educate on insurances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in participating clubs’ membership and community reach • More clubs ready to participate in recruitment activities
2. Encourage more Western Australians to walk in more places more often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local bushwalking clubs, regional tourism authorities and walking groups to promote walking in their area • Work with health organisations and educational organisations to target their members • Help overcome identified barriers to participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushwalking becomes an integral part of regional tourism • Increased number of people bushwalking and more areas walked • Bushwalking has a better community profile and is increasing in popularity
Strategy 3: Contribute our expertise for community benefit		
1. Promote safety, respect for the natural environment, and facilitate the provision of skills to people interested in bushwalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade BWA website and newsletter and expand online information. • Use Social Media etc for promoting messages online e.g. Facebook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer and more responsible bushwalking • Increased public recognition of BWA



GOAL 2: Bushwalking Opportunities in WA

WA is recognised for its range of attractive bushwalking opportunities and quality trails

Objectives	Key Tasks	Outcomes
Strategy 1: Work proactively to influence decisions that impact bushwalking and bushwalkers in WA (advocacy)		
1. Engage with key decision makers and land managers to ensure that bushwalking issues and opportunities are understood and considered when policies and decisions are made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent bushwalking at meetings with agencies, LGAs, Ministers etc • Participate in relevant committees, panels, forums • Document cooperative working arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWA has effective liaison with all who influence the bushwalking environment • Bushwalking needs and issues are being heard and acted on by key land managers
2. Work with other peak bodies to develop and support policies, initiatives, submissions and other advocacy activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue proactive involvement to share knowledge and experience • Harness the views also of our Member Clubs • Prepare position statements, submissions etc • Support relevant research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies relating to bushwalking matters are developed proactively and communicated effectively • The needs of the bushwalking community are acknowledged by peak bodies, and considered in their policy development
Strategy 2: Support the development of appropriate world-class bushwalking experiences and facilities in Western Australia		
1. Help facilitate opportunities for sustainable new trail developments to meet demand and provide wider user choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with agencies, LGAs, members and other stakeholders to identify, encourage and support new trails initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number and range of new quality trails • Positive user feedback on range of attractive bushwalking opportunities
2. Encourage adequate facilities and ongoing track maintenance of existing trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage users and other stakeholders to identify needed improvements and to contribute to track maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well maintained trails • Positive feedback on enjoyable WA trail experiences from trails users



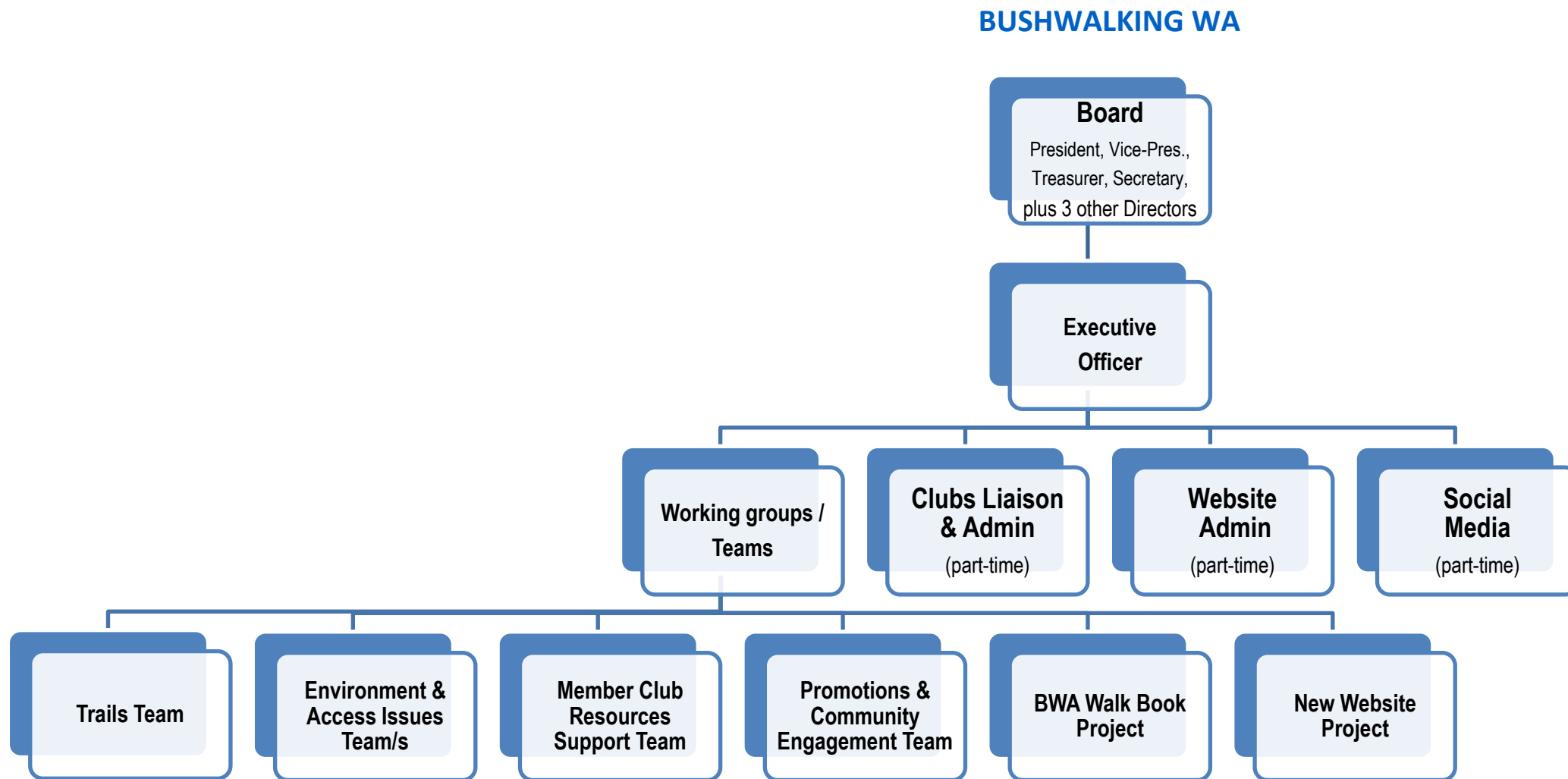
GOAL 3: Effective Bushwalking Organisations In WA

BWA and its member clubs are well resourced and effective organisations that support the bushwalking community

Objectives	Key Tasks	Outcomes
Strategy 1: Assist member clubs to ensure their viability and their ability to influence and improve their operating environment		
1. Support clubs with information and advice that will assist them enhance their capability and viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively develop positive working relationships with all clubs, including regular active engagement Provide advice and support to clubs on promotional activities to maintain and grow their membership and expand into new areas Encourage insurances cover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs' recognition of BWA as a professionally managed organisation that adds value to their operations and businesses Clubs are growing and providing better services to their members Better resources for clubs to help with recruitment, membership retention, engaging with the media Members insured
Strategy 2: Take actions to secure funds and other resources necessary to support our activities		
1. Pursue opportunities to strengthen our existing membership base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with walking groups beyond our member clubs; also non-bushwalking affiliates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in membership (Member Clubs, non-bushwalking Affiliates and Individuals)
2. Pursue potential non-member funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with potential sponsors/partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding/in kind support from sponsors/partners
Strategy 3: Ensure BWA further builds and maintains the management capability to execute this strategic plan		
1. Expand the management and operational capability of BWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint Executive Officer Establish Teams / Committees & admin. support (refer Appendix 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capability to fulfil the demands of effectively executing this Strategic Plan.



Acknowledgement: This strategic plan owes much to the results of prior work by Bushwalking Victoria ('BV'). BV embarked on major changes in 2012, a few years ahead of BWA. This current BWA Plan has incorporated insights gained from BV's prior research, review work and 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.



Appendix: **Bushwalking WA - Planned Organisation Chart - 2018**