

Balingup Progress Association (BPA)

Review of 2021 Strategic Plan

Carried out April 2024

Background

In 2021 Balingup Progress Association held a series of community conversations to develop a Strategic Plan that would identify community priorities for the next 5-10 years. A copy was provided to the Shire of Donnybrook- Balingup (SDB) so that it could be included in their Strategic Community Plan (SCP) 2017-2027.

Making Our Move - The Big Picture

The Plan agreed that the following statements should lead future development:

- Balingup is a centre of environmental sustainability (Environment)
- Balingup is a resilient, thriving community with a vibrant, village feel (Economy and Tourism)
- Balingup is a community that creates, learns and grows together (Lifespan and Living)
- Balingup Progress Association is an intergenerational, community-led, representative, **change and innovation group**. (Community and Governance).

Does BPA still agree with these overarching statements?

A common theme, identified during both the Conversations and Open Space, was the need to have more intergenerational activities. There was a strong desire to bridge the gap between young and old.

Making Our Move - 2021 Strategies & Measuring Results

Strategies	How success could be measured
Balingup is a centre of environmental sustainability <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Town development and landscaping retains a 'village' feel.2. Land is revegetated and well managed - the best quality land is reserved/reclaimed for agricultural use.3. Waterways are clean - brook and tributaries are revegetated.4. The Blackwood River offers educational and recreational activities for all abilities.5. Use of natural pesticides is widespread.6. The community is well educated in the principles of waste reduction.7. The community showcases its respect for its environmental and cultural heritage.	Health and quality of soil Health and quality of water Reduction in waste No of rural properties retained. No of new educational/ recreational activities created.
Progress Report 2024. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Town development and landscaping have retained a 'village' feel.2. Balingup Progress Association (BPA) continues to support the cluster development concept. SDB has included in Draft Local Planning Strategy 2024.3,4,5. No specific projects run but concepts supported by community.6. Containers for Change programs run at Primary School and Recreation Centre. Baling-Upcycle shop, was opened in 2022 and in its first six months of operation, Upcycle returned \$10,000 profits to the community. Upcycle operates under the umbrella of Progress Association.	

7. Small Farm Field Day continues to focus on environment issues. Wadandi elder, Sandra Hill, opened an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Museum in the Packing shed in 2022. Unfortunately it was closed late in 2023 due to lack of funds.

Strategies	How success could be measured
<p>Balingup is a resilient, thriving community with a vibrant, village feel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attract and retain a diverse range of profitable businesses, providing local employment opportunities. 2. Collaborative and funded event management. 3. Increase in trails tourism (walk, bike, horse). 4. A new industry is built around education - providing education opportunities in sustainability, agriculture and artisan skills. 5. Town is self sufficient in utility infrastructure. 6. Golden Valley Tree Park is prized by the community as a world class Arboretum, centre of excellence in conservation and fire science. 7. New industries in arboriculture and silviculture. 	<p>No of shops open in town. No of visitors to town No of children at Primary School No of events No of micro-grid power systems.</p>
<p>Progress Report 2024.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2021 there were 18 small businesses in the Main Street. In 2024, there are 23 - a 20% increase. 2. Events continue to share resources (tables, chair and expertise). Funds from Small Farm Field Day and Medieval Carnivale are used to support smaller events. Telling Tales and Health & Wellbeing events will return in 2024. 3. A new trails brochure and trailhead signs were produced by the Visitor Centre in April 2024. 4. The Balingup College of Traditional and Modern Artisanhip continues to be actively progressed in 2024. 5. No progress made. 6. GVTP continues to attract more visitors and is the 'jewel in the crown' of Balingup. 7. No progress made. 	

Strategies	How success could be measured
<p>Balingup is a community that creates, learns and grows together.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Infrastructure and services support healthy independent living. 2. Regular community events and mentoring programs create a supportive, inter-generational community. 3. A wide range of volunteering opportunities are offered through membership of special interest community groups. 	<p>No of independent living services and facilities. No of metres of footpaths and bike tracks (new or repaired). No of mentoring programs and community events. No of community groups.</p>

Progress Report 2024

1. A second group of four Vintage cottages were built in 2022/23 on land purchased from the Shire. The quality of footpaths remains a concern in the community.
2. Balingup Arts & Cultural Hub (BACH) was created in 2022. This inter-generational group now runs a program of music, cultural and art events suitable for all ages.
3. Balingup has over 40 community groups - there is no shortage of volunteering opportunities!

Strategies	How success could be measured
<p>Balingup Progress Association (BPA) is an intergenerational, community-led, representative, change and innovation group.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. BPA meetings are informal, social and encourage an atmosphere of co-creation.2. Mentoring programs are in place to support future leaders.3. The community is resilient and able to respond to challenging situations4. There is strong focus on community building, family focused events and activities.	<p>Average age of BPA member reduce. No of mentoring programs. No of community building activities held. No of Bushfire Brigade and other emergency resources available.</p>

Progress Report 2024.

1. The format of and time of BPA meetings was changed in 2021. In 2024, meetings are very well attended (10-15 per meeting). It is still difficult to attract younger people.
2. The BPA President, elected in October 2023, is **under 50 years old**. She has access to mentors if needed.
3. BPA formally set up a Resilience Committee in 2023. This group has developed detailed response plans in conjunction with Bushfire Brigade and Bushfire Ready groups and secured necessary equipment.
4. Balingup holds two major family focused events every year (SFFD & Carnivale) and Telling Tales (specifically for children) will return in July 2024. BACH runs a series of family focused activities each year.

Infrastructure and Major Projects

In October 2020, BPA was asked to provide a list of infrastructure and major projects to the Shire and these were provided at the Open Spaces so that participants could add their own ideas. A voting process was used to prioritise the list.

Possible Balingup Infrastructure Projects	Black Dot Votes	Status in 2024
Walk and cycle trails - new and repair existing	12	Some local work carried out but no real progress made.
Centre of Excellence in conservation, arboriculture, and silviculture (GVTP)	11	GVTP continues to work toward this goal
Permanent covered space in front of stage	5	No progress made

@ Carnivale grounds		
Two tennis hard courts	4	No progress made
Improve village green playground	4	No progress made
Upgrade skatepark so surface is not so hot in summer	4	No progress made
Develop new recreation precinct on Balingup-Nannup Road	4	No progress made
Develop and implement Balingup-Nannup Road Improvement Proposal	3	No progress made
Develop and Implement Blackwood Ride Park	3	Completed, became BADTA project in collaboration with other stakeholders, scope of plan increased and BADTA has passed on for project to grow.
Review land use/pine plantations and scale back to improve amenity and reduce fire risk.	3	No progress made
Renovate showers and toilet block @ Balingup oval	1	Completed by Shire
Improve acoustics at Town Hall	1	Completed by Balingup Art & Cultural Hub
Promote sustainable burning in the shire including State Forests	0	Indigenous burning program run by member of Bushfire Ready group in 2023.

It was agreed that the following priority projects be followed up with individual team leaders.

Make Your Move – 12 Priority Action Items 2021/22	Votes	Status in 2024
Self-sufficiency/Sustainable town	10	This continues to be a priority for the community. Profits from the events are channelled into this.
Footpaths and Trails	7	This continues to be a priority. The Shire has upgraded some footpaths in town but more need to be done. BPA updated the Footpath Audit in early 2024 and sent to the Shire for action.
Arts and Creative learning Centre	6	Balingup Art & Cultural Hub is making good progress in this area. Balingup College of Traditional and Modern Artisanry also has this as a goal.
Clean waterways	5	No specific progress
Intergenerational project	3	Balingup Art & Cultural Hub is making good progress in this area
Creating jobs (cars to E. V's)	3	Not considered feasible
Kids and youth engagement	2	Balingup Art & Cultural Hub is making good progress in this area
Cluster development	2	Now in SDB draft Local Planning Strategy 2024
Waste management	1	No specific progress
Supporting Aboriginal awareness	1	Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Museum in the Packing Shed was closed due to lack of funding.
Community Safety	1	Community Information & Social Centre has been established to help the community in times of stress.
Health and wellbeing centre	0	No specific progress however a Health and Wellness event will be held in 2024 and the Recreation Centre embarked on a series of improvements in 2023 that continue into 2024.

