

WELLINGTON PARK MANAGEMENT TRUST

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021 - 2025

Introduction

Wellington Park is an 18,250ha natural area reserved in accordance with the *Wellington Park Act 1993* (Refer Appendix 1). The Act outlines the core values for the Park, and provides for the establishment of a Trust to be the managing and strategic planning authority for the Park.

The make-up of the Trust is outlined in the Act, and allows for representation from agencies with landowner and management responsibilities within the Park, and other key government departments.

A key role of the Trust is to prepare and implement an over-arching management plan for the Park. The current plan (*Wellington Park Management Plan 2013, Amended October 2015*) provides the following Management Principles, Key Desired Outcomes and Management Objectives for the Park.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

- *Provide for community, tourism and recreational use and enjoyment of the Park consistent with the remaining management principles;*
- *Protect the Park's environment for the long term;*
- *Retain the essential cultural characteristics of the Park; and*
- *Manage water catchments in the Park as sources of clean water.*

KEY DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE WELLINGTON PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- *The enhancement of the visitor experiences in the Park;*
- *The protection, maintenance and, where appropriate, restoration of the ecological and cultural integrity of the Park; and*
- *The enhancement of an ethic of care for the Park within the community consciousness.*

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES OF THE WELLINGTON PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Consistent with the purposes for which the Park was reserved, and to maintain Park values and meet the management principles, the primary management objectives of the Management Plan are to:

1. *Promote and provide high quality tourism and recreational opportunities and facilities consistent with the appreciation and enjoyment of the environmental, water catchment, and cultural values of the Park;*
2. *Conserve and maintain the biophysical processes and biodiversity of the Park, including indigenous species, communities, ecosystems, and genetic diversity;*
3. *Conserve the geological, geomorphological, pedological, hydrological, scenic and landscape features of the Park;*
4. *Protect the supply and quality of water available from Park catchments;*
5. *Protect and retain culturally representative and significant areas, features or artefacts of use and enjoyment of the Park;*

6. *Protect and retain the special tourism and recreational character and community sense of place which the Park provides; and*
7. *Develop the organisational and procedural capacity required to achieve the above objectives.*

The Wellington Park Management Plan has adopted the Adaptive Management approach to management for the Park and it has been built into this Strategic Plan.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Adaptive management is a cycle which starts with determining management objectives, developing strategies and actions to meet those objectives, implementing those strategies and actions, monitoring the effects of the management actions and then using the results to evaluate whether the strategies and actions have achieved the management objectives. The adaptive management cycle is completed by modifying the management strategies and actions to more effectively achieve the management objective.

This Strategic Plan outlines the strategies the Trust will employ to:

- Meet its responsibility “to provide for the management and maintenance of Wellington Park in a manner that is consistent with the purposes for which it is set aside” (section 11(1)(a) of the *Wellington Park Act 1993*).
- Achieve the Key Desired Outcomes (KDOs) and the management objectives of the Wellington Park Management Plan 2013.

PART 1 – Vision, Mission, Values and Goals of the Trust

VISION

The Vision defines where Wellington Park seeks to be in the future.

Our vision is for Wellington Park to be a special place, accessible and enjoyed by all for its prominent landscape, natural and cultural diversity, and community value.

MISSION

The Mission defines how the Trust will achieve the Vision.

To preserve the natural, cultural, recreational, tourism and drinking water qualities of Wellington Park for their own value and for the safe enjoyment of all people.

This will be achieved through outstanding management, sympathetic development and a co-operative relationship with our communities.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

The values that will guide us towards our Vision and help us achieve our Mission are:

- *Working Collaboratively with Park Management Agencies*
- *Integrity, Professionalism and Quality*
- *Commitment, Flexibility and Innovation*
- *Cooperation and Teamwork*
- *Effective Communication*
- *Environmentally Sustainable Practices*
- *Valuing Community Participation*

ORGANISATIONAL GOALS

- *Effective in co-ordinating the management and development of Wellington Park.*
- *Encouraging and managing for the enjoyment and sustainable use of the Park by all.*
- *Working actively in partnership with our communities.*
- *A leader in natural and cultural resource management.*
- *Resourced to provide effective management in partnership with Park Management Agencies.*
- *Transparent and professional in all our dealings with the public and our management agencies.*
- *A highly skilled team that is pro-active, innovative, fulfilled and responsive to change.*
- *Promoting, and expanding our knowledge of Wellington Park.*

PART 2 –STRATEGIES to ACHIEVE ORGANISATIONAL GOALS

The strategies to achieve the Trust's goals have been arranged under six Strategic Pillars:

1. Visitation and Recreation
2. Natural Values and Conservation
3. Culture and Heritage
4. Regulation and Compliance
5. Engagement and Promotion
6. An Effective Organisation

These pillars align with the Trust's functions as set out in section 11 of the *Wellington Park Act 1993* and the Wellington Park Management Plan 2013.

Each Pillar has one or more key strategic actions and a strategy for implementation. Where specific projects are required to support a key strategic action these have been prioritised and, where possible, provided with a target for completion.

In this part of the strategic plan 'Strategy' documents are high level planning documents covering background information, identification of problems and issues, objectives to meet corporate goals or to deal with specific problems, and the general means by which the objectives will be achieved. They may be prepared by external consultants or internally. 'Plans' are generally documents providing detail of proposed on-ground works, and site management guidelines. They are generally prepared internally or with the assistance of Park management agencies.

PILLAR 1. Visitation and Recreation

The Trust considers that the issues and actions surrounding current and future visitor use pressures (particularly recreation and other facilities) access and tourism deserves highest priority for the period of this strategic plan.

Key Strategic Action:

Implement the Visitation and Recreation Strategy (VRS) for Wellington Park.

This will include:

- a) Effective communication of the VRS to Park management agencies (Hobart City Council, Glenorchy City Council, Parks and Wildlife Service and TasWater) State Government, Park visitors and user groups, and the wider community.
- b) Resourcing the implementation of the VRS through the creation of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator position in the Wellington Park Office.
- c) Working with Park management agencies and State Government to better understand the drivers of visitation and recreation in the Park and maintain up to date information on patterns and types of usage in the Park.
- d) Development of visitation and recreation action plans with Park management agencies to target specific use areas and activities.
- e) On-going engagement with Park user groups (including bike riders, bushwalkers, trail runners) tour operators and other businesses operating in the Park, and Park users in general to continue to adapt the VRS to changing use patterns and pressures.
- f) Assessing and managing risks to visitors.

Specific Projects:

The following plans and strategies for specific uses or specific areas of the Park will support the implementation of the VRS:

- a) Prepare a visitor data collection and analysis plan to continue the monitoring undertaken during preparation of the VRS.
- b) Prepare a visitor risk management strategy.
- c) Revise the master plan for The Springs.
- d) Revise the Wellington Park Bike Strategy.
- e) Revise the Wellington Park Walking Track Strategy and expand it to include the needs of trail runners.
- f) Prepare a master plan for the Junction Cabin area.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Visitation and Recreation Strategy	High	Started in July 2019	Proposed completion by late 2021
Visitor Risk Management Strategy	High	Started in September 2017, completion delayed until the Trust's corporate risk management framework is finalised.	End of 2021
Visitor Data Collection and Analysis Plan	High	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined
Revision of Springs Master Plan	Medium	Started in 2017-18, but delayed	End of 2021
Revision of Wellington Park Bike Strategy	Medium	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined
Revision of Wellington Park Walking Track Strategy	Medium	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined
Master Plan for Junction Cabin	Low	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined

PILLAR 2. Natural Values and Conservation

Surveys of Park users found that the main attraction of the Park is its natural values and the opportunities provided to access places of natural beauty, tranquillity and inspiration.

Key Strategic Action:

Prepare an action plan that identifies the key processes and uses threatening Park values and how they will be managed.

This will include:

- a) Resourcing the creation of a Natural and Heritage Values Co-ordinator position in the Wellington Park Office.
- b) Working with Park management agencies to better understand the range of natural values in the Park and the threats to them.
- c) Development of strategies and action plans with Park management agencies to minimise the effects of key threatening processes.
- d) Establishing a program to coordinate monitoring of impacts of identified threatening processes on Park values as part of an adaptive management approach to managing the Park's natural and heritage values.
- e) Educating Park users about the natural values of the Park and what users can do to protect them. This will include informing the public on how the various planning zones in the Park function to control activities in order to protect Park values.
- f) Working with TasWater to protect drinking water catchments.

Specific Projects:

The following plans and strategies for specific uses or specific areas of the Park will support the identification and management of key threatening uses and processes:

- a) Carry out an audit of the Park's flora and fauna values.
- b) Prepare a strategy for protecting water quality in drinking water catchments.
- c) Complete the revision of the Wellington Park Fire Management Strategy.
- d) Identify research opportunities to assist with Park management in consultation with UTAS and other institutions.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Audit of the flora and fauna values of the Park	High	After appointment of a Natural and Heritage Values Co-ordinator	Still to be determined
Revision of the Wellington Park Fire Management Strategy	High	Commenced in 2016, delayed until other regional fire management strategies are completed	Proposed completion by mid 2021
Drinking Water Catchments Management Strategy	High	In collaboration with TasWater after it has completed its state-wide catchment management strategy	Unknown
Identify research opportunities	Low	After completion of the audit of Park flora and fauna values.	Still to be determined

PILLAR 3. Cultural and Heritage Values

Key Strategic Action:

Prepare and implement a Heritage Management Strategy to set out the processes for identifying, recording and managing the cultural heritage in the Park.

Implementation of the Heritage Management Strategy will include:

- a) Resourcing the creation of a Natural and Heritage Values Co-ordinator position in the Wellington Park Office.
- b) Maintaining an up to date database of heritage sites and precincts in the Park.
- c) On-going engagement with the Aboriginal community.
- d) Nominating key heritage sites and precincts for listing on the Tasmanian Heritage Register.
- e) Working with Park management agencies and interested members of the community to better understand the range of heritage values in the Park and the threats to them.
- f) Development of strategies and action plans with Park management agencies to protect heritage values.
- g) Educating Park users about the cultural heritage values of the Park and what users can do to protect them.

Specific Projects:

The following specific projects will support the identification and management of cultural heritage in the Park:

- a) Complete the historic Bush Huts Management Framework.
- b) Carry out burnt area surveys (after planned burns and bushfires) to locate and Aboriginal and European heritage.
- c) Prepare a Cultural Heritage Interpretation Plan.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Heritage Management Strategy	High	Scoping document approved in August 2019	End of 2021
Bush Huts Management Framework	Medium	Commenced in late 2019	Late 2021
Burnt area surveys	Medium	Two surveys completed (2016 & 2018)	On-going when planned burns or bushfires provide an opportunity.
Cultural Heritage Interpretation Plan	Low	After appointment of a Natural and Heritage Values Co-ordinator	Still to be determined

PILLAR 4. Regulation and Compliance

Regulation includes both the issuing of permits for activities in the Park that are prohibited under the *Wellington Park Regulations 2019* and ensuring compliance with these regulations. The Trust employs an Education and Regulations Coordinator who oversees the Regulations Awareness Program and compliance with the Wellington Park Regulations.

Key Strategic Actions:

1. Prepare and implement a Compliance and Enforcement Strategy that includes both education of Park users and enforcement of the Regulations.

This will include:

- a) Training Authorised Officers under the *Wellington Park Act 1993* and coordinating their activities.
 - b) Preparing and implementing regulation awareness campaigns for Park users.
 - c) Preparing and implementing annual compliance action plans in consultation with the Regulations Awareness Advisory Group.
 - d) Planning and carrying out enforcement operations.
 - e) Issuing cautions and fines to offenders.
 - f) Maintaining an offenders database.
 - g) Monitoring the Park for non-compliance with the regulations.
 - h) Working with Park management agencies to maintain regulatory signs and gates at vehicle entry points.
2. Streamline and simplify the approval process for works in the Park undertaken by Park management agencies.

This will include:

- a) Discussions with the Management Advisory Committee and other Park management agency officers.
- b) Preparing a Park Activity Approval Manual to clarify the activity approval process under the Wellington Park Management Plan.
- c) Issuing standing permits to agencies for low risk, recurrent maintenance activities.

Specific Projects:

The following specific projects will support regulation and compliance in the Park:

- a) Complete the Compliance and Enforcement Strategy.
- b) Complete the Park Activity Approval Manual.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Compliance and Enforcement Strategy	High	April 2021	End of 2021

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Park Activity Approval Manual	Medium	Commenced in 2019	Proposed completion by mid 2021

PILLAR 5. Engagement and promotion

This Pillar is informed by, and will assist the implementation of, the Visitation and Recreation Strategy.

Key Strategic Action:

Develop and implement a Communication and Engagement Strategy.

This will include:

- a) Establishing partnerships with organisations and interest groups outside the Trust including:
 - Park user groups and associations
 - Community associations
 - Tourism industry organisations.
- b) Defining and promoting the Park's identity and values and the 'message' the Trust wants to convey to the community.
- c) Promoting uses of the Park that are compatible with protection of its values.
- d) Working with Park management agencies and other stakeholders to identify and reduce constraints/impediments to progress opportunities which are compatible with the Wellington Park Management Plan.
- e) Engaging with the community when undertaking reviews and management planning.
- f) Establishing and managing committees and working groups of Park stakeholders.
- g) Preparing an engagement framework with commercial tour operators.
- h) Appropriate use of social media.

Specific Projects:

The following specific projects will support stakeholder engagement and promotion of the Park:

- a) Develop a community engagement strategy.
- b) Prepare an interpretation strategy for the Park.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Community Engagement Strategy	High	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined
Interpretation Strategy	Medium	After completion of the VRS and appointment of a Visitation and Recreation Co-ordinator	Still to be determined

PILLAR 6. Effective Organisation

This Pillar is essential for the completion of the key strategic actions in the other five Pillars.

Key Strategic Action:

Resource the Wellington Park Office to effectively carry out the Trust's functions under the Act and Management Plan.

This will include:

- a) Establishing the following new positions:
 - Visitation and Regulations Co-ordinator
 - Natural and Heritage Values Co-ordinator.
- b) Clarifying the Trust's roles and responsibilities in relation to the Park management agencies.
- c) Maintaining strong partnerships with the Park management agencies and collaboration with them to ensure adequate funding for the Park and particularly the adaptive management approach that is the basis of the Wellington Park Management Plan.
- d) Exploring opportunities to share resources with stakeholders.
- e) Ensuring the Trust meets all its statutory obligations including Work Health and Safety and financial management.
- f) Providing a working environment that will enable the Wellington Park Office to achieve the Trust's Organisational Goals and to maintain its values.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS	PRIORITY	COMMENCEMENT	PROPOSED COMPLETION
Skills matrix (including the Trust)	High	June 2021	September 2021
Position descriptions for new for new staff positions	High	June 2021	September 2021

PART 3 –IMPLEMENTATION and MONITORING

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES

Implementation of the key strategic actions under the six pillars will be the responsibility of the Wellington Park office assisted by the Management Advisory Committee.

The State Government and Park management agencies will be asked to assist financially and in kind to ensure there are adequate resources to complete all the initiatives.

MONITORING PROGRESS AND REVIEW

Progress with implementation of the Strategic Plan will be reported to the Trust annually. Based on the annual report the Trust will review the priorities of the Plan and an action plan will be prepared for the following year. A strategic review of progress will be undertaken after 3 years.

The Wellington Park Management Plan is periodically reviewed by the Trust. This is not considered a “key strategic action” in the Strategic Plan, however the Strategic Plan will need to be reviewed in conjunction with the next review and revision of the Management Plan.

Appendix 1

