

Sustainability Snapshot Report

2023–2024



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

**Rockingham, ngala kaaditj
moondang-ak kaaradjiny
nidja boodja, Binjareb wer
Whadjuk Nyoongar moort, wer
baalabang kalyogool dandjoo
boodja, kep wer moort.**

The City of Rockingham respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their connection to the land, waters and community. We wish to pay our respects to all Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.



Celebration and reflection of local culture was presented in a video series during Reconciliation Week in early 2024. Elders and other Aboriginal community members spoke on topics such as cultural awareness, women's connection to water (Ngaangk Kep Bidi) and the ongoing connection that Nyoongar people have to the land that they managed sustainably for thousands of years.



Foreword from the Mayor

Front Cover Image,
Peel Harvey
Catchment Council

The City has continued to capture our collective action on long supporting climate resilient behaviours through the release of our Sustainability Snapshot Report. The report provides an opportunity to reflect on initiatives undertaken across all six key focus areas.

As our population continues to grow it is inspiring to see all the ways our community, in addition to our internal organisation, are supporting the shared journey towards mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. This year, the City awarded our first school category Green Award winner for their efforts on waste avoidance and sustainable practices. Congratulations, and we hope to continue to showcase all the great work being undertaken by our community and development of leadership qualities of our younger generation.



Mayor Deb Hamblin

Introduction

Since 2017, the City has released the Sustainability Snapshot Report annually. From 2023, the release schedule for the Sustainability Snapshot Report changed to a biennial report (once every two years). This report is the first biennial report, with the 'Sustainability Highlights' released last year providing a short overview of project updates for the 2022/2023 financial year.

Information and data captured within this version relate to the financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. The Sustainability Snapshot Report showcases collective sustainability initiatives and actions delivered across the City's internal departments. Projects and programs outlined in this version continue to build on the ongoing momentum and our progress toward creating a sustainable community. Actions reported through this document align with the City's overarching direction outlined in our Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033. During 2023, a major review of the Strategic Community Plan was undertaken, adopting new aspirations and objectives falling under the vision:



**'A quality lifestyle.
A sustainable future.'**

The Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033 aspirations and objectives are referenced within this edition. Implementation of key actions are further supported through City Community Plan Strategies, including the Sustainability Strategy.

This report is divided into six key focus areas, including:



Water



Waste and Recycling



Energy and Emissions



Nature and Environment



Environmental Education
and Engagement



Climate Response



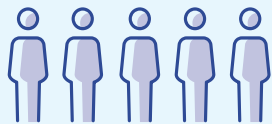
City of Rockingham Regional Overview

The City of Rockingham is located 40 km south of Perth. Our Local Government area covers 257 km² and is divided into 16 suburbs.

Rockingham is the place 'where the coast comes to life', offering residents and visitors 37 km of coastline to explore. Our City features unique cultural heritage sites and natural environments, including the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park and Rockingham Lakes Regional Park.



Population

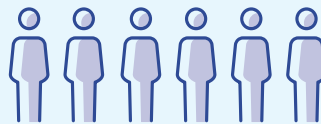


143,653

(ABS ERP 2022)



increased to



148,822

(ABS ERP 2023)

3.53%

increase in
population in last
12 months.



Land area

257 km²



Population Density

579.0

persons per km²

Number of
total dwellings

54,905

(2021 estimation)



37 km

of coastline

Sustainability Milestones

November 2011

Became a signatory of the WALGA Local Government Climate Change Declaration. The City's own Climate Change Declaration was also endorsed by Council.

March 2017

City endorsed as a Waterwise Council by Water Corporation and Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

June 2017

A third 'Greenwaste' bin rolled out across municipality.

November 2012

'Local Government Energy Efficiency Program' launched in the City. Sponsored by the Federal Government.

December 2015

Paris Agreement: Australia committed to reduce emissions by 26-28 per cent below 2005 levels, by 2030.

November 2012

Climate Change Response Strategy - adopted by Council in November 2012.

November 2014

Strategic Community Plan 2015-2025 adopted (Climate Change Defence and Management Strategy and Climate Change Mitigation Strategy identified).

September 2003

WA State Sustainability Strategy 'Hope for the Future' released.

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

February 2018

First annual Sustainability Snapshot Report released.

May 2018

The City became a signatory of the Climate Council's Cities Power Partnership (formally announced in August 2018).

January 2019

Second annual Sustainability Snapshot Report released.

May 2019

Single Use Plastics and Balloons Policy was endorsed, along with a Turn the Tide on Plastic guideline.

May 2019

The City was endorsed as a Gold Waterwise Council by Water Corporation and Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

January 2020

Third annual Sustainability Snapshot Report released.

Climate Change Act 2022

The Federal Government released Australia's Greenhouse Gas Emissions reduction targets, legislating a 43% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

September 2022

Fifth annual Sustainability Snapshot Report released.

November 2023

Sixth annual Snapshot Report released

2018**2019****2020****2021****2022****2023****2024****September 2019**

Council endorsed the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan, originally earmarked in the Strategic Community Plan as the 'Climate Change Defence and Management Strategy'.

The City also made a submission on the State Government's Climate Change in WA Issues Paper.

February 2020

Council endorsed the City's first Sustainability Strategy. This document will guide the development and delivery of the sustainability agenda across the City for the next five years.

August 2020

Launch of the Compost at Home Scheme.

April 2021

Fourth annual Sustainability Snapshot Report released.

May 2021

Waste Plan 2020/2021.

October 2024

Sustainability Highlights 2023



Water

Responsible water consumption is a high priority as our region is impacted by a hotter, drier climate. In the south-west of Australia, a 20% decrease in rainfall has been seen across our winter season (May-July) since 1970. As maintainers of a wide array of public amenities including sports fields, swimming pools and parks, the City is committed to effectively managing this valuable resource. Actions from our Waterwise Council Action Plan are implemented and reported upon annually through our engagement in the Waterwise Council Program.



Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 2 - Natural Environment

1. Protection of natural environment:

Reduce City's energy and water usage.
Mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.

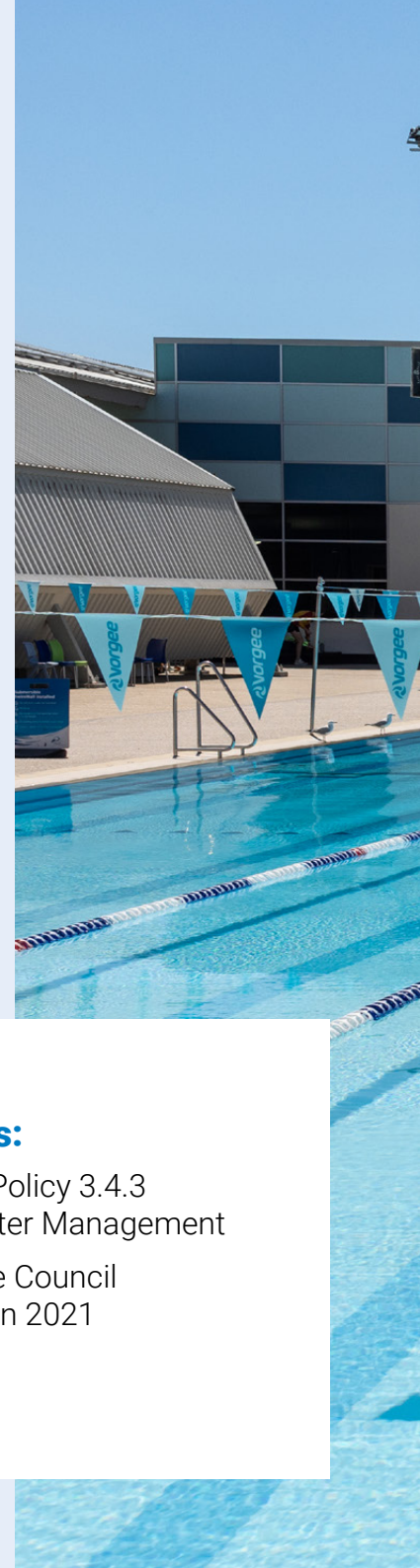
2. Sustainable natural green spaces:

Improve community open spaces.



Key City Documents:

- Planning Policy 3.4.3 Urban Water Management
- Waterwise Council Action Plan 2021

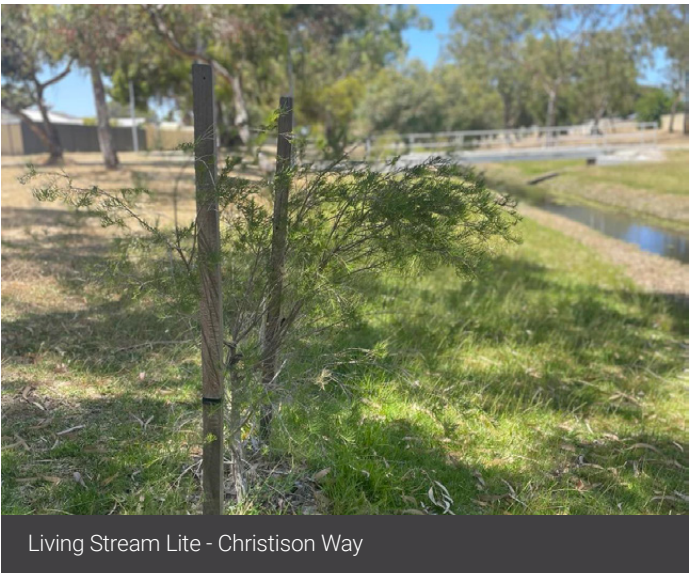




Updates and Achievements

- **Living Stream Lite**

In October 2023, 39 Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) trees were planted in Water Corporation drainage assets at Christison Way and Wallsend Reserve Rockingham, as part of the Living Stream Lite program, supported by the City of Rockingham. Based on site suitability characteristics, installation of trees through this program can be a quick, cost-effective solution to increase shade, amenity and habitat in existing Water Corporation drainage assets. An additional benefit to Paperbark's in these locations is the increased infiltration and canopy interception, reducing extreme event impacts, soil erosion and improved water quality. The City will continue to maintain and monitor these locations to determine applicability to future sites.



- **Gold Waterwise Council**

Since 2019, the City has been endorsed as a Gold Waterwise Council, as part of our ongoing commitment to building a water sensitive city.

Our 2021 Waterwise Council Action Plan outlines key targets and actions to be undertaken over five years, supporting new and existing waste reduction actions across corporate facilities and the community. As of July 2024, the City is on track to meet our goals, comparing the 2023/2024 financial year with the 2015 baseline year target below:

- ↓ Scheme Water Consumption – 16% decrease
- ↓ Community Water Consumption – 5% decrease (99 kL per capita)
- ↓ Groundwater Consumption – 4% below the City's corporate groundwater allocation.

Both our Aqua Jetty and Rockingham Aquatic Centre are endorsed Waterwise Aquatic Centres.



- **Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)**

Across the last two financial years 21 Public Open Spaces (POS), i.e. Parks, were constructed incorporating WSUD principles. Designed to improve the quality of stormwater runoff through filtration and nutrient removal, while also providing habitat for native wildlife.

Public Open Spaces Constructed



13

2022/2023



8

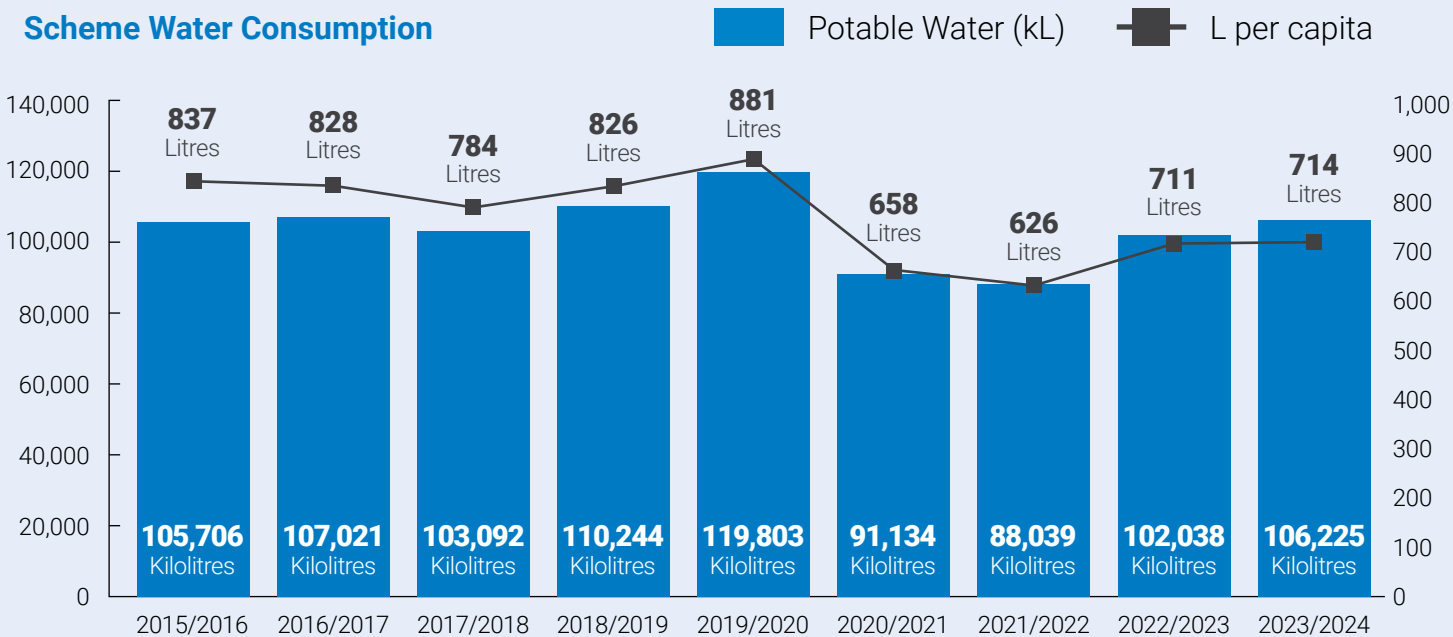
2023/2024



Paradiso Estate - Northern Basin

Facts and Figures

Scheme Water Consumption



- Aqua Jetty remains the City’s number one potable water consumption facility (22,351 kL of water consumed in 2023/2024). Both aquatic centres (Aqua Jetty and Rockingham Aquatic Centre) have demonstrated an increase in potable water consumption in 2023/2024. Higher rates of patronage were observed in the last financial year for both facilities.
- In both 2022/2023 and 2023/2024, a number of leaks were detected and resolved for our top five highest water usage sites. Deviations from previous years include the introduction of several lower usage sites transitioning into the City’s top five usage facilities.

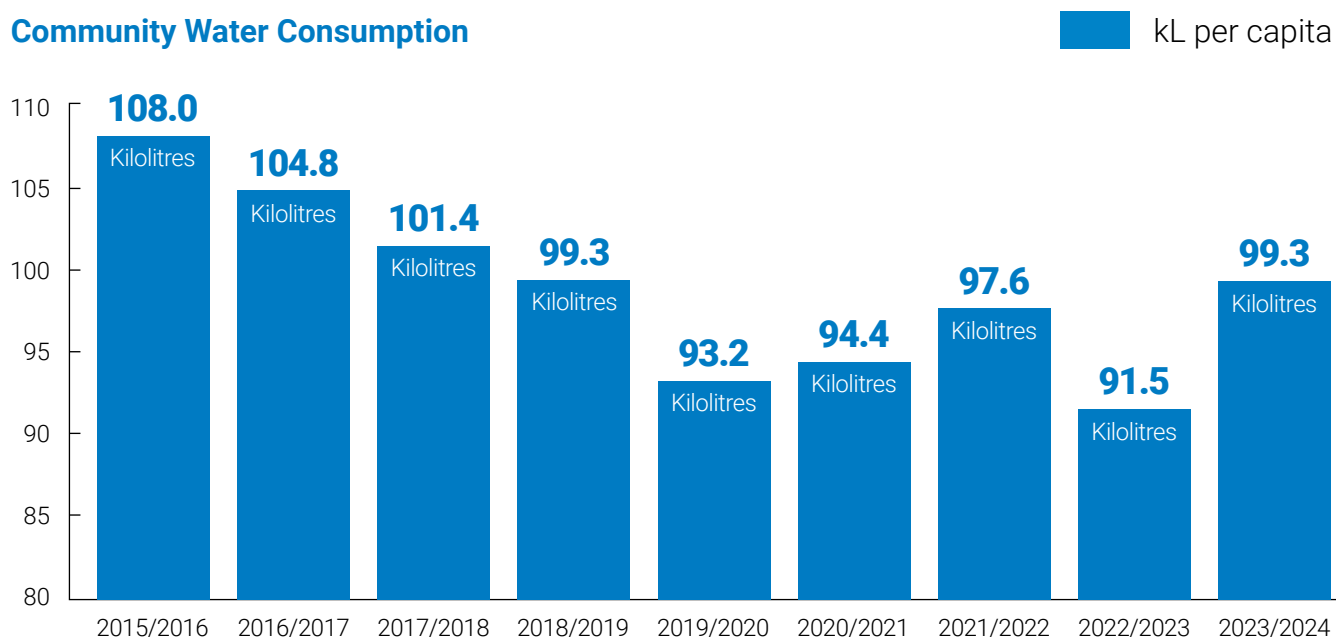
 **16%** reduction since 2015/2016

These locations include Warnbro Community Recreation Centre and two toilet blocks located across our Rockingham Foreshore. The City will continue to work towards further education and works to reduce water consumption at these locations moving forward.

- For the Warnbro Community Recreation Centre, following the rectification of a leak identified in 2022/2023 usage has dropped down to 887 kL in 2023/2024.

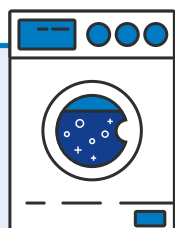


Community Water Consumption



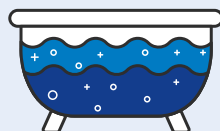
- The City's goal to reduce community water consumption by 15% by 2030 is still on track, based on a 2015 baseline. Community potable water consumption includes commercial, residential and education sector usage. Ongoing education and engagement with our community will continue to achieve this target, including the latest years promotion of water saving tips.

↓ **5%** reduction since 2015/2016



Highest residential water usage

Baldivis
32%

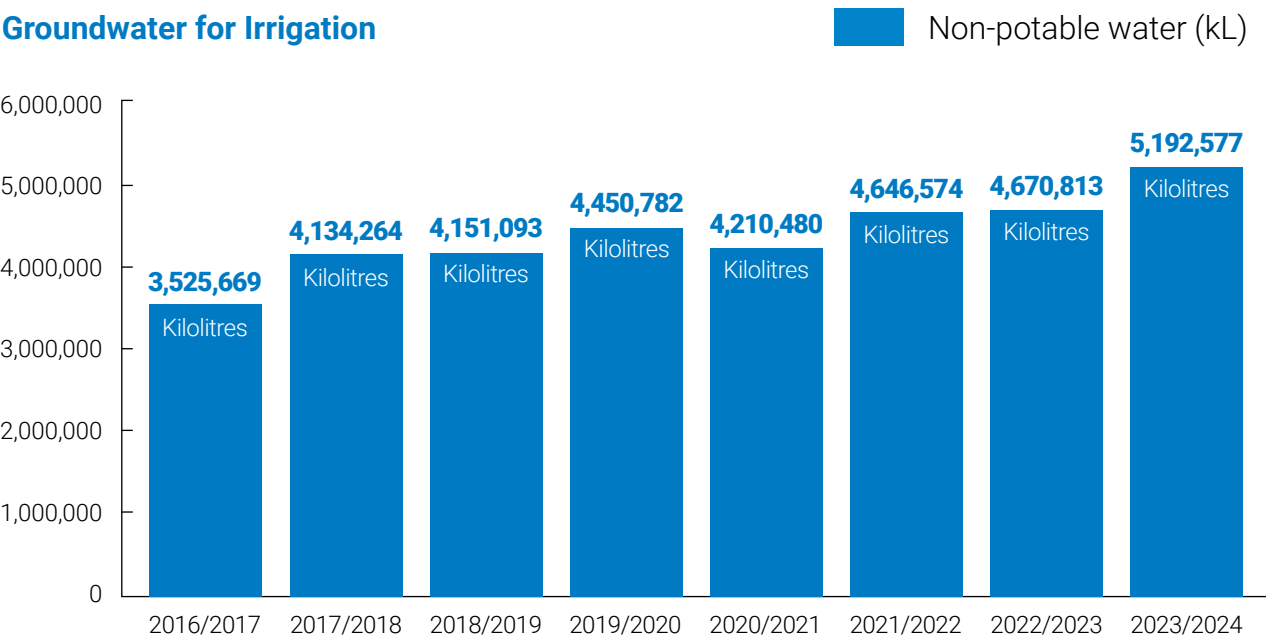


Highest consumption per unit

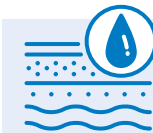
Secret Harbour
307 kL per year

Facts and Figures

Groundwater for Irrigation



- Six new public open spaces were transferred to the City between 2021/2022 and 2023/2024, contributing to 14 additional hectares of managed POS. As a result, the City’s licenced abstraction limit and annual abstraction volume has continued to increase, reflecting the growing number of irrigated reserves managed by the City.
- The Lark Hill Sporting Complex remains the City’s top groundwater consumer in 2023/2024 (151,672 kL). For this facility groundwater allocation includes irrigation of over 37 hectares of playing fields. The City intends to investigate installation of fertigation units to the existing irrigation system at a number of sporting complexes, including Lark Hill. This initiative will support more effective application of wetting agents resulting in more resilient turf that requires less groundwater consumption.



Groundwater consumption
was 4% less than the total allocation in 2023/2024

Focus Moving Forward

- Support residents to upgrade their verge to be waterwise, through introduction of a new waterwise verge subsidy in 2025.
- Maintain Gold Waterwise Council status by submitting annual progress reports to Water Corporation and implementing agreed water efficiency measures outlined in the Waterwise Council Action Plan 2021.



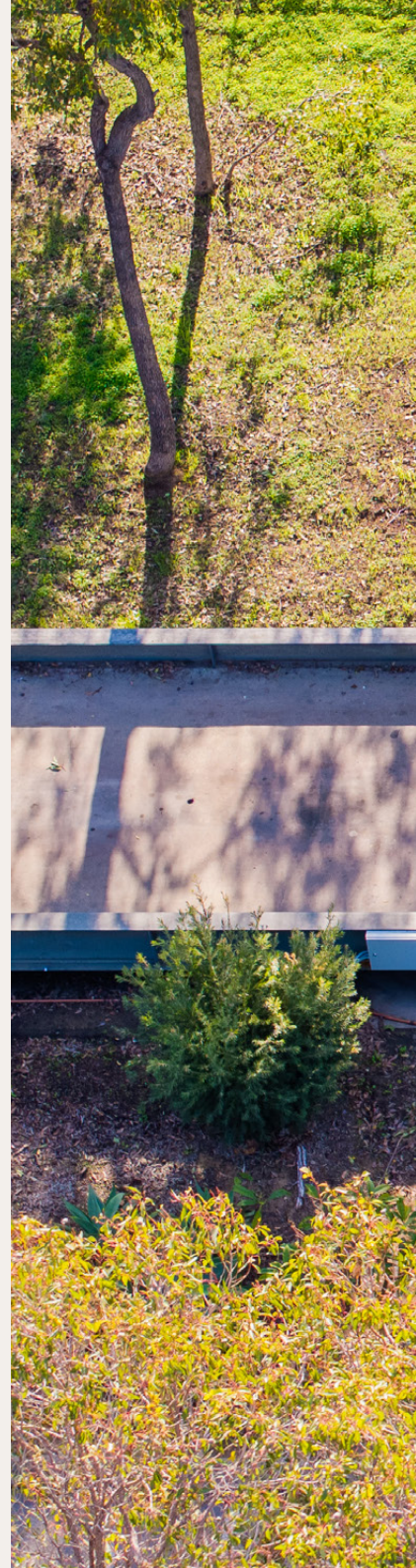


Waste and Recycling

Provision of waste and recycling services is a key function of local government. The City is uniquely positioned given the ownership and management of the Millar Road Landfill and Recycling Facility. We have a direct impact on the delivery of best practice waste management solutions and facilitation of waste education to our community.

In 2023/2024, diversion of residential waste from landfill was at approximately 39%. From mid-2025, our community will be introduced to a new FOGO (Food Organics, Garden Organics) kerbside collection and processing service. This follows the successful introduction of a garden organics (GO) kerbside system which increased material recovery from 20% to 37% over two financial year periods. This action is expected to support the City's target to increase diversion of residential waste from landfill and improve recovery of valuable material.

In 2024, State Government began the review of the State Waste Strategy (Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030). Following finalisation of the updated Waste Strategy, expected in 2025, the City will look to review and align with any new targets identified and implement best practice recovery solutions into our Waste Plan.





Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 2 - Natural Environment

1. Protection of natural environment:

Minimise waste.

Aspiration 3 – Built Environment

1. Built infrastructure meets current and future community needs

Plan, build and maintain current and future assets.



Key City Documents:

- Single Use Plastics and Balloons Council Policy
- Waste Plan 2020/2021

Updates and Achievements

- **Compost at Home Program**

The City offers residents the opportunity to obtain free indoor and outdoor composting bins. Since the program start in 2020, over 1,000 composting bins have been given away to residents.

In Rockingham, up to 50% of residential kerbside waste material that enters our landfill is organic material which could otherwise be recovered and put back into our soils. Feedback from the program has shown the positive impact composting can also have on social connection, getting the kids in the garden and reducing individual impact on the environment.

Composting at home can come in many forms and we recently expanded the program to support residents and to increase uptake in the community while building awareness and knowledge on alternative methods.

In early 2024, residents were offered worm farm 'kits' when attending an educational workshop. In total over three sessions 63 residents attended, 41 participants opted to receive a subsidy to purchase a 'kit' or worm-related materials on the day. Feedback from the Worm Farm 'kit' partial-subsidy and Compost at Home free bins will be used to inform future program revisions.

This introduction of worm farm workshops to the program was supported by a WasteSorted Community Education Grant funded by the Government of Western Australia and the Waste Authority.



three
workshops



63
participants



41 worm
farm kits
provided





• **Living Plastic Free**

In July, the City encourages the community to engage with the message of reducing single-use plastics and practice sustainable behaviours at home and work. This messaging strongly aligns with the City’s own Single Use Plastics and Balloon Policy.

In 2023, we partnered with Perth NRM and local clean-up group, Rockingham Beach Cleans, for our Corporate Volunteering Program, to increase awareness on how litter has a direct impact on our local environment. A total of 20 City Officers participated in a corporate beach clean-up day, collecting nine kilograms of litter (752 pieces).

The City presented a series of educational workshops and incentives to promote plastic free living during July 2024. In addition to our Library team workshops, our Environmental Education Officer supported:

four modern cloth nappy workshops

waste education games with younger children.

Further information on library workshops and community engagement can be found in the Environmental Education and Engagement Section of this report.

nine kilograms collected



752 pieces of litter



Updates and Achievements

- Green Award 2024**

For the first time, the City introduced a 'Green Award' which was open to local schools, businesses, community groups and individuals involved in a project which seeks to eliminate waste in the community and encourage sustainable practices. The award aims to recognise and showcase key projects which have been undertaken locally, demonstrating waste diversion while going above existing initiatives and policy.

For the 2023/2024 round, the City received a number of submissions from local schools, all undertaking a multitude of projects positively impacting the environment. Our judging panel selected, Mother Teresa Catholic College and their 'MTCC Sustainable Education Program' as the local school category winner.



Search 'Turn the Tide on Plastics' for more information on the winning project.

Green Award Winner 2024:
Mother Teresa Catholic College (MTCC)

Project Title:
MTCC Sustainable Education Program

Since 2016, MTCC has continued to evolve their multi-year level program to develop a Sustainability Centre hosting vegetable gardens, chicken coops, worm farms, composting bins, recycling bins and more. Year six students can become Sustainability Leaders communicating waste reduction goals to the whole college. A 'Green Team' consisting of year three to fives, take responsibility of looking after the centre during the week, and host market stalls to sell fresh produce, beeswax wraps and items collected from the centre.



This circular loop within the college demonstrates best practices in waste reduction and elimination while incorporating water saving and sustainable behaviours across the college and community. Over seven years, an estimated 10,000 kilograms of material has been saved from landfill by students.

As an accredited WasteSorted Schools, MTCC received grant funding to purchase compost bins, wicking beds, and related tools to process the school's food and green waste. This project was supported by the Government of Western Australia and the Waste Authority.



Updates and Achievements

- **E-Waste Recovery**

Capture of recycled materials at our recycling stations support ongoing material recovery in Rockingham. Residents can access free drop off of dry-cell household batteries, printer cartridges and mobile phones at our Administration Building and four local libraries. Both lithium-ion and other household batteries should be dropped off at a participating B-cycle location or at our Millar Road Landfill and Recycling Facility.

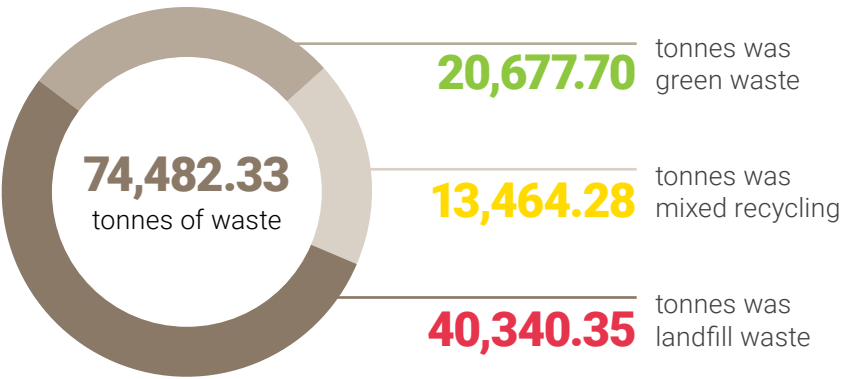
A waste audit of residential kerbside bins was conducted in the latter half of 2024. Results from the surveyed suburbs, compared with 2020, revealed an increase in the total percentage of batteries and vapes being placed into residential kerbside bins. The community is encouraged to drop-off electronic and hazardous waste (such as batteries, vapes and mobile phones) at selected facilities and not in kerbside bins.



Facts and Figures

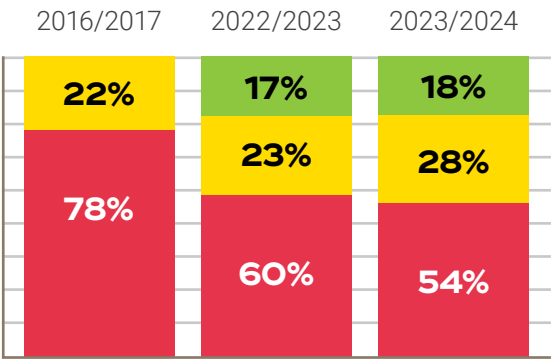


74,482.33 tonnes of residential waste material was collected in 2023/2024, which was 2,036.84 tonnes more than 2022/2023, resulting in a 3% increase, similar to population growth. Residential waste material refers to kerbside bin collections, hard waste verge collections and residential drop off at our Millar Road Landfill Facility.

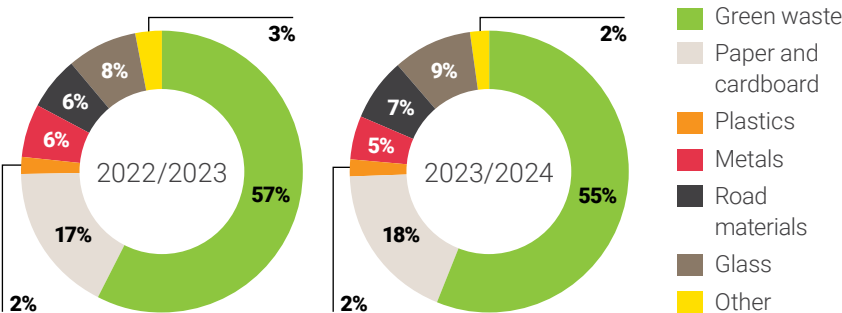


Residential Waste Collection (Tonnes)

	2016/2017	2022/2023	2023/2024
Green Waste	-	16,685.47	20,677.70
Recycling	17,200	12,281.08	13,464.28
Landfill	62,503	43,478.94	40,340.35
Total Waste	79,703	72,445.49	74,482.33



Breakdown of Recyclables Materials from Landfill



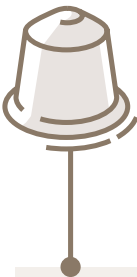
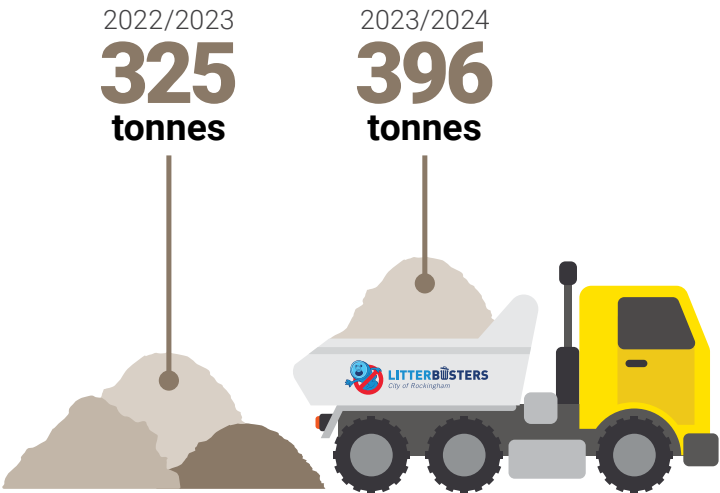
Recyclable materials are diverted from landfill, in addition to kerbside recycling by the City. Key resource avenues for material include green waste processing, material recovery facility and waste salvaged from landfill drop-off. The graph shown provides a breakdown of recyclables. In 2022/2023, **34,157.31 tonnes** was diverted and in 2023/2024 there was a slight decrease to **29,594.19 tonnes**.

Facts and Figures

LitterBusters

Since 2015, over 3,500 tonnes of litter has been collected through the City’s LitterBusters service. Across the last two financial years, 748 tonnes of litter was collected and 6,226 callouts received. In 2023/2024, the team have seen a slight increase in asbestos disposal from the last financial year.

Residents are encouraged to report unauthorised littering and illegal dumping by calling 1800 4 LITTER.



- **Recycling coffee capsules**
– Since 2022, aluminium coffee pods have been collected from City employees for recycling. Approximately 19,500 capsules have since been diverted from landfill.



- Tyres are recycled through a Tyre Stewardship Australia (TSA) accredited provider to ensure environmentally responsible management of end of life tyres. In 2022/2023 and 2023/2024, over **1,200 tyres** were recycled across the City’s vehicle fleet.



- **Containers for Change** – Eligible containers were recovered across a number of our 2023/2024 Summer Series Events, with over 1,000 containers recovered over four days.



- In 2022/2023, 70 kg of **printer cartridges** were recycled through a partnership with Close the Loop.

Focus Moving Forward

- Progress rollout of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) bin system to residents in mid-2025.
- Continue to progress actions outlined in the Waste Plan 2020/2021.
- In late 2024, works will start for the redevelopment of our Millar Road Landfill Facility to improve traffic management and increase material recovery.
- Continue facilitating the Compost at Home Program, considering feedback gained from previous participating community members.
- Reintroduce landfill tours for local schools and community groups to visit and learn more about our facilities and best practice waste management.
- Ongoing educational campaigns aligned with the State Government to promote responsible waste management and disposal within the community.



Energy and Emissions

As the City manages a large profile of facilities, services and infrastructure, identifying and implementing energy and emission reducing measures is a key priority. Ongoing installation of solar PV systems and energy efficiency upgrades is supported with the trialling of newer technology, such as electric tools and fleet vehicles, to achieve this outcome.



Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 2 - Natural Environment

1. Protection of natural environment:

Reduce City's energy and water usage.
Mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.

Aspiration 3 – Built Environment

1. Built infrastructure meets current and future community needs:

Plan, build and maintain current and future assets.



Key City Documents:

- Road Safety Management Plan 2023-2030
- Tourist Destination Strategy 2024
- Sustainability Strategy 2020
- Strategic Asset Management Plan 2021





Updates and Achievements

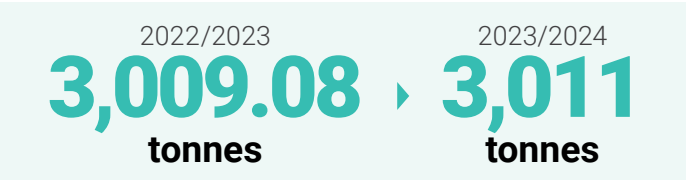
Reducing Fleet Emission

In 2024, the City alongside 21 Western Australian local governments received funding via the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) to support our vehicle fleets becoming electric. A total funding package for all local governments of \$3.51 million was received. Funding received by the City will support the introduction of **four battery electric vehicles (BEVs)** into our fleet vehicle mix during 2024/2025.

Benefits for transitioning our fleet to electric vehicles include, reducing our impact on air quality, lower running costs and lowering our emission profile. Data and feedback from internal employees will be gathered and responses received will be used to inform decision making moving forward to reduce the City’s overall emissions profile.

In October 2023, our Park Services team supported the trialling of a specially modified vehicle designed to carry and charge **battery-powered small equipment** such as line trimmers, blowers, hedge trimmers and chainsaws. The vehicle had two solar panels installed to charge the batteries and a robust battery storage (and charging) setup to ensure batteries aren’t damaged in transit. The City currently uses over 400 pieces of petrol-powered equipment so this pilot program will be an important step towards reducing our reliance on fossil-fuels. Battery electric equipment also reduces operating costs and is quieter to operate.

Offset emissions from City fleet



These projects form part of our ongoing commitment to reducing our environmental impact, while looking to transition our fleet toward zero-emission vehicles. The City has for many years offset fleet emissions, by purchasing offsets from accredited providers. Our **Carbon Neutral Fleet** has used a number of certified programs in Australia and overseas in the last two financial years. This includes 50% in 2022/2023 and 33% in 2023/2024 of offsets coming from the Yarra Yarra Biodiversity Corridor Project. As one of only 35 internationally recognised global biodiversity hotspots, this 13,000 hectare planting project, the largest reforestation carbon sink in Australia, helping to increase wildlife habitat and connectivity, and improve soil erosion. Additional offsets came from wind farms, reforestation, safe water projects and methane recovery from agricultural activities.



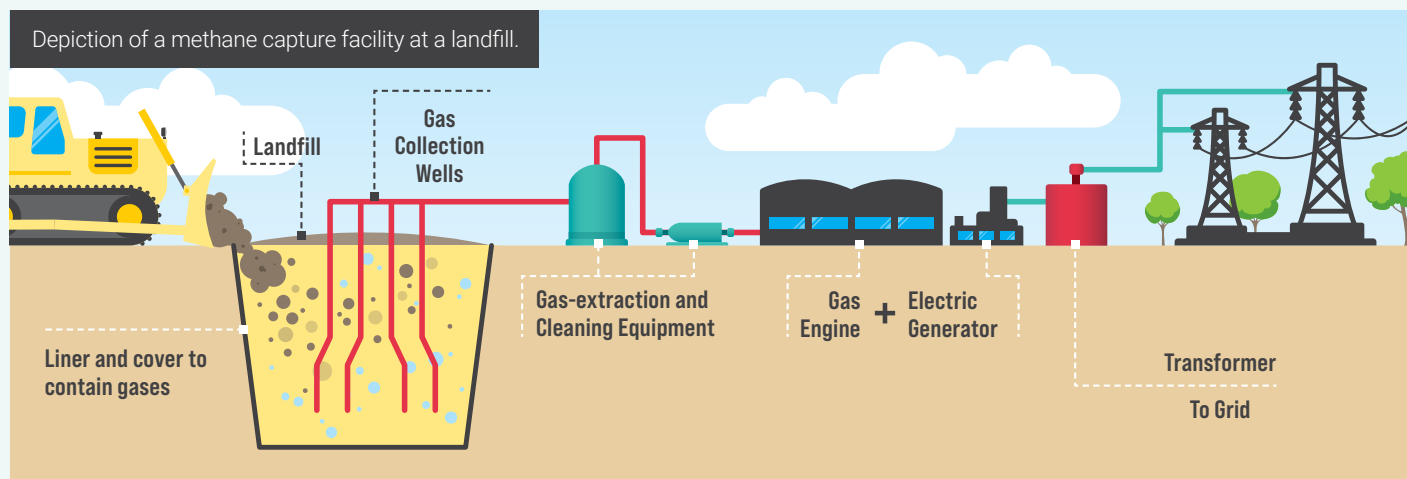
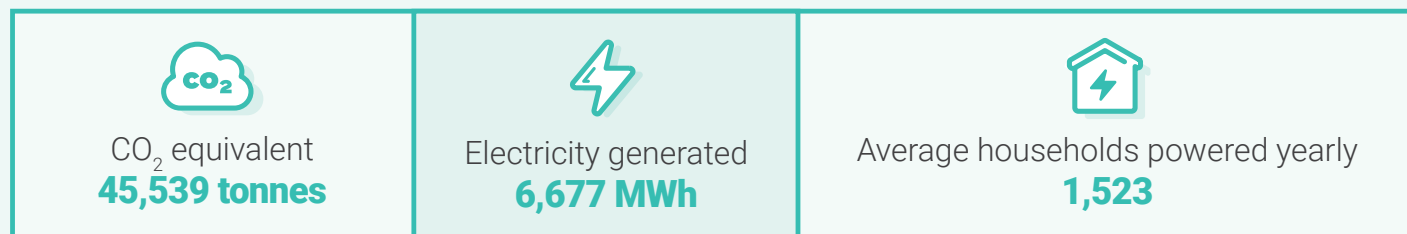
15 hybrid vehicles
across City fleet

Sustainable Energy Procurement Program

The City is involved in a WALGA led Sustainable Energy Project, which concentrates on sourcing renewable energy to participating Western Australian local governments. Since joining in March 2022, the project has supported our highest consuming sites being powered by renewable energy (50% offset between April 2023 – March 2024, and 100% offset between April 2024 – March 2025). This has resulted in the offset of **2,158 tonnes of CO₂e**, to June 2024. At the conclusion of the three-year contract the City is expected to have saved on overall energy consumption costs, while moving our operations to be powered by more renewable energy sources.

Methane Harvesting

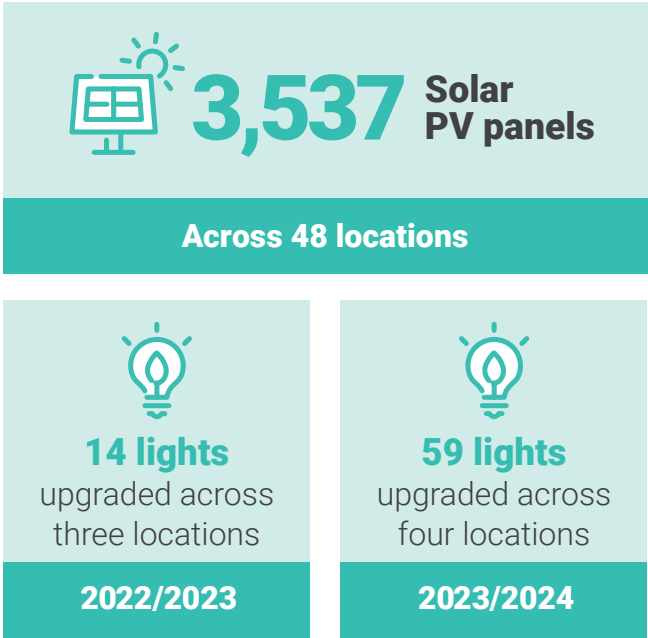
Methane from the City's Millar Road Landfill Facility is able to be captured, converted into electricity and input back into the grid. Methane is one of the most harmful greenhouse gases contributing to climate change, therefore reducing methane emissions is crucial. Across 2022/2023 and 2023/2024, an average of **45,539 tonnes of CO₂e** (carbon dioxide equivalent) was captured as methane from decomposing waste from landfill and transformed into electricity; as shown in the diagram below.



Facts and Figures

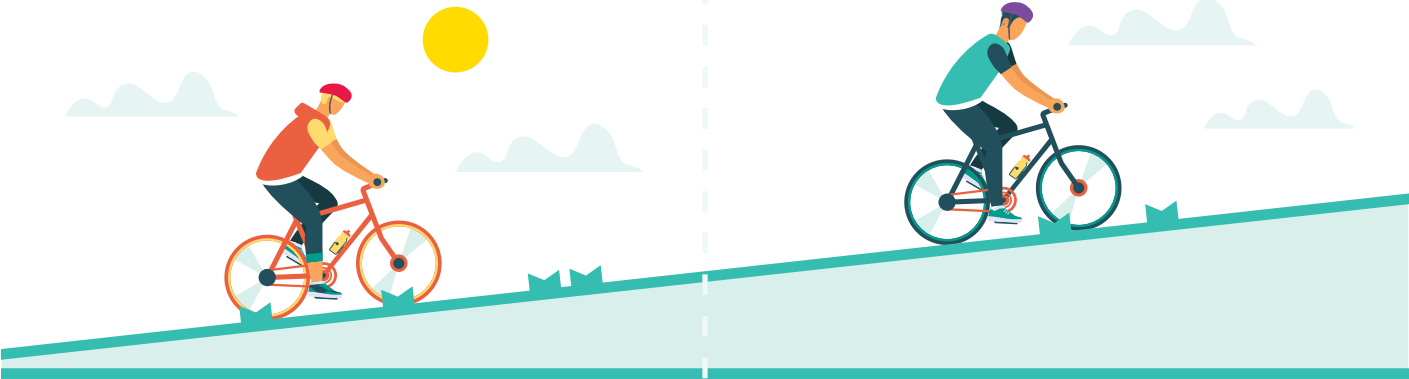
Energy Efficiency Upgrades

- Solar PV**
As of June 2024, the City manages a total of 3,537 solar PV panels across 48 locations, with 33 buildings housing 3,485 of these panels. The remaining 11 locations are associated with solar lighting in parks and along road reserves. One new solar PV system was installed in 2022/2023 and no new installations were completed in 2023/2024. One site was delayed until 2024/2025.
- LED Lighting Upgrades**
Ongoing replacement of older lighting to LEDs forms part of the City's lighting removal plan. In the last two financial years, 73 lights were upgraded to LEDs.



3.45 km of new bike paths installed in 2022/2023

4.02 km of new bike paths installed in 2023/2024



Focus Moving Forward

- **Sustainable Transport Plan** – Creation of a Sustainable Transport Plan is an identified action in the City's Sustainability Strategy. Moving forward this plan will be renamed to an Integrated Transport Plan. The plan will focus on delivering infrastructure that supports healthier lifestyle choices by creating well-connected networks for walking, biking, and driving—making it easier and safer for all residents travel within the City and surrounds.
- Continue working on the establishment of real-time energy monitoring across City facilities with existing solar installations. In addition to, supporting the development of an emissions reporting online tool to capture key emission sources across our operations.
- Continue to source renewable energy to supply suitable facilities through the WALGA Sustainable Energy Procurement Program. Review contract renewal from end of March 2025.



Nature and Environment

An ongoing challenge with our growing population is the provision of housing whilst protecting and enhancing the significant natural environments located within the City. Our Environmental Management Plans identify and support the management of our diverse range of flora and fauna in City managed reserves.

In 2025, we will be releasing our Urban Forest Strategy (to supersede the 2017 Greening Plan), providing an updated pathway forward to increasing canopy while preserving biodiversity.





Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 2

– Natural Environment

2. Sustainable natural green spaces:

Preserve and enhance biodiversity.
Improve community open spaces.
Improve amenity.
Increase tree canopy.

Aspiration 3

– Built Environment

2. Plan for sustainable growth

Balance growth while maintaining the identified natural environment.



Key City Documents:

- Greening Plan 2017
(under review)
- Wetland Management Plan
(to be reviewed in 2025)
- Lake Richmond Management Plan
- **Foreshore Management Plan 2024
(to supersede 2016 version)**
- Natural Area Conservation Strategy 2017
- Reserve Prioritisation Report
- Bushland Management Plan
- Tamworth Hill Swamp Management Plan
- Planning Policy 3.1.1 – Rural Land Strategy
- Public Open Space Community Plan Strategy (2020-2025)

Updates and Achievements

- **Save our Snake-Necked Turtle Program**

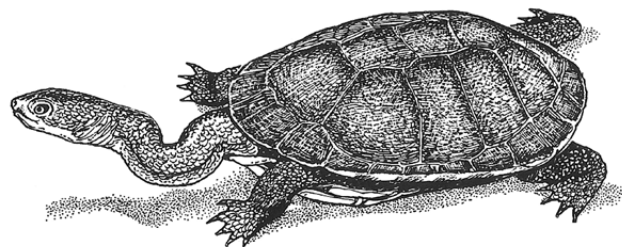
The Saving Our Snake-Necked Turtle Program, is a partnership between local governments and Murdoch University which seeks to empower citizen scientists to record and protect this important species. The City assisted in the recruitment of community members and selection of two wetlands to support the program outcomes.

In 2023, volunteers patrolled two wetlands (Hawker Lake, Safety Bay and Lagoon Lake, Secret Harbour) on the look-out for the South-Western Snake Necked Turtle (*Chelodina oblonga*). Rockingham's dedicated volunteers logged a total of 200 hours volunteer time, recording 71 live turtles (including two hatchlings) and protecting 17 nests from predation. Across all 20 participating local governments a total of 648 nests were protected and 1,621 live turtles recorded by 14 Turtle Tracker teams.

At Hawker Lake, a slight increase in turtle size and population number was observed, likely a result of lower water lake levels. One hatchling was observed at this reserve suggesting that environmental conditions are suitable to support breeding. Protection of nests by Turtle Trackers should help to restore successful breeding, boosting the local population. Only one dead turtle and one destroyed egg were recorded, likely due to the strong presence of Turtle Trackers limiting predation.

Comparatively Lagoon Lake, had fewer turtles captured than previous seasons, likely due to trap tampering varying results. A small number of turtles were observed and no nests protected, although several destroyed nests were recorded. Foxes, cats and ravens are key predators for the turtles, these species are all targeted for control in the majority of the City's nature reserves.

In late 2024, the City will again recruit local community members to conduct turtle surveys. The wetlands selected in 2024 will include Rivergums Reserve, Baldvis and Hawker Lake, Safety Bay. Results from the 2024 season will be reported to the City in early 2025.



16 Turtle Trackers



200 Volunteer Hours



- **Frog Monitoring**

Frogs are known to be good environmental indicators, and as such, were identified by the City to be monitored for the long-term effects of climate change on a number of wetlands. A baseline assessment of 15 wetlands was initially conducted in 2014 to determine the frog species assemblage within the City. Occupancy modelling was proposed as a monitoring technique to determine the status of populations of the Squelching Froglet (*Crinia insignifera*) as part of this assessment. Since then, the City has undertaken frog monitoring annually, with the most recent monitoring completed in August 2023 across 50 survey sites distributed across 14 wetlands.

Key results from the survey have been summarised:

Call recording results captured a total of five frog species including *C. insignifera* (Squelching Froglet), *C. glauerti* (Clicking Frog), *L. adelaidensis* (Slender Tree Frog), *L. moorei* (Motorbike Frog) and *L. dorsalis* (Western Banjo Frog).

The most common species of frog was the target species, *C. insignifera* (Squelching Froglet) detected at 39 sites and the most species diverse site was Lake Richmond with five species recorded from each site.

Occupancy rates at seasonal wetlands during 2023 was the highest yet recorded although not significantly higher than 2021 and 2022 where detection of frogs was higher in wetlands with a depth of greater than 1 cm and less than 1 m.

Positive results recorded in 2023 indicate that wetlands are currently responding well to potential climate change impacts and as such, no management response was triggered for 2024.



Squelching Froglet (*Crinia insignifera*), Biota Environmental Sciences

Updates and Achievements

- **Microbat Nest Boxes**

In September 2023, 18 microbat nest boxes were installed around Lake Richmond. Nest boxes were kindly donated by students from the Rockingham Senior High School Education Support Centre, built under the guidance of bat expert, Joe Tonga.

This action falls under the City's Lake Richmond Management Plan. Aiming to support species population increase by providing suitable roosting boxes where they can breed. The City will explore further community education through installation of interpretive signage at the lake.



Bat Boxes - Lake Richmond

- **Little Penguins**

Penguin Island is a popular tourism destination where the City continues its advocacy efforts to help sustain the Little Penguin population on the island. This included contributing \$37,000 in funding towards the 2023 Little Penguin Population Estimate study.

The 2023 Little Penguin Population Estimate study, conducted by expert scientist Dr Belinda Cannell from the University of Western Australia (UWA), found that for the period of study, the population on Penguin Island had decreased by approximately 64% since the last population estimate study in 2019, and by approximately 94% since 2008. The decline reflects lower breeding participation and/or fewer penguins to breed, and changes in the mortality rate of adults.

The City, Department of Biodiversity, Conservations and Attractions (DBCA) and expert researchers from Murdoch University and UWA continue to support the conservation of Little Penguin's in identifying management and research priorities that can be implemented in an effort to support the penguin population and reduce any further population decline.

Population study estimates in collaboration with Dr Cannell and DBCA will continue to be implemented to guide effective management strategies aimed at sustaining the Little Penguin Population on Penguin Island. The next study is scheduled to take place late 2024.



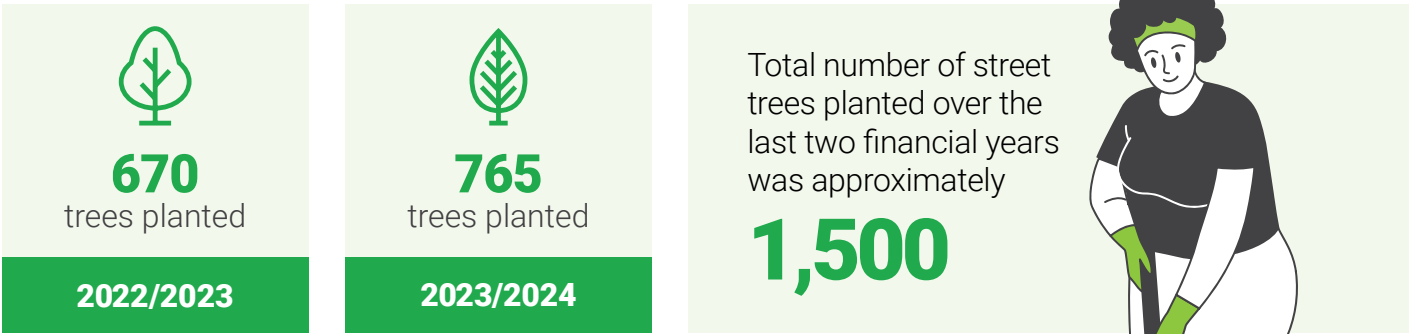
Native Plants Giveaway

To support residents in building waterwise gardens, while helping establish neighbourhood habitat for wildlife the City offers an annual one-day native, waterwise plant giveaway. Since 2018, a total of 57,000 seedlings have been given away. In addition to the reallocation of 11,000 seedlings in 2020 to City-managed reserves following event cancellation.



Urban Greening

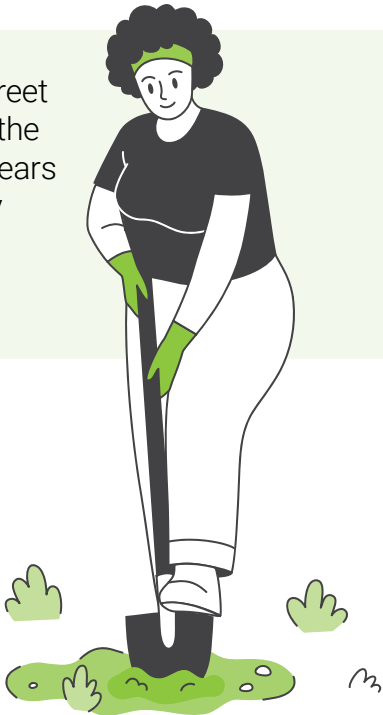
Increase tree canopy cover and improved tree retention is a key priority for the City. New targets for urban canopy coverage will be developed as part of the new Urban Forest Strategy, in early 2025.



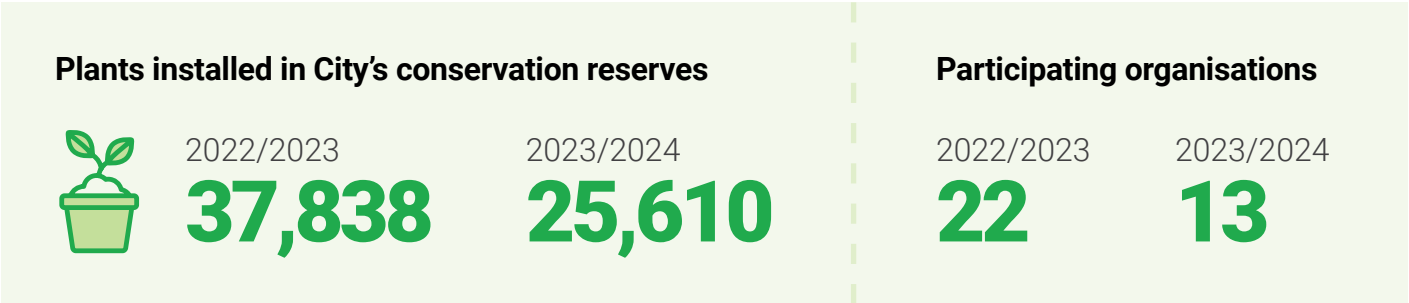
As of June 2024, the City manages **445 POS areas, totalling 2,142 hectares.**



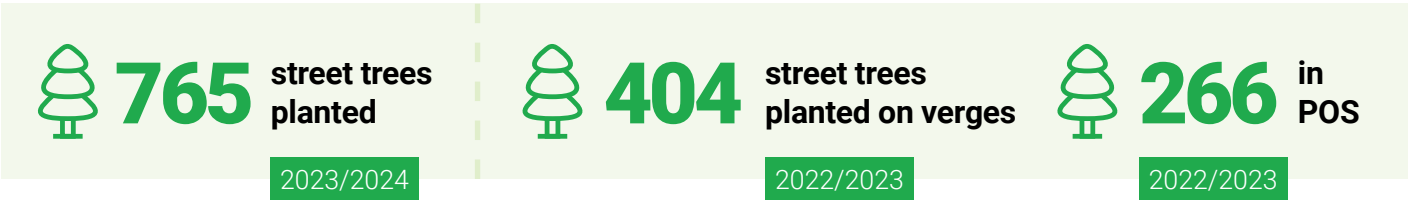
To maintain and manage these areas, the City has **100 dedicated staff employed.**



Facts and Figures



- Winter Street Tree Planting** - In the last two financial years, a total of **1,169 trees** were planted on residential verges as part of the Winter Street Tree Planting.



- Urban Canopy Grant** - In 2023/2024, the City received funding through the WALGA Urban Canopy Grant Program (Round 2) to assist in the installation of 436 street trees. In 2024/2025, Round 3 funding secured will support a further 1,060 trees planted across the City in winter 2025.

- Community Planting Days** - In partnership with Perth NRM, the City engages with local community groups and schools to undertake community planting days in our coastal reserves. In 2023/2024, a total of 19,780 seedlings were planted across nine reserves. Although the number of participating groups and schools was lower in 2023/2024 there has been an increase in the total number of volunteers.

	2022/2023	2023/2024
Community Planting Days	18	15
Number of plants	22,980	19,780
Number of reserves	21	9
Number of volunteers	1074	1323



Focus Moving Forward

- Planned release of our Urban Forest Strategy in 2025.
- Continue to implement measures to protect and enhance environmental values through identified actions under the Planning Strategy – Environmental Protection.
- Provide key updates to the environmental management plans to be reviewed in 2025, including: Greening Plan and Wetland Management Plan.
- Continue to implement actions identified in the City's Environmental Management Plans.
- Continue to giveaway free waterwise, native plants through the City's annual Native Plants Giveaway.
- Continue to participate in the DBCA Little Penguin Working Group.
- Proposed amendment to the Cat Local Law 2018 considered for further review in 2024.





Environmental Education and Engagement

The City provides a range of opportunities for community to get involved, learn and be empowered to engage in sustainable behaviours. In late 2023, the City employed an Environmental Education Officer to support further sustainability and waste education amongst the community. Key areas of focus across the last two financial years included environmental awareness, healthy lifestyles and reducing waste.





Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 1 – Social

1. Connected community:

Provide opportunities for community engagement and participation.

2. Community health and wellbeing:

Strengthen community health and wellbeing.

4. Inclusive community

Build connectivity with our diverse community.



Key City Documents:

- **Strategy for Early Years, Children and Young People 2024-2023**
- **Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2029**
- Volunteering Strategy 2016
- Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy 2018
- Library and Information Strategy 2017
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023 **(update to be released mid-2025)**
- Community Safety and Support Services Strategy 2022-2027



WA Tree Festival

The City joined in on the **WA Tree Festival** for the first year in 2024; a joint initiative by City of Stirling and the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) and other participating local governments. The festival aligns with the City's Greening Plan and aims to promote the importance of trees as contributors to cooler suburbs, habitat for wildlife and their impact on general health and wellbeing.

As part of our program, the City expanded on our existing Native Plants Giveaway and Street Tree Planting, to support a bird walk and promotion of a 'Hero Trail' between April and May 2024. The Don Shepherd Nature Reserve and Nyoongar Trail was selected as our 'Hero Trail', and is a unique reserve featuring Jarrah, Banksia species and Marri with undergrowth of shrubs, orchids and other wildflowers. It also provides habitat for a range of fauna species including various birds. During the bird walk event, community members were able to identify 22 different bird species. The site also provides residents with a connection to the Nyoongar people through a trail depicting signage of the six indigenous seasons.

Bird Walk

25 participants

22 species identified





Grow It Local

Grow It Local is a community initiative encouraging residents to grow, share and eat locally grown produce. Since partnering as a Council Member in January 2020, the number of community members participating has grown by 26% in the last financial year. A total of **1,089 members** are now participating as of June 2024.

Alongside this partnership, the City held another six week 'Grow.Cook.Eat' workshop series in Spring 2023, with around 25 residents in attendance for each session of the workshop series. Feedback received from attendees was positive with 100% of participants reporting to take proactive steps in reducing food waste within their households and making healthier food choices.

26% growth, **1,089** community members as of 2023/2024



amongst WA local governments in Grow it Local participation

Across 2023/2024, the City delivered 11 food nutrition workshops to residents to gain awareness of healthy eating habits, cooking skills, reduce food waste and undertake hands-on nutrition activities.

11 nutrition workshops ... delivered to ... **140** residents

- **Seed Library** - In addition to the Seed Service offered through our partnership with Grow It Local, our City libraries offer a Seed Library free to local members. Residents can access this service through the hosting library to get free vegetable seeds to grow at home. Participants are encouraged to bring back seeds and to help continue the cycle for more residents to participate.
- **Castaways Sculpture Awards**, held in October, is an annual event which promotes awareness of environmental issues through the repurposing of materials for a sculptural exhibition. In 2023, a free Beachcombing event was held by Perth NRM encouraging families to discover treasures washed ashore.
- On 20 January 2024, a **Community Fun Day** was held using the theme of sustainability. Community members were able to access resources and activities to reduce waste, increase environmental awareness and learn to build new skills (such as bike repair).
- **Community Grants** are offered by the City for eligible community groups to undertake works which benefit the natural environment. In 2024, grant funding was allocated to support the undertaking of weed control in conservation reserves and installation of new plants.
- **Bike Month** – Cycling is one way that individuals can participate in active mobility. During October, the City promotes the positive impacts of cycling, supporting residents through provision of bike maintenance and bike safety through in-person workshops and social media.

Facts and Figures



**Sustainability related
workshops and events held
through City Libraries**

46

**Sustainability
Workshops Held**

2022/2023

39

**Sustainability
Workshops Held**

2023/2024

Walk Safety to School Day – May 2023 and 2024

In 2023 and 2024, 25 schools were registered to take part in Walk Safety to School Day. The City actively supports this national event, providing a free healthy breakfast to participating schools. Aimed to encourage active travel alternatives in 2024, an 86% increase in active travel methods (such as walking, biking and scooting) was seen on the day compared to normal of those schools surveyed.



25

**registered
schools in May**

2023/2024

Focus Moving Forward

- Release the first edition of electronic newsletter '**GREEN**' in late 2024, promoting sustainability, environmental and resource recovery initiatives to the community.
- Continue to promote sustainability through educational workshops and City events, including Castaways October 2024.
- Continue to partner with Grow It Local to support residents in learn to grow and share food locally.
- Partner with ReWild Perth in 2024/2025 to expand educational messaging on the benefits of bringing nature back into our gardens.
- Look to deliver new initiatives outlined in the City's Environmental Education Program to community members in 2024/2025, including the Sustainable Parenting Program and the Rockingham Reserve Program.



Climate Response

A key general function of local government is to plan for mitigating risks associated with climate change and when making decisions, to consider potential long-term consequences and impacts on future generations.

The latest 2024 State of the Climate Report by CSIRO, reports on the exacerbation of weather and climate extremes and their impact on existing pressures on health and wellbeing, for both communities and the environment. Ongoing review of climate-related risks continues to be assessed and actioned through the implementation of our strategic documents.



Strategic Community Plan Objectives:

Aspiration 2 - Natural Environment

1. Protection of natural environment:

Mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.

Aspiration 3 – Built Environment

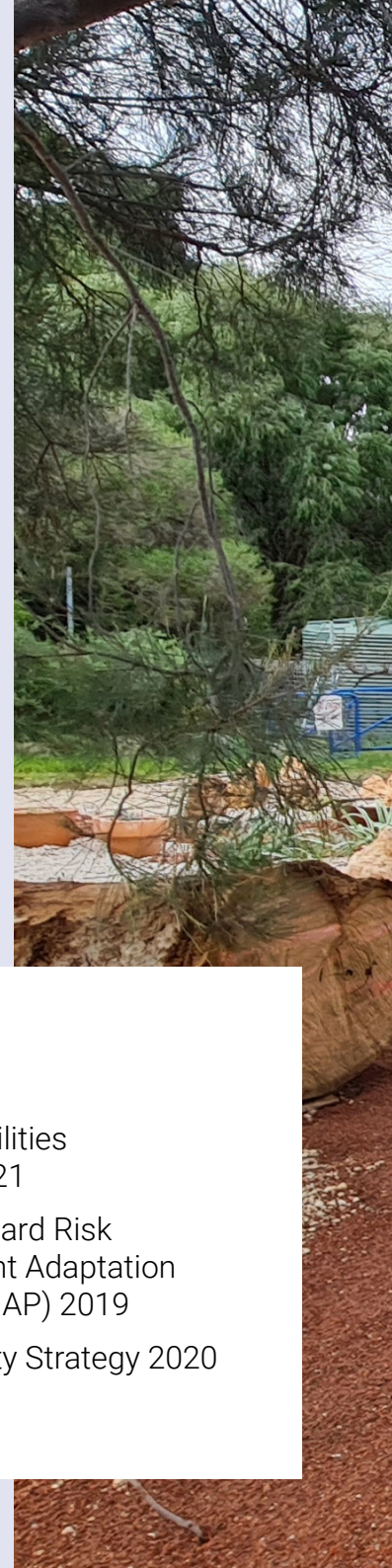
2. Plan for sustainable growth

Balance growth while maintaining the identified natural environment.



Key City Documents:

- Coastal Facilities Strategy 2021
- Coastal Hazard Risk Management Adaptation Plan (CHRMAP) 2019
- Sustainability Strategy 2020





Firewise Demonstration Garden - Naragebup

Updates and Achievements

Peron Naturalist Partnership

The Peron-Naturaliste Partnership (PNP) is a collective of nine Local Governments located between Point Peron and Cape Naturaliste. The City joined the PNP in 2011, recognising the importance of taking a regional and collaborative approach to coastal management.

As part of our involvement the City joined the CoastSnap initiative, installing our first coastal photo monitoring stand at Shoalwater Beach in 2020. Feedback from a 2022 community values survey, supported the review of coastal values of beach goers and coastal vulnerability for this section of coastline.

Following its success, a second stand was installed at Waikiki Beach in 2024 to support additional monitoring of coastal changes, while engaging beach goers on coastal vulnerabilities.

Coastal Monitoring Plan

The City's CHRMAP endorsed by Council in 2019 provides a framework for adapting to coastal hazards over the next 100 years; while prioritising management actions for the next ten years.

A Coastal Monitoring Plan, identified within the City's CHRMAP, is to be delivered for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the long-term success of the CHRMAP. The Plan identifies key objectives over a period of six years (2023-2029), including improving understanding of coastal processes contributing to coastal change, collection of data to inform the 2029 review of our CHRMAP, and inform design and funding of future projects and structures.

In addition to ongoing actions, the Plan identifies budget to support key initiatives such as, metocean monitoring, sediment transport analysis and hydrographic and terrestrial laser scanning surveys.



Waikiki Beach - CoastSnap Stand



Firewise Demonstration Garden

In October 2023, the City partnered with the Forever Project and Naragebup (Rockingham Regional Environment Centre) to launch a firewise demonstration garden. Residents living in bushfire prone areas can build more fire resilient landscapes to assist in the protection of home and property against the threat of bushfire.

Open to the public at Naragebup, community can walk around the garden and observe different components of a firewise garden. When creating a firewise garden a number of key firewise design principles are considered, including:

- **Landscape Design** – consideration of design elements such as reducing fuel volume, creating breaks in the design (i.e. for paths, driveways), remove overhanging vegetation and lower ember sources, are all considered essential to a firewise design. Regular and planned maintenance is essential for achieving a successful firewise garden.
- **Choose Firewise Plants** – some species are more fire-retardant, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has developed a guide for WA residents to further understand flammability rating for plants that will assist in determining suitability and selection of firewise plants.
- **Water conservation** – install efficient irrigation, consider collecting rainwater and recycling greywater for an alternate water supply, use hydrozoning principles to group plants with similar water needs and use non-combustible wind breaks and shading to create cooler areas.
- **Material selection** – consider the use of locally sourced, repurposed and recycled low flammability materials. Avoid using timber-lined edging, raised timber or plastic garden beds that can easily burn. Use firewise, non-combustible mulch.
- **Biodiversity** – select native species with low-flammability characteristics that can also attract insects, birds and animals and provide a home for native bees.



Further information can be found by searching 'Emergency Preparedness' on the City's website.



Facts and Figures

Point Peron Sand Trap

Sand naturally captured as the result of the Garden Island causeway builds up over time at our Point Peron sand trap. Excavated sand from this location is used for the renourishment of sites with significant erosion issues, while also ensuring safe access to the Point Peron boat ramp.

Between July 2022 and June 2024, the City excavated **26,848 m³** of sand from the Point Peron sand trap. Sand was relocated for development in-fill and at the Safety Bay and Waikiki foreshore locations.



Focus Moving Forward

- Continue to progress actions and works identified within the City's CHRMAP, including actions included within our Coastal Monitoring Plan.
- Develop procedure to guide expenditure of the CHRMAP Reserve (0.25% of the total rate yield), used for implementation of the CHRMAP.
- Continue to engage with external partnerships – Cities Power Partnership and Peron Naturalist Partnership – to deliver upon climate mitigation measures.
- Review locations for a second firewise demonstration garden in Rockingham.
- **Heat Vulnerability Project** – A two year project in partnership with the Department of Communities and WA Department of Health, aimed to reduce disaster risk related to periods of high heat. It will focus on implementing interventions to support at-risk residents in the community across a number of pilot local government areas. For the City, key focus areas during the pilot will include a subsidy scheme for cooling items, transportation to cool spaces, places to cool off and training on ways to keep cool. Project completion expected in 2025.





Acknowledgements

The City wishes to acknowledge the following teams who collectively work to deliver the various sustainability actions detailed in this report.



Operations and
Fleet Services



Community
Capacity Building



Technical Services



Land Development
and Infrastructure



Library Services



Parks Services



Strategic Planning
and Environment



Waste Services

Further, thank you to all City of Rockingham residents who contribute towards our sustainable future.



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