




# Geelong Sustainability Annual Report 2024





Geelong Sustainability acknowledges the Wadawurrung, Eastern Maar and Gunditjmara People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies where we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past, and present. We recognise their stewardship and continuing connection to Country, Culture and Community.

Sovereignty was never ceded. Always Was and Always Will Be, Aboriginal land.

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# About Geelong Sustainability

**Geelong Sustainability is a not-for-profit community organisation and registered charity that supports residents of Geelong and surrounding regions to be more sustainable in their everyday lives.**

Since our establishment in 2007, Geelong Sustainability has become the region's leading sustainability group with extensive networks in community, government and business throughout Geelong and the Barwon region. We are recognised for our values-based innovative projects, which educate and support our community's transition to a net-zero emissions, climate ready future.

We have 182 financial members, 42 business supporters, over 50 active volunteers, and a broader base of 20,000 newsletter and social media followers.



## OUR VISION

For people and our planet to thrive within sustainable limits.

## OUR MISSION

Empowering people to protect and regenerate our planet.

## OUR VALUES

**Objectivity** - We ensure contemporary data and evidence-based research informs our work and determines our goals and priorities.

**Passion and Positivity** - We are passionate about promoting positive action that has a meaningful impact on our community and planet.

**Democracy and Empowerment** - We seek to engage and empower people, businesses and communities with democratic processes, real life experiences, up-to-date knowledge and practical tools that enable effective action.

**Respect and Trust** - We always act in a manner that respects people, builds collaboration and sustains public trust in our organisation.

**Innovation** - We are highly adaptive and responsive to change, building on our strong foundations to experiment with new ways of doing things that are different and better.

**Diversity and Inclusion** - We are proactively getting people involved, demonstrating that diversity, equity and inclusion make our community richer and stronger.





# Our Team 2023-24

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## BOARD

David Spear  
Marilyn Harris  
Sara van der Meer  
Neil Plummer  
Vivienne Burke  
Fred Ritman  
Emma Connan  
Stuart Mkojera-Thomson

## VOLUNTEERS

Vicki Perrett  
Yvonne Parker  
James Rourke-Dunkley  
Taryn Fisher  
Scott Barnes

## GIFT FUND SUBCOMMITTEE

Dave Campbell  
Fred Ritman  
Sarah Jelley

## STAFF

Dan Cowdell  
Emilie Flynn  
Tania Bartlett  
Karina Donkers  
Emma Chessell  
Ruth Blackhirst

## PROJECT COORDINATORS

Georgie Allen  
Sahar Naghashian



# Chair & CEO's Report

2024 has been another fantastic year for Geelong Sustainability, one marked by significant growth both in the scope of our projects and the strength of our team. We are proud of the milestones we've achieved, reflecting the dedication of our staff, volunteers and partners, as well as the community's ongoing support for a sustainable future.

We've continued our efforts to support not-for-profit organisations in accessing vital energy upgrades through the Community Energy Revolving Fund and Community Power Hub program. Our 2023 Electric Homes Program, which saw exceptional results, has been expanded into 2024, allowing even more households to transition to cleaner, more efficient energy solutions.

This year also saw us amplify our advocacy for climate action. We engaged with state and federal Members of Parliament (MPs), voicing the need for immediate and effective policies to combat climate change. These efforts are complemented by our work with new partners, including local councils and businesses, which have been essential in broadening our reach and strengthening the impact of our initiatives.

The growth and evolution of our organisation have necessitated

some significant shifts in our governance approach this year. At our Special General Meeting in October 2023, we adopted new rule changes, following extensive consultation, to better reflect our current scale and the changing needs of Geelong Sustainability. These updates are essential for ensuring we remain agile, transparent, and accountable as we continue to expand.

Our focus has also been on developing our long-term vision through Strategy 2030. This strategic framework will guide our priorities and actions over the next decade, enabling us to maximise our impact on environmental sustainability and community resilience.

We are proud to have taken steps towards First Nations justice by including Welcome to Country ceremonies at our major events throughout the year and ensuring deep and genuine Acknowledgements of Country are given where Welcomes are not possible. Our participation in NAIDOC Week through the "First Nations Voices on Climate Action" event has further deepened our engagement with First Nations communities and perspectives.

We have continued to expand our reach and influence through

projects with new stakeholders, such as Western Alliance for Climate Action (WAGA), RACE for 2030, and West Wind Energy.

At the beginning of FY24 we budgeted a deficit in order to invest our cash holdings in additional staff capacity. The final deficit was half what was forecast, which is an excellent result. In 2023, we were thrilled to welcome Tania Bartlett as our Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Emma Chessell as Community Energy Officer, and in early 2024 we welcomed Ruth Blackhirst to the Electric Homes Program.

## LOOKING FORWARD

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we are also preparing for a significant transition. At the end of 2024, we will bid farewell to our CEO, Dan Cowdell. Dan has been instrumental in guiding Geelong Sustainability through a period of incredible growth, and while we are sad to see him go, we are also excited about what the future holds. His leadership has positioned the organisation to continue thriving, and we are confident that this transition will open up new opportunities for both the team and the broader community. We are excited to welcome a new CEO to continue Geelong Sustainability's

evolution and growth into our next phase.

In early 2025, with our Strategy 2030 bedded down, we will move forward with implementing our new vision and strategic priority areas.

Geelong Sustainability remains deeply committed to building a sustainable future for our region, and none of this would be possible without the support of our members, volunteers, and partners. We are incredibly grateful for the contributions of everyone involved, and we look forward to another year of progress, innovation, and community impact. Together, we can create a lasting legacy of environmental stewardship, and we are excited for what 2025 will bring.



David Spear  
Chair

Dan Cowdell  
CEO

# Our Impact



## 17 YEARS OF OPERATION

Established in October 2007, Geelong Sustainability is celebrating 17 years of supporting our community to live more sustainably.



## \$1,675,310 OF GRANTS RECEIVED

From Local and State Governments since our establishment in 2007.



## 129,375 TONS OF CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS AVOIDED

Over the lifetime of Geelong Sustainability initiated projects and activities.



## \$9,446,167 OF INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

Within the community as a result of Geelong Sustainability initiated projects and activities.





# Our Reach

7,725 NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS

31 Emails Sent to Subscribers

12,500 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn  
throughout Australia

113,050 WEBSITE VIEWS

Across Business EnergyTips,  
EnergyTips, the Sustainability Directory,  
and Geelong Sustainability websites

12 ARTICLES IN THE MEDIA

Newspapers, Radio and Local  
Community Newsletters

NEWS •

## Local change-makers win big

BY ELLIE CLARINGBOLD

ENVIRONMENTAL innovators and trailblazers have been recognised at this year's Tidy Towns and Sustainable Cities Awards with three local initiatives taking out prizes.

Now in its 41st year, the awards hosted by Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria celebrate the achievements of community-led sustainability projects, education institutions and councils across the state.

Initiatives are recognised across ten categories and are awarded for their ability to empower communities, encourage positive behaviour change, protect the environment and promote community spirit.

For the team at Farm My School, their win in the awards' Community category is a reminder of how far they have come. With a pilot location at the Bellarine Secondary College, Farm My School aims to turn unused school land into commercial market gardens.

The produce grown is returned to the community in the form of veggie boxes, and the farm is employed as part of the school curriculum, providing hands-on learning for students. The seasonal produce grown is also used by food technology students to learn how to cook, as well as in the school canteen for healthy lunches.

Outside of school hours, the farm is a space for adult learning, team building and workshops about how to farm and grow food.

"It was nice to just go, 'wow, we've achieved a lot in 12 months', but then to actually be recognised as well was pretty humbling," said co-founder James McLennan.

"This was just an idea that a mate and I came up with over a cup of tea and literally from that it just grew into this really powerful story."

He said the project was inspired by their previous experience with school gardens that hadn't been given the tools or the attention needed to reach their full

potential. And with more farmers currently being trained, the Farm My School team are only getting started.

"We've got a pretty fantastic model within Bellarine Secondary College, but we don't want to stop there," McLennan said.

"We want to get into as many schools as we can."

Two of Geelong Sustainability's projects were also recognised this year, with its Community Power Hub winning in the Energy category and its Climate Safe Rooms winning in the Wellbeing category.

Meanwhile, the Torquay Rabbish Rangers took out the top prize in the Litter category for their efforts picking up rubbish around the town.

"It's great recognition. We're all pretty happy about it," founder Dean Walton said. After purchasing a house in Torquay just before the pandemic, Walton decided he'd do everything he could to keep the



Geelong Sustainability took home two awards. (L-R) Karina Duttar, Dan Cowdell, James McLennan, Scott Barnes, Tim Adams. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/GEELONG SUSTAINABILITY HUB. THE Farm My School project has provided Bellarine Secondary College with a productive market garden. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/FARM MY SCHOOL.

the Torquay Rabbish Rangers has grown to group of more than 30 volunteers who pick up when they can. Walton hopes the win will inspire more volunteers to join the group. "It's funny, we'd like [Torquay] to be a Tidy Town. That's our next goal."

NEWS •



L-R: Geelong Sustainability CEO Dan Cowdell and Wathaurong Co-operative CEO Simon Flagg at the Co-operative's base in North Geelong. Photo: VINNIE VAN ORSCHOT

BY VINNIE VAN ORSCHOT

A GREEN, new partnership has officially begun in Geelong, with two organisations taking the next step towards climate action and reconciliation.

Local not-for-profit organisation Geelong Sustainability has announced Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative joined forces as a community donation partner for its Electric Homes Program.

Geelong Sustainability CEO Dan Cowdell says an important feature of the Electric Homes Program, an initiative designed to support households in the Barwon region transition from gas facilities to all-electric renewable systems, is the community donations.

All systems installed by Geelong Sustainability's key delivery partners RACV Programs, Reclaim Energy and Jerick Plumbing, will contribute donations towards solar panel systems and hot water heat pump being provided to families through the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative.

"The Electric Homes Program is a testament to the power of community-driven initiatives that make a positive impact on both the environment and people's lives," Mr Cowdell said.

"We are thrilled to join hands with Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative to extend the benefits of

this program.

"Our partnership with Wathaurong is a significant step towards fostering a more sustainable and inclusive future for our community."

The Electric Homes Program was launched by Geelong Sustainability in July of this year and has garnered a sizeable response over the past few months.

The program has received over 700 expressions of interest and more than 1,400 registrations for information events since its inception.

"We are excited to be part of this program that embodies our shared values of sustainability, caring for Country, Community, and supporting our mob," Wathaurong Co-operative CEO Simon Flagg said.

"The Electric Homes Program not only benefits the environment but also contributes to supporting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through donations of sustainable power systems."

"We look forward to the positive change we can create together."

Expressions of interest to be part of the program are open until November 30 City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire, and the Borough of Queenscliff residents.

More information about the program can be found at [electrichomes.com.au](http://electrichomes.com.au)

GREATER GEELONG

Home • News • Success sees electric program continue

News

## Success sees electric program continue

28/05/2024

Like 0



Geelong Sustainability chief executive Dan Cowdell. (Louisa Jones) 409298\_07

Matt Hewson

A local program aimed at helping households save money through transitioning from gas to electricity will continue in 2024 after far exceeding expectations last year.

## Geelong Sustainability seeks funding to help community's most vulnerable

BY ELLIE CLARINGBOLD

AS THE accolades for Geelong Sustainability's Climate Safe Rooms initiative continue to roll in, the team is hoping the recognition will help them find funding to expand the reach of the project.

The initiative aimed to upgrade the energy efficiency of nine homes in 16 Geelong-based households to provide comfort during both summer and winter climate extremes.

The retrofit included the installation of energy-efficient lighting and air-conditioning systems, draught proofing and insulation, and solar systems to cover the costs associated with air-

conditioner usage. Sixteen low-income households participated in the program.

Each housed at least one resident receiving home care support services for an existing chronic health condition who were deemed at risk of harm caused by exposure to heatwaves and extreme cold.

Program participants such as Deborah Haygarth reported increased comfort, health and happiness after the installation of the climate safe room.

Many also exhibited increased activity levels, higher self-care ability and fewer visits to the doctor. "Air-conditioning is essential. If I get overheated, I can collapse," Ms

Haygarth, who has multiple sclerosis and is unable to easily regulate her body temperature on warm days, said.

"Since being part of the project, my hills have dropped thanks to the solar panels on the roof, and the extra money has improved my mental health too."

"I'm no longer worried about how I'm going to afford the power and can visit family and friends again."

Geelong Sustainability chief executive Dan Cowdell said there were still "hundreds of thousands of homes" that needed to be upgraded across Victoria and Australia.

"The pilot program has been so successful that we want to see this work scaled up."

"There are far more people in need of this in our community and things have only become worse in terms of cost-of-living pressures, and the outlook for this summer being an absolute scorcher."

As climate change continues to increase the frequency and intensity of heatwaves across the country, the number of individuals vulnerable to the health impacts of climate extremes is also climbing.

The risk of death attributed to cold weather remains a concern, with nearly 85 per cent of Victorian homes experiencing indoor temperatures below the World Health Organisation's safe threshold of 16 degrees.

"We're in the process of applying for philanthropic grants to scale up to upgrade at least 100 homes but we have a bigger ambition to install over a thousand Climate Safe Rooms across the region," Mr Cowdell said.

"To do this we need a much bigger funding commitment from the state and federal governments of \$10 million."

"So far, we've had positive discussions about the program with our local members of parliament and we'll be advocating strongly for funding to protect the most vulnerable people in our community from climate extremes."

For more information, head to [geelong sustainability.org.au/project/climate-safe-rooms](http://geelong sustainability.org.au/project/climate-safe-rooms)

## Sustainable home living on display

October 13, 2023 • BY Golden Plains Times



Shining bright: Run on passive solar designs, the Light House in Point Lonsdale was designed by Bishop Architects and on show as part of Sustainable House Day. Photo: SUPPLIED

LOCAL environmental group Geelong Sustainability has announced the return of one of its largest yearly events.

Known as Sustainable House Day, the annual three-week event now in its 15th year and seeking to provide people in the region an opportunity to learn more about low-impact living.

Running from 7 to 26 October, the period aims to promote sustainable living and design across Golden Plains Shire as well as Greater Geelong, Bellarine, Queenscliff, and the Surf Coast regions.



# Key Highlights

## BARWON COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECT

Throughout 2023 we delivered the Barwon Community Solar Project which was delivered through the New Energy Jobs Fund, a grant provided by the Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. Geelong Sustainability partnered with two organisations to facilitate and fund their transition to be powered by renewable energy:

- 10kW at Torquay Community House, and
- 25kW at Cloverdale Community Centre.



## ELECTRIC HOMES PROGRAM

The Electric Homes Program is supporting the G21 region to transition off gas towards an all-electric renewable energy future. Geelong Sustainability partnered with key delivery partners to deliver this community purchase program, which brings together information, products and experienced suppliers to make it easy for households to install solar panels, home battery storage, hot water heat pumps, efficient heating and cooling systems and electric vehicle chargers.

The Electric Homes Program 2023 engaged 1,500 attendees through 18 information sessions held both in person and online, generating 927 unique enquiries. The program led to the installation of 318 systems, stimulating \$2,053,185 in capital investment and saving participants an estimated \$81,328 annually on energy bills, which equates to \$2,033,200 over 25 years.



It also achieved significant environmental benefits, reducing around 770 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in one year, and 18,328 tons over the systems 25-year lifespan. Additionally, the program will donate three 6.6kW solar systems and six hot water heat pump systems to the Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative and Norlane Community Initiatives.

The 2024 Electric Homes Program builds on the success of the 2023 initiative, running from 28 August to 30 November 2024. The program features an expanded product offering, including home energy audits, home insulation, draught proofing and induction cooktop installations, alongside the previous options of solar panels, home battery storage, hot water heat pumps and efficient heating and cooling systems.

Geelong Sustainability, in collaboration with key delivery partners, continues to make it easier for households to improve energy efficiency and reduce reliance on gas.



Premier's  
Sustainability  
Awards 2023

**Healthy and fair society**

INDUSTRY LEADER  
WINNER

**Geelong Sustainability**



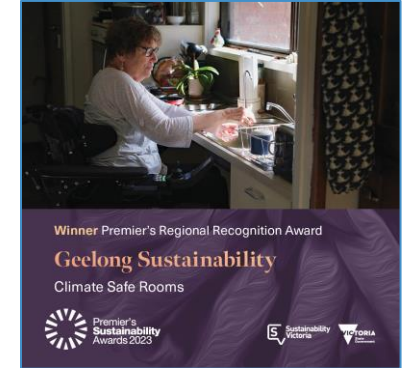
This was a year when Geelong Sustainability became more broadly recognised across Australia with Climate Safe Rooms. The program was featured on ABC News, in The Guardian, and won awards from Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainability Awards, and two Premier's Sustainability Awards including the overall winner.



# Key Highlights cont.

## AWARD WINNERS

In late 2023, Geelong Sustainability achieved remarkable milestones by winning two of the Premier's Sustainability Awards; Regional Industry Leader and overall Regional Recognition Award for Climate Safe Rooms. Plus two Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns & Cities Sustainability Awards; Energy Category for the Community Power Hub and the Wellbeing Category for Climate Safe Rooms. These accolades recognised our innovative programs and the dedicated team who brought them to life. This project, alongside all our projects, has not only elevated our organisation's impact but also set a benchmark for environmental stewardship and community resilience. These awards highlight the importance of our mission and inspire us to continue building a sustainable future for Geelong and beyond.



## CLIMATE ADVOCACY

This year, Geelong Sustainability has significantly increased its work in advocacy and climate campaigning, reflecting our commitment to becoming more active in this crucial space. We have engaged in constructive dialogue with state MPs, including Darren Cheesman, Ella George and Christine Couzens. We have advocated on behalf of our community for stronger emissions targets, expressing our opposition against local fossil fuel projects and seeking essential funding to expand Climate Safe Rooms to support the most vulnerable in the energy transition.

We have engaged in critical campaigns, including Save the Southern Sea to oppose offshore oil and gas exploration, and taken a firm stance against the Viva Energy Gas Import Terminal. We are proud to be amplifying our advocacy efforts and building a local movement to address the climate emergency.

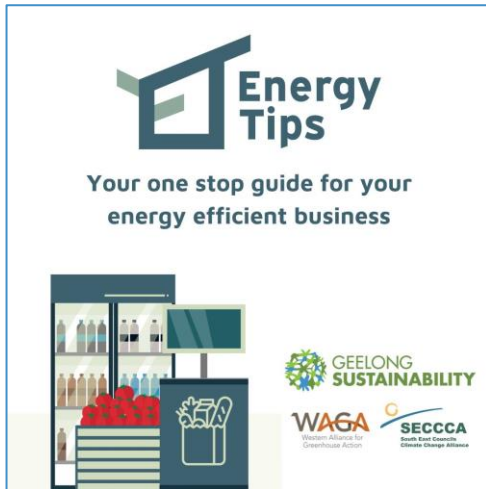


Dan Cowdell, Ella George MP, David Spear



Karina Donkers, David Spear, Christine Couzens MP, Dan Cowdell

# Key Highlights cont.



## BUSINESS ENERGYTIPS

Geelong Sustainability developed the Business EnergyTips website on behalf of the Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action and South-East Councils Climate Change Alliance. Launched in early May at iHarvest Coworking Sunshine, the site aims to help businesses become more energy efficient, reduce their bills and lower emissions.

The website provides practical energy-saving tips for retail, hospitality, small manufacturing and office sectors.

Visit [business.energytips.org.au](https://business.energytips.org.au) for more information.

## REAL DEAL

Geelong Sustainability has deepened its engagement with the Real Deal project over the past year, expanding the coalition to include a broader spectrum of community organisations, unions and faith groups. Throughout the financial year, we facilitated two impactful community forums to address pressing issues in Geelong.

In December, at Cloverdale Community Centre, our community forum convened over 100 participants.

The session provided a platform for local residents to share personal challenges amidst the climate crisis, with Emilie Flynn from Geelong Sustainability highlighting rental housing concerns. Another forum, focused on housing issues, was held at Geelong West Town Hall, chaired by Emilie, with local MPs Chris Couzens and Ella George addressing community inquiries regarding state government initiatives to tackle Geelong's housing crisis. Additionally, we contributed to multiple submissions and grant applications as part of the coalition.





## SUSTAINABLE HOUSE DAY GEELONG AND SURROUNDS 2023

Sustainable House Day Geelong and surrounds 2023 took place throughout October, offering plenty of opportunities to explore sustainable building solutions.

On Saturday 7 October, Peter Maddison from *Grand Designs Australia* delivered a 90-minute seminar on sustainable building design at Deakin University, covering both big-picture concepts and practical tips.

In collaboration with the Electric Homes Program, we hosted two webinars including Heat Pump Hot Water Systems 101, and Solar & Battery 101 on 10 and 17 October, both of which were well attended.

On Sunday 15 October, eight sustainably built and retrofitted homes across the region opened their doors to 1,245 visitors.

Workshops on topics like building design, energy efficiency and permaculture followed on 21 October.

The event concluded with a Sustainable Design Q&A at Green Drinks on 26 October, featuring insights from homeowners and design experts.





# Key Highlights cont.

## SUSTAINABLE HOUSE DAY GEELONG AND SURROUNDS 2023





## CLIMATE CONNECT

This year, our Climate Connect (formerly Green Drinks) events continued to play a pivotal role in supporting our community through education, capacity building, and fostering connections to strengthen resilience in the face of the climate emergency. We hosted a diverse range of events, including a Caring for Country event with Corrina Eccles honouring NAIDOC Week, the Future of Transport event exploring active transport, e-bikes and EVs, the Sustainable House Day Panel, and our Zero Waste Christmas event.

Early in 2024 we ran a Climate Resilience Forum at Common Ground Project, which provided valuable insights into preparing for and adapting to climate impacts. We were involved in the One Planet Living Festival in Torquay further extending our reach, engaging with broader audiences and celebrating sustainable living practices. We also showcased the powerful documentary '*Southern Blast*', highlighting the Save the Southern Sea campaign against offshore oil and gas exploration.



# Key Highlights cont.

## COMMUNITY ENERGY REVOLVING FUND & COMMUNITY POWER HUB

The Community Power Hub was delivered throughout Financial Year 2024 to support local not-for-profit organisations to cut running costs and reduce emissions. The Hub provided free expert advice on tariffs, rooftop solar, batteries, getting off gas and electric vehicles. This includes system sizing, grant applications, feasibility assessments, engaging a supplier and long-term sustainability planning. The Community Energy Revolving Fund provided access to interest-free finance for projects to cut operating costs for not-for-profit groups.

This program helped food relief organisations, churches, sports clubs, community health facilities, community centres and others. In all cases, the program identified useful ways to cut costs and reduce emissions - often saving substantial funds through tariff assessment alone. In total, the program served 38 not-for-profit organisations through FY24, and was renewed for FY25.



## QUEENSCLIFFE ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES PROGRAM

The Queenscliffe Energy Efficient Homes Program was an initiative of Queenscliffe Climate Action Now (QCAN) delivered by Geelong Sustainability and supported by the Borough of Queenscliffe. The aim of the program was to provide residents of the Borough of Queenscliffe with expert advice on how to improve the energy efficiency of their homes in order to reduce their energy consumption and emissions.

This program offered residents a detailed energy efficiency audit at a subsidised rate. Audits were conducted by a professional, accredited energy assessor with help from QCAN volunteers, with a total of 54 audits completed.



# Networks, Partnerships & Memberships

**Geelong Sustainability has been an active contributor to a number of regionally significant networks, partnerships and advisory committees. Throughout 2023 and 2024 we've collaborated with numerous organisations, building lasting partnerships for ongoing impact.**

We represent our members on the following advisory committees and regionally significant partnerships:

- Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy - BRACE
- Barwon Water, Environmental Advisory Committee
- Bellarine Catchment Network
- City of Greater Geelong, Clever and Creative Vision Partners
- Committee for Geelong, Strategy & Policy Committee
- Geelong Port, Community Liaison Group
- G21 Geelong Regional Alliance, Sustainability Pillar
- A Real Deal for Geelong, Sponsoring Committee
- Women in Local Democracy (WILD) Geelong

We maintain financial membership with the following organisations:

- Coalition for Community Energy - C4CE
- Committee for Geelong
- Environment Victoria
- Geelong Chamber of Commerce
- Geelong Field Naturalists Club
- G21 Geelong Regional Alliance
- Surf Coast Energy Group
- Volunteering Geelong
- Our Community

We also collaborate with and support the work of many other community organisations.



# Acknowledgements

**Geelong Sustainability has built its success over the last decade upon the amazing contributions of its many passionate and capable volunteers, members, staff, contractors, partners and networks.**

## 2024 BOARD MEMBERS

David Spear  
Merilyn Harris  
Sara van der Meer  
Neil Plummer  
Fred Ritman  
Emma Connan  
Stuart Mkojera-Thomson

We wish to thank and acknowledge the huge contribution made by all board members this year.

## VOLUNTEERS

James Rourke-Dunkley  
Vicki Perrett  
Yvonne Parker  
Taryn Fisher  
Scott Barnes

We'd like to extend our thanks to all our volunteers who assisted with events and other initiatives.

## STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

Dan Cowdell  
Emilie Flynn  
Tania Bartlett  
Karina Donkers  
Emma Chessell  
Ruth Blackhirst  
Georgie Allen

## GIFT FUND SUBCOMMITTEE

Dave Campbell  
Fred Ritman  
Sarah Jelley

## MEMBERS AND DONORS

Thank you to our financial members and donors for your ongoing support and encouragement.

## NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

ACF Community Geelong  
Apollo Bay Museum  
Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy (BRACE)  
Barwon Water  
Bellarine Catchment Network  
City of Greater Geelong  
Cloverdale Community House  
Environment Victoria  
Ephe  
Freshwater Creek Steiner School  
G21 - Geelong Regional Alliance  
Geelong Chamber of Commerce  
Geelong Field Naturalists Club  
Geelong Media  
Geelong Real Deal  
Geelong Regional Library Corporation  
Jeztek Plumbing  
Real Deal Geelong  
Reclaim Energy  
Responsible Cafes  
Regional Innovation for a Circular Economy (RICE)  
Torquay Community House  
West Wind Energy  
Women in Local Democracy Geelong (WILD)

## SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS

Barwon Timber  
Barwon Water  
Borough of Queenscliffe  
City of Greater Geelong  
Jeztek Plumbing  
Keystone Construction  
Homes with Integrity  
Pickering Joinery  
RACV Solar  
SO'R Construction  
Surf Coast Shire  
Sustainability Victoria  
Reclaim  
Victorian Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action  
Volta Rocks  
PMF Foundation  
Geelong Community Foundation  
Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action



# Treasurer's Report

This financial year has seen Geelong Sustainability continue on its journey of growth and transformation, both in terms of our financial sustainability and our overall impact. I'm pleased to report that we closed the year with a much smaller deficit than anticipated, a testament to the successful implementation of our new financial strategy and the commitment of our team.

## FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ending 30 June 2024, Geelong Sustainability posted a deficit of \$53,424. With a focus on capacity building, creating a resilient, sustainable organisation, and long-term growth, our posted deficit came in below the forecast deficit of \$100,000. This result is extremely positive. At the end of the reporting period, our total equity stands at \$519,563, which is a strong position that reflects our careful financial management and strategic planning.

## INCOME

In line with our strategy to reduce reliance on grants and increase our income from services and philanthropic contributions, we've successfully diversified our revenue streams. This shift can clearly be seen in our financial performance, with service-based income almost doubling from 2023, and philanthropic donations towards projects forming part of our revenue.

## EXPENSES

Our two largest expenses for the year were employee costs (wages and superannuation) and consultancy fees. Among the consultancy fees, the largest expenditure was our cash co-

contribution of \$114,025 to RACE for 2030, which was repaid via the Electric Homes Program. We also incurred consultancy fees for our key initiatives, including the Electric Homes Program and Sustainable House Day.

## ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Geelong Sustainability's cash at bank has increased once again, from \$636K to \$847K. This increase is largely due to multiple philanthropic grants, which were received in Financial Year 2024, but won't be recognised until their delivery in the following year, which has resulted in an increase in our liabilities. Grants received in advance are recognised as a liability on the balance sheet until the projects they are received for are delivered.

In order to benefit from the surplus cash, we made strategic investments in savings accounts and term deposits last year. This provided us with interest earnings of nearly \$10K, which has allowed us to put our funds to work while maintaining liquidity for our ongoing projects.

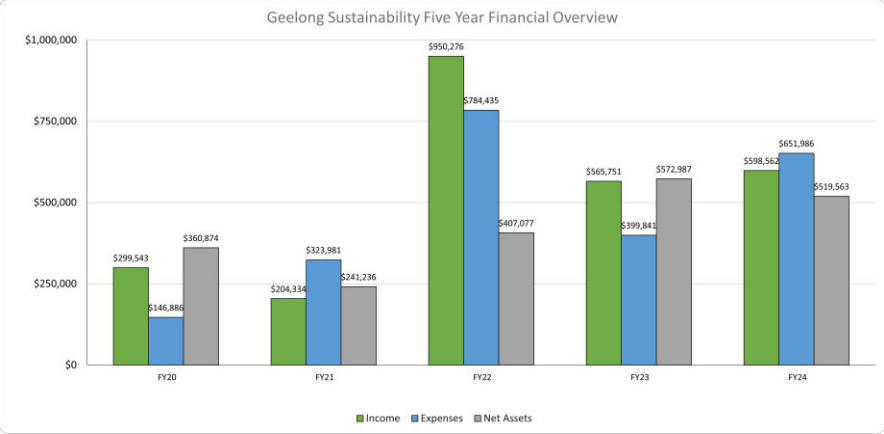
## NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR

Looking ahead, we are forecasting a deficit of \$125,000 for the upcoming financial year. We remain committed to building our capacity to create impact delivering programs across the region.

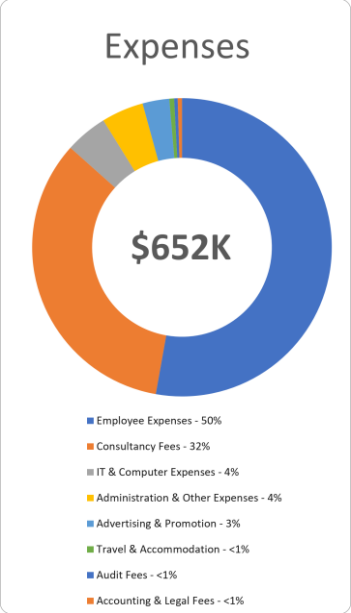
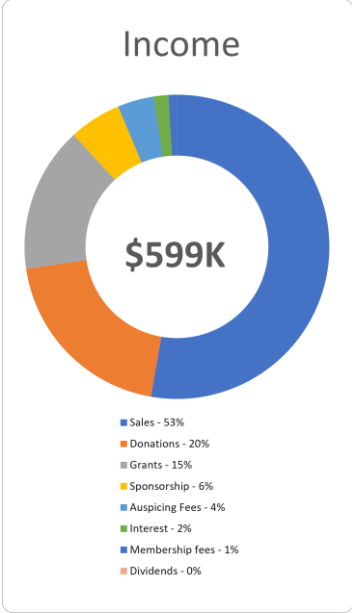


Sara van der Meer  
Treasurer

## FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



## FY24 INCOME & EXPENSES



# Geelong Sustainability

Geelong Sustainability is a not-for-profit community organisation and registered charity that supports residents of Geelong and surrounding regions to be more sustainable in their everyday lives. We deliver events, projects, campaigns and services which help educate and support our community's transition to a zero-emission climate ready future.

Together we can achieve so much more!

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