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Annual Report

September 2022-July 2023



Mindful Margaret River's Board and volunteers acknowledge and pay respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are based, the Wadandi people of the Noongar Nation and extends that respect to all the Traditional Owners and Elders of this country.

We recognise the significant importance of their cultural heritage, values and beliefs and how these contribute to the positive health and wellbeing of the whole community.





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About us

Mindful Margaret River is an incorporated, not for profit association of volunteers, mental health professionals, government agencies, community representatives working together to promote mental health and wellbeing in the Shire.

Our goals

In our community:

- People are comfortable talking about their mental health.
- We have clear pathways to services when needed.
- We have good mental health literacy.
- There is collaboration between services and government which listens to, and responds to, local needs.

Our purpose

To improve community access to health and wellbeing services available in the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

To facilitate, support and coordinate education and awareness programs to address stigma and stoicism in the community around mental health.

To advocate for and bring key social, emotional and mental Health Services into the Shire

To build on and maintain a community based social, emotional, wellbeing collaborative through Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Plans, by the community for the community.



Our Volunteers

The implementation of this project is supported by community members volunteering in the Mindful Margaret River Taskforce. These volunteers guide, support and develop the work of MMR through their expertise and local knowledge.

The volunteers work in Taskforces to deliver local action and are supported by the Project Implementation Officer.

For 2022-2023 we had volunteer teams working on the following projects:

1. Promote general wellbeing messages and information to the community.
2. Respond to community requests for awareness raising activities.
3. Build community capacity for wellbeing and mental health through training.
4. Build strong relationships with youth service providers, particularly with the high school to increase opportunities for youth connectedness and support.
5. Support the wellbeing and mental health of isolated community members – focus on rural men, men’s groups, men’s early intervention connections.
6. Support and resources for family and domestic violence local initiatives and advocacy.
7. Support women’s mental health through proactively supporting women’s wellbeing literacy.

A word from....

Our Chair



As this financial year closes, it gives us the opportunity reflect on what Mindful Margaret River has achieved. The following pages give just a small insight into all the events, workshops, training and conversations which have been taking place in our community.

Mindful Margaret River is still a fledgling organisation and very much relies on its members for direction.

More than ever this year, now we are beginning to become embedded in the community, we have listened to what the community wants. Many of you will have participated in exit surveys following various workshops and for that we thank you. Your responses are invaluable to the Board because they ensure we take the paths the community wish us to take.

This has also been a year of evaluating where we sit in the community, putting some value on the services we provide and facilitate and ensuring that we are responding to the community's needs. Former Chair, Martin Ringer, takes an interesting view on the impact Mindful Margaret River has in our community on page 19 of this report.

With your input, we have also worked on updating our Community Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2023-2025, which is available on our website and at our Annual General Meeting.

I cannot close this report without thanking the Board for its enormous support and particularly thanking Erin Statz, our Project Implementation Officer, for all her hard work. Erin has adapted to suit our budget constraints this year yet, still, she manages to pull everything together, including this report. I would also like to thank our volunteer administration support, Sadie Breslin for making herself available to the Board this year as well as volunteer editor for our articles, Jacqui Barnsley.

As usual, there are always jobs available for any interested members, particularly in the areas of fund raising, event support, communications and of course on the Board. Please keep your eye on our website where positions are advertised.

We say goodbye to Yen Hawkes as a Board member this year and thank her for her contribution throughout. We wish her all the best for her travels.

Finally, we thank our Professional Liaison Team, who provide so much support and advice to the Board as well as helping with the co-ordination of outreach services and workshops. Their input is invaluable.

Just like all other small not for profit organisations, we have had a strong focus on funding as we see our initial Lotterywest funding being fully expended later this year. Grant applications have been made, but we are always alert to any opportunities and we welcome any input you, our members, may have in this regard.

It is with pride in our organisation and the path it is taking that I present to you this year's Annual Report.

-Marilyn Hopkins

Our Board

Marilyn Hopkins Chair

As a lawyer and mediator, Marilyn has always had a sense of fairness which has been demonstrated by her passion to see everyone given the opportunity to access education whenever they are ready in their life.

As a result, Marilyn has spent many years participating in organisations which give second chances for education. These have included 15 years' service on the Board of Canning College and 6 years' service on the Governing Council of South Regional TAFE.

There is no doubt in Marilyn's mind that those left behind in education at a young age, for whatever reason, are more likely to struggle with confidence and self-esteem in later life.

Marilyn has many other interests and carries out many other roles, amongst which are secretary of the Rotary Club of Margaret River, treasurer of the Margaret River Rowing Club, secretary of Above the Line, member of the Margaret River Senior High School Board.

Dr Peter Durey Deputy Chair

Peter Durey was born in Guyana, South America. He attained degrees in Medicine and Biochemistry at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Immigrating to Australia in 1976 where he continued to practice family orientated general medicine retiring four years ago.

He is grateful for the extra time that retirement has given him to study and reflect, amongst pursuing numerous other interests and hobbies.

Peter is devoted to supporting the principles of personal and local community responsibility in the areas of Health and Wellbeing and has made it a priority to focus his attention on areas of improving communication, collaboration, and empowerment for people.

Within Mindful Margaret River, and along with the committed team of volunteers, he is dedicated to improving social and mental health in our community.

Brian Middleton Treasurer

Brian operates an accounting practice in Margaret River and is active in many local community organisations.

He has previously served as a Shire Councilor with the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and as a Commissioner with the WA Conservation Commission.

Brian is currently treasurer of Rotary Margaret River and deputy chairman of Margaret River Men's Shed steering committee.

Dr Mike Wood Secretary

Dr Mike Wood has been a journalist, academic, senior public servant as Public Service Commissioner, head of the Department of Local Government, chair of the WA Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, director of his strategy company and Dean of the Curtin Business School.

He recently completed a period as chair of Member (trustees) for Ruah Community Services, having been the founding chair of its board in the 1990s.

As a board member of incorporated organisations, Mike has contributed to governance structures and the clarification of responsibilities between boards and management.

Prior to buying here in 2004, Mike was a regular visitor to Margaret River.

Our Board

Martin Ringer Board Member

For as long as I can remember I have been curious about what makes human beings 'tick'. Soon after graduating as an engineer, I moved careers to work in the field of human services and education.

Since being in Western Australia I have taught group work in the Schools of Social Work at UWA and at Curtin University, taught in the Edith Cowan Masters in Psychoanalytic Counselling and Psychotherapy, consulted to the Royal College of GP's, ran dozens of adventure therapy and group facilitation workshops in many countries around the World, and provided 'reflective space' sessions for two CAMHS multi-disciplinary teams as well as for the CAMHS metro group of psychiatrists

Judith Maechler Board Member

Judith migrated from France to Australia in 2010. After spending eight years in Perth practicing as a dispensing optician and after the birth of her second child, she moved down to Margaret River.

Her own experience of perinatal (pre-and post-) stress and anxiety made her uncover the difficulties women experience due to parenthood (most of the time long before even becoming a parent) and prompted her to volunteer as a peer supporter in various programs and organisations. She also realised that the personal issues women experience result from much broader narratives that foster mental health issues and impede their well-being. As a result, she has a keen interest in gender and women issues, perinatal mental health, discrimination and prejudice, and representation of diversity in society. She believes that addressing and managing such matters would directly positively impact the mental well-being of community members

Yen Hawkes Board Member

Yen is a multi-passionate entrepreneur, a foodie, has travelled extensively for work, was based in the US, Spain, Jakarta & Malaysia which helped broaden her horizons. Yen has spent more than 30 years, managing multicultural teams in the corporate sector; a banker with the Development Bank of Singapore & Citibank for 15 years, managing 5- star hotel benchmarking in the Asia Pacific region for STR Global, market research consultant for AQ Services International - project managed large scale customer service initiatives for key international clients in Singapore, Indonesia and Australia.

Yen is passionate about assisting migrants in Margaret River and the region in the areas of isolation and language barriers.

Rebecca Hannan Board Member

Known as The Momentum Maker, Rebecca's expertise is in workplace well-being. With decades of experience as a small to medium business owner in Margaret River, Rebecca knows intimately the challenges businesses face in regional communities.

Additionally, Rebecca specialises in the design and delivery of mental health initiatives for companies in Mining and Construction.

At home, you'll find her studying all things psychology, yes she's a nerd, outdoors walking in nature, practising yoga, preparing healthy food, and spending time with her family whom she adores.

Our Professional Liaison Team

2022-2023

Angela Delaney

A/Executive Manager - South West
Department of Communities

Andrew Host

Principal - Margaret River Senior High School
Department of Education

Belinda Hutchinson

Community Development - South West
Headspace

Brendan Mooney

Regional Executive Director - South West
Department of Communities

Brooke Trenorden

Community Support and Development Programs
Mental Health Commission WA

Casey McNab

Clinical Supervisor
Headspace

Colin Penter

Projects Lead
WA Association for Mental Health

Jacquie Tarrant

Suicide Prevention Officer
South West Community AOD Service
St John of God Social Outreach

James Shepherd

Director, Corporate and Community Services
Shire of Augusta Margaret River

Jan de Groot

Clinical Manager, Mental Health Programs
GP Down South

Jenette Loud

AOD Prevention Coordinator
SW Community AOD Service
St John of God Social Outreach

Marina Johns

Regional Manager - South West
WA Primary Health Alliance

Nicky Smith

Suicide Prevention Officer
SW Community AOD Service
St John of God Social Outreach

Robert Kimmel

Mental Health Services
Lower South West
WA Country Health Services

Simone Taplin

Officer in Charge - Margaret River
WA Police



Mindful Margaret River seeks to engage in local action, empowering community members to know when, where and how to seek help for their wellbeing as well as how to support family, friends and colleagues who may be experiencing poor mental health.

We do this by:

- Developing practical, local solutions to enhance community mental health and wellbeing through the collaboration of key agencies and the community.
- Using local knowledge as well as the findings, outcomes and recommendations of reports relevant to mental health and wellbeing in the Shire of Augusta Margaret River to develop and inform our approach.
- Focusing our efforts on the key areas access, education, information and collaboration.
- Working with community groups, schools, workplaces to promote ways to collaborate, share information and develop local solutions to current gaps in services and supports.
- Providing and promoting as many local opportunities for education, training and information sharing as possible.
- Promoting and providing an online mental health hub of information to improve local awareness and as a resource for community members.

What we do

Mindful Margaret River is a community group of volunteers who undertake local action to support good mental health and wellbeing in the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

Here are some examples of activities we undertook in the 2022-2023 financial year:

Hosted the Happiness Co to undertake three community based workshops, one at the High School for year 9 students, one at the Primary School for parents and one at the Shire of Augusta Margaret River for all staff. Over 500 community members took place in workshops to improve their mental health and wellbeing in one day.

Coordinated and promoted an online hub of mental health information, the MMR website. This site promoted local training, support services, community based events and workshops. This hub saw monthly traffic in the 1000s which indicated use for connecting to community events and increasing means to mental health literacy.

Provided ten workplace and community group mental health awareness workshops.

Facilitated, coordinated and/or promoted of over 15 accredited mental health training events.

Coordinated eight RUOK day and Women's Health week events for community members.

Hosted the 2022 Suicide Bereavement Forum. Run by Edith Cowan University and St John of God, this forum is a collaboration of key partners including Headspace, Standby, Aboriginal Medical Services, Roses in the Ocean and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.



Our stories

Our strength is in our people. Part of our commitment to normalising conversations about mental health is our popular series of articles written by our volunteers. Full articles can be found online at: mindfulmargaretriver.org.au/blog

Surfing sisters, riding the waves of life

"A wise surf coach once said "pick a wave with a future". Such great wisdom for life.

Yes, we try to apply it to our surfing as we make the judgement of whether to paddle for a wave. We can also reflect on how we make judgments in life to follow a particular path.

There's an important moment of commitment at the take-off, when you need to just go for it.

We cheer each other on!

The ocean can be rough, wild, howling on-shore (for those who don't know, on-shore is not good).

We can feel discouraged, exhausted, useless when faced with the circumstances or conditions.

There are the crap days, the days we have ended up on the shore in tears, the days when we have had to give each other 'pep talks' as we walk back to the carpark.

There are the days when we've just lost our 'mojo'.

It's ok to have these days, everybody does.

It does help to reach out, to not be alone at these times. Someone cares, guaranteed!

Other days are sunny, glassy, fun, exhilarating... the times when we're with great company, surrounded by the big blue, blessed by the presence of a pod of dolphins swimming through the line-up.

Sometimes it takes just one wave to spark joy.

Kathryn Seisun is a volunteer and a YouthCare Chaplain at Margaret River Senior High School
Marg Lindsey is a volunteer and works with YouthCare.
Both sisters are passionate about youth mental health and volunteer on the youth focus team.



Our stories

Margaret River Blokes Breaking Down Barriers

The influence of society's expectations of masculinity on a boy from a very young age is huge and we are molded by messages of being tough, not getting emotional or showing our feelings, being decisive, acting first and thinking later, solving problems quickly and not complaining,"

"While solitude can be good, isolation can be a worry and loneliness is a problem."

"Loneliness is a consequence of political and social change, mixed with technology and consumerism, and is the most serious threat to a person's health, wellbeing and mortality."

Decades of research shows that social and emotional connection is the single biggest indicator of personal wellbeing.

Stigma and social constructions of masculinity and how it impacts on men's mental health is deadly.

The earlier you connect with help increases the chances for a faster recovery.

Outdated stereotypes are leaving some of our mates, dads, sons, uncles, teammates, workmates or brothers stranded without the tools to live a healthy life.

"This free community event aims to get beyond the banter and explore what it means to be a man today and what it will mean tomorrow."



Mindful Margaret River hosted its second Blokes Night in November 2022 with over 50 men attending this free event.

This article first appeared in the Margaret River Mail on the 7 November 2022.

Our year at a glance.

Education and awareness raising

Some of our volunteers and projects in action!

One of Mindful Margaret River's goals is to facilitate, support and coordinate education and awareness programs and workshops to address stigma and stoicism in the community around mental health. We have impacted over 4000 community members in the last year alone.



Volunteer Debbie George talking about checking in on others, when to get help for yourself, where to get help and how to ask others RUOK? when you have concerns.



Volunteer Dr Peter Durey talking with workers about wellbeing and self-care.

Our year at a glance

Education and awareness raising



Julian Pace, CEO & Founder Happiness Co talking about how everyday choices can improve mental health as part of a day of workshops in Margaret River.



Brayden is the Youth Mental Health Officer with the Happiness Co. Brayden spoke to all the year 9 students about resilience, good mental health, friendship and participation. This event was part of a series organised by Mindful Margaret River.



Our year at a glance

Education and awareness raising

In November 2022, Mindful Margaret River with its partners and volunteers delivered five events engaging over 400 community members that month in mental health and wellbeing workshops.

A Night with the Blokes was one of the workshops.



As men we bottle things up occasionally, and then we become overwhelmed and erupt. This workshop helped me understand that we need to ask our mates the tough questions, and taught us how to ask those questions.

- A Night With The Blokes Participant



Thanks to local supporters and host, The River and funding from the Barbarians Group. The workshop was facilitated by Tomorrow Man.

Our year at a glance

Supporting partnerships

In November 2022, Mindful Margaret River hosted the Suicide Bereavement Forum. Organised by St John of God Social Outreach and Edith Cowan University, the forum in Margaret River aimed to give the community a better understanding of the experience of being bereaved by suicide, its long-term nature, the intensity of it and

the way that grief, trauma and stigma all become part of that experience. Supported by Roses in the Ocean, Aboriginal Medical Services, StandBy, Headspace, and the Shire, Mindful was proud to host and support this initiative in our community.



Forum organisers: Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Jacque Tarrant and Dr Colleen Carlon from Edith Cowan University with champion advocate, Jon Eddy from Roses in the Ocean.



Erin Statz from Mindful Margaret River facilitated a panel discussion at the Suicide Bereavement Forum in Margaret River 2022.



Our year at a glance

Supporting partnerships



Presenters Nina James and Tara Sofair

In March, Mindful Margaret River hosted a workshop called Preventing Eating Disorders in Young People.

Nina James who is a Registered Nurse and Tara Sofair, a Registered Practising Dietician did a workshop for parents and carers of young people at the Margaret River HEART.

In response to the growing concern for the well-being of young people, Nina and Tara have developed a presentation to inform the community about this topic and provide practical tools that can be used at home. It was attended by over 60 community members.

Partners for this event included the Shire of AMR, MR Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Arts Margaret River.

Perinatal Mental Health focus



Covid put a break on parents groups which has left many new parents disconnected from their peers and local supports.

This perinatal mental health gathering saw over 50 community members coming together to celebrate and connect.

This event was thanks to the Margaret River Midwifery Group Practice and partnerships with Community Health Nurses, Radiance and local volunteers, supported by Mindful Margaret River.

The Sacred Women's Choir provided entertainment and connection.

Our impact

Mindful Margaret River has an impact on many levels. The most obvious is the direct positive effect of the plethora of activities that we run, as outlined throughout this report. These activities directly engage many members of the public, each of whom talks with friends, family, schoolmates and workmates about their experience of engaging with Mindful Margaret River activities. And this leads me to the second impact, which is the background awareness throughout a growing proportion of the community that there is a benign, focused and effective organisation that exists exclusively to ameliorate and enhance the social and emotional well-being of all people in our community.

At a symbolic level, we could liken this to a toddler who plays calmly in one room in the secure knowledge that her mother is present and occupied in the next room. That is we don't even need to have direct contact with Mindful Margaret River to experience the reassurance that it exists and that it will be present there for us when we need it.

Also, the fact that our community took the initiative and mobilised itself to create an organisation that focuses exclusively on mental health and social and emotional well-being has drawn the attention of a number of agencies including the Mental Health Commission.

Thus Mindful Margaret River provides a model and an inspiration for other communities in Western Australia, and even throughout Australia. We have a lot to be proud of and yet a lot of work ahead to develop and maintain a sustainable financial model to enable us to continue to have a strong positive impact in the community.

Martin Ringer - Board member Mindful Margaret River

Our annual timeline

September

AGM 2022
safeTALK
Hormone Harmony workshops x 2
Legal & Financial Wellbeing for Women workshop
New mothers morning tea
RUOK Day workshops x 2

safeTALK
Youth Mental Health First Aid Training
Mental Health First Aid Training

October

November

safeTALK
Blokes Night
Suicide Bereavement Forum
Supporting Young people impacted by suicide
Happiness Co workshops x 3

safeTALK

December

January

safeTALK

safeTALK
Mental Health First Aid Training for Older Persons

February

March

Preventing Eating Disorders workshops
safeTALK

Review of 2021-22 plan
New CMHWP drafted

April

May

Respect @ Work
Maternal Mental Health Week

Men's Table
Grant application time

June

Our highlights:

Over the past 12 months, we have completed work on our Action Plan 2021-2022.

Throughout the challenges of Covid-19 our approach to implementing the Community Mental Health Alliance has been:

- Community driven and scaled appropriately for the local community
- Credible because of strong Shire support and the involvement of and endorsement of key community leaders
- Evidence-based as data from recent reports informs emerging strategies.
- Accessible through online MMR hub for information about a wide range of services and training
- Integrative, in that many services that are in separate silos in urban settings are all included in our web site and data base
- Responsive, in that we have an employee who is well integrated into the community and has an extensive system of communication
- Inclusive, in that we connect with other local agencies whose work intersects with ours. Examples are: The Community Centre, the Margaret River High School, The Margaret River Police, The Margaret River Chamber of Commerce, Radiance (perinatal mental health) and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.



Finance

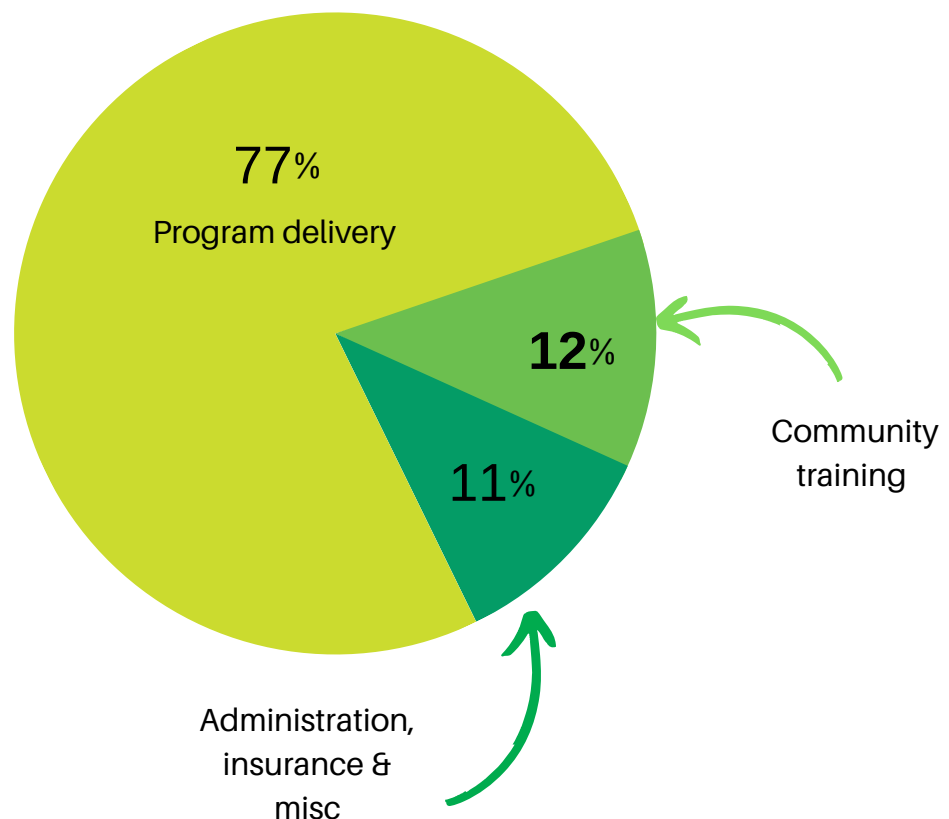
In 2020, Mindful Margaret River successfully applied for a grant of \$176,000 from Lotterywest to implement its strategic community plan.

Under an auspicing agreement between Lotterywest and the Shire, grant funds are administered by the Shire of Augusta Margaret River on our behalf.

In addition, through an MOU with the Shire, MMR receives considerable in-kind support including being provided with an office and support facilities. The Shire's ongoing support for MMR enables us to operate with minimal administration costs so that we can focus our efforts and finances on implementing projects in the community through the volunteer taskforce teams. This collaborative partnership has harnessed the energies of an array of talented, committed professionals working together with a common goal.

MMR has also received grants to stage community events at the Margaret River HEART (\$2500), sponsored advertising pages in the Margaret River Rotary Directory (\$4000). Funding from the Barbarians Group in Perth paid for two Tommorow Man Blokes Nights. Monsoon funding through the Happiness Co subsidised three Happiness Co workshops with the Shire of Augusta Margaret River contributing to the costs of hosting the Happiness Co at the Shire.

Expenditure



Thank you!



Mindful Margaret River is funded by:



Mindful Margaret River is supported by:



Thank you!



Mindful Margaret River proudly collaborates with:



WA Country Health Services
Department of Communities
Accordwest
South West Mental Health Services

