

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026



## UPPER HOPKINS LAND MANAGEMENT GROUP

Supporting the community to care  
for the environment in a productive landscape

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**Mission:** Supporting the community to care for the environment in a productive landscape.

**Vision:** A community working together to maintain a healthy, productive landscape.

The Upper Hopkins Land Management Group (UHLMG) was established in 1991 as a community Landcare group focusing on ensuring sustainable farming for current and future generations. UHLMG also recognises that climate change adaptation and mitigation are important for the region.

The group has successfully facilitated funding for a range of environmental projects across the region using a diversity of approaches to combat a diversity of challenges.

A high priority for UHLMG is to increase habitat connectivity by creating biolinks and corridors, incorporating indigenous and biodiverse plantings. In the Upper Hopkins, re-establishing woodlands, preserving native grasslands and protecting waterways are all important actions that contribute to the health of the catchment. To enable landowners to manage their land sustainably, UHLMG shares resources with members to facilitate revegetation projects and pest plant and animal control. This includes a water trailer, spray unit and tree planters.

UHLMG invites the community to participate in Landcare through various engagement events (field days, workshops, seminars, etc.). Forming a network of land managers who care for the environment while farming sustainably is an important aspect of Landcare.

This strategic plan outlines key activities for the group to undertake in the next few years, focusing on five objectives. Importantly, the UHLMG committee looks forward to developing a relationship with local Traditional Owners and improving the understanding of cultural heritage in our region.

# Objective 1: Share sustainable land management knowledge with the community and encourage participation in Landcare

Activities	How	When	Who
1.1 Engage with schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on Willaura and Maroona</li> <li>Offer school involvement in events that are held by the group</li> </ul>	Once a year for each school.	Facilitator
1.2 Engage with Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with GHCMA Indigenous Partnership Officer and/or Eastern Maar liaison officer and keep them informed of UHLMG activities</li> <li>Hold cultural competency training for the committee and facilitator with local Traditional Owner group(s)</li> <li>Develop a cultural engagement framework for UHLMG</li> </ul>	Ongoing  2023-24  By end of 2026	Facilitator  Committee  Committee and Facilitator
1.3 Maintain strong communications with members and the broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain regular members newsletter, newspaper articles, updated website, social media (Facebook, Instagram)</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator
1.4 Hold field days, workshops and other face to face engagement and knowledge sharing events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop programs that focus on Objectives</li> <li>Look for opportunities to deliver with partners (e.g. GHCMA, neighbouring Landcare groups, ARCC)</li> </ul>	6 events per year; evaluate and report outcomes	Facilitator



## Objective 2: Improve the health and productivity of our soils through education and engagement programs

Activities	How	When	Who
<b>2.1 Maintain and strengthen relationships with other industry bodies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link expert knowledge and funding opportunities to the community, focussing on natural capital including soil carbon</li> </ul>	Regular and ongoing	Facilitator
<b>2.2 Support farmers through a diversity of educational activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise outreach events for farmers (e.g. field days, workshops, seminars)</li> </ul>	2-3 events per year	Soil Health Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support farm garden network by maintaining ongoing “Garden Day” events (e.g. bus tours, guest speakers, demonstrations days)</li> </ul>	1-2 events per year	Soil Health Working Group
<b>2.3 Develop a showcase of ‘healthy soil’ projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight successful soil projects on the “Projects” page on the website</li> <li>Include healthy soil stories in the newsletter</li> </ul>	Up to 1 per year	Soil Health Working Group
<b>2.4 Maintain an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure IPM information is accessible and encourage farmers to undertake IPM monitoring</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Soil Health Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a dung beetle project</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Soil Health Working Group

## Objective 3: Promote and enable coordinated control of pest animals and plants

Activities	How	When	Who
<b>3.1 Promote and support control of feral cats, foxes and rabbits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information with land managers and encourage coordination between neighbours</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for funding opportunities to pay contractors and support landholders to carry out on-ground works</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator
<b>3.2 Promote and support control of priority weeds on private and public land</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information with land managers and encourage coordination between neighbours</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for funding opportunities to pay contractors and support landholders to carry out on-ground works (spraying environmental weeds such as gorse)</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share equipment with members to encourage weed control</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Facilitator



## Objective 4: Protect, enhance and reconnect threatened remnant vegetation, wetlands and waterways to build landscape health and to save threatened species

Activities	How	When	Who
4.1 Promote understanding of the multiple values of wetlands, their management and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetland friend-raising events and activities (e.g. skills training); consider partnering with GHCMA</li> </ul>	1 event per year	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with Nature Glenelg Trust on a demonstration wetland project</li> </ul>	By end of 2026	Facilitator, NGT, landholder
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for a network of wetland friends</li> </ul>	By end of 2025, establish a biodiversity working group	Facilitator/wetland friends of members
4.2 Promote understanding of the multiple values of native grasslands, their management and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassland friend-raising activities and events, including skills training, where possible in partnerships with GHCMA and DEECA</li> </ul>	1 per year	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for a network of grassland friends</li> </ul>	By end of 2025, establish a biodiversity working group	Facilitator
4.3 Continue tree and shrub ecological community protection and revegetation program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5-10 properties per year and focus on a landscape-scale approach to ensure optimum benefits for the catchment</li> </ul>	Annual projects	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore new potential funding sources</li> </ul>	Annual projects	Facilitator
4.4 Develop biodiversity and landscape connectivity goals for the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek additional expertise/partnerships to help develop conservation priorities and actions</li> </ul>	2024-25	Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop priority areas and actions for protection and revegetation</li> </ul>	Plan by end of 2026	Partner organisation and the community

## Objective 5: Ensure that UHLMG's operations are sustainable and effective

Activities	How	When	Who
<b>5.1 Implement 3 year fixed term committee positions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rotate committee positions, beginning with Secretary in year 1, President in year 2 and Treasurer in year 3.</li> </ul>	Annual	Committee
<b>5.2 Provide opportunities for all members to contribute and get involved.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold an annual social meeting, either a field visit or a public function with a guest speaker</li> </ul>	Annual	Committee/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At annual membership renewal, ask members about volunteering (skills, time available, etc.)</li> </ul>	Annual	Secretary/Treasurer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify skills gaps on the committee and find members to fill those gaps</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee/Facilitator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a biodiversity working group and maintain the soil health working group, including non-committee members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Committee/Facilitator
<b>5.3 Evaluate programs and activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define objectives that can be monitored and reviewed annually for adaptive management</li> </ul>	Annual; End of Strategic Plan cycle	Committee/Facilitator



### Stakeholders and partners

<b>Agriculture Victoria</b>	Ag Vic
<b>Ararat Landcare Group</b>	ALG
<b>Ararat Rural City Council</b>	ARCC
<b>Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group</b>	BBCAG
<b>Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action</b>	DEECA
<b>Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority</b>	GHCMA
<b>Grampians Public Health Unit</b>	GPHU
<b>Landmate (prison crew)</b>	
<b>Panyyabyr Landcare Group</b>	
<b>Parks Victoria</b>	
<b>Perennial Pasture Systems</b>	PPS
<b>Southern Farming Systems</b>	SFS



The Upper Hopkins Land Management Group works with many stakeholders and supporters, including neighbouring Landcare groups, Agriculture Victoria, Ararat Rural City, Landmate, Perennial Pasture Systems and Southern Farming Systems. The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority supports UHLMG through various programs, including

annual Landcare funding, the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program, sustainable agriculture funding and on-ground support from the Works Crew and Land Health Officers. Success of the activities outlined in this strategic plan depends on continued support from partners and collaborators, either through knowledge-sharing or funding support.

Potential funding source	Obj. 1	Obj. 2	Obj. 3	Obj. 4	Obj. 5
Landcare grants	*	*	*	*	
GHCMA	*	*	*	*	
Ararat Rural City Council	*		*	*	
Ararat Wind Farm	*		*	*	
Adapt Grampians	*			*	
Junior Landcare grants	*				
DEECA/Aboriginal Affairs	*				
Grampians Public Health Unit	*				
Ag Vic		*			
Federal Soil Health Strategy funding		*			
Victorian Gorse Task Force			*		
DEECA/GHCMA Threatened Species programs			*		
Philanthropic Funding (e.g. Wettenhall Trust, Odonata, Bendigo Bank)				*	
Community Biodiversity Grants (State, Federal)				*	
Federal National Threatened Species program				*	
Bushbank				*	
BirdLife Australia				*	



## contact

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