



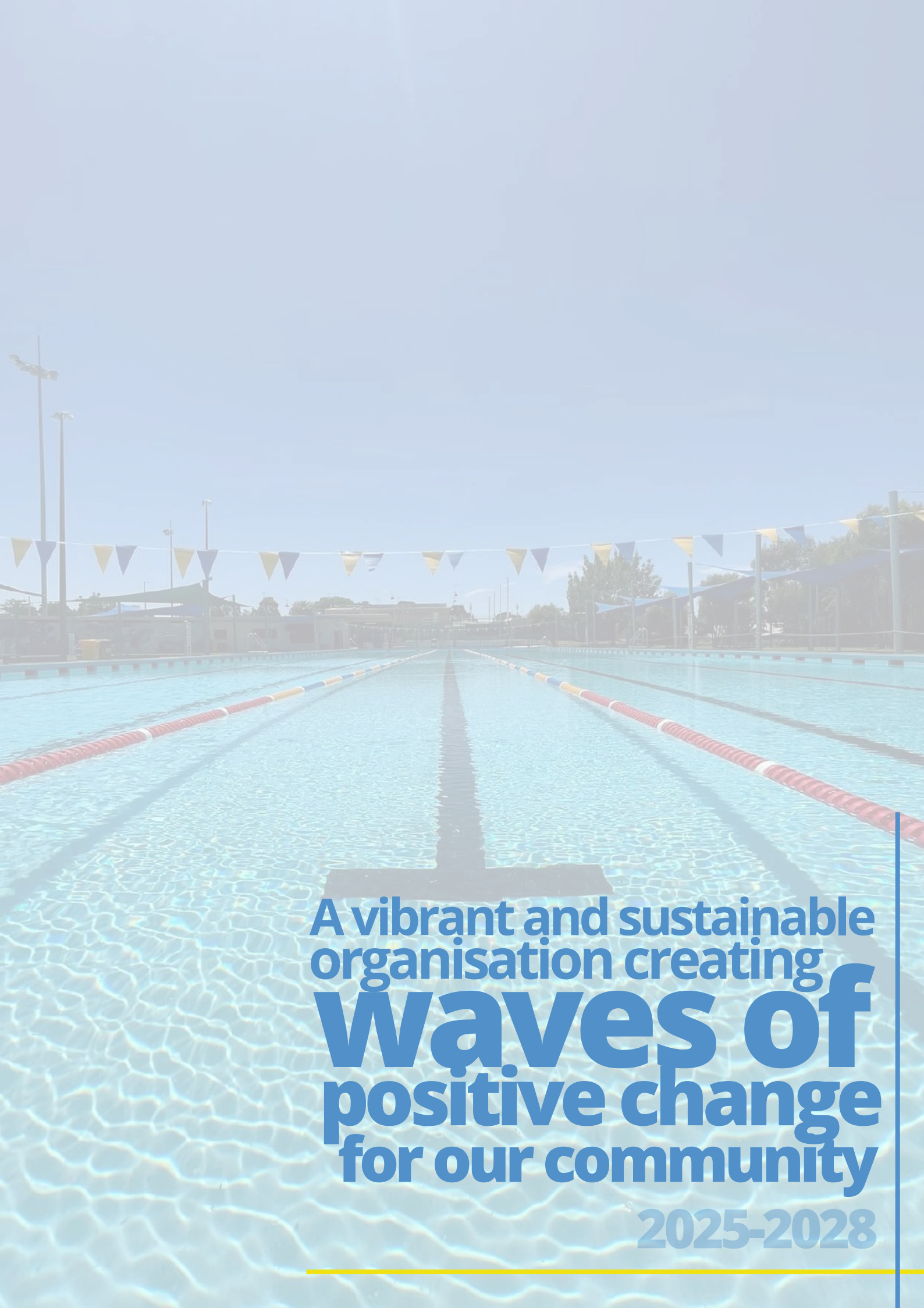
Golden Square Pool



GOLDEN SQUARE POOL INC.

2025/2026

ANNUAL REPORT



A vibrant and sustainable
organisation creating
waves of
positive change
for our community
2025-2028

OUR

ORGANISATION



Committee of Management

Sam Kane President
Barb Lomas Vice President
Margaret Hand Secretary
Linda Howell Treasurer
Helen Barton
Debra Butt
Leonie Stead



Operations Leadership Group

Sam Kane General Manager
Barb Lomas Volunteer Manager,
Kiosk Lead
Linda Howell Business Manager
Margaret Hand Grounds Manager
Aidan Corr Team Leader
**Leonie Stead, Deb Butt, Barb
Lomas and Linda Howell** Kiosk

Teams

Plant Operations

Andrew Penna, Adam Reaper, Aidan Corr

Maintenance, Grounds and Facility

Margaret Hand, Bob Downing, Andrew Penna, Steve Hand, Catherine Doyle, Chris Corr

Digital and Communications

Sam Kane, Nicole Wong, Barb Lomas, Carol McCormack, Noel Clarke

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

When people tell me what they love most about Golden Square Pool, it often comes down to three things – people, grass and vibe.

Being able to connect and contribute with friends, neighbours and family in a delightfully nostalgic community paradise where, despite whatever's going on in one's life, everyone feels included.

As President, I'm immensely proud that together we've saved and maintained our physical asset – our pool.

But even more so, I'm grateful that we've authentically developed a community that really means something to people – to our volunteers, to our patrons, and to those who are still only discovering us for the first time after all these years.

The pool itself has been the vehicle for a community to come together and use its best asset – everyday people – to solve problems and create the place that they want.

A place that has been steady and stable for 13 years, sees an increase in volunteers each year, and has year-on-year patronage growth.

A place that punches above its weight and is now the envy of like-organisations across Victoria and Australia.

And a place that really does stay true to its vision of creating waves of positive change for Bendigo.

None of us could have imagined this would be the outcome of getting involved.

But for many of us, Golden Square Pool and its community bring a richness that doesn't really exist anywhere else.

Preserving the things that we hold dear about this place are so important to ensure that we continue the momentum, maintain a responsible organisation, and guarantee we're here for the next generation.

We've achieved some great things over the past 12-months, including:

- Welcoming our 200,000th patron through the gate



- 21,654 patrons for the season – another year of steady growth
- A successful partnership with Paul Sadler Swimland
- An upgrade to our carpark
- A jam-packed events program
- Financial sustainability with investments in asset maintenance and renewal
- Planning for future upgrades in line with the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan
- A new funding agreement with council

Fourteen years since the campaign to Save Golden Square Pool from closure commenced, I'm very pleased with where we are and that we've moved past needing to prove who we are, to instead, just getting on and doing it.

I'd like to thank our generous and talented Committee of Management and Operational Leadership Group for their tireless efforts all year. Barb, Margaret, Linda, Helen, Deb and Leonie drive the vision forward, and for that I'm so thankful.

Thank you to Aidan Corr, our outstanding Team Leader, for overseeing daily operations. Aidan supports our wonderful 25 staff to ensure we're delivering a sound aquatic service everyday.

To our volunteers – this place is here because of you. Thanks for stepping up, lending a hand, and for just being a great, happy bunch.

And to everyone who has donated and partnered with us, we value your contributions towards making our pool what it is today.

Golden Square Pool is such a special place, and one that everyone should be so proud of every single day. There's nothing like else like it.

Sam Kane
President & General Manager

BY THE NUMBERS

Seasons operated by community	13
Season entry total	21,654
Combined entry total since 2013	218,334
Members	296
School programs and lessons visits	3,340
Volunteers Total	101
	Adults (73), Juniors (28)
Kiosk Volunteer hours during the summer season	1310
Kiosk Junior Volunteer Team hours worked during season	274
Followers on social media	7,500
Water aerobics participants	340
Paul Sadler Swimland visits	2064
Pools for Paws visits	447
Friends of Golden Square Pool	252





**OUR
PEOPLE**

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do at Golden Square Pool, and we wouldn't be here without them.

Although people do come and go, we are fortunate to keep the numbers steady at around 100 volunteers, which helps ensure the load is shared.

The hard-working, generous volunteers manage most aspects of the daily running of the facility, including maintenance, operating the kiosk, running events, managing social media and communications, maintaining the gardens, plant and facilities as well the governance and compliance of the pool.

The 2025/2026 season was no exception as the Volunteer Team worked quietly and efficiently to ensure all visitors enjoy a pleasant experience at the pool.



OUR SEASON PASS HOLDERS

Season Passes are a great way for our people to show support for Golden Square Pool and get fantastic value at the same time.

Season Pass holders gain unlimited access to all the City of Greater Bendigo outdoor pools from November to mid-March. But importantly, every dollar spent on Season Passes at Golden Square Pool invests money back into the infrastructure, management and ongoing operation of the pool.

Not only that, but a Season Pass gives patrons unlimited access to the pool, including to all our events during the normal season. Season Pass holders also get a discounted rate for water aerobics – even more if combined with a multi pass. Another good reason not to go anywhere else!



OUR JUNIORS

The Junior Team members are great ambassadors for our organisation, working hard in the kiosk, assisting customers and bringing a cheerful, optimistic atmosphere to their shifts.

Their enthusiasm at the pool also inspires their parents and grandparents to participate in our volunteering culture and contribute to our community environment.

The Junior Team members gain important skills, an understanding of community participation and responsibility, and build their future resumes.

We love to see our Junior Team members graduate into the Senior Team as well as qualifying to join the paid staff as lifeguards.

OUR STAFF

25 brilliant staff supported our operations over the past year - ensuring we're ready to go each and every day.

Our staff complete many risk and compliance tasks that are important to keep our organisation going.



COMMUNITY ACTIVATION



EVENTS PROGRAM

New Year's Eve

Cool weather impacted the size of the crowd at our traditional New Year's Eve neighbourhood party this year. However, with music, hot dogs, ice creams and a safe, family-friendly environment available, people still made the most of an affordable night out before heading into town or up the hill to watch the early fireworks and say goodbye to 2025.

Australia Day

Sunny weather on the Australia Day Public Holiday meant that the Golden Square Pool is a popular destination for locals and visitors making the most of the last holiday before school goes back. 2026 was no exception with plenty of families bringing picnics and enjoying free entry. The Golden Square Pool institution – the Great Inflatable Race - was once again a crowd favourite with kids and adults on inflatables of all shapes and sizes taking part. Sportsmanship was on display as spectators cheered the efforts of participants. Many thanks to our MC on the day, Chris Corr, for his entertaining call of the races and Deputy Mayor, Cr Karen Corr for judging the winners and distributing the prizes.

Movie Night

The annual mid-summer movie night was a whole-day affair for many families. A glorious summer day was enhanced by the giant inflatable, Water Aerobics and the movie *Despicable Me 4*. A perfect package included dinner, fun activities and treats from the kiosk.

Inflatable Fun

This season, there were more opportunities than ever for kids and kids-at-heart to have extra fun at the pool with the giant inflatable. The big colourful obstacle course was an extra way to enjoy time at the pool on selected days over the summer.



EVENTS PROGRAM

Fire Relief Charity Concert

On Friday 30 January, Golden Square Pool was proud to support a group of big-hearted teenagers who put together a night of music and community to help raise money for those affected by the Harcourt Fire on 9 January 2026.

It was a perfect night to relax by the pool and enjoy the talent and enthusiasm of local performers who were keen to do what they could to help. The performers, Harvey Jenkyn-Taylor, Kai Stone, Tarah Frawley, Ellie Sylvia, and the organisers themselves, The Unknown, kept the crowd entertained while a raffle and auction helped raise funds.

Many thanks to the organisers, the generous sponsors and the patrons who supported the initiative.

The night raised \$2,500 which went directly to the Harcourt Progress Association to aid their vital relief efforts.

Music by the Pool

Saturday 14 February, was another Super Saturday as families enjoyed the giant inflatable, water aerobics, and poolside entertainment provided by the wonderful Ally Gook at our annual Music by the Pool event. It was a beautiful balmy evening to enjoy the music and take the night off cooking, thanks to food trucks Bullwinkles Burgers and The Munch Hub.

Listening Post

On 22 February, Deputy Mayor Cr Karen Corr held her listening post at the pool. Themed 'Cornetto with a Councillor' she enjoyed many interesting conversations poolside with a variety of local people.



LESSONS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Golden Square Pool is dedicated to offering innovative health and wellness initiatives that foster a vibrant, diverse community. We offer programs to suit all levels of fitness and abilities, in addition to creating a friendly, enjoyable environment for everyone to enjoy the outdoors, so that we're more than just a place to swim.

Water Aerobics

The Water Aerobics was a big part of summer at Golden Square Pool. A loyal group of supporters, as well as sports teams, enjoyed the variety of exercise offered by our expert instructors Sarsha and Tanya, the friendly atmosphere and of course, the wonderful pool.

This season, there were more classes than ever, and patrons took advantage of the savings offered through memberships and the MultiPasses. They were also kept up to date with any program variations, thanks to our dedicated Water Aerobic Newsletter and notifications.

VicSwim

Every year we welcome children and families from right across Bendigo for the popular and affordable VicSwim Program.

The program provides fun and educational holiday classes over three big weeks in January, where children develop water safety and swimming skills under the expert supervision of our regular instructors Anne and Gabby.



PAUL SADLER SWIMLAND

In a unique situation for Golden Square Pool, we were thrilled to have Paul Sadler Swimland join us this season while they built their new facility in Epsom. PSSS quickly became a welcome part of our community, and their swimming lessons brought many new families to discover our facility and become fans of Golden Square Pool.

The Paul Sadler Swimland team said:

"We've loved our time operating the Paul Sadler Swimland Program at the Golden Square Pool. There's something truly special here, swimmers have been building their confidence and skills while enjoying the sunshine and then family time, play time or even dinner time!"

Beyond the water, there's a wonderful community here. From the moment you arrive, you're greeted by a supportive and friendly team — our team and families have been feeling very much welcomed."



HOLI FESTIVAL OF COLOUR

One of the last big events at the pool for the summer is the Indian Association of Bendigo's annual Holi Festival. This year it was held on Saturday 14 March in perfect conditions.

Distinguished guests included Mayor Cr Thomas Prince, Maree Edwards MP Member for Bendigo West, Hon Jacinta Allan Premier of Victoria, Shri Anish Rajan, the new Consulate General of India in Melbourne, Deputy Mayor Cr Karen Corr and other community members.

The 2026 event was the fifth time Holi has been held at Golden Square Pool and was a wonderful day of music, dance, food, vibrant colours, joy, and community spirit, bringing people together to celebrate and enjoy the Indian culture.

Holi festivals, a Hindu tradition recognised globally for their colourful powders and water, celebrate love and new beginnings, and our Bendigo event is the largest of its type in regional Victoria.

Once again, our brilliant team of volunteers and staff worked hard to ensure the successful delivery of this unique event.



POOLS FOR PAWS

With the season officially finishing on Saturday 21 March, it was time to let the dogs have their day (or days) at the pool. This event was once again a highlight of the summer for many dogs and their people.

Run over four big days at the end of March, Pools for Paws saw more dogs than ever: big dogs, little dogs, crazy dogs and fun-loving dogs running, swimming, leaping, socialising and playing in the water. While some preferred to paddle timidly in the shallow water, and other leapt in from every surface, all enjoyed themselves immensely.

The visit to the pool wouldn't be complete without a treat from the kiosk, with the dogs taking their turn on the big step to the counter. Besides the enjoyment of this much-loved tradition, it is also a major annual fundraiser for the pool, helping to raise vital funds for ongoing operations.





FACILITY GROUNDS AND STRATEGY

GROUND, FACILITY AND MAINTENANCE

Work to maintain and renew our asset is an ongoing task, undertaken by our fantastic grounds and maintenance team.

The most significant upgrades this year included the replacement of the toddler's pool shade sail, and repair works to the kiosk shade sail. These were required after damage to both, following storms.

These were important works to ensure that we're delivering a safe and sun smart facility.

Routine maintenance also took place in the change rooms, a new storage area was created in the pool operations area, and we had the bike racks and lane rope holders powder-coated. Our carpark also had a refresh.

The grass continued to be lovingly looked after by the team, and remains one of the pool's most complimented features!



SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS

We wouldn't be where we are today without the valuable work and support of the following supporters and sponsors:

- Bart n Print
- Agnico Eagle
- WebSmith Productions
- Golden Square Dry Cleaners
- United Cricket Club
- Sheridan Homes



STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE

Golden Square Pool's 2025-2028 vision is to be a **vibrant and sustainable organisation creating waves of positive change for our community.**

This vision is realised through three strategic priorities - with the following actions completed this year:

Innovative health, wellbeing, and community programming

- Partnership with Paul Sadler Swimland
- Annual activation plan implemented
- Review of entry pass options to expand access

Sustainable facility and infrastructure development

- New funding agreement with council with annual funding increasing by CPI
- Asset maintenance and renewal, including shade sail works
- Commenced work on upgrading the Asset Management Plan
- Progressed priority capital projects including designs for a new roof for a future solar project

Organisational capacity, capability and culture

- Review of organisational structure
- Appointment of new a new buisness to lead a financial review
- New direct marketing email list





GOLDEN SQUARE POOL INC.
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