



Adventuring Dwellingup

by Mike Wood

Over the past three years the Dwellingup area has been developed as a world-class trail destination within a unique forested natural environment and a stunning river valley.



The picturesque town of Dwellingup is within easy driving distance from Perth and Mandurah, making it an ideal location for a day trip or an overnight adventure activity for families, trail enthusiasts and international event participants.

In 2021 and again in 2023, Dwellingup won Western Australia's

Top Tiny Tourism Town award and the National Tiny Tourism Town award in 2023. Dwellingup is now recognised as an awesome trail and adventure tourism destination (see 'Trails firing up Dwellingup', *LANDSCOPE* Winter 2021). The town welcomes in excess of 250,000 visitors a year, 80 per cent of whom camp at the popular Lane Poole Reserve and are

focused on family oriented outdoor nature experiences.

There is a range of walking, mountain biking, four-wheel drive and paddle trails in the area as well as the internationally recognised Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track, which pass through the area. There are more than 50 kilometres of new mountain bike trails alone to entertain riders, plus 24 kilometres of new walk trails in addition to the 10 kilometres of paddle trail on the Murray River.

As more cafés and eateries open, adding to the town's café culture, and the range of accommodation continues to expand in town and in the surrounding rural and forest environment, the region will become more attractive to people looking for a nature-based, bush-focused, adventure experience.

DEVELOPING DWELLINGUP

The Dwellingup Adventure Trails project, coordinated by the Parks and Wildlife Service at the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, facilitated the investment of \$8.4 million to develop new trails and facilities that showcase the area's natural landscapes and cultural heritage, and make a significant economic contribution to the region.

The Dwellingup Adventure Trails project and the new Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre, developed with project partners the Shire of Murray, have seen Dwellingup emerge as a world-class trail destination providing facilities for individuals and families to enjoy all the adventure activities on offer.

The connectivity of the trail network has recently been greatly improved with the opening of the spectacular \$4.5 million



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Main Dwaarlindjirraap Bridge.

Photo - Visit Dwellingup

Inset top Dwellingup mountain bike trail.

Photo - Peter Nicholas/DBCA

Inset centre Paddling Dwellingup.

Photo - Tourism WA

Inset below Walking Dwaarlindjirraap bridge.

Photo - Visit Dwellingup

Left Paddling the Murray River.

Photo - Tourism WA

Dwaarlindjirraap Bridge, which connects mountain bike visitors and campers at the day use area and Baden Powell campground with the stunning Murray Valley mountain bike trails on the southern side of the Murray River.

Just over the bridge on the southern bank, you'll find the Murray Valley mountain bike trail head, with detailed trail information, a map of the network and a bike repair station and bike rack. The lung-busting climb to 'The Roost' at the top overlooks the Murray Valley and riders can experience exhilarating descents.

BUILDING MEMORIES

The first thing trail builders and mountain bikers talk about in Dwellingup is 'hero dirt', the holy grail of perfect consistency of soil moisture, soil makeup and perfect traction.

The second thing mountain bikers notice about the Dwellingup trails is the 'flow'; these trails have been designed and constructed so that bikes can roll down hill in a fluid motion, tyres gripping the high sided berms and throwing the speeding bike out of the bottom of the turn. The thrill of the descent is unforgettable.

As the construction of the trails are completed, information is uploaded and available to the public on the TrailsWA website.

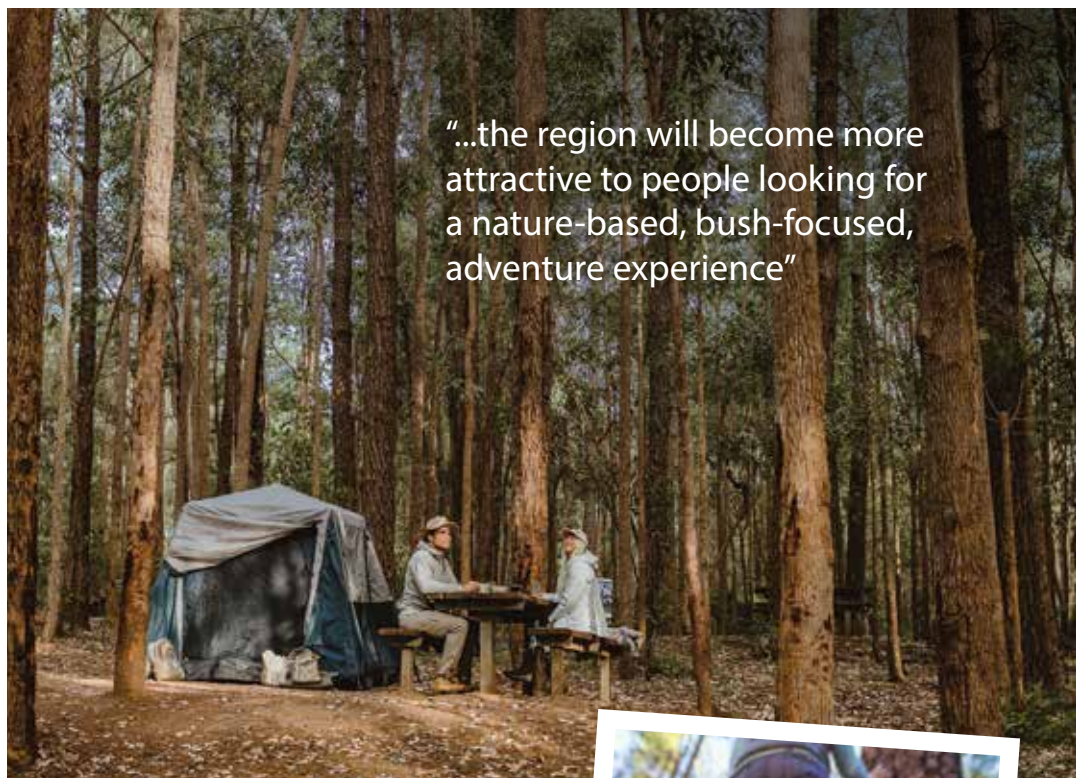
The Dwellingup Adventure Trails project will continue to add even more new trails and activities to Dwellingup's trail network while also upgrading and improving the existing offering, providing even more reasons to visit.

A number of networks have now been built and opened to the public, and some are planned or under construction.

Above right Camping in Lane Poole Reserve.
Photo – Visit Dwellingup

Inset right Bushwalking in Lane Poole Reserve.
Photo – Josh Cowling

Right The Bibbulmun Track passes through Dwellingup.
Photo – Bibbulmun Track Foundation



"...the region will become more attractive to people looking for a nature-based, bush-focused, adventure experience"

Walk trails

King Jarrah Walk Trail upgrade and new short loop in Lane Poole Reserve

Status – works underway

The 18-kilometre King Jarrah Walk Trail is a WA classic day walk which begins at Nanga Mill and is a five-hour return trip. Not to be confused with the actual King Jarrah tree at Dwaarlindjirraap, Lane Poole Reserve, you will see another King Jarrah on this trail. Work on this trail includes:

- Construction of steps to mitigate drainage and steep slope issues and improve sustainability.
- Construction of approx. 4.4 kilometres of realignments to address erosion issues.
- Construction of a new 1.6-kilometre section of trail to create a shorter 4.2-kilometre loop option.

Completion expected by December 2023.

Bibbulmun Track loop

Status – construction works underway.

This new trail is being built in response to trail-user demand for more loop trails as per the *WA Hiking Strategy 2020–2030*.

- Development of a three-day/two-night walk loop utilising the Bibbulmun Track and two campsites, Swamp Oak and Chadoora.
 - Trail construction is to be completed by the Bibbulmun Track Foundation Maintenance Team.
- Completion expected by November 2023.



Mountain bike trails

Murray Valley Trail Network

Status – completed

- Now access the Murray Valley trails from Lane Poole Reserve and cross the Murray River via the Dwaarlindjirraap Bridge avoiding vehicle roads.
- 30 kilometres of green (easy), blue (moderate) and black (difficult) mountain bike trails.
- Unisex toilets and bike repair facilities at the Murray Valley trail head with limited phone reception.
- Try trails with names like Quokkamoly, Busted Nuts and Inzamia.

Marrinup Circuit upgrade

Status – completed

This traditional, hand-built trail is Dwellingup's original cross-country loop trail. The works included:

- An upgrade of the existing seven-kilometre circuit.
- Construction of an additional 1.2 kilometres of new trail, which included the realignment of the existing fire road sections onto a new single track.

Turner Hill upgrade

Status – completed

Like Marrinup, Turner Hill is a traditional, hand-built loop trail. New works include:

- An upgrade of the existing 11 kilometres of single track by adding 2.5 kilometres of optional lines to give riders a variety of descents.

Dwellingup Town Trails Mountain Bike Network

Status – completed

With construction taking place during 2023, this network provides trails directly accessible from town and links the Dwellingup townsite to the Marrinup Circuit. This network:

- Has 15 kilometres of new mountain bike trail linking the Marrinup Circuit to town.
- Offers loops of varying lengths and difficulty providing something for everyone.

Northern Loop mountain bike trail

Status – planning commenced

- 15 kilometres of new cross country



mountain bike trail linking the Marrinup and Turner Hill circuits.

Tom's Crossing downhill trails in Lane Poole Reserve

Status – construction commenced.

- Situated above the Baden Powell campground in pine plantation, this small network of technical downhill trails will be constructed to national competition standards. These trails will not be for the faint hearted and designed to challenge the most experienced riders, including those preparing for competitions, and will feature up to three kilometres of technical, downhill blue and black rated trails.



Paddle trails

New paddle craft launching facilities are planned at Yarragil and Stringers campsites on the banks of the Murray River in Lane Poole Reserve.

Construction of at least two facilities are proposed, with steps to mitigate damage to the riverbank and to allow easier access to, and exit from, the river.

Above and inset top Riding 'Inzamia' on the Murray Valley Trails

Photos – Visit Dwellingup

Inset above Trail markers.

Left Paddle trails are suitable for all ages.

Photo – Tourism WA

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Up to date information on trail projects in WA can be found at projects.trails.wa.com.au or explore.parks.dbca.wa.gov.au