

Western Councillor



Issue 128 April 2024

Fields of Gold

How Backroads Gravel
became a major
Mid West Event

P10

*"I even bought a bike.
Maybe this year..."*

*Kirrilee Warr,
Shire President, Chapman Valley*

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The Blue Tree Project
logs 1,000 trees

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A new Local
Government Bank..?

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Taking Tony to Work:
a CEO gets on the tools

Local governments working together.

At LGIS, protecting our local government members is what we do.

We make sure our members have the right cover to suit their needs. If disaster strikes, our local government specialists help get them, and their community, back on their feet as soon as possible.

It's our members who make Western Australia such a great place to live – their roads get us around, we meet in their libraries and recreation centres, they manage our waste, and provide connection for the elderly. Every day they provide the countless services and support which makes us a community.

We believe that's worth protecting.



To find out how you can get the most out of your LGIS membership, visit lgisw.com.au or call 9483 8888.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Peer Support Team

A practical way to provide mediation and conciliation support to Local Governments in Western Australia.

The Peer Support Team is an initiative between the WA Local Government Association (WALGA) and Local Government Professionals WA.

The team was formed to provide conciliation, negotiation and mediation support to Local Governments that identified issues of relationship conflict between Councillors, or between Councillors and senior staff.

The key objective is to assist Local Governments to resolve these issues

of conflict and reduce the need for formal investigations or enquiries.

The team will meet with the affected Councillors and staff individually, as well as in a group setting, allowing all parties to freely express their views in a neutral environment. The team will then assist the Local Government to develop outcomes and a path forward that is suitable for all involved.

So, to head off possible conflict or for the best resolution in situations where it already exists, call Nick Sloan or Candy Choo on the numbers below.

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
PEER SUPPORT
TEAM HOTLINE
NUMBERS

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WALGA
Tel 9213 2025

Candy Choo
CEO
LG Professionals WA
Tel 9271 1136



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Western Councillor

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COVER: The Backroads Gravel ride in action
Photo: Daniela Tommasi

Welcome to Issue 128 of *Western Councillor*
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From the Minister

As the new Minister for Local Government, I would like to warmly thank WALGA for welcoming me, most recently at the Strategic Forum held on 6 March.

I was grateful to hear of the different issues and perspectives from the Association's members and zone representatives.

I would also like to congratulate Cr Karen Chappel on being re-elected as WALGA President at the State Council held after the forum.

Karen's leadership has been deservedly recognised on many occasions and I look forward to continuing to work with her, Paul, Nick, Tony and the whole WALGA team into the future.

I'm Western Australia's 25th Minister for Local Government and the fifth woman to serve in the role.

As the new Minister, it's my priority to continue working constructively with the sector, particularly through the ongoing delivery of the Cook Government's landmark local government reforms – the biggest changes in more than 25 years.

As you know, the tranche one Bill passed last year and I'm continuing the implementation of a range of those reforms.

I'm also continuing the development of the tranche two legislation to establish the Local Government Inspector and Monitors, provide council members' superannuation and introduce other positive measures for the sector.

I recognise the importance of the sector.

Local governments make an enormous difference to everyone in Western Australia.

Councils provide critical services and manage huge infrastructure networks.

Local government is also a huge employer, employing nearly 23,000 Western Australians.

Since becoming the Minister in December 2023, I have been on an informal listening tour meeting with local governments throughout the State – including in the Great Southern, South West and Wheatbelt.

I have met with several metropolitan Cities and Towns, and with representatives from regional Towns and Shires, with a busy calendar of more meetings ahead.

I acknowledge the diversity of local governments, Western Australia's biggest, the City of Stirling, has more than 226,000 residents while the smallest, the Shire of Sandstone, has a population of around 109.

I have heard many perspectives and examples of some of the significant challenges facing the sector. Regional local governments experience unique challenges with distance and persistent supply chain pressures.

As the Minister for Local Government and Minister Assisting the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, I appreciate the demand for skilled workers across our State.

Our Cook Labor Government is committed to supporting our regions, particularly through developments in urban precincts and worker accommodation.

WALGA provides a range of important services to its members, supporting Local Governments to deliver for their communities.

I'm grateful for the engagement opportunities I've had with WALGA and I'm committed to continuing our productive relationship.

Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA
Minister for Local Government; Youth;
Minister Assisting the Minister for Training
and Workforce Development



From the WALGA President

I am honoured to have been re-elected as President of WALGA for another term.

The overwhelming support and trust bestowed upon me by our Members reaffirms our shared commitment to the betterment of communities across Western Australia.

I'd also like to welcome our new and returning WALGA State Councillors who were elected after last year's Local Government Elections, including my Deputy, Cr Paul Kelly.

Together, we will continue to champion the interests of Local Governments and strive for excellence in service delivery. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead WALGA once again and look forward to working tirelessly alongside our esteemed colleagues to shape a brighter future for all communities across WA.

At the time of writing, WALGA is currently curating sector-wide submissions regarding National Inquiries into regional telecommunications in Western Australia and Local Government sustainability. By contributing to these inquiries on behalf of our Members, we are able to use our collective voice to highlight issues and advocate for sector-wide results. I encourage all our Members to contribute to these and any future submissions.

In March, I had the opportunity to travel to Canberra to attend the opening of the Canberra hub, alongside WA Premier Roger Cook, Hon Hannah Beazley BA MLA, Hon David Michael MLA and Hon Reece Whitby MLA.

As a new home for WA, the hub supports a new way to work with the Federal Government, providing a space for in-person meetings. It will support a new way of working with the Federal Government, help to champion WALGA and the State's priorities, enhance relationships, and improve outcomes for Local Governments and all Western Australians.

We have been able to build mutually respectful relationships through our advocacy work and I am heartened that at WALGA we are a strong voice for the sector in not only campaigning for resources on the issues that matter to our Council Members, but in supporting the people who live in our Shires, Towns, and Cities.

Recently, we refreshed our brand to better represent who we are and what we do. Our new brand pillars of Influence, Support and Expertise do just that, emphasising that we have a team of subject matter experts that are driving outcomes for our Member Councils, every day.

This expertise was highlighted when WALGA hosted our annual Aboriginal Engagement Forum and for the first time, assisted in the launch of the WA Tree Festival.

Both initiatives highlight our commitment to working with our Members, stakeholders and the wider community to provide the support Local Governments need to best serve their local communities.

Our extensive networks and relationships, combined with our credibility through events such as these, aim to achieve an impactful influence that benefits our Members and the communities they represent.

I am especially proud of the work we have done in collaboration with the State Government and other stakeholders ahead of the handing down of the State Budget, when policy initiatives and announcements are made.

WALGA's submission in advance of the 2024-25 State Budget contains initiatives that Local Governments, and the communities they represent, consider to be priority areas for investment.

These initiatives are consistent with the sector's aspirations to enhance community wellbeing and enable economic prosperity whilst seeking to contribute towards important outcomes including, but not limited to:

- Safer roads
- Community Infrastructure that meets the needs of a changing population
- Climate Action
- Accelerate the transition to a circular economy
- Disaster resilient communities
- Address gaps in community services
- Better governance and oversight

WALGA has been working closely with Local Governments and relevant community groups and stakeholders to highlight the need for funding to achieve the above outcomes through meetings, events, media, and other appropriate channels.

I encourage you to visit WALGA's website and social channels to see the work we have done in this space.

In addition to our 2024-25 State Budget Submission, we have commenced the development of our 2024-25 State Election advocacy platform and campaign, as well as supporting the Australian Local Government Association's (ALGA) Federal Election campaign.

As we embark on this new chapter, I am inspired by the collective dedication of our staff, Members, and sector both in this *Western Councillor* and beyond to work towards WALGA's vision for agile and inclusive Local Governments that enhance community wellbeing and enable economic prosperity.

Cr Karen Chappel AM JP
WALGA President

We're with you when it gets critical – bushfires, floods, cyclones and major incidents

by **James Sheridan** CEO, LGIS



This summer we enjoyed holidays, days at the beach, and lazy afternoons with friends and family.

Unfortunately, as our members and their communities know all too well it also heralded peak natural disaster season as the mercury heats up, the rain disappears and everything turns to kindling. For those in the north it also means cyclones and floods. In 2024 we've already experienced a number of heatwaves and major bushfires.

A unique approach, standing with our members

When it comes to responding to a major incident or natural disaster we've got experience. We've honed our response so that members are supported to get them and their community back on their feet. In recent years we've stood alongside our members for a wide variety of incidents from Tropical Cyclone (TC) Seroja in the Mid-West; a community shooting, lockdown and manhunt in the Wheatbelt; and bushfires in the South West, Wheatbelt, Mid West and Great Southern.

Our approach is focused on the member, working with them to provide the services they need when they need them. Often we're on the phone to the member the day of or just after the incident – if it's something with some warning (such as a cyclone) we'll be in contact beforehand. We don't wait for members to contact us.

We provide a whole-of-organisation approach to the incident and embed a dedicated LGIS team to manage the response. This means that the member has a single point of contact at LGIS who works with a small action team to get the best results. This team differs for every incident, for example, to support Mid-West members impacted by TC Seroja, the LGIS Portfolio manager for Property visited within weeks of the incident and the property claims team were in early contact. An initial allocation of funds were released to support the member with immediate make safe and reparation, while loss adjusters were onsite as soon as possible. Our people risk team also connected with members to provide critical incident debriefing and counselling for staff.

Another key element of our incident response is established relationships with emergency response services and sector stakeholders. In January 2023 to support members impacted by historic flooding in the

Kimberley we worked with WALGA, taking advantage of their close relationship with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), to get our loss adjuster to the top end by mid-January. Securing flights and travel to flood affected and isolated communities was incredibly difficult, but by accessing a DFES flight we were able to quickly start the process of itemising and quantifying members' losses. Our loss adjuster was on the ground from 18 January, and we are moving quickly to assist our members in reinstating key community infrastructure. Our critical incident debriefing and counselling team also provided services to staff at Derby and Fitzroy as they endeavoured to support their devastated community and deal with the personal impact of the flood.

New year, new Act – changes to workers' compensation

On 1 July the modernised *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023* (WA) will commence. This is a complete rewrite of the current act with all sections re-ordered, re-worded and better organised. The changes are numerous and there are significant implications for local governments as both employers and members of a mutual indemnity scheme, LGIS.

To support the sector in understanding what the changes mean for your organisation we've partnered with WorkCover WA and legal firms Mills Oakley and Moray & Agnew to deliver information sessions across the metropolitan area and in select regions. These events will provide local government officers with a unique opportunity to understand the specific implications for local government. These events are provided as a benefit of LGIS membership.

2024/25 Membership renewal

It's always a good time for members across Western Australia to start thinking about their protection requirements for 2024/25 and LGIS membership renewal. Our account managers have been out on the road already this year visiting members to discuss your organisation and your protection requirements for the next financial year. As always if your council would like more information about their LGIS membership our team are available to provide a briefing.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your Local Government's issues, please contact me on 9483 8886 or talk to your LGIS account manager.



Tony works the phones...

Bring Tony to Work Day

In an innovative and fun initiative aimed at giving the Chief Executive Officer, Tony Nottle, greater opportunity to engage with staff and gain a greater understanding of the City's day-to-day operations, the City of Busselton introduced *Bring Tony to Work Day*.

Bring Tony to Work Day invites Mr Nottle to spend one morning each month with a different team within the organisation – not just to observe the teams going about their work but for Mr Nottle to actively be a part of the team, completing work alongside them.

The inaugural Bring Tony to Work Day commenced in November 2023 at the Busselton Library.

Kicking off the morning with a stand-up values meeting, followed by a tour of the library, Tony then moved on to frontline duties, including book check-ins and engaging with library patrons.

"I was so impressed with the team morale and camaraderie at the Library and although I had heard that their customer service was exceptional, it was extraordinary to actually see how good it really was. Their customer service is second to none!"

Volume 2 of Bring Tony to Work Day continued at the City's busy Administration Building customer service counter. Beginning with a symbolic task of raising flags, Tony gained insights into the daily operations of the customer service team. From assisting with registrations to coordinating departmental calls and facilitating external visitor sign-ins, Tony experienced the diverse challenges and responsibilities handled by the team.

"My morning spent with our brilliant and hands-on customer service team left me with two clear takeaway messages to share with the organisation.

"The first is how important it is that organisationally we all filter information through to customer service so that they can continue to deliver a great service, with accurate and



... and the tools

up-to-date information. Secondly, that we're all customer service officers at the end of the day, even if we might not be the first point of contact," explained Mr Nottle.

Volume 3 had Mr Nottle don his hi-vis and join the parks and gardens team at the Busselton Foreshore, for a morning of pruning, gardening, cleaning, and collecting litter.

Reflecting on the experience, Tony expressed appreciation for the team's dedication and the variability of tasks and weather conditions. "I would love to join the parks and gardens crew more often, the work is enjoyable and the team is fantastic, although I might try and come back on a slightly cooler day," explains Tony after completing the work on a warm 36-degree day.

Bring Tony to Work Day has emerged as a successful way of enhancing employee morale, encouraging collaboration and deepening the Executives understanding of the City's day-to-day operations. It has also been positively accepted by staff, who consider it a constructive way to show their work and any potential challenges they experience directly to the CEO.

As Bring Tony to Work Day continues its rotation across different departments, it remains a testament to the City's commitment to building strong internal relationships and continually improving the customer experience.

This story was curated in collaboration with the City of Busselton.

“

... we're all customer service officers at the end of the day...

”

Tony Nottle, City of Busselton CEO



The original Blue Tree

The Blue Tree Project

Dotted through Western Australia and now the world, the blue trees are on Council land, private properties, farms, public open spaces and on school and hospital grounds.

Kendall Whyte reflects on the growth of the Blue Tree Project.

"Five years on from where we started, the blue tree has become an important and powerful symbol.

"Put simply, we want to try and stop others going through what we have been through.

"We logged our 1,000th blue tree recently, with over 55% of the trees based here in Western Australia.

"The success has been very unexpected, and while there are bittersweet moments, we have been very fortunate in that people have been so supportive."

The Blue Tree Project started after the funeral of Kendall's brother Jayden, who sadly took his own life in 2018.

Jayden and his friend Tjarda painted a tree on the family farm one night using leftover paint, for a laugh. Incredibly, the story of the blue tree only came to light at Jayden's funeral, even Kendall didn't know about it.

"It started as a story of mischief, love and friendship, a practical joke, we only found out about the tree after we lost him.

"Jayden's best mate Simon (Comerford) then found the biggest, baddest, tree possible, painted it, filmed it, and it went viral."

The Blue Tree Project was born, Kendall and the team started a mission to create mentally healthy future generations. Something that began out of tragedy now offers a positive way for people to connect and help change the way we talk about mental health.

The Project now holds mental health first aid courses, training, events, activations, school and community talks, and works with WA's Local Governments.

Ray Lucas is the Manager of Work Health and Safety at the City of Canning. Canning have worked hard to explain the Blue Trees they have.

"We wanted to change the perception that that blue tree is a memorial to a tragedy, that it memorialises grief. We have used signage and QR codes to explain on site why the blue trees are there.

"The blue tree is not a memorial, it is a beacon, it is in fact a symbol of hope."

Canning has four blue trees, at the Canning Arts Centre in Riverton, at Mary McKillop Park (Queens Park) at Massey Park (Rossmoyne). The fifth tree at Whaleback Golf Course is the pride and joy of the Parks and Environment team.

Ray has seen Kendall Whyte in full charismatic flight, when she came to speak to the Canning staff.

'She is a truly authentic, engaging and open person and speaker. I have heard her say 'I need to speak, I need to break down the stigmas.'

"When she talks, you can hear a pin drop."

As of *Western Councillor* going to print, the Blue Tree Project has 1,167 blue trees registered across the world, as beacons of hope and conversation starters.

"We are going back to the trees to maintain them, maybe some paint touching up and most importantly, get people back together for a chat," says Kendall Whyte

And are the trees the same colour blue..?

"That's one of the most-asked questions. And yes, the blue is incredibly consistent. It is now a paint colour that WattyL has officially renamed to Blue Tree."

And in other news, the next high profile blue tree will be going in at the grounds of Optus Stadium, a team-building project by the Burswood Park Board.



“

**We now have a blue tree
on every continent,
including Antarctica.
It is a global movement.**

Kendall Whyte
Founder, the Blue Tree Project

”





Le Gravel Peloton

Fields of Gold

Photos by Daniela Tommasi

The Backroads Gravel ride and running events will be held on August 10 2024 in Nabawa, in the Shire of Chapman Valley. In its third year, the event is booming. The ride distances will be 160km, 100km, 60km, 20km, and 10km, while the runs will be 14km and 5km.

David Budge is a Director at The Event Team.

"We looked around the rest of the State and realised there was no one iconic mass participation event in the Mid West. We started talking to the Councils up there and local cyclist from Geraldton Bikes, Roger Swan, to create one.

"We needed a strong local organising committee, but Roger was the local champion. We asked him how many locals would do Backroads in the first year. He said about 20-30. We got 50, so we were away. Second year we got 300 locals, out of 660 riders.

"It is important that the event is seen to be held in Nabawa and Geraldton, to combine the accommodation, hospitality, and resources of the two locations, the two Local Governments (Shire of Chapman Valley and the City of Greater Geraldton). Then it's a genuine Mid West event.

"The local organising committee was crucial in starting Backroads up. At The Event Team we love the local aid stations, that the Country Women's Association (CWA) are involved, the footy club, that the locals have got right behind the day.

"Gravel racing doesn't need traffic management and road closures, it is cheaper to run."

And riding through those fields of gold..? Through the canola..?

"It's ideal."

Roger Swan agrees.

"This has been massive for us. People drive through Geraldton on the way to somewhere else, it's only when you head inland and get to Mills Lookout, you enter this incredible landscape and vista that is spectacular all year round.

"(Legendary WA mountain bike course designer) Tony Tucknott spotted our area had potential for off road cycling and put Dave and Gemma from The Event Team onto us to chat. We did one Instagram promotional video, then lots of local coaching, schools visits, talked to parents, the police, and the locals have responded and want to be part of it.

"Geraldton is busy, lots of traffic and it is hard to get a decent ride in. The gravel is a 15 minute ride from the city. You can ride 100k out there and never see a car, although the farmers do love to stop and have a chat.

"The range of distances we offer mean we have gun cyclists but great options for the occasional cyclists and the e-bikes.

“

**I even bought a bike.
Maybe this year...**

Kirrilee Warr
Chapman Valley Shire President

”

For a lot of us who have been bike riders, this is a chance to give back to the community. That's the best bit.

"I think Backroads is unique in Australia."

Shire President Kirrilee Warr lights up when she talks about what "Backroads" has done for the Shire of Chapman Valley.

"We are absolutely thrilled and privileged to be able to host the event in Nabawa. The idea came to us, The Event Team are so professional and we could see the potential of the event getting bigger each year."

Cr Warr praises the collaboration between Chapman Valley and the City of Greater Geraldton.

"We have this beautiful landscape on the doorstep of a major centre, it is perfect. The competitors stay in Geraldton, or camp with us, they spend money with our businesses or in Geraldton. We also see pop-up businesses travel into the area for the weekend."

The locals are right into Backroads.

"The CWA and the footy club love the adrenalin and the atmosphere, they love meeting the competitors, and the bike course goes through landholder properties as well. We see our locals and the Geraldton guys take up cycling, running, walking, they volunteer, it has become a major regional event that everyone looks forward to."



Kirrilee Warr talking it up



The Nabawa vibe



The legendary Roger Swan



The main street in Tom Price

A new Local Government bank, and a new social licence

"It is not unusual for me to have a few thousand dollars in my bag when I fly down to Perth. I have heard of some of our community groups flying five grand in notes and coins down to the bank." – Cr Audra Smith, President, Shire of Ashburton

This is the reality of living in a remote town without a bank. When the Westpac branch closed in Tom Price in December 2022, life changed financially for clubs, businesses and the locals.

"It was devastating that we lost a community place when Westpac shut the doors, and not just the bricks and mortar building," Audra Smith says.

"We lost a place to make deposits, our groups and businesses can't pitch business cases, the local investment slows down and disappears.

Cr Smith is also worried the impact has on young people in the Shire who just tap and go.

"I think a physical bank where people experience actual transactions helps people understand debt, financial planning and budgeting."

After Senate public hearings on remote town bank closures in Carnamah and Beverley in August last year, the hearings moved to Tom Price in March 2024.

Ashburton is vociferously calling for a way forward to combat the mass exodus of banks from rural Australia.

Cr Smith says, "There is an urgent need to shed light on the insidious impact these closures are having on towns and communities, stressing the devastating consequences of the lack of access to basic financial services.

"The repercussions for communities are profound, with limited access to basic financial services hindering day-to-day life, impeding access to financial information, affordable financial products like insurance, and contributing to poor financial literacy. The ripple effects extend to businesses, families, community organisations, and overall community well-being."

One of WA's prime tourism sites doesn't have a bank





Community groups and clubs like the Tom Price Tigers and Townsite Eagles need a bank

President Smith and collaborating stakeholders like the RMIT and Melbourne University will also present to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) in April to create a new bank and allied financial services system.

"The people in our towns need access to basic banking and financial services, like insurance.

"It is of the utmost importance we rebuild this notion of a social licence, where our new banking and financial system is accessible and is trusted by the community.

"I am grateful this issue is featuring in *Western Councillor*. Garnering the support of other Local Governments in WA is crucial as we tackle this national concern."



Local businesses struggle to invest and grow





The Moorditj Mob, Wesley College

Djinaning Koora, Djinaning Boorda 2024 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum

WALGA's annual Aboriginal Engagement Forum this year brought together 189 delegates from across Western Australia to discuss and examine the importance of looking back to move forward.

The theme for this year's Forum was Djinaning Koora, Djinaning Boorda (Looking Back to Move Forward), a phrase that was the bedrock of discussion throughout the day.

Local Government staff know how important it is to bring their communities along with them when charting a path towards reconciliation and driving change for the benefit of all – this is the essence of the Forum's theme.

Held for the first time at Kaarta Gar-up (Kings Park), connection to country was highlighted throughout the day.

Facilitated by Ballardong Noongar woman Roanna Edwards as Master of Ceremonies, the Forum brought together First Nations leaders and key stakeholders for a day of learning, and stories, fostering collaboration between Local Governments and their Aboriginal Communities across policy and service delivery.

City of Kwinana Deputy Mayor and WALGA State Councillor Barry Winmar in his Welcome to Country, opened the WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum and spoke of the importance of all Australian's walking together to await

new horizons and challenges. This was accompanied by a cultural performance by students from Wesley College, who performed as the Moorditj Mob highlighting the importance of land and culture preservation.

“

**When you listen you learn,
when you learn you understand,
and when you understand
you can help**

Brad Vitale
Harvey Aboriginal Corporation

”



Carol Innes OAM - Walking Together

WALGA State President Karen Chappel AM reiterated the responsibility that Local Governments have in progressing Aboriginal engagement. The event was opened by the Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Education; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests.

WALGA's Aboriginal Engagement Forum welcomed delegates from forty-three Local Governments representing thirteen Zones across Western Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders represented 65% of presenters at the Forum.

The theme of Looking Back to Move Forward was reflected in the Forum's keynote speeches by City of Sydney Councillor Yvonne Weldon AM and Ingrid Cumming.



Barry Winmar and Dylan Stack

“

**Jump in with your hearts
and walk with us**

Carol Innes AM

”

Councillor Yvonne Weldon AM discussed how her journey and lifelong activism has been shaped by her Elders and shared her insights on the importance of being the change in the cycle for future generations. She focused on how change is for everyone and to authentically include First Nations people in this change. Cr Weldon also stressed the need to invest in Aboriginal engagement and cultural preservation; to not walk in front, but alongside.

Ingrid Cumming reminded delegates of the importance to Nih (Listen), Kaditj (Learn), Barruning (Connect) and Wongi (Yarn) to create the space for increased reconciliation and connection.

As a proud Whadjuk Balardong Noongar woman, Ingrid Cumming encouraged attendees to explore how we all can keep the reconciliation momentum going, to rebuild trust and empower communities through accountable and authentic actions that will achieve lasting impact.

Six Local Governments and their relevant Aboriginal organisations, from across the state were invited to participate in the Panel Discussion and Local Government Showcase.

With panels consisting of delegates from the Shire of Waroona, the Harvey Aboriginal Corporation, the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and the Undalup Association, the Shire of Broome, and Mudmap Studios, the City of Melville,

the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and the Undalup Association, and the Shire of Kojonup, the sessions showcased the inspiring partnerships that have elevated the work of Local Government in their Aboriginal engagement journey.

Both panels shared their experiences of innovative engagement and partnerships within their Local Governments, as highlighted by Brad Vitale from the Harvey Aboriginal Corporation, “when you listen you learn, when you learn you understand, and when you understand you can help.”

Reconciliation WA also presented ‘ReconciliACTION’ where they provided insights into why we all need to dig deep, listen and lean into shaping the reconciliation journey, and discover ways to get involved and connect with other like-minded organisations.

Each speaker highlighted how by embracing authentic partnerships and innovation, Local Governments can

“

**Be brave enough to
truth tell and have
representation**

Cr Yvonne Weldon

”

work together to embrace reconciliation and achieve social outcomes for the future.

The WALGA 2024 Aboriginal Engagement Forum was sponsored by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, and the Department of Planning, Lands, and Heritage.

Ingrid Cumming (Listen, Learn, Connect, Yarn)





Wembley Golf Course from above

“This year... we will see 30 million balls hit at the driving range... and log 190,000 rounds of golf”
 Gary Mack
 Mayor, Town of Cambridge

Bringing the “A Game”

So many of Western Australia's public golf courses are managed, run or funded by Councils.

Wembley Golf Course (WGC) has been honoured with the prestigious 'Metropolitan Golf Facility of the Year' title at the Western Australian Golf Industry Awards on 22 March 2024.

Wembley has set the gold standard for public golf facilities in WA with a remarkable 20% increase in membership in 2023.

Town of Cambridge Mayor Gary Mack could not be prouder.

“This is an absolutely sensational result for us – for Council, our staff at WGC, for the families and golfers who come to Wembley in their thousands.

“Yes there are two 18-hole courses, but people come to play mini golf, use the playgrounds, have a meal, get some coaching, use the function rooms, and have a hit at the driving range with one of the best views in Perth.

“We had 800,000 visitors last year. This year we reckon we will see 30 million balls hit at the driving range and we will log 190,000 rounds of golf.”

Cr Mack paid tribute to the vision that saw the course redesigned in 2016.

“I think the previous Mayor in Simon Withers and former CEO Jason Buckley knew that this facility would become an enormous asset for the community and the Council finances.

“The WGC provides over 50% of our entire Council revenue.”

In addition to the Metropolitan Golf Facility of the Year accolade, expert Wembley Golf Course Coach Andrew Thomas won the WA PGA Coach of the Year (Game Development) award for his outstanding contributions to golf coaching.

“Thommo is typical of the staff at Wembley. The public love him. He is a rehabilitation golf specialist, and he changes the lives of people who are going through rehab and want to play golf,” says the Mayor.

“We are blessed that so many of the course staff are entrepreneurial leaders who tap into what the golfing market and our visitors want when they come here.

Acting Operations Manager Simon Smith spoke of the staffing culture at Wembley and the drive for continual improvement.

“We have developed a great culture here under our General Manager Jason Roach. We hang onto part-time and full-time staff for years because people get to upskill, see clear employment pathways and opportunity, do training, it really is a happy enjoyable place to work.

“We are always looking to improve, we look at what the golf industry trends are, particularly in Australia. Indoor Golf simulators and Trackman Golf are huge these days and are a big part of what we offer at Wembley.

“We want to make sure a visit to Wembley is the best public golf experience in Australia.”

The Town of Cambridge and the Wembley team have embarked on a 20-year plan to ensure the course and the facilities are providing value for visitors. For the golfers reading, this includes turf and fairway management, redesigning “the rough” with native vegetation, and continually upgrading the driving range buildings and technology.



Wembley Golf Course coach Andrew Thomas

Local Lens

The following pictures celebrate the achievements of Local Government in Western Australia. Local Governments are encouraged to submit notable events, initiatives and achievements to be featured in *Western Councillor* by contacting communications@walga.asn.au



City of Albany

The City of Albany's annual Binalup Festival transformed Binalup/Middleton Beach foreshore into a summer playground on 26 January. The event kicked off with the Girl Guides Big Breakfast at 7am, followed by the Community Citizen of the Year Awards at 9am, which recognised some of Albany's local legends and the winner of the inaugural Annette Knight Leadership Medal. A total of 28 new citizens were welcomed from 10am which was followed by a performance from the Moorditj Yorgas Youth Choir who performed the song "For our Elders". From 11am, activities included an interactive puppet performance by Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, 'Awesome Aboriginal' cultural displays, a Minang Dance Group performance, and amusements for children, including dodgeball, archery tag, and bubble soccer.

Provided by Laura Condon, Communications Coordinator – City of Albany

Town of Bassendean

On Saturday, 2 December 2023, Bassendean's Town Centre came alive with Music on the Green: Old Perth Rockin' Road, a community event offering free music and good times. The event showcased local talent, including Freebird's impressive voice, The Community Chest's catchy indie tunes, and Licence 2 Thrill's classic rock hits. Beyond the music, attendees enjoyed the photobooth and local eateries served up mouth-watering options. Music on the Green: Old Perth Rockin' Road celebrated local talent and community spirit, providing a platform for musicians and support for local business.

Pictured: The Community Chest performing at Music on the Green: Old Perth Rockin' Road. Provided by Elizabeth Martin, Communications Officer - Town of Bassendean



City of Bayswater

On Saturday 3 February, Pat O'Hara Reserve in Morley became a melting pot of jazz, hip-hop and First Nations music as part of the 2024 City of Bayswater Community Concert. The free event featured unforgettable soulful numbers from Noongar duo Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse, followed by tunes from hip-hop Noongar/Jingili artist ZERO Emcee, with the sensational 950 Express Big Band bringing a jazzy twist to the night. In addition to musical performances, the concert featured Aboriginal and contemporary dance performances, didgeridoo playing, community and market stalls, food trucks and a range of free children's activities.

Pictured: Noongar/Jingili artist ZERO Emcee and the 950 Express Big Band
Provided by Philippa Gray, Communications Officer – City of Bayswater

City of Belmont

The City of Belmont's student exchange program with Adachi-ku, Tokyo returned for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The City sent 16 local high school students on an eight-day cultural and educational exchange to Adachi and the snowy Uonuma mountain region. The exchange ties in with the Japanese language subject taught in local high schools, and it's the flagship program of the City's 40-year Sister City relationship with Adachi. Students from Adachi will visit the City of Belmont in August. The exchange program is overseen by the City's Economic and Community Development team and the Belmont Sister City Association.

Pictured: The City of Belmont's 2024 Student Delegation to Adachi-ku, including Mayor Robert Rossi, Cr George Sekulla, Manager Economic and Community Development Adam Strelein, Coordinator Community Development Joel Warner, Coordinator Community and Cultural Engagement Beck Hall. Provided by Laura Chaplyn, Acting Manager PR and Stakeholder Engagement – City of Belmont



City of Busselton

South Regional TAFE and the City of Busselton's Geopraphe Leisure Centre (GLC) continue to offer swimming lessons for culturally and linguistically diverse residents. South Regional TAFE 2023 students working towards a Certificate II and III in Spoken and Written English, participated in swim and survive lessons, a one-of-a-kind pilot program. Through incorporating curriculum content with experience in the water, participants developed important safety skills that they now share within their families and communities. Culturally and linguistically diverse residents are over-represented in Australian drowning statistics. The students are excited to return to the water this term to continue their swimming journey.

Provided by Deborah Holden, Communications and Marketing Officer – City of Busselton



Town of Cambridge

A record Cambridge turnout of more than 12,000 people attended the Town's free New Year's Eve family-friendly community event at City Beach Foreshore on Sunday, 31 December 2023. The afternoon and evening included roaming entertainment, giant games, eco glitter art, and buskers before the spectacular fireworks display that overlooked the City Beach groyne.

Image Credit: Stephen Heath Photography. Provided by Matt Lau, Senior Communications Officer – Town of Cambridge



City of Canning

The City of Canning's New Year's Day Concert and Fireworks 2024 was held at Shelley Beach Foreshore. This is a safe and inclusive, family-day style event that allows community members to come together and celebrate the new year. The event was jam packed with lots of activities for the whole family and was huge success, with a great turnout from the local community with around 9,500 people in attendance!

Provided by Bronwyn Keys, Marketing & Communications Advisor – City of Canning



Shire of Capel

Another vital piece of community safety infrastructure in the Shire of Capel was officially opened at the end of 2023, with the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Gelorup Bush Fire Brigade Facility. The facility provides a state-of-the-art Bush Fire Brigade Facility for volunteers as they continue to protect our community and provide support to other Local Governments across the Region when deploying to other major incidents. Funded in partnership between the State Government and the Shire of Capel, which included \$1,297,816 through the Department Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Local Government Grants Scheme and \$445,700 from the Shire of Capel.

Pictured: Jodie Hanns MLA, Member for Collie-Preston, Shire of Capel President Doug Kitchen, Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Emergency Services, DFES Assistant Commissioner Danny Mosconi, and Gelorup Bush Fire Brigade Captain Glenys Malatesta. Provided by the Shire of Capel Communications Team

Town of Claremont

Domestic cats are a threat to our native wildlife, so the construction of catios is a logical solution to protect other animals by creating a safe outdoor space for our feline friends. The Town of Claremont's newly formed Catio Grant Program allows eligible residents a grant of up to \$500 to support the building of enclosed areas in backyards for domestic cats. The first of its kind in metropolitan Perth, it's a great opportunity for cat owners who would like their cat to have a longer healthier life, save on vet bills, and protect precious native wildlife.

Provided by Michael Lee, Corporate Communications Officer
– Town of Claremont



City of Cockburn

The City of Cockburn was the first Perth Metropolitan Local Government to endorse a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2011 – it has now endorsed its fourth. The Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 outlines specific actions to guide the City as it gains a deeper understanding of its sphere of influence and establishes the best ways to advance reconciliation. The Council endorsed the RAP at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 December 2023. The RAP cover page features a painting by Cockburn resident and artist Kathleen Sherie who grew up on Beeliar Boodja and has connections to Minang/Goreng Country in southwest Western Australia.

Pictured: L-R, City of Cockburn CEO Daniel Simms, Beeliar Boodja artist Kathleen Sherie, City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett and City of Cockburn Community Development Manager Fiona Gardener at Bibra Lake. They are pictured with Kathleen's original artwork, which appears on the City's Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025.



Shire of Carnarvon

The Shire of Carnarvon is pleased to announce the successful recipients of this round of the Community Growth Fund, totalling over \$32,000 in financial support for various community initiatives. The fund aims to boost local organisations and clubs that contribute to the Shire's Strategic Community Plan, fostering growth and development within the region. Shire President Eddie Smith expressed the Council's excitement about the positive impact these grants will have on the community. "The Community Growth Fund plays a vital role in supporting the endeavours of local organisations and clubs, enabling them to contribute to the overall wellbeing of our community."

Pictured: Carnarvon Golf Club Members Liam Chinnery, Stuart Pendergast, Peter Skender and Rita Byron
Provided by Ashleigh Barr, Communications & Engagement Officer
– Shire of Carnarvon



City of Gosnells

Construction is underway on the largest-ever commercial project undertaken by the City of Gosnells, the Southern River Business Park. All 51 lots in the 27ha subdivision are under contract and construction is expected to take 14 months. The project will bring lasting business and social benefits to the rapidly growing local population. In addition to providing local jobs and well-located, in-demand commercial land for the business community, all profits will be directed to community infrastructure, such as the redevelopment of the nearby Sutherlands Park, including a proposed aquatic centre.

Pictured: City of Gosnells Councillors and contractors Densford Civil at the site of the new Southern River Business Park
Provided by the City of Gosnells

Shire of Coolgardie

Australia Day in the Shire of Coolgardie is one of the special times to celebrate community, culture and our much loved volunteers by recognising the work they do in the community. Locals gathered in Coolgardie starting the day with breakfast followed by the Australia Day Awards, family games and a dip in Coolgardie Pool.

Pictured: Tommy Forward, Steve Forward, Ann Meagher, Sheree Forward, Tash Gray, Fiona Castle, Lisa Munro and Robyn Carey
Provided by Joy Charlton, Communication and Media Officer
– Shire of Coolgardie



Shire of Dalwallinu

The Shire of Dalwallinu now has a fully operational Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station, funded entirely by the Shire. The EV station is located at the rear of the Dalwallinu Town Hall and adjacent to the Dalwallinu Discovery Centre. It is also 50 metres from the shopping precinct. The Shire made the decision to provide EV drivers with the ability to travel to the wheatbelt secure in the knowledge they would be able to recharge whilst in town. Dalwallinu has the only inland EV station on the Great Northern Highway north of Perth.

Provided by Deb Whitehead, Executive Assistant – Shire of Dalwallinu





Shire of Harvey

The Shire of Harvey has installed a new solar PV system at the Harvey Recreation and Cultural Centre. This system and another recently installed at the Uduc Hall are projected to produce 1,550 MWh of renewable energy. This will avoid 883.50 tonnes of carbon dioxide over the life of the systems. The Shire of Harvey is installing solar panels on major Shire buildings in accordance with the Corporate Mitigation Action Plan, a blueprint to managing the effects of climate change with evidence-based sustainability projects. Other projects have included becoming a WaterWise Council and introducing the 3 kerbside bin FOGO system.

Provided by Tamara Carr, Coordinator Marketing and Communication – Shire of Harvey

City of Joondalup

Western Australian Premier Roger Cook joined Joondalup Mayor Albert Jacob and other dignitaries at the City of Joondalup's Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony at Joondalup Resort. About 300 people, from more than 40 different countries of origin, were granted Australian citizenship on the day. Indigenous cultural activities were held, and the City's 2024 Community Citizen of the Year Awards were presented in the categories of Citizen of the Year: Catherine Kolomyjec (pictured with Mayor Jacob and Premier Cook), Youth Citizens of the Year: Harry and Tom Linehan, Senior Citizen of the Year: Nev Maw and Active Citizenship – Group/Event: Fostering Hope Australia.

Provided by Stuart McLea, Media and Communications Officer – City of Joondalup



City of Kalamunda

The City of Kalamunda recently upgraded the Stirk Park play space, complete with a co-designed 'Rotary Kalamunda Skate Park'. This provided an opportunity to embed positive culture right from its establishment, leading the City's Youth Services team to hit the ramps with local young people monthly, celebrating their tricks and seeking their feedback. Many attendees at the meet-and-greets are now regulars, fostering a sense of community on and off track. These regulars helped design the 'Skater's Guide to Skateparks' signage as a reminder of skate etiquette and were stoked to see their ideas come to life.

Provided by Kath Parkinson, Manager Customer and PR – City of Kalamunda

Shire of Kulin

On 1 November 2023 the Kulin Shire Council hosted a function to recognise 34 years of service and dedication from retired Councillor Barry West. Invited guests enjoyed a delicious meal and shared in the acknowledgement of Barry's contribution to the Shire of Kulin from 1989 to 2023. Barry was Deputy President from 2003 – 2015 and President from 2015-2021. In September 2023, Barry was deservedly awarded the Eminent Service Award, he is the only Kulin councillor to have received this prestigious award. On behalf of Council President Grant Robins presented Barry with a certificate and gift and proposed a toast in his honour.

Pictured: President Grant Robins, Deputy President Brad Smoker, Barry West, Alan Leeson CEO.





City of Kwinana

Kwinana now has an iconic entry statement referencing First Nations heritage in the area. Cara Djubak stands 10m tall and is visible from the Thomas Road off-ramp in Casuarina. It features a representation of a yooral (carrying bowl) filled with delicate spider orchids broadly references the significance of the surrounding land to Aboriginal people, including five known Aboriginal Heritage sites in the area. The artwork was funded by Main Roads (\$300,000) and using developer contributions (\$250,000) that are assigned for public art. The artist team selected for the project was a collaboration between Susan Milne, Greg Stonehouse and Nyoongar Yamatji artist Justin Martin, supported by Nyoongar Yamatji cultural advisor Cheryl Martin and a technical team.

Provided by the City of Kwinana Media Team



Shire of Mukinbudin

The Shire of Mukinbudin hosted a vibrant Australia Day celebration at the Mukinbudin Aquatic Centre, drawing over 200 community members. The festivities included traditional activities such as the Bombie Competition and kids' Coin Drop, where a generous \$100 worth of silver coins were tossed into the pool for children to eagerly dive for! The event featured complimentary burgers, a sausage sizzle, juice boxes and ice creams, all graciously provided for the community by dedicated Shire Staff and Councillors. Attendees of all ages relished the opportunity to reconnect after the break, sharing memories and catching up with friends; whilst listening to some iconic Australian music. Additionally, the Mainstreet Gallery, Mukinbudin, proudly clinched the 2023 Community Group of the Year award, adding an extra layer of achievement to this memorable Australia Day celebration.

Provided by Kerry Walker, Customer Service Officer – Shire of Mukinbudin

Shire of Meekatharra

Meekatharra's Entry Statement, unveiled in a collaboration between the Shire and Meekatharra District High School, hides a time capsule brimming with photos and documents. A symbol of community pride, the Aboriginal artwork on the statement reflects Meekatharra's cultural diversity. Each stroke captures the town's people, families, landscapes, and the industries shaping its character. Nestled beside the Entry Statement, the time capsule serves as a profound snapshot of Meekatharra's identity, set to be unveiled in 2043.

Provided by Kelvin Matthews, CEO, Shire of Meekatharra



Shire of Murray

More than 30 Murray kids, their parents and grandparents joined the Shire of Murray's annual Mad Hatter's Tea Party during the January school holidays. The kids were invited to participate in a crazy hat making activity at Murray Library prior to the event and to dress up and join in for a mad morning tea, fun and games all in the beautiful Edenvale Heritage Precinct. This event is one of the many school holiday activities offered by the Shire of Murray and the Murray Library.

Pictured: Murray Library staff members Anneke Scheepers and Chloe Dentice with attendees. Provided by Brooke Hancock, Communications and Marketing Coordinator – Shire of Murray



Shire of Northam

The Shire of Northam recognised local and AFL superstar Ian “Bobby” Hill at a family-friendly community event to celebrate his recent achievements. The 2023 Premiership winner and Norm Smith Medallist was joined by another Northam local, Phil Walley-Stack and his guest, the effervescent Ernie Dingo, to provide the musical entertainment at Henry Street Oval. The Collingwood forward was presented with a plaque and certificate from Shire President Chris Antonio before spending time signing autographs for the next generation of aspiring sports stars. The event was possible thanks to support from Darren West MLC and sponsorship by local businesses.

Pictured: Darren West MLC, Shire of Northam President Chris Antonio, and Ian “Bobby” Hill
Provided by Ian Kiely, Manager Activation & Communications – Shire of Northam



City of Rockingham

The City of Rockingham's Youth Beach Party for local 12-18 year olds was back bigger than ever at Rockingham Foreshore, on a picture-perfect beach weather day in mid-January 2024. With live music, slushies, burgers, a colour run, inflatables, beach volleyball, the always popular foam pit, and lots more, the summer vibes at this annual free event were enjoyed by an enthusiastic crowd of 700 young people.

Provided by Michael Callaghan, Media and Communications Coordinator
– City of Rockingham



City of Perth

Lighting up the season! The City of Perth celebrated its biggest festive season on record, with an average 25 per cent increase in visitors and a record-breaking monthly spend of \$400 million – a staggering 19.1 per cent increase on December the previous year.

Provided by the City of Perth Comms and Media Team



Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

Up until the end of February alone, Serpentine Jarrahdale's volunteer firefighters responded to 95 incidents, battling 10 large bushfires, including those in Keysbrook and Jarrahdale. While residents are urged to prioritise preparedness, the Shire also employs a unique initiative for fire mitigation – sheep! The eco-friendly strategy, launched by the Shire's Emergency Services team, involves sheep grazing on potential fire fuels. This cost-effective project, funded by the Mitigation Activity Fund, has successfully reduced fuel loads and received positive community feedback. The Shire plans to expand this innovative approach further.

Pictured: SJ fires hard at work amid a busy bushfire season. Provided by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

City of Wanneroo

Iconic works by one of the most influential artists of the 20th century will soon be on show at the Wanneroo Regional Gallery as part of the National Gallery of Australia's Sharing the National Collection initiative. The partnership between the galleries will see 53 renowned works by pop artist, Andy Warhol, shared with the Wanneroo Regional Gallery from March 2024. The City of Wanneroo is proud to provide local opportunities for the community to have unprecedented access to international treasures.

Pictured: Andy Warhol Inc. Multiples (publisher). Portraits from Artists and Photographs (Self portrait) 1970. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./ARS. Licensed by Copyright Agency. Provided by the City of Wanneroo Communications and Brand Team.



City of Stirling

Mayor Mark Irwin and CEO Stevan Rodic welcomed Australia Day Ambassador Hon Graham Edwards AM to the 2024 Community Citizen of the Year award ceremony held at the City this past Australia Day. Award recipients included Rob Geersen, Maureen Banham, Marwa Wasique and the group Uluu.

Provided by Scott Stirling, Communications & Content Officer
– City of Stirling



City of South Perth

Southside Summer 2024 returned with a week-long extravaganza at Mindeerup, South Perth Foreshore. From 28 January to 4 February, families enjoyed free activities and live entertainment – all set to the stunning backdrop of the South Perth foreshore. Amidst roving performers and live music, the highlight was ZAP CIRCUS, a FRINGE WORLD award winner, who enthralled audiences with mesmerising performances and workshops. From enchanting stilt walkers to the dynamic Rise Girls Musical Trio, the event offered something for everyone. Kids immersed themselves in daily 'Find Me' activities, which only enhanced the vibrant atmosphere.

Provided by Sarah Pope, Communications Officer – City of South Perth

City of Vincent

The City of Vincent is the first Local Government in Australia to launch a GreenTrack priority assessment service for residential development applications. The service encourages people to construct energy and resource efficient homes with environmentally sustainable design principles. Applicants who submit a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) with any single house and grouped dwelling proposal will be able to have their application prioritised and receive a subsidy of up to \$200. "This will have a huge impact on our sustainability footprint in residential areas and help tackle climate change at a local level," said Mayor Alison Xamon.

Pictured: A sustainable home in the City of Vincent
Provided by Kristie Lim, Media and Communications Officer – City of Vincent



Shire of Waroona

A unique multigenerational park designed to commence the revitalisation of the Waroona town centre was launched by Hon Donald Punch MLA, Minister for Regional Development. Railside Park includes a pump track, skatepark, junior playground, fenced toddler play area, grassed open space, a Noongar six seasons garden, picnic area and the Waroona War Memorial. Along with bringing the community together within the town centre, the transformation of 11,500sqm of previously underutilised land is expected to draw visitors, providing tourists with a reason to stop and spend time in the town.

Pictured: Hon Donald Punch MLA and Member for Murray-Wellington Robyn Clarke MLA with students from St Joseph's Primary School, Waroona and Waroona District High School.
Provided by Jade Salpietro, Manager Community & Communications
– Shire of Waroona

WALGA State Council meeting, March 2024

Resolutions from the first State Council meeting of 2024, held at the WALGA Office in West Leederville.

POLYPHAGOUS SHOT-HOLE BORER (PSHB) BIOSECURITY RESPONSE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

That State Council note:

1. The significant threat PSHB represents to growth and retention of urban forests.
2. WALGA and Local Government's engagement in the PSHB biosecurity response.
3. The importance of shared surveillance by government, industry and community to assist with eradication efforts.
4. The need for funding for trees lost due to PSHB and ameliorate the long term urban canopy impact.

SEPARATION (CENTRE) AND EDGE LINE MARKINGS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON LOW VOLUME RURAL ROADS

That WALGA endorse the below Advocacy Position:

1. *Main Roads Western Australia allow Local Governments to install edge line and separation (centre) line markings on roads that meet all relevant criteria, but do not meet the criterion on traffic volume.*
2. *Main Roads Western Australia to consider reducing the traffic volume threshold in the Main Roads warrant for installing separation (centre) lines to recognise the proven safety benefits.*
3. *For this exemption, Local Governments must adhere to the following conditions:*
 - a. *The Local Government contact Main Roads via the Regional Network Manager with their intent to undertake line marking on specific roads that do not meet the traffic volume criterion, but meet all the other criteria.*
 - b. *The Local Government obtain a Council resolution, committing to fund all installation and maintenance costs.*
 - c. *Local Government undertake spotting/surveying.*
 - d. *Main Roads to undertake an inspection following the survey/spotting work, confirm the start and finish points for the longitudinal line markings, and record the sections of road with line markings to be maintained by Local Government in the relevant database.*
 - e. *Main Roads approve the final layout prior to line marking occurring.*
 - f. *Local Government undertake the works.*
 - g. *Local Government maintain the works in accordance with Main Roads WA standards.*
 - h. *Local Government remove the lines if maintenance works are not performed to the standard.*

RECOVERED MATERIALS FRAMEWORK ADVOCACY POSITION

That WALGA:

1. Rescind the existing WALGA Standards for Recycled Organics Applied to Land Policy Statement 2007 and Advocacy Position 7.9
2. Endorse a new Recovered Materials Framework Advocacy Position as follows:

The use of recovered materials, across a range of applications, is essential in reducing the use of basic raw materials, meeting State Waste Strategy Targets and increasing diversion of waste from landfill. To ensure end users have high confidence in the quality and safety of products derived from recovered materials, consistent, outcomes-based standards and investment certainty are required. The State Government, in consultation with Local Government and the waste management industry, should take a leadership role in facilitating the use of recovered material by:



Cr Karen Chappel and Cr Paul Kelly, re-elected as WALGA President and Deputy President on 6 March 2024

1. *Developing a regulatory framework which:*
 - a. *Outlines clear, outcomes-based specifications for individual products which take into consideration the receiving environment and allow for site-specific assessment.*
 - b. *Minimises risk to human health and the environment from the use of recovered material.*
 - c. *Establishes robust systems to provide quality assurance and ongoing surveillance throughout the supply chain.*
2. *Providing guidance and support mechanisms for the successful implementation of the framework.*
3. *Supporting the development of, and access to, sustainable end markets and long-term offtake agreements through initiatives such as active engagement with potential end users and the inclusion of recovered material content targets in Government procurement and large infrastructure projects.*

REVIEW OF CEMETERIES ACT 1986 AND CREMATION ACT 1929 DISCUSSION PAPER

That WALGA:

1. Supports the intent of the Review of Cemeteries Act 1986 and Cremation Act 1929 Discussion Paper to reduce red tape, modernise legislation and standardise administrative practices;
2. Supports the intent of providing accessibility for alternative types of burials and disposal of human remains; and
3. Advocates that Local Government cemetery managers retain the capacity to impose cemetery fees and charges under Part 6 of the Local Government Act.



Andy (Ben Feldman) on the set of *Population 11*

Shire takes centre stage in Stan Original Series

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley provided the scenic backdrop for the Stan Original series *Population 11*.

Last year, the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley had the pleasure of hosting Jungle Entertainment, a renowned production company, for the filming of the Stan Originals Series, *Population 11*, in Derby. Inspired by the true events around the disappearance of Paddy Moriarty from the town of Larrimah in 2017, *Population 11* is a quirky 12-part series about a man who goes missing from a tiny outback town of only 12 residents and his estranged son, who journeys from the United States to find him.

Following several months of collaborative efforts between the Shire, the production company and various local organisations, filming was scheduled during the dry season of Derby (April-August), the peak period for tourism, events, and visitors to the town. As the cast, producers, and crew assembled in town, it became apparent that the ensuing three months would be anything but ordinary for the community of Derby.

Commencing in May 2023, filming took place at various locations around town, with the Shire's heritage building, the Derby Woolshed, serving as the primary location.

Other notable locations included the heritage-listed Wharfinger House Museum, the Derby Wharf, Derby Civic Centre, Derby Airport, Derby Marsh, and Derby Speedway. As the production team settled into town, the Shire began working on logistical applications for managing traffic, ensuring the permitted use of heritage-listed sites and providing access to our Civic Centre for equipment storage and crew operations.

To facilitate a seamless production process, the Shire appointed a film liaison officer, tasked with assisting in applications, recommending shooting sites, advising on accommodation options, and managing transport logistics. The officer collaborated extensively with crew members, producers, and location managers to accommodate all filming requests, even coordinating the temporary removal of street signs!

The presence of the production company provided a significant economic boom to Derby and neighbouring economies. The historic King Sound Resort Hotel was fully occupied by the crew, producers, and actors, injecting life into the establishment as many rooms were refurbished in preparation for their arrival. Local businesses experienced increased activity, providing services such as catering, accommodation, traffic management, vehicle rentals and assistance in sourcing and creating props.

Additionally, local residents were given the opportunity to be involved in various aspects of the production, which not only provided short-term employment opportunities around town, but also allowed them to gain valuable skills and experience. There was a wide range of opportunities available, including working as extras, stand-ins and assisting in organising props, vehicles and houses that were used to add to the perception of the fictional town.

"We are so excited for the release of *Population 11* showcasing our beautiful town of Derby and the West Kimberley region. We are delighted to have played a role in supporting this amazing production, which contributed greatly to the economic, social and tourism aspects of our Shire. We take pride in being a steadfast supporter of the arts and we look forward to what the future of film and media brings to the Kimberley region," CEO Amanda Dexter said.

The town of Derby was abuzz with social vitality as local residents, tourists and the filming crew seamlessly blended into the vibrant community. The dry season events and festivals offered ample opportunities for newcomers to unwind and connect. Whilst the crew were in town, the annual Boab Festival was underway, featuring standout events such as the Derby Races and Long Table Dinner. The annual festival runs between May and August every year during dry season, bringing the whole town together. Last year, the events provided a perfect opportunity for local residents to get to know the new faces in town and embrace the community-minded nature of a small town like Derby.

Moreover, the company's presence significantly contributed to the promotion of local tourism and

increased exposure for Derby. The Stan Originals show was promoted widely on all social media channels, television, and print media, creating excitement around town.

Showcasing Derby's scenic backdrop and promoting the beauty of the town, it is anticipated the show will attract more tourists ahead of the upcoming tourist season and generate interest from filmmakers in the future, positioning Derby and the entire Kimberley Region as a desired filming location.

Population 11 is streaming on Stan Original.

This story was provided by the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley and edited by the WALGA Media and Communications Team

“

We take pride in being a steadfast supporter of the arts and we look forward to what the future of film and media brings to the Kimberley region.

Amanda Dexter
Derby/West Kimberley CEO

”

Andy (Ben Feldman) on the set of *Population 11*





Karen Chappel AM, Alison Xamon and Gillian O'Shaughnessy at the City of Vincent Library for the WALGA media event in February 2024

The push to renew our libraries

There are 232 public libraries in Western Australia with close to 650,000 members. These libraries in the main are managed, run and mostly funded by Councils.

The library has always been an important part of any community. The modern public library has become more than a place to go and just borrow a book. Libraries provide a social setting, digital resources, a safe space for vulnerable members of the community to find assistance, activities, programs, historical archives and services and a place to support literacy in children.

Importantly, libraries provide free services to the community at a time when the cost of living presents a major challenge for many Western Australians.

WALGA has been asking the State Government for more funding for Council libraries, and held a media event at the City of Vincent Library on 8 February with Vincent Mayor Alison Xamon, WALGA President Karen Chappel AM and author and former ABC presenter Gillian O'Shaughnessy.

Gillian described the importance of libraries for authors.

"Libraries just offer such a wonderful space for writers to gather and talk about their work and connect with readers.

"I think libraries are cultural treasure houses and they democratise knowledge so anyone can access it."

WALGA is asking the State Government for \$30m over four years to restore funding to previous levels, and a further \$4m towards a WA Public Library Strategy.

"The State Government provides the books, but the Local Governments provide the infrastructure and services, the technology and the resources. The infrastructure is ageing," said Cr Chappel.

The extra funding is needed to bring the Council libraries up to a standard expected by the community.

City of Vincent Mayor Alison Xamon agrees.

"What we are finding increasingly is that our libraries are places where the community can come together and gather.

"Quality libraries are a hallmark of a civilised society... it really is core and that's why it should be treated with sure core funding as a priority."



Libraries provide a social setting and a place to support literacy in children
Image provided by the City of Busselton

New era of electricity for Local Government authorities

The State Government has a decarbonisation target of 80% by 2030, compared with 2020 levels. As this date draws nearer, Synergy is working with commercial customers across WA, including local government authorities, to educate customers and support them in exploring their energy options as part of their own decarbonisation strategies.

According to Synergy Account Manager Bec Elshaw, Synergy's large commercial customers, including Local Government authorities, play a vital role in Western Australia's energy transition.

"As WA transitions into a new energy future, our energy market is changing," said Ms Elshaw.

"Different types of electricity contracts have been created in response to our changing market conditions – and we're encouraging our customers to learn more about these products and the impact it could have on their energy management."

Ms Elshaw explained that there are current discussions around different types of electricity contracts, such as electricity sales agreements (ESAs) and power purchase agreements (PPAs).

Electricity Sales Agreement (ESA)

"This is the standard commercial supply contract from Synergy that we use to sell energy to our customers. This typically involves a one-to-three-year contract – and the current agreement for the LGAs under the WALGA project also includes a renewable energy offset."

"This is a flexible option in terms of adding or removing different sites if there is a roll in / roll out clause included in the contract or changing operations on-site. Our ESA customers have the power to choose their retailer and can choose environment add-ons."

While some customers may find this type of agreement contractually easier, Ms Elshaw noted there are some other factors to consider. "This type of contract exposes customers to more price fluctuations over time and needs to be recontracted every one to three years. In terms of decarbonisation, this is an option which tends to maintain the status quo – and customers can't directly link any carbon-reduction credentials to a particular renewable energy asset."

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)

"Unlike the ESA, the power purchase agreement or PPA links the electricity supply to a specific renewable asset, such as a wind farm," said Ms Elshaw. "The energy production of that asset is linked to the consumption of a customer to match a certain volume over a certain time period."

"PPAs require a longer-term commitment and allow our LGA customers to show their support for renewable energy projects in WA. In turn, this could give rise to marketing opportunities as they share their carbon reduction strategies with their communities."

"Customers with a PPA also have the potential benefit of more price certainty due to the electricity price being less exposed to some of the market factors that can result in price volatility which could assist with longer-term budget planning."

Ms Elshaw explained that despite the many benefits, a PPA may not be the

right option for every customer. "PPA contracts are more complex and can be less flexible, needing expertise or extra resources to manage. This could make it more onerous to meet contractual obligations – and there's a need to commit to longer contracts and pricing, with contracts of between 10 and 25 years."

"Both agreements offer a balance of both risk and return – so it's important for customers to make an informed decision. We're here to help our LGA customers explore the right solution for their needs to discover whether a new type of agreement could be beneficial to your business and support your decarbonisation goals."

Synergy is working with LGAs to explore the best ways to manage their electricity accounts and find the best options for their energy profile and goals. For more information on the options available, contact Bec Elshaw at bec.elshaw@synergy.net.au or on 0457 199 222.

Electricity Sales Agreement (ESA)	Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)
✓ Flexible ✓ Streamlined contracts	✓ More price certainty over longer term ✓ Express commitment to renewables
▲ Price fluctuations ▲ Recontracting every 1 to 3 years	▲ Contracts require more time and resources, and may have restrictions on load shape & flex ▲ Longer contracts of 10 to 25 years



A simple way to reach your green goals.

If your council is going greener, one of the simplest things you can do is choose green energy. Join other councils by choosing one of our green energy options – and together we'll all power a brighter future for WA.

See how your council can help. Contact **Bec Elshaw** via bec.elshaw@synergy.net.au or **6212 2257**.

Warradarge Wind Farm is a Bright Energy Investment (BEI) asset, which is a joint venture between Synergy, CBUS and DIF.

The WALGA launch of the 2024 WA Tree Festival, 27 March, Kings Park (Kaarta Gar-up)

Images by Jeff Henderson, Content Producer, WALGA

