

Western Councillor



WALGA

Influence. Support. Expertise.

ISSUE 134 | DECEMBER 2025

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Western Councillor

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Welcome to Issue 134 of *Western Councillor*
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WALGA Staff and WA Local Governments

Cover photo

Provided by the Ride4Life Team

Key takeaways from the July – September Quarter Expertise

WA Planners unite for Planning Showcase 2025

More than 235 delegates representing 40 WA Local Governments attended WALGA's 2025 Local Government Planning Showcase, sponsored by the RAC and the Western Australian Planning Commission.

Hon John Carey MLA, Minister for Planning and Lands; Housing and Works; Health Infrastructure, gave the opening address, while WAPC Chairperson, Emma Cole, provided her valuable insights on the Local Government sector.

Quarterly Economic Briefing now available

WALGA's December 2025 Quarterly Economic Briefing is now available for Members.

Containing unique data and insights tailored for Local Governments in WA, this important briefing provides an overview of the current economic climate and economic conditions impacting the sector.

Advocacy

State Government boost for Community Emergency Services Managers

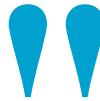
In September, WALGA welcomed the State Government's announcement of the expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program. Two new CESMs have been allocated to work with Local Governments in Mid-West and Southwest regions, in the Shires of Northampton and Chapman Valley.

The addition of new CESMs was a direct result of WALGA's advocacy to expand the Program, as one of our State Election Campaign (The West at its Best) advocacy priorities.

State Government commitment to Regional Road Safety Program

In August, WALGA welcomed the State Government's funding commitment to improve Local Government managed roads through the Regional Road Safety Program.

As part of the initial commitment, \$39 million has been allocated to the first tranche of the Regional Road Safety Program for 2025/26 to support 27 Local Government projects. WALGA has extensively advocated to both the State and Australian Governments – calling for co-funding for these road safety countermeasures.



Improving voter participation is vital to ensuring strong local democracy for the people of Western Australia.



From the Minister

Firstly, I want to wholeheartedly congratulate all newly elected council members as well as those of you who were re-elected in October.

At this year's elections, nearly 1,060 candidates nominated for 469 Local Government vacancies. While I was pleased that the elections went smoothly and some fantastic new councillors have been elected, unfortunately, voter participation rates this year were disappointingly lower than expected.

Improving voter participation is vital to ensuring strong local democracy for the people of Western Australia. A structural reform I have been socialising is the frequency of Local Government elections.

WA's current system of staggered elections every two years contributes to voter fatigue, is costly and is out of step with the sector across the country. The cost of postage has risen significantly, as have other costs of delivering elections, and the delivery impacts of caretaker periods are also felt every two years. Some claim that staggered elections promote stability, however, often they actually foster destabilisation, with increased potential for competing mandates on council which disrupt or derail strategic planning, direction, service delivery plans and other agreed actions of local councils.

One solution is to reduce the frequency of elections to once every four years, like every other state and territory around the nation. One election, one caretaker period, with every council member elected together, trained together, to plan together for one four-year term and beyond.

On the topic of reform, one of the biggest reforms will be the introduction of the Local Government Inspector. The Office of the Inspector officially begins work on 1 January 2026. The Inspector, Mr Tony Brown, commenced in October and has been busy laying the groundwork for the launch of the Office of the Inspector including its team of skilled investigators and compliance specialists, and the commencement of its powers.

Expressions of Interest for the Principal and Deputy Adjudicators opened in October, with applications sought from legal practitioners with a minimum five years' experience. The Adjudicators will replace the Local Government Standards Panel and decide conduct breach complaints against mayors, presidents, councillors and committee members referred by the Local Government Inspector.

The Adjudicators will be empowered to apply stronger sanctions including potential three-month suspensions of a council member. If a council member is suspended three times by an Adjudicator or the State Administrative Tribunal, they will be disqualified from office for ten years.

A panel of Monitors is also being established, with specialists in different areas, including finance, governance and human resources to be able to provide advice, support and guidance to Local Governments.

While I expect the Office of the Local Government Inspector will drive greater accountability, improved decision-making and enhanced transparency across all Local Governments, there is still the question of how to increase the community's engagement with this important level of democracy.

I am committed to working in partnership with the sector. To continue our collaborative approach, a number of roundtable discussions will offer another opportunity to hear from, and work with, the Local Government sector and key stakeholders on issues and reforms to strengthen the sector.

With the end of the year fast approaching, which sees our communities confirming their holiday plans, one of the things that comes into sharper focus is road safety. We all know that our Local Governments play a critical role in maintaining local roads, especially in our regions.

This year, for the first time, the Cook Labor Government's landmark Regional Road Safety Program (RRSP) expanded to Local Government roads with a \$125 million State Budget allocation. I also encourage Local Governments that are working through their road maintenance program to speak with their neighbours about opportunities to share resources or partner to secure economies of scale to help ensure sustainability and success.

And on that note of success, I hope you all enjoy a successful end to the year, and I wish everyone a safe and merry Christmas, a happy New Year and a highly successful 2026.

Hon Hannah Beazley MLA

Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth; Gascoyne Member for Victoria Park



From the Shadow Minister

A tough year for Local Governments, but our Councils keep delivering.

Looking back on 2025, it's clear this has been another challenging year for Local Government across Western Australia.

We began the year with the suspension of the City of Nedlands, followed by threats to merge the Shire of Coolgardie with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. By September, the Town of Port Hedland had been dismissed and commissioners appointed.

These high-profile cases dominate headlines and create the impression of a sector in crisis. But the reality is very different. Across WA, another 136 Local Governments continue to get on with the job, representing their communities, maintaining services, and advocating for better outcomes, often with limited support from the State Government.

Later in the year, the Premier and Local Government Minister flagged the introduction of compulsory voting in local elections, a move that ignores the obvious issue of voter fatigue after three separate elections in 2025. The proposal will also drive up election costs for Councils and ratepayers, with little evidence it will lead to better outcomes.

The sector has also come under repeated fire from Minister for Planning and Lands; Housing and Works; Health Infrastructure, John Carey MLA, who continues to blame Local Governments (and the weather) for the State's housing crisis. This is a convenient distraction from his own failures. Across WA, Councils are working tirelessly – often at their own expense – to facilitate new housing, release land, and provide critical services to support growth. The Minister should be working with Councils, not against them.

More recently, we've seen yet another attack on Local Governments through the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Leases) Bill 2025. These laws, introduced to overturn a Supreme Court ruling in favour of the Shire of Mount Magnet, stripping Local Governments of their ability to rate certain mining licences and, worse still, apply retrospectively, forcing Councils to repay rates collected since 2017.

This bill exposes a much deeper issue, one that I support, the urgent need for a comprehensive review of Local Government rating arrangements to ensure Councils can remain financially sustainable and independent into the future.



This bill exposes a much deeper issue...the need for a comprehensive review of Local Government rating arrangements...



For years, WALGA and Councils have been calling for reform that addresses rating exemptions, outdated fee structures, and the chronic oversubscription of State and Commonwealth grant programs that fund critical infrastructure like roads, emergency services, and disaster recovery.

Instead, this Government is using valuable Parliamentary time to push through punitive legislation that undermines Local Governments and their communities when it should be delivering long-overdue reforms to strengthen them.

Speaking of overdue reforms, Councils are still waiting for the long-promised update to the Cat Act 2011. Despite repeated assurances, the Cook Labor Government has failed to deliver, leaving Councils powerless to implement effective cat management measures and protect native wildlife.

The environmental and animal welfare impacts of delay are significant. Recent data indicates that roaming pet cats kill millions of native animals every year, while hundreds of cats are injured or killed themselves. Councils, carers, and community groups want progress, and it's time the Government delivered.

As we head into the festive season, I want to thank Elected Members, Local Government CEOs, and staff for your continued commitment and resilience. You've kept your communities running through a tough year, often in the face of growing expectations and limited resources.

I wish you all a safe and restful holiday season and every success in 2026. My door remains open to you and your communities.

Kirrilee Warr MLA
Shadow Minister for Local Government
Member for Geraldton



WALGA continues to leverage the collective strength and influence of our Members for the benefit of WA Local Governments and their communities.



From the WALGA President

As always, I am proud to highlight our continued efforts to use our influence and support our Members through the advocacy, expertise and services provided by WALGA.

WALGA's 2025 Local Government Convention (LGC25) brought together more than 500 attendees from across Western Australia for a full program of events at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from 22–24 September.

With a focus on reflective, current and future legacy, the Convention explored how leaving a lasting, positive legacy as a Local Government means making choices that endure far beyond election cycles. It was a powerful reminder of the long-term value of thoughtful leadership and collaboration.

Thank you to everyone who made the event a success, and I encourage you to read the full event recap on page six.

I am proud to share that since the last Western Councillor, WALGA's continued advocacy has seen sector wins and positive progress in a number of key areas.

WALGA welcomes the State Government's announcement to include wine and spirit bottles in the Container Deposit Scheme, Containers for Change, from 1 July 2026, reflecting WALGA's advocacy. The expanded Scheme will continue to support WA communities through increased employment opportunities and financial returns to community groups, sporting clubs, charity organisations and individuals. WALGA will continue to advocate for the Scheme to be expanded even further to include other container sizes and plain milk or milk alternatives.

WALGA also welcomed the expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program, with two new CESMs now working with Local Governments in the Mid-West and South West. This is a positive outcome of WALGA's advocacy, and we will continue to push for broader access to CESMs and increased support for Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades across the State.

Aligned to WALGA's ongoing advocacy efforts and the 2024-25 State Budget Submission, WALGA supported the State Government's announcement to begin the process

of establishing a Child Safeguarding Independent Oversight Body. When implemented, this new body will build organisational capability, as well as monitor and enforce compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

In November, WALGA welcomed the \$25 million Regional Housing Support Fund launched by the State Government to help unlock housing and land projects across regional Western Australia.

This reflects WALGA's advocacy to create a comprehensive, long-term strategy to address the shortage of social, affordable and key worker housing, including:

- measures to increase the availability of temporary accommodation solutions to resolve immediate housing challenges; and
- working with Local Governments to efficiently unlock underutilised Government-owned land for housing initiatives.

Collaboration among all levels of Government, industry stakeholders, and community organisations is essential to develop effective solutions to WA's housing challenges.

On Friday 14 November, WALGA hosted a New Elected Member Seminar. This was a fantastic opportunity for new Councillors to meet peers, learn about the sector, and access key resources to support them in their new roles.

Supporting Elected Members from day one is critical to ensuring strong, informed leadership across our communities.

As we reflect on 2025, I extend a sincere thank you to my fellow State Councillors, including WALGA Deputy President Paul Kelly, WALGA staff led by CEO Nick Sloan, Preferred Suppliers and our Members for your ongoing support.

In the last year of my second and final term as WALGA President, I am proud that WALGA has continued to proactively represent our 139 Member Local Governments and play a key role in driving and delivering better outcomes for Western Australian communities.

Karen Chappel AM JP
WALGA President



LGIS

By James Sheridan
CEO, LGIS

2024/25 Scheme results and defamation in the media

Every second year, October brings Local Government elections and plenty of media coverage as candidates get out on the campaign trail. There was a definite buzz at the 2025 WA Local Government Convention as delegates discussed the upcoming elections and LGIS was pleased to provide members with an update on our 2024/25 financial results.

2024/25 Scheme results

On behalf of LGIS' Chair, Peter Forbes, I was very pleased to provide members with a briefing at the recent WALGA AGM. We also launched our 30th Anniversary promotional video, taking a moment to reflect on the reasons the mutual was established, our contribution to the sector and what lies ahead.

Your Scheme over 30 years has stood strong in the sector's times of need. We've been resilient, and this year's results are yet another chapter confirming the mutual's strength, reliability and sustainability.

The 2024/25 financial year saw a better-than-expected surplus of \$4.4 million, which the Board of Directors has decided to reinvest to strengthen the Scheme's capital position. Despite higher-than-budgeted claims costs—especially in workers' compensation, management liability, and motor vehicle funds—the Scheme's robust financial health has helped avoid significant fluctuations in member contributions.

The Scheme's capital adequacy, a key indicator of financial stability, remains a priority for the Board. Maintaining a strong capital base is essential to absorb claims and protect members' interests. As the sector grows, so too does the value of assets and services protected by LGIS, now covering over \$21 billion in property assets, more than 15,500 vehicles, nearly 20,000 Local Government workers, and over 17,500 volunteer bushfire fighters.

Workers' compensation remains challenging. The introduction of the new *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act (2023)* has required adaptation, with LGIS focusing on early reporting, intervention, and collaborative return-to-work

strategies to manage costs. Our approach is working, with Local Government's average claims cost consistently 40% lower than the WA Workers Compensation Scheme average. However, there remains plenty of work to be done.

Looking ahead, LGIS is expanding injury prevention services and emphasising psychosocial risk management to foster healthier workplaces. Liability assessments, particularly for playgrounds in regional areas, and a comprehensive cyber risk program are also key priorities for 2025/26.

Elected Members and defamation

Recent media coverage has once again put defamation in the spotlight.

It's important to remember that defamation is broadly defined as the publication of facts that damage an individual's reputation or tend to cause that individual to be shunned, avoided, hated, ridiculed or treated with contempt. Key concepts within that definition are 'publication' and 'damage' – both are important. There are a variety of defences against defamation and in general the courts like to see a genuine attempt by both parties to resolve the matter avoiding formal proceedings, which can be incredibly costly.

LGIS provides support to members in defending an allegation and we've developed a helpful guide, available on the LGIS website, that covers the key aspects and defences.

Questions?

From 1 November, the LGIS 2024/25 Annual Financial Report and A Year in Review will be available on the website at www.lgiswa.com.au.

For more information on any topics in this article, please talk to your Local Government administration or ask about LGIS providing a briefing to Council.



Scan the QR code to see LGIS
30th Anniversary promotional video.







Legacy in action: WALGA's 2025 Local Government Convention looks beyond election cycles

WALGA's 2025 Local Government Convention (LGC25) saw more than 500 attendees from across Western Australia participate in a full program of events at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from 22-24 September.

This year's theme, 'Lean into Legacy', delved into how the decisions we make today form the building blocks for tomorrow.

With a focus on reflective, current and future legacy, this year's Convention explored how leaving a lasting, positive legacy as a Local Government means making choices that endure far beyond election cycles.

WALGA's Local Government Convention provides the opportunity for Elected Members, Suppliers, Council Officers, and key stakeholders to come together for a unique program of professional development, networking, and business opportunities.

Heads of Agency

Local Governments had the chance to engage directly with State Government Department and Agency Directors General and Chief Executive Officers on topics impacting their Local Government as part of the Heads of Agency session.

Mayors and Presidents

Mayors and Presidents had the opportunity to attend this forum, where former Director of News and Current Affairs at Seven West Media, Anthony De Ceglie provided a keynote

presentation, sharing his wealth of executive leadership and business innovation experience.

Opening Keynote

The first keynote presenter of the Convention has been described by Forbes Asia as 'one of the smartest people on the planet.' Dr Richard Hames is a futurist, author of nine best-selling books, and the Chairman of the Asian Foresight Institute and delivered a presentation with unparalleled insights into the future of humanity.

State of Play

WALGA's highly anticipated State of Play session was facilitated by State Political Editor of The West Australian Jessica Page, where former Local Government representatives Rhys Williams MLA, the Honourable Lauren Cayoun MLC, David Bolt MLA and Kirrilee Warr MLA spoke about their journeys and about current issues facing the sector. State of Play is a key session of the Convention program and was an opportunity to hear from current Members of Parliament about issues that matter most to Local Government.

ALGA President Address

President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Matt Burnett addressed delegates, highlighting the importance of financial sustainability, and the need to build partnerships with all levels of government to deliver local solutions to national priorities.

Delegates also heard from State and Federal representatives with addresses from Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy and Federal Member for Fremantle Josh Wilson MP, and State Leader of the Opposition Basil Zempilas MLA.





Cocktail Gala

The 2025 WALGA Cocktail Gala was hosted at The Art Gallery of Western Australia, providing an opportunity for delegates to network over an evening of entertainment, connection and conversation, surrounded by amazing artwork from around the globe.

Icons Breakfast

The Icons Breakfast saw Australian cricketing great Glenn McGrath AO reflect upon his journey to success and enduring legacy. Glenn spoke to Di Darmody about many milestones throughout his illustrious cricket career and his role as President of the McGrath Foundation, established to address the chronic shortage of Breast Care Nurses throughout Australia, particularly in rural and regional areas.

Collaborative Panel Session

On the main stage, an expert panel discussion centred around cooperation and shared services between Local Governments. Panellists Anthony Vuleta, CEO at the City of Kalamunda, Fiona Mullen, Manager of Development Services at the City of South Perth, Tamara Clarkson, CEO Shire of Derby/West Kimberley, and Warwick Carter, Director and Chair of the Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance, discussed how resources can be maximised for the delivery of services.

Breakout Sessions

This year's breakout sessions focused on Electrification and Economic Development. As all tiers of Government continue to work through the energy transition, this Electrification breakout session explored how Local Government can best navigate the next phase of electrification.

The Economic Development breakout session highlighted sector case studies that have created conditions to invigorate local economies, leaving lasting positive legacies for their communities.

Closing Keynote

The 2025 Local Government Convention closing keynote was AFL legend and advocate for Indigenous Australians, Adam Goodes. Goodes spoke about being a dual Brownlow Medallist and dual premiership player for the Sydney Swans, and member of the Indigenous Team of the Century. Delegates also heard about Adam's work as a symbol of resilience and inspirational role model who works to create a better Australia for all.

Exhibition

More than 80 exhibitors took part in the Convention Exhibition, which provides a unique opportunity for WALGA's Preferred Suppliers and Convention delegates to meet, and showcase the latest innovations and technologies across the sector.

Sponsors

Thank you to LGIS; Civic Legal; the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS); Western Australia Return; Recycle Renew (WARRRL); RSM Australia; Hidrive; CCNA; Synergy; and McArthur for making the Local Government Convention possible.



Leading locally, learning globally: Georgie Carey's journey from Local Council to Harvard Kennedy School

Elected to the Town of Mosman Park in 2017 at just 21 years of age, Georgie Carey was one of Australia's youngest Councillors and served as an Elected Member for eight years, including two terms as Deputy Mayor.

As a passionate advocate for the inclusion of young people in positions of decision making at a local level and on the global stage, Georgie also served on the Board of the Youth Affairs Council of WA for nearly seven years, including two years as its Chair. In 2019, Georgie was selected as Australia's representative at the G(irls)20 Global Summit in Tokyo, and in 2024, represented Australia in the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program on Women in Politics. In 2020, Georgie received WALGA's Jacqui Dodd Scholarship to undertake WALGA's LGA50220 Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member; the highest level of qualification that an Elected Member can obtain through WALGA Training. In July 2025, Georgie stepped away from her role on Council and is now based in Boston, undertaking a Master of Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School.

Georgie shares her Local Government experience and learning journey.

You were first elected to the Town of Mosman Park at age 21 – what made you stand for Council?

I'd been involved with the Mosman Park Youth Advisory Council for years and loved playing an active role in my community. When I realised how few young people were represented at the Council table, I wanted to help change that. Running for Council felt like a way to make a tangible difference in Mosman Park, while showing other young people that their voices matter too.

What was your favourite thing about being on Council and your role as Deputy Mayor?

My favourite part was the collaboration – working alongside other Councillors, staff, and community members to solve problems and see our ideas come to life. At its best, Local Government shows how good our democracies can be: people coming together to make their community better. Seeing those conversations translate into visible outcomes around the Town was always incredibly rewarding.

Looking back on your time as an Elected Member, what are you most proud of?

I'm proud of what we achieved together as a Council and community. Some highlights include helping to co-design the Town's Strategic Community Plan – our most successful engagement process to date. I'm also proud of our record investments in expanding our urban canopy, helping future generations enjoy a more sustainable, climate-resilient town. I'm equally proud of the positive shift in culture during my time on Council that strengthened the relationship between Elected Members and staff. Together, those efforts made the Town more connected, greener, and future-focused.



You have a strong public platform that you used to educate your followers about the decisions and role of Council. How important was utilising platforms such as Instagram to connect with your community?

It was really important. For many people, Local Government can feel distant or confusing – social media helped bridge that gap. By sharing the 'why' behind decisions and making the process more transparent, I hoped to spark curiosity and trust in local democracy. It also opened up two-way conversations that often led to better ideas and outcomes.

You are a graduate of WALGA's LGA50220 Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member. How did this qualification support your role on Council?

The Diploma gave me a strong grounding in the governance and legislative frameworks that underpin everything we do as Elected Members. It helped me make more informed decisions and engage more confidently in complex policy discussions. It was also a great way to connect with Councillors from across the state and learn from their experiences.

You are currently undertaking a Master's in Public Policy at Harvard. How did this opportunity transpire and what do your studies focus on?

After several years on Council, I wanted to deepen my understanding of how cities can design policies that drive inclusion, sustainability, and innovation. That led me to apply for Harvard Kennedy School, where I'm now completing a Master of Public Policy as a Gleitsman Leadership Fellow and Ramsay Scholar.

My studies focus on urban policymaking and civic innovation – particularly how participatory governance can help cities tackle complex challenges through collaboration between governments and communities.

What advice would you give to anyone who is new to Council?

Take the time to learn – about your community, your fellow Councillors, and how Local Government really works. Approach differences with curiosity, not defensiveness, and remember that the best outcomes come from working collaboratively with fellow Councillors, staff, and community. And if you can, complete WALGA's training early! It's a game-changer for understanding your role and responsibilities.

What advice would you give to anyone who is looking to make a change in their community?

Start where you are, with what you have – and don't underestimate the influence of small actions. Change in Local Government rarely happens overnight; it takes persistence and optimism to keep it moving forward. Over time, I've learnt that lasting progress comes from consistency, not intensity – showing up, doing the work, and trusting that momentum will build.

When will you complete your studies at Harvard, and what are your plans post-study?

I'll finish my degree in 2027 and plan to work at the intersection of cities, innovation and civic participation – helping governments design policies that bring people more meaningfully into decision making. Ultimately, I want to bring those insights back to Australia to help strengthen Local Government and community leadership.

WALGA Training is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO Code 51992), offering comprehensive training solutions for the Local Government sector. WALGA Training provides a wide range of in-person, virtual and online specialised courses designed to enhance credentials and qualifications for both Elected Members and Local Government Officers.

How a quad tandem bike, a flat tyre and an egg became the catalyst for friendship.



Connection over kilometres

In September 2025, four adventurous Aussie women rode Australia's first quad tandem bike across Australia. Over six weeks, the Ride4Life team, led by Louise Ginn, pedalled more than 4,000km from Scarborough Beach in Perth to Bondi Beach in Sydney.

Louise was no stranger to long-distance tandem rides. A passionate cyclist, she had previously ridden 1,000km with her son Nathaniel to support a project in Vanuatu and later rode 2,300km from Ballarat to Uluru with her youngest son Matthew to raise funds for CareFlight. "I'm always looking for the next kind of crazy event," Louise said. "But this time, I wanted something different – something that would really stand out."

That 'something different' came in the form of Ruby, a rare quad tandem bike. After discovering that no such bike existed in Australia, Louise connected with Canadian charity Wirth Hats, which had five quad tandems built for mental health awareness rides. "They were blown away that four women in Australia wanted to do the same thing," Louise said.

"They agreed to sell us one second-hand, and Ruby the red bike that had already carried a women's team in a world championship, became ours."

With only three training weekends together, the team – Louise, Sonia, Anna and Rach – set off to travel over 4,000km from Perth with a goal to raise vital funds for Gotcha4Life, a charity dedicated to building the mental fitness of all Australians, helping people develop the strength, skills, and support

networks they need to face life's challenges.

Early in their journey, a stop in at the Northam Lions Club marked the beginning of a friendship with Shire of Northam President and WALGA State Councillor Chris Antonio.

Inspired by the team's spirit – and a conversation about the film *Cool Runnings* with Anna – President Antonio returned the next morning before the team continued their journey with an egg from his farm; a symbolic 'lucky egg' to carry across the country. "It just really touched us that he was so interested in what we were doing," Louise recalled. "He saw what we were doing and became part of that journey."

That egg became a symbol of connection, with the team taking photos at various intervals across Australia, tagging Chris in their social media posts, and celebrating the growing support from other communities along the way.

A few days into the WA leg of their journey, a chance encounter brought the Shire President and Ride4Life team back together. As the team paused roadside near Norseman to fix a flat tyre, a bus carrying President Antonio and WALGA's State Council pulled up alongside them! "It was unbelievable," Louise said. "Chris was telling everyone about us, and they all came over to connect."

At this chance meeting, President Antonio told the team it only made sense for him to meet them at the finish line.

Travelling across the country, the team had countless opportunities to talk to people about Gotcha4Life.

"Across the ride, we realised how much loneliness there is across the country," Louise said.

"As soon as people heard what we were riding for, they felt safe to open up. We had people crying, thanking us. That connection – that's the gold."



That gold was present as the final chapter of the ride unfolded at Bondi Beach, where Chris kept his promise and welcomed the team.

"We had that with Chris – straight away there was a connection. And then we saw him on the side of the road again, for him to just sort of say, 'I'm going to be there at the end' and to make that effort and be there for us when we rolled in at Bondi - we were definitely blown away."

"Anna gave him back the egg – a little squashed – and he gave us a plastic one in return, for the next adventure."

By the end of their ride the team had spent over 350 hours in the saddle, visited 11 schools and raised over \$110,000 for Gotcha4Life.

Shire of Northam President Chris Antonio said this achievement was more than a ride.

"The Ride4Life team have banded together and taken time out to ride for something that truly matters," he said.

"At the core, events like this aren't just about the ride, they're about why we ride. They're about unity, compassion, supporting good causes, and sharing a bit of sweat, a bit of grit, and a lot of smiles."

As soon as people heard what we were riding for, they felt safe to open up. We had people crying, thanking us. That connection – that's the gold.



SHOWCASE IN PIXELS

2025 Winners announced

Local artists explore how they see the world evolving over the coming years.

This year's Showcase in Pixels winners were announced at a special event at the Shoe Bar in Yagan Square with students and artists representing their local communities.

Showcase in Pixels is the pre-eminent Local Government art competition and has run since the early 1990s, originating as 'Banners on the Terrace' and evolving into an amazing digital display that sees both finalists and winners have their pieces displayed on the iconic digital tower at Yagan Square.

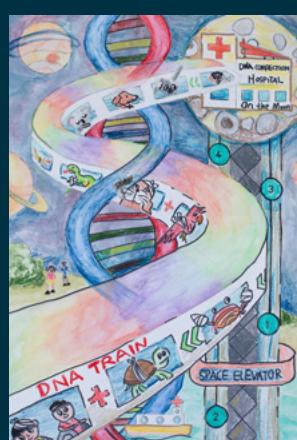
This year's theme, 'Design our Future' invited artists to explore how they see the world evolving over the coming years. From crayons and paint to collage, sculpture, or digital art, every kind of artwork was welcome.

The Showcase in Pixels 2025 panel of judges included WALGA CEO Nick Sloan, Yagan Square Digital Tower content manager Zeppo, Perth-based muralist and portrait artist Susan Respinger, award-winning Pilbara-based artist Jenna Pickering.

Thank you to everyone who submitted artwork and congratulations to our 2025 Showcase in Pixels winners!

Winners

- **Community Group**
Darkan Primary School – Shire of West Arthur
- **Individual – Professional**
Stefanie Palladino – City of Canning
- **Individual - Non-Professional**
Abhijit Prasanth – Town of Mosman Park
- **School - Secondary (up to Year 12)**
Dustie Sutherland – City of Cockburn
Honourable Mention: Ellinah Shin – City of Cockburn
- **School - Upper Primary (up to Year 6)**
Quinton Yong – City of Nedlands
- **School - Junior Primary (up to Year 3)**
Isabella Yee Sa Leong – City of Canning
- **People's Choice Award**
Shiwen Shao – City of Stirling



Local Lens





City of Albany

A major upgrade of Albany Heritage Park's trail network has lifted off, with helicopter support already shifting cleared vegetation from inaccessible areas to stockpile zones.

The Albany Heritage Park Link Trails Project will deliver 8 km of walking trails, 10 km of mountain bike trails, and nearly 5 km of dual-use paths. Around 9 ha of illegal trails and degraded lands will be rehabilitated.

With a site-responsive design that separates trail users and protects environmental values, works are expected to be completed by mid-2026.

Pictured: Helicopter making multiple trips to drop and collect bags of cleared vegetation for the Albany Heritage Park Link Trails Project

Provided by Natasha Muir, Communications Officer



Town of Bassendean

The Town of Bassendean has completed a \$1.4 million lighting upgrade at Steel Blue Oval, transforming the WAFL venue with energy-efficient LED lights that boost safety, reduce costs, and support vibrant evening sport and events.

With future capacity for 500 lux, the project opens doors for broader community use. Backed by federal and state funding and contributions from Swan Districts Football Club and WA Football, it reflects the strong collaboration amongst local clubs and government.

The Town celebrated the upgrade as a milestone toward a more inclusive, active, and connected community.

Pictured: Swan Districts Football Club player Cruz Woodley trains under the new lights

Provided by Hannah Forde, Senior Communications Officer



Shire of Ashburton

It's no secret that Ashburton is home to some pretty extraordinary artists – including our young people! With guidance from the incredibly talented artist Jerome Davenport, our Pannawonica Youth have completed a stunning mural on the exterior of their Youth Club, blending elements of home with their favourite hobbies.

The Shire of Ashburton, together with our partner Rio Tinto, are absolutely blown away by the creativity and talent of our youth. We're sure everyone visiting the region will be just as impressed!

Provided by Amelia Johnston, Manager Media and Communications and Gemma Taylor, Digital Communications Officer



City of Bayswater

In September, a significant fire destroyed the Morley Market building, deeply impacting small business owners and the local community.

The City quickly established Morley Library as a recovery hub, arranging for translators to be on site.

During response efforts, the City worked closely with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, and with the Department of Communities to arrange welfare support, counselling and financial advice.

The City is continuing to provide assistance by offering a private space at Morley Library to connect impacted businesses with relevant support services.

Provided by the City of Bayswater



City of Belmont

The City of Belmont's annual street tree planting program has added 3,000 new trees across local neighbourhoods, creating greener spaces for the community to enjoy.

Pictured: City of Belmont Urban Forest team planting the final tree of the season

Provided by the City of Belmont



City of Busselton

In September, the City partnered with Sport4All, APM Communities, and Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport to run a forum focused on reigniting the conversation about the importance of inclusion and accessibility in all areas of sport.

The forum was well attended and enabled the City and its partner agencies to introduce the Sport4All onboarding process, demonstrating how clubs, schools and organisations can take practical steps toward becoming more inclusive. Presenters and decorated Paralympian Ellie Cole shared lived experiences and best practice for inclusion.

Sport4All aims to identify and empower local inclusion champions, whose leadership can inspire sustainable change in their communities.

Pictured: Mayor Phill Cronin (City of Busselton), Sarah Bowes (APM Communities), Sports Inclusion Coach Gemma Harrison (City of Busselton), Ellie Cole (Paralympian and APM Ambassador), Carina McMillen (Sport4All) and Penny Holmes-Brown (APM)

Provided by Deborah Holden, Communications and Marketing Officer



Shire of Broome

The Shire of Broome won the Regional Award at the 2025 WasteSorted Awards for its leadership in waste reduction and reuse.

Supported by WasteSorted Infrastructure Grants, the Shire introduced an all-weather e-waste drop-off area, mechanical sorting equipment, and expanded hazardous waste interception to prevent fires. Seasonal reuse zones now allow residents to exchange reusable goods, promoting recycling and reducing landfill. Since early 2024, over 50 tonnes of e-waste have been recovered.

Pictured: Waste Education Officer Elena Marian and Manager of Waste Services Myles Mitchell

Provided by Katya Minns, Marketing & Communications Officer



Town of Cambridge

The Town of Cambridge recently celebrated the creativity of its youngest residents at the Cambridge Local Schools Art Exhibition, held on 17 September at the Boulevard Centre.

Mayor Gary Mack presented prizes to the talented students, including overall winner Lauren Shoebridge from Floreat Primary School for her artwork 'Can an Emu Survive a Drought'.

The event, supported by local schools and educators, highlights how the Town continues to foster community pride, creativity, and connection through initiatives that nurture the next generation of artists.

Pictured: Two girls enjoy the 2025 Cambridge Local Schools Art Exhibition on 17 September (Credit: Stephen Heath)

Provided by Matt Lau, Senior Media & Communications Officer



Town of Claremont

The Town's Aquatic Centre recently received the Sustainability Award at the WA Aquatic Recreation Industry Awards for 2025.

The Claremont Aquatic Centre pools are naturally heated, saving 330 tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. This outcome, together with a recent transition from chlorine gas to a salt chlorination system amongst other initiatives, were acknowledged through this award.

The Town was pleased to donate its extra chlorine gas and plantroom equipment to Royal Life Saving WA's Remote Pools Project, which helps remote and isolated communities to help support swim safety and provide training for pool maintenance.

Pictured: Claremont Aquatic Centre Managers presenting Royal Life Saving WA Representatives with the donated equipment

Provided by Ashley Rush, Manager Communications and Customer Relations



Shire of Coolgardie

Shire Deputy President Tracey Rathbone was proud to recently present a cheque from the Shire's Community Assistance Fund to Kambalda Senior Men's and Women's football teams. Thanks to this support, the club has purchased a life-saving defibrillator, boosting safety for players and the wider community. This partnership highlights the Shire of Coolgardie's commitment to supporting local sport and community wellbeing.

Pictured: The Kambalda Women's and Men's League Football teams with Shire of Coolgardie Deputy President Tracey Rathbone

Provided by Joy Charlton, Communication and Media Officer



City of Cockburn

The next phase of the Cockburn ARC Evolution is complete, providing significantly enhanced assets for the whole community.

The ARC Evolution has delivered improvements to both the ARC Health Club and Fremantle Dockers facilities.

The new facilities include:

- AFLW changerooms
- changerooms to support community sporting programs
- an undercover 250-seat spectator terrace
- a multipurpose space to support education and community programs.

This was completed at a project cost of \$7.4 million split between Fremantle Football Club (\$4.3m), the State Government (\$2.5m), WA Football Commission (\$350,000) and the AFL (\$300,000).

Pictured: Fremantle Dockers AFLW player Áine Tighe, Fremantle Football Club President Chris Sutherland, Mayor Logan Howlett, Sport and Recreation Minister Rita Saffioti, Fremantle Football Club CEO Simon Garlick, and Fremantle Dockers AFLW player Philipa Seth

Provided by Michele Nugent, Media and Communications Officer



Town of Cottesloe

On Saturday 30 August, the Town of Cottesloe celebrated the opening of a new playground on Broome Street, next to Harvey Field. The community were invited to explore the new playground and enjoy cupcakes, fruit and face painting. The new playground was funded through a combination of municipal funds and cash-in-lieu of public open space contributions. It was lovely to see our community come together and enjoy the morning at the new play space.

Pictured: A local family enjoying the opening of the new playground on Broome Street

Provided by Lisa Mattiske, Senior Communications and Marketing Coordinator



Shire of Derby/West Kimberley

The Orphan Roads Project is transforming the Fitzroy Valley by improving vital road links, while creating real opportunities for local workers. A partnership between the Shire of Derby-West Kimberley and Main Roads WA, the program delivers hands-on training and employment for Aboriginal workers, achieving 86% local participation.

Crews have upgraded key roads – including Jarlmadangah Access, Ngurtuwarta and Walmajarri Hwy – ensuring safer travel for residents and visitors.

Beyond essential roadworks, the project strengthens skills, fosters pride and builds community resilience, demonstrating the lasting value of community-driven initiatives that connect people, grow capacity and deliver meaningful outcomes across the West Kimberley.

Provided by Maria O'Connell, Coordinator Communications and Media



Shire of Esperance

Advanced technology is now available at the Esperance Public Library – the result of months of meticulous preparation.

Staff individually tagged each Library item for integration with RFID Smart Shelving, with returns now taking just seconds to rejoin the collection. Outside, a vibrant book locker in the new Library colours lets patrons collect reservations anytime, while a self-service terminal means users can browse, reserve, and borrow with ease.

These innovations, backed by Council and Shire teams, mark a bold step toward the future – ensuring the Library's transition to the James Street Cultural Precinct is as smart as it is inspiring.

Pictured: Digital Media Officer Abi Scott, with the new Esperance Public Library branding she created and adapted for the Library's new Book Locker

Provided by Mary Bidstrup, Media & Communications Officer



Shire of East Pilbara

The Regional Arts Workshop Series, held across five months in 2025, marked the first collaboration of its kind between the Shire of East Pilbara and the Shire of Ashburton.

The two Local Governments worked together to deliver creative workshops on a geographical scale not seen before.

It strengthened creative connections and showcased the depth of artistic talent across the Pilbara.

By combining resources and expertise, the programs provided a platform for local artists to share their work.

The initiative stands as a great example of what can be achieved through collaboration, nurturing cultural exchange, community pride, and stronger regional ties.

Pictured: Participants in the Ashburton Woodwork series of classes make their own stools under instruction from wood turner Gary Mayfield

Provided by Sally Spalding, Communications & Engagement Officer



Shire of Exmouth

On Friday 10 October, the new Shire of Exmouth Recycling Centre was officially opened. The event was attended by Minister for Environment; Community Services; Homelessness Hon Matthew Swinburne MLC, Kevin Michel MLA, Exmouth Shire President Matthew Niikkula, Shire of Exmouth Councillors and other special guests.

The opening achieved a key Shire commitment and community outcome, supporting sustainable initiatives and environmental stewardship, as we collectively work towards reducing the number of items going into landfill. This project was made possible with funding support from both the Western Australian and Commonwealth governments through the Recycling Modernisation Fund.

Pictured: Hon Matthew Swinburne MLC, Kevin Michel MLA, Shire President Matthew Niikkula, Shire of Exmouth Councillors Jackie Brooks and David Gillespie, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Western Australia Jim Walker, and key community members involved with the project

Provided by Nic Errol, Coordinator Communications



Shire of Goomalling

Biosphere Boodja lit up Goomalling.

A creative uprising in the heart of the Wheatbelt, rewilding imaginations and reconnecting people to art, land, and each other.

The event, supported by Lotterywest, was the culmination of eight months of community collaboration, where students and residents helped create giant puppets and clay sculptures, contributing to the Crop Circle Art Installation and Dome projection.

The event showcased local Western Australia artists and musicians and became one of the most significant and heartfelt community arts events Goomalling has ever seen – drawing over 3,000 people who became part of our story and left with memories to last a lifetime.

Provided by Tahnee Bird, Community Development Officer. Photo by Angie Roe Photography



City of Gosnells

More than 120,000 local native seedlings were planted across the City of Gosnells over winter, enhancing amenity and biodiversity for years to come.

Approximately 10,000 of these were tree species, supporting the City's commitment to achieving 30 per cent tree canopy coverage on City-managed land. This initiative will help increase shade and cool the City's suburbs.

The largest projects were at Harmony Fields Reserve in Maddington and the Southern River Confluence Foreshore Reserve in Thornlie, which together accounted for 80,000 seedlings.

Looking ahead, the City plans to establish a production nursery to boost planting capacity and support a diverse range of species suited to local conditions.

Pictured: City of Gosnells Mayor Terresa Lynes at The Southern River Confluence Foreshore Reserve in Thornlie.
Provided by the City of Gosnells



Shire of Gingin

On Saturday 11 October, The Shire of Gingin hosted 'Palettes & Plates' for the first time. This event brought together producers, artists, entertainers, businesses and community groups from in and around Gingin.

The day started off with various entertainment such as live painting, an art gallery, local musicians, acrobats, pony rides, market stalls and a produce pavilion. We finished the evening with a candlelight performance from the Hills Symphony Orchestra, whilst attendees enjoyed drinks, pizza and picnic boxes filled with local produce. It was a day full of flavour, colour and community spirit.

Pictured: Shire of Gingin Community Development team members Caitlin Skewes, Matilda Agnew, Andi Dackins and Olivia Forbes
Provided by Caitlin Skewes, Administrative Support Officer



Shire of Harvey

The Shire of Harvey has been helping regional local governments prepare for mosquito season.

For the first time, the Shire hosted the Department of Health's Mosquito Management Course.

The three-day program explored best practice methods in mosquito control, including surveillance, breeding sites, and diseases to identify.

The itinerary also included site visits, trap setting, mosquito larvae collection, equipment repair demonstrations and other helpful techniques.

Roughly 40 representatives from local government environmental health teams in regional Western Australia participated in the course.

Pictured: Shire of Harvey Environmental Health Officer Anna Baguley with City of Bunbury Environmental Health Officer Paul Grayson

Provided by Tamra Carr, Coordinator Marketing and Communications



City of Mandurah

Two new murals have been created at popular spaces in the City of Mandurah as part of the 2025 Mandurah Arts Festival.

The artworks celebrate community connections and the local environment and are part of 10 public art pieces the City is delivering over five years to activate and enhance community areas – a key action from the City's Arts and Culture Strategy.

Two experienced WA artists have recently created the masterpieces. Artist Haylee Fieldes (AKA Fieldey) has transformed a toilet block at Henson Reserve in the city's north, inspired by the local coast and marine life. A special community painting day was held for people to get involved.

Artist Jerome Davenport has created murals at the Contemporary Art Spaces Mandurah (CASM) workshop, taking inspiration from the people who use the space.

Provided by Holly Sutton, Communications and Public Relations Advisor



City of Joondalup

Perth artist Sam Bloor has been named winner of the 2025 Invitation Art Prize – the City of Joondalup's most prestigious visual arts competition.

The announcement was made at the launch of the exhibition, which also saw the official opening of the event's location – the new Joondalup Contemporary Art Gallery on Boas Avenue, Joondalup.

Mr Bloor received \$25,000 in prize money for his artwork, entitled *Chance Encounter*. The City will also acquire the artwork for its art collection.

Provided by Daniel Davini, Media Advisor



City of Melville

The start of construction on Esplanade Park in Mount Pleasant in August was the culmination of many months of careful planning and community consultation by the City of Melville.

The Park will become an important community meeting place and a link from the commercial precinct on Kishorn Road to the foreshore in the dynamic Canning Bridge Precinct. Work is expected to be completed early in 2026.

The Park has been made possible by funding from Lotterywest and the State Government, and representatives from the organisations involved were recently on site for a ceremonial sod-turning.

Pictured: City of Melville CEO Gail Bowman, Mayor Katy Mair, Kim Giddens MLA, and Lotterywest Grants and Community Development General Manager Lorna Pritchard

Provided by Kerry Faulkner, Communications Officer



Shire of Merredin

In September, the Shire of Merredin was proud to welcome His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, Governor of Western Australia, and his wife, Mrs Darrylyn Dawson. Their visit started with a tour of Merredin's redeveloped CBD and concluded with a gathering in our historical Cummins Theatre.

Held in honour of our esteemed guests, this afternoon tea was a unique opportunity for Shire Councillors, executive staff and local emergency service personnel to share their enthusiasm for the Wheatbelt and celebrate life in regional towns with the Governor and Mrs Dawson.

Pictured: Acting Chief Executive Officer Codi Brindley-Mullen, Mrs Darrylyn Dawson, His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM Governor of Western Australia, and Shire President Donna Crook

Provided by Michaela Ironwood, Media & Communications Officer



Shire of Murray

More than 100 enthusiastic riders came together to celebrate WA Bike Month at the Murray Rides: Skills in Motion event in Dwellingup. The event encouraged people of all ages and abilities to ride for fun, fitness and a healthier lifestyle, packed with learning, fun, and community spirit.

Our Murray Youth for Youth team hosted engaging activities, while Murray Library ran a special bike-themed Story Time session for younger children. A free sausage sizzle capped off the day, keeping riders fuelled and smiling.

This event was proudly supported as part of WA Bike Month 2025, a Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure initiative supported by RAC WA.

Pictured: Community taking part in Skills in Motion workshop

Provided by Kaylin Heyns, Digital Communications and Marketing Officer



Shire of Mundaring

More than 2,700 people joined us at Mundaring Arena in October for a day of learning, connection and preparedness. Families met local brigades, explored emergency vehicles and took home practical tips to stay safe this bushfire season.

The event, hosted with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, helped our community build awareness, strengthen resilience and thank the volunteers who work tirelessly to protect the Perth Hills.

Provided by Breyon Gibbs, Coordinator Communities



Shire of Northam

The Shire of Northam was recently honoured to welcome His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, Governor of Western Australia, along with Mrs Dawson, and A/Superintendent Geoff Regan APM, Aide de Camp to the Governor, for a visit to Bilya Koort Boodja.

During his visit, the Governor spent time reflecting in the exhibition space at the centre, sat for a discussion with the Chairperson of the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation, and took some time to talk to staff. The Governor is visiting Wheatbelt communities to gain an understanding of current community priorities and challenges.

Pictured: Wheatbelt Development Commission CEO Robert Cossart, His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation Chairperson Tracey De Grussa, Mrs Dawson, Shire of Northam CEO Debbie Terelinck, and staff from the Shire of Northam's Community Development team

Provided by Victoria Williams, Member Engagement and Communications



Shire of Perenjori

The residents of Perenjori in Western Australia's Wheatbelt are buzzing with excitement as they finally enjoy the convenience of shopping locally for the first time in seven years! Since the town's previous supermarket closed its doors in 2018 and was later reduced to rubble by ex-Tropical Cyclone Seroja, locals have been eagerly awaiting a solution.

The grand opening of a brand new grocery store on August 8 has sparked a wave of optimism and joy throughout the community.

The Perenjori Shire has made this dream a reality, breathing new life into the heart of the town.

Pictured: Residents and visitors celebrate the official opening of the new supermarket

Provided by Adim Hajat, Community Development Officer



Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

Kicking off our Major Event Program for 2025-26 in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale was Pups in the Park – a free and fun-filled event for the whole family, including four-legged friends.

The community event included a range of pet market stalls, tasty food and drinks (for both people and pups), and interactive training sessions.

Provided by Issy Rule, Strategic Communications and Advocacy Advisor



City of Rockingham

Each October, the City of Rockingham honours residents aged 65 and over who have lived in the City for 50 consecutive years or more at the annual Pioneers Luncheon.

This year's theme, 'Taste of Heritage – Recreating Food Memories of Rockingham', celebrated the way food connects generations. Pioneers shared treasured recipes and heartfelt stories – from family feasts to favourite local eateries – reflecting the rich cultural tapestry of the community.

It was a wonderful day filled with connection, nostalgia and celebration, as the City recognised the lasting contributions of long-term residents and the memories that continue to shape Rockingham.

Provided by Sharnae Hope, Media and Communications Officer



City of Stirling

The City of Stirling's redevelopment of Stirling Leisure – Hamersley Public Golf Course has claimed its fifth major award since completion, with a win at the Urban Development Institute of Australia WA's prestigious 2025 Awards for Excellence in September.

The City's \$20 million golf course redevelopment won the Social and Community Infrastructure category, with judges saying it "redefines what a golf course can be".

The redevelopment previously won the Productivity through Infrastructure category at the 2025 National Awards for Local Government in June and three prizes at the 2025 Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia WA Excellence Awards in March.

Pictured: The new driving range at Stirling Leisure – Hamersley Public Golf Course.

Provided by Mark Ravi, Communications Officer



City of South Perth

In a move to increase recycling within our community and the greater inner-city area, the City of South Perth has opened a Reuse Shop at the Recycling Centre in Como.

Operated by Workpower, a leading Western Australian disability service provider and social enterprise, the shop sells second-hand goods and supports inclusive employment.

The initiative is part of the City's broader sustainability push, alongside Verge Valet™, a Containers for Change Drop & Go point, and waste diversion to the Kwinana Energy Recovery Facility.

Pictured: Shirley from Workpower collecting donations at the City of South Perth Reuse Shop

Provided by City of South Perth Communications Officer



City of Subiaco

Lords Recreation Centre launched a brand-new, 8-week Teen Fitness Program in October – and the promotional campaign for sign-ups was so successful that the program was completely booked out before it even started.

The program is designed to help young people aged 12 to 16 to develop confidence, strength and overall fitness in a safe and supportive gym environment. Classes in the program are held twice a week after school, and include machine work, free weights and team exercises.

Pictured: Lucy Brown, Milla Grieve and Ruby Pegler taking part in Teen Fitness Program

Provided by Tatum Stafford, Senior Media and Communications Advisor



Shire of Three Springs

The Shire of Three Springs recently completed the full reconstruction of the Margie Bone Netball Courts, funded through the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (Phase 4).

The project transformed an outdated surface into a safe, competition-standard facility and has revitalised netball locally and regionally. The Three Springs Netball Club now enjoys reliable training and match-day conditions, while the venue is again capable of hosting regional winter sport.

This investment will deliver long-term sporting, social, and community benefits, ensuring netball continues to thrive in Three Springs and across the Mid-West.

Pictured: Three Springs Netball Courts and Oval (Credit: SaltLake Media)

Provided by Raman S Virdi, Coordinator Community Development and Tourism



Shire of Toodyay

The Shire of Toodyay was proud to support the Toodyay Picnic Races 2025, held on Sunday 28 September. Despite a few spring showers, the event was full of energy and excitement, with racegoers enjoying the charm of one of Western Australia's few remaining picnic-style race meets.

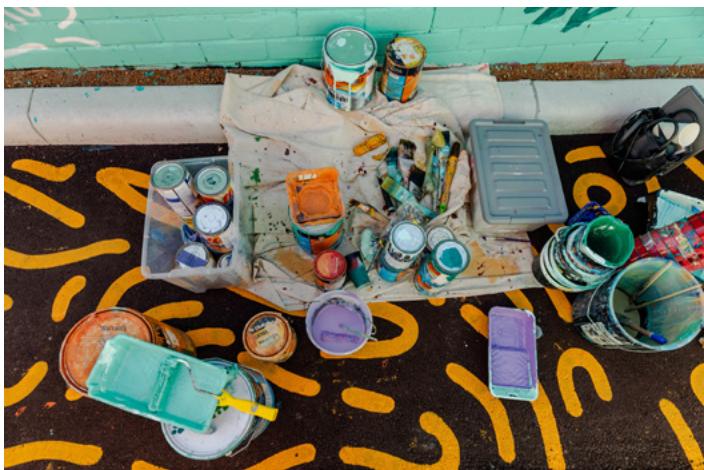
Set against the picturesque backdrop of the Avon Valley, the races offered a memorable day of country racing, community spirit, and of course – style! In addition to the Toodyay Cup, Fashions on the Field was a definite highlight, bringing a splash of glamour and creativity to the festivities.

Established in 1865, the Toodyay Picnic Races continue to be a cherished tradition, bringing locals and visitors together in celebration of heritage and hospitality.

The Shire would like to congratulate the Toodyay Race Club and all organisers for delivering a sensational event.

Pictured: Fashions on the Field MC Richard Hudson, Toodyay Race Club member Elizabeth Moir, Shire CEO Aaron Bowman, and Toodyay Race Club Vice Chairman Stirling Thompson

Provided by Meredith Taylor, Executive Manager Economic Development & Community Services



City of Vincent

City of Vincent is encouraging neighbours to collaborate to make their laneways safer, greener, and full of personality!

The 'Love Your Laneway' grant is all about transforming residential laneways into vibrant, welcoming spaces that bring people together.

The program is designed to encourage neighbours to work together on creative projects that make the City's laneways more attractive, accessible and environmentally friendly.

The City is encouraging the community to celebrate the unique character of their local neighbourhood by creating spaces that are more enjoyable for everyone.

Provided by Rebecca Land, Communications Officer



Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

When the new Wongan Hills Cemetery Toilet Grand Opening was announced, no one expected it to become a viral sensation on Facebook and two radio stations! What locals saw as a practical, community-driven project unexpectedly caught statewide attention, much to everyone's surprise and amusement.

The initiative was led by passionate residents, with support from the Rotary Club, Progress Association, Kondut Sports Council, Wongan-Ballidu Development Group, and Community Association. The project reflected Wongan-Ballidu's spirit of teamwork and light-hearted humour, proving that even the most down-to-earth projects can put a small town in the spotlight.

Provided by Esther Mepham, Community Engagement Officer



Shire of York

It's been a vibrant season of community spirit and celebration in York, with a calendar packed full of signature events drawing visitors from across the state.

The York Agricultural Show, York Medieval Fayre, and York Motor Show (just to name a few) each showcased the town's charm and heritage in their own way – from family-friendly festivities and heritage displays to roaring engines lining Avon Terrace.

The Shire of York continues to work closely with local organisers and volunteers to deliver memorable experiences that boost tourism, strengthen community pride, and support local business.

Pictured: Re-enactors perform for the crowd at the York Medieval Fayre
Provided by Allan Brady, Media and Engagement Officer



New Elected Member Seminar

On Friday 14 November, WALGA officially welcomed new Elected Members at a Seminar held at Kings Park.

After being welcomed to the sector by WALGA President Karen Chappel AM JP, attendees heard from the Minister for Local Government, Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, and received an overview of the role of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) from Director General, Lanie Chopping.

WALGA CEO Nick Sloan also provided an overview of WALGA's role as the authoritative voice and trusted partner for Western Australian Local Government, including the further training opportunities and support available for Elected Members.

In addition to sessions from LGIS and Civic Legal, attendees heard from WALGA Executive Manager Member Services Kirsty Martin; City of South Perth Director of Development & Community Services Donna Shaw (speaking on the essentials of planning); City of Vincent Mayor Alison Xamon (about community leadership); and City of Karratha Mayor Daniel Scott and CEO Virginia Miltrup (about the relationship between a CEO and a Mayor or President).

The event provided an opportunity for new Elected Members to meet their peers, learn more about the sector, and develop an initial understanding of the importance of their role, and what it means to effectively serve their community.



You are the right material

WALGA, in partnership with the State Government, ran a campaign in the lead up to the Local Government elections encouraging Western Australians interested in shaping the future of their community to nominate for Council.

The 'You are the right material' campaign emphasised that local Councils work best when they reflect the fabric of their community and encouraged diversity in nominations including people from different cultural backgrounds, ages, professions, ability levels and genders.

Following the closure of the candidate nomination window, the campaign shifted to voter participation, encouraging community members that are passionate about local issues to put their passion where it counts, with a vote.

State Council resolutions

WALGA's State Council is the decision-making representative body of all 139 Member Local Governments and is responsible for sector-wide policy making and strategic planning.

Chaired by WALGA President Karen Chappel AM JP, State Council consists of 24 State Councillors – 12 from Country constituencies and 12 from Metropolitan constituencies.

For the third meeting of the year, WALGA's State Council travelled to Norseman in the Goldfields-Esperance Country Zone.

Zone Forum

At the regional meeting, State Council joined representatives from the Goldfields-Esperance Country Zone for a Forum to discuss regional issues, projects and opportunities. State Council heard presentations from each Zone Member Local Government. This is a valuable opportunity for State Councillors to gain a first-hand appreciation of the various issues confronting Local Governments in the Zone.

State Council Meeting

At the State Council meeting, resolutions were made on the following matters:

- Rating of Renewable Energy Facilities
- Rating of Miscellaneous Licences
- Community Infrastructure and Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund Advocacy Positions
- Rural and Remote Health Services Advocacy Position
- Advocacy Positions for Active Transport and Micromobility.

Other Advocacy Position changes included:

- Retirement of Advocacy Positions 3.2 Health and 3.7.2 Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (superseded by Position 3.7.1 update)
- Amendment to 3.2.1 Local Public Health Plans.

For full resolutions, visit the WALGA website.

WALGA's 2025 Annual General Meeting

Each year, WALGA holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Members as part of the Local Government Convention.

WALGA's 2025 AGM was held on Tuesday, 23 September at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Each Member Local Government was entitled to be represented by two Voting Delegates. Over 200 Voting Delegates were present at the AGM.

In addition to endorsing WALGA's 2024-25 Annual Report, a number of Member Motions were debated and passed:

- provision of medical services in remote and very remote Local Governments;
- homelessness and short-term accommodation solutions;
- rating exemptions; and
- the rateability of miscellaneous licences.

The action proposed to be taken in relation to each of the resolutions will be considered by State Council at the next meeting on 3 December 2025.

For full resolutions, visit the WALGA website.

Rising costs boost energy management motivation for summer

The rising cost of living is putting pressure on a growing number of WA households and is having an impact on businesses of all sizes, including Local Government organisations.

With summer approaching, WA's largest electricity generator and gas and electricity retailer, Synergy, is helping customers to plan for what is typically a time of higher electricity consumption. According to Synergy Account Manager Luke Randell, this spike in electricity use is generally from long hours of air-conditioning use.

"Looking at Western Power estimates, air conditioning use accounts for almost a third of electricity consumed across the South West Interconnected System on the hottest days from January to March each year," says Randell. "This higher consumption over summer can have a noticeable impact on energy costs. The good news is that customers can be proactive and plan for these impacts to take more control of their bills."

Understand the components of an electricity bill

Randell notes the simplest action for Local Governments wanting to take more control of energy costs is to understand their bills.

"When you're trying to reduce your business' energy costs, start with our online portal My Account. You can use it to learn how and when you're using electricity to get an idea of your usage. With this data, you can look at any consumption inconsistencies or opportunities to make changes, then share this with your wider team and put targeted energy efficiency strategies in place."

Learn about the impact of Peak Demand Days on energy costs

To help understand the components of their energy bill, Randell recommends businesses

understand their capacity charges and when the Peak Demand Days, the four days with the highest demand for electricity in the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) from 1 December to 31 March each year, for electricity occur.

"Capacity charges are based on how much electricity your business uses on four Peak Demand Days, usually the hottest days in summer. Synergy pays the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) a price for capacity, based on the amount of electricity it requires to meet customer demand, and recovers this cost through customer billing as a capacity charge."

"If your Local Government can reduce its demand for electricity when demand in the grid is at its highest, the capacity charges which would be payable in the following year might also be reduced."

Consider Synergy's Peak Demand Notification Subscription Service

"If you're eligible and sign up for the subscription service, you could receive notifications in advance of the predicted Peak Demand Days," Randell explains. "Some businesses will then implement a practice known as peak-shaving, where they strategically use less energy during times of peak demand."

To learn more about this subscription service, or reducing electricity consumption on predicted Peak Demand Days, please contact Luke Randell at luke.randell@synergy.net.au or call 0436 916 941.

Please note, Synergy offers the Peak Demand Notification Subscription Service at its sole discretion, and terms and conditions apply. Visit synergy.net.au/peakdemand for more details.

Sign up to receive notifications during peak times and you could save.

With our Peak Demand Notification Subscription Service,* you could receive notifications of likely periods of high system demand to help inform your electricity use and potentially save on capacity charges.

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After long-term advocacy calling for measures to improve the resilience of telecommunications, especially during emergencies, WALGA welcomes last week's funding announcement that if re-elected, a Dutton-Lamont Government will invest \$1.2m towards a much-needed telecommunications boost for the Perth Hills area.

WALGA's 2022 State Election Priorities and Federal Election Priorities to address



WALGA

A LOOK BACK AT 2025



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