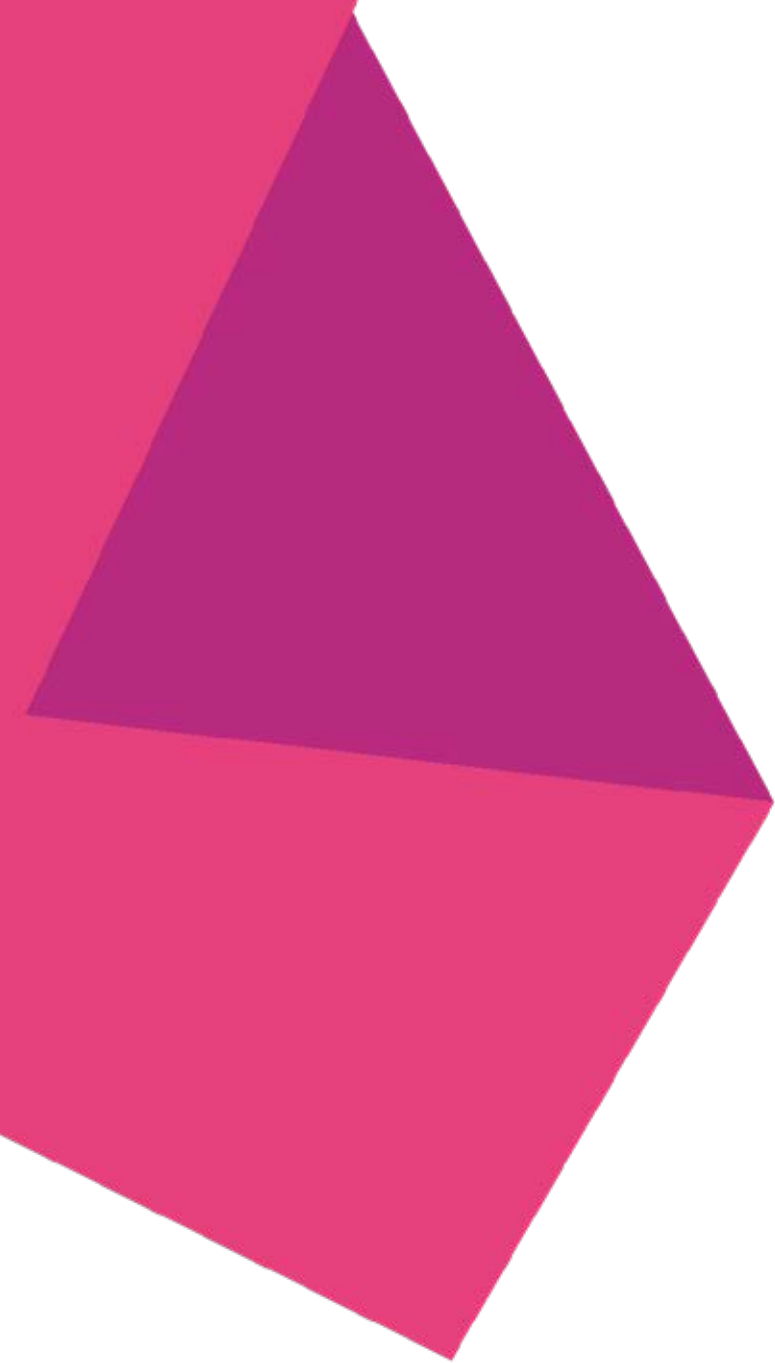


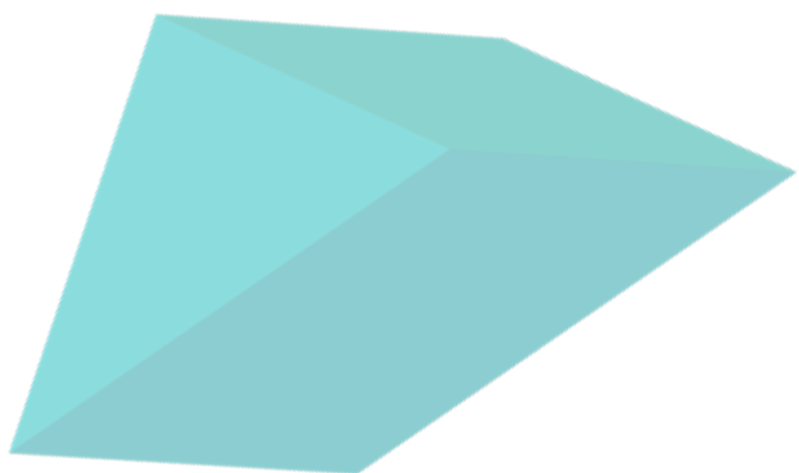
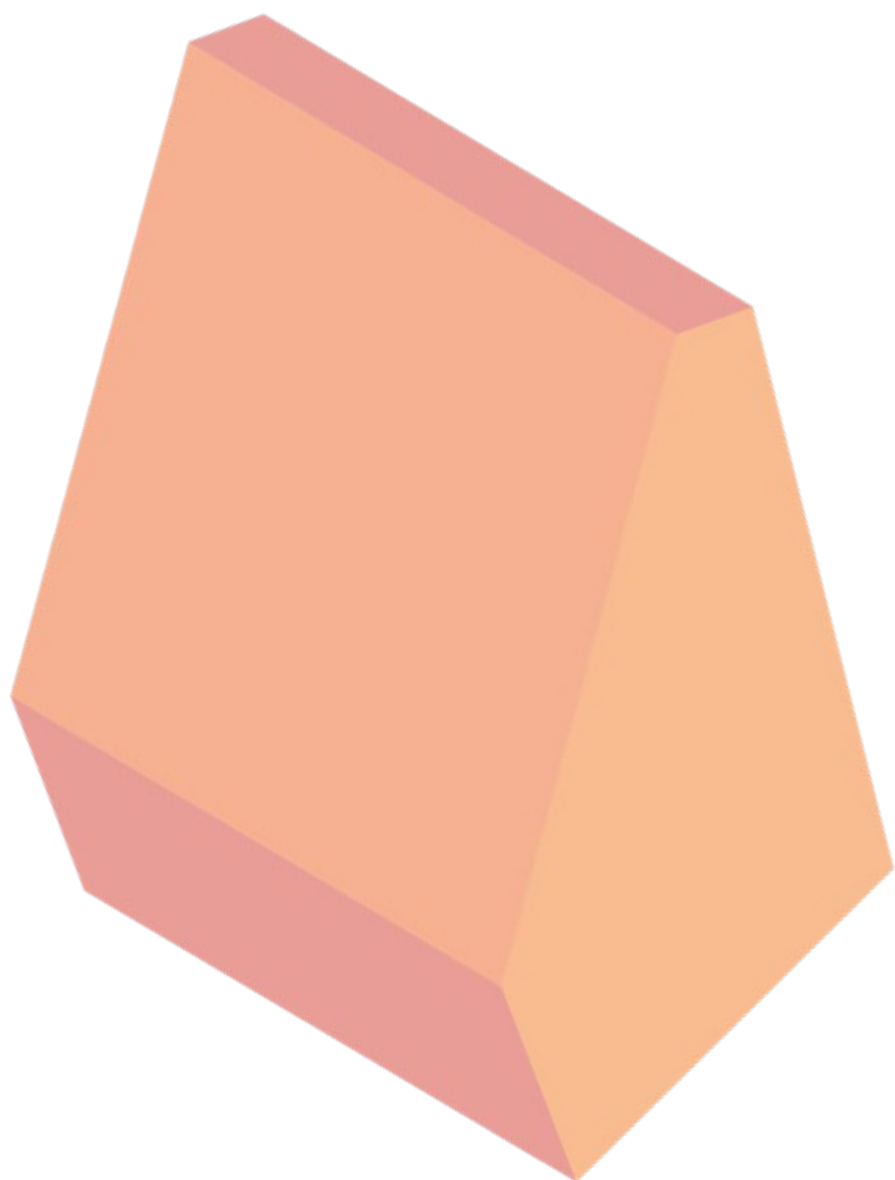
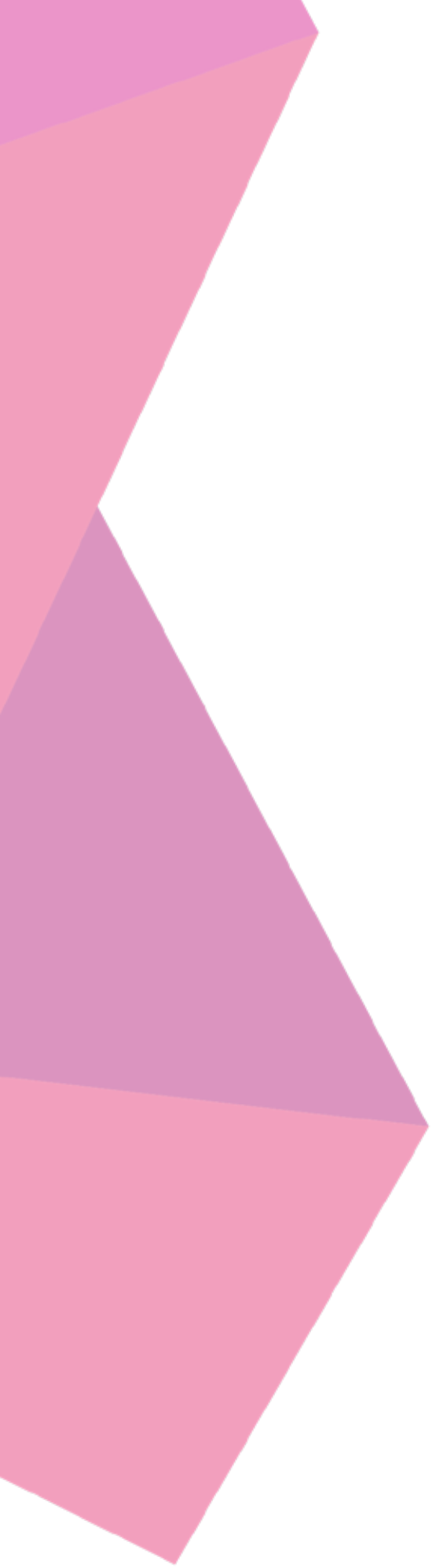


WALGA



Local Futures

Local Government
Honours Recipients 2023



Local Government Honours 2023

I am delighted to announce the winners of the 2023 Local Government Honours Program.



This year, we received one of the largest numbers of nominations ever seen in our Honours program. This suggests to me that we have an outstanding group of people involved in our Local Governments right across the State. It makes me incredibly proud to be part of this sector of government that has a real and tangible impact on individual lives.

Congratulations to Stephen Strange who is receiving this year's Life Membership Award. Stephen has dedicated over half his life to elected service, including 29 years as President of the Shire of Bruce Rock, which is an outstanding achievement, but also a testament to his values, strength of character and the high regard he is held in by his community. Stephen is an inspiring leader who has led his community through some fantastic and enterprising initiatives but has also been a reliable and effective leader during challenging periods and in times of adversity.

Many of our award winners in this year's Honours Program played a valuable role in their Local Government response to the COVID pandemic. Being strong communicators during this pandemic was of critical importance and this skill was demonstrated repeatedly in our award nominations.

A number of our Eminent Service Award winners have been elected members for two decades or more, and a special mention must be made of Barry West for his 34 years of continuous service with the Shire of Kulin, and Bill Mulrone at the Shire of Pingelly, who was an employee for 18 years, before serving for 18 years as an elected member. It's wonderful to be able to acknowledge this level of committed community representation.

This year's Eminent Service Award winners have also led some incredibly exciting and innovative community projects, such as the expansion of the Busselton Margaret River Airport driven by Mayor Grant Henley which has culminated in direct flights between Busselton and Melbourne.

In this year's Troy Pickard Young Achievers Award, Rhys Williams has been acknowledged for being the youngest Councillor ever elected to the City of Mandurah at just 21 years of age, and then one of the youngest serving Western Australian mayors when he was elected Mayor of the City in 2017.

The winners of this year's Honours Awards are inspiring leaders who make our local communities fantastic places to work and live, and we thank you all for the commitment you have shown to improving the lives of each and every Western Australian.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Chappel'.

Cr Karen Chappel AM JP
President, WA Local Government Association



Life Membership Award

Recognising outstanding service to WALGA and the Local Government sector, and distinguished contributions to the community as a WALGA President, State Councillor or Elected Member.

Stephen Strange



An outstanding leader who has served his community since 1989, Stephen Strange is the Shire of Bruce Rock's longest ever serving President, elected to the position in 1997.

Dedicating over half his life to community representation, Stephen is a passionate and active community member who has only missed five Council meetings and two WALGA conferences in his 34 years of Local Government service.

As a State Councillor, Stephen is currently the chair of both the Infrastructure Policy Team and the Freight Policy Forum, and a member of the CEO Performance Review Committee. Stephen has also previously been a member of the Association's Electoral Reform Policy Forum, the Mayors and Presidents Policy Forum, the Members First Advisory Team, the Local Government Mentoring Program for new Shire Presidents and the Country Policy Forum.

Passionate about the critical importance of quality country roads and the delivery of sustainable and effective road networks, Stephen regularly lobbies for improved road funding and better infrastructure; and has been a member of various delegations and representations to the WA Premier, Ministers, and director generals, as well as federal politicians and commissioners.

He is also dedicated to the establishment of quality regional aged care and was an inaugural member of the Central Eastern Aged Care Alliance which constructed 71 two-bedroom units across 11 Shires throughout the Wheatbelt.

Stephen has exceptional connections and relationships across the Local Government sector and regularly mentors new Shire Presidents. He is always available for public speaking engagements and media enquiries, promoting the interests of regional Western Australia and strengthening the Local Government sector.

Locally, Stephen has spearheaded many exciting and innovative community projects such as the redevelopment of the Bruce Rock Recreation Centre, the construction of both Acacia House and the Bruce Rock Medical Centre, the upgrades to the Bruce Rock Aquatic Centre, the development of the Bruce Rock Amphitheatre and Remembrance Park, and the construction of factory units in the town.

In 2020, when the Bruce Rock grocery store was destroyed by fire, Stephen, together with other local community leaders, worked tirelessly to establish a temporary grocery store in the Town Hall to ensure locals had almost immediate and continued access to groceries and essential supplies. This effort was recognised when the Shire received a Highly Commended Resilient Australia Award in 2020. Stephen has since spearheaded the Council's efforts to secure funding to build a new supermarket, with this facility due to be opened at the end of 2023.

In both his role as Shire President and also as a local volunteer fire fighter, Stephen led the community through the devastation of the 2022 bushfires which destroyed 45,000 hectares of land across two Shires, working tirelessly with the joint recovery committee to assist in the recovery efforts.

Aside from his many state and regional commitments, Stephen also represents the Shire on the Bruce Rock Land and Conservation Committee, the Landcare Conservation Committee, the Local Emergency Management Committee, the Bushfire Advisory Committee, the District Health Advisory Group and the Bruce Rock Community Resource Centre Committee.

A highly respected leader, and a dedicated community representative, Stephen is a worthy recipient of the WALGA Life Membership Award.



Eminent Service Award

Recognising eminent service and distinguished contributions to the Association as a WALGA President, State Councillor, Elected Member, Local Government officer or WALGA employee.



Paul Beech

An outstanding community leader who is highly respected by his peers, Paul Beech has served the Shire of Harvey for 24 years as an employee, and a further 12 years as an elected member. A visionary community representative, Paul is passionate about developing new opportunities, initiatives and infrastructure within the Shire. A resident of the Shire for 37 years, Paul was elected to Council in 2011 and served as Deputy Shire President from 2013 to 2019. As a former employee of the Shire, Paul has a unique understanding of issues within the Shire, from a range of perspectives.

With the aim of improving community engagement on a range of critical issues, Paul has been the Council representative on a number of key advisory groups, such as the Community Sail Training Trust Advisory Group, the Harvey Recreation and Culture Centre Advisory Group, and the Awards, Honours and Prizes Advisory Group. Paul's dedication to the community has been recognised with a number of accolades including Officer Brother of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; Life Membership of St John Ambulance Harvey; Serving Brother St John Ambulance of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship Award; Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International; and Life Membership of Apex Clubs Australia.

Paul is also a member of the Shire's Audit Committee, the Shire of Harvey and Shire of Dardanup Joint Town Planning Committee, the Brunswick River Cottages Committee, Harvey Community Radio 96.5fm Committee, the Harvey Community Resource Centre, and the Regional Road Group.



Tony Dean

President of the Shire of Nannup since 2011, and elected to the Shire in 2007, Tony Dean is an innovative, forward-thinking leader who is constantly searching for opportunities to attract new industry to the region, create employment opportunities and improve the quality of life for all residents in the Nannup community. First elected as a Councillor to the City of Bunbury in 1994, Tony served until February 2001 before being elected Member for Bunbury in the Western Australian Legislative Assembly where he served a four-year term before returning to Nannup as a resident and small business owner. As a result of this extensive service, Tony has a strong network of connections, and always advocates for Nannup with local, state and federal politicians and government department staff.

Throughout his long service as Shire President Tony has been the driving force behind many successful projects including the sealing of the Mowen Road link to Margaret River, changes to the Local Planning Scheme to protect the visual amenity and maintain the character of the main street, the development of Nannup as a Trails Town, the establishment of both the Tank 7 Mountain Bike Park and the Stock Route horse trail, and the rebranding of Nannup as the Halfway Town on the Munda Biddi Trail.

Tony is a current WALGA State Councillor, chair of the Association's People and Place Policy Team, President of the South West Country Zone, a board member of the South West Development Commission and the Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils, and chair of the Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils Climate Change Action Plan Implementation Group.



Quentin Davies

Elected to the Shire of Wyalkatchem in 2005 and appointed President in 2013, Quentin Davies is a highly respected leader across the wheatbelt region for his thoughtful guidance on a range of critical issues. An active and willing mentor, Quentin has worked to encourage the election of young and diverse Councillors, positioning the Shire for a successful transition into the future. Quentin has been a staunch supporter and promoter of buying local, and established Wylie Community Meats to ensure the community could complete its weekly shop within the town boundary. He has also worked tirelessly to maintain the local doctor, the hospital, and childcare services, and has spearheaded the upgrade of sporting facilities and the consolidation of sporting clubs.

Over his long and dedicated Local Government career he has actively agitated against bank closures; he continues to publicly and privately lobby Western Power and Telstra for improved service reliability and is constantly calling on the State Government to retain the live sheep export industry.

Quentin served as President of the North East Wheatbelt Regional Organisations of Councils (NEWROC) from 2017 to 2019 and is the current serving deputy chair of the Great Eastern Country Zone. Throughout his time on NEWROC he has been a strong advocate for regional collaboration to drive outcomes that could not be achieved by councils working in isolation. Quentin is a founding member of the Central East Accommodation and Care Alliance and is currently the Alliance's Secretary and a member of its Executive Management team.



Moira Girando

Moira Girando was first elected to the Shire of Coorow in 1997, becoming Shire President in 2003, and serving in that position until 2011. Throughout her 14 years in elected service, she was a member of many regional boards and committees, and was a WALGA State Councillor, a member of the State Government to Local Government Roads Committee, a board member of Local Government House Trust, and a deputy country member of both the Local Government Advisory Board and the Local Government Standards Panel.

During this time, she was also a member of the Shire's Audit Committee, and Building Management Committee, and served as the deputy country member to the Local Government Grants Commission and chair of the Northern Country Zone.

Retiring in 2011 for personal reasons, Moira was awarded both a WALGA Certificate of Appreciation and Freeman of the Shire of Coorow.

Re-elected to Council in 2015, and almost immediately re-elected as Shire President, Moira continues to be an outstanding advocate for the Coorow community, and for the Mid West region. She is a current State Councillor, representing the Northern Country Zone, and a member of both the Association's Selection Committee and the Finance and Services Committee.

Locally, she is a member of the Shire's Audit Committee and Townscapes Committee, a co-chair of the Coorow-Carnamah Local Emergency Management Committee, the Coorow delegate to the North Midlands sub-Regional Road Group, and the Coorow delegate to the Mid West Regional Road Group.



Grant Henley

Mayor of the City of Busselton since 2015, Grant Henley has a passion for social and economic sustainability, particularly through tourism opportunities in the Busselton region. A strong supporter of the town centre revitalisation project for both Busselton and Dunsborough, Grant also played a key role in the attraction of multiple cruise ships to the region, bringing an injection of economic activity and providing opportunities for businesses to benefit in both the retail and tourism sectors.

Grant has been an inspirational regional leader, and under his guidance, the communities of Busselton and Dunsborough have experienced a period of strong economic growth and development. He was instrumental in expansion of the Busselton Margaret River Airport, and following on from that, the instigation of the direct flights between Busselton and Melbourne now running four times every week.

Through his drive and determination, the Busselton Foreshore redevelopment project received significant financial investment from both the State and Federal Governments, with the flow-on effect including private investment into key assets around the Busselton foreshore.

Grant represents the Shire on both the South West Country Zone and Regional Capital Alliance WA, and is the WA representative for Regional Capitals Australia. Apart from his duties as Mayor of the City, Grant is a member of the Busselton RSL, volunteers at local schools' breakfast clubs, and is involved in a voluntary capacity in many community and regional events. Grant will be retiring from his role as Mayor, and from Council in October 2023.



Kerry Hollywood

With over 15 years of service to the community, including two years as Deputy Mayor, Kerry Hollywood has contributed a wealth of knowledge in her role as an elected member with the City of Joondalup. Now retired from Council, Kerry was an outstanding community representative since her election to Council in 2006, serving on many Council and community committees, boards and organisations. She was chair of the Council's Policy Committee and Capital Works Committee, deputy chair of the Office Development Committee and the Major Projects Committee and a member of both the Ocean Reef Marina Committee and the Streetscape Committee.

Passionate about the development of the arts in the community, Kerry was a member of the former Art Collection and Advisory Committee for the duration of her time on Council and was presiding member for the Joondalup Performing Arts and Cultural Facility Committee for five years. Kerry considered the availability of quality education to be critical and served on several local school boards for many years. She was always actively engaged in efforts to protect the environment, enhance streetscapes and parks, and spearhead initiatives that contributed to making Joondalup a remarkable place to live. Instrumental in championing many community initiatives, Kerry was an active advocate for the establishment of Joondalup's first-ever dog park, the Burns Beach-Mindarie coastal path, and planning for the Performing Arts and Cultural Facility.

Kerry has served with numerous other organisations to further extend her positive influence to benefit the region, including the Tamala Park Regional Council, the Mindarie Regional Council, the Joondalup Health Campus Community Board of Advice, and the Tamala Park Coastal Reserve Community Advisory Committee for the State Government Department of Planning.



Tom McLean

Tom McLean was elected to the City of Joondalup in 2006, and since that time has been elected as Deputy Mayor on two separate occasions, in 2008/2009 and then again in 2015/2016. During his dedicated tenure, Tom has spearheaded initiatives that have fostered community cohesion and celebrated the diversity of the northern corridor region, in particular, the City's Ocean Reef Marina project which will ultimately transform the region and create new opportunities for economic growth, recreation, and community engagement.

Tom also played a key role in the multi-million dollar Burns Beach Foreshore development, demonstrating his ability to navigate complex projects and deliver impactful results for the community. He was also instrumental in the development of Delamere Park in Currambine.

A Justice of the Peace for 12 years, Tom was also the City's representative on the North Metropolitan Zone. During the COVID pandemic he drove initiatives which aided the recovery of the local economy and played a vital role in restoring the community's vibrancy and resilience.

Throughout his 17 years of service to the City of Joondalup, Tom has demonstrated exemplary leadership, remarkable dedication, and an exceptional ability to engage with various stakeholders, both locally and internationally. He is often approached by community members who seek his insight on Council business, and his collaborative approach, combined with his willingness to engage in open discussions, has contributed to the success of the Council and its ability to address community concerns effectively. His strong relationship with ratepayers is a testament to his approachable nature and commitment to community engagement.



Kellie Mortimore

First elected to the Shire of Narembeen in 2007, Kellie Mortimore served as an elected member until 2015, including two years as Deputy President. Re-elected in 2016, Kellie was elected Deputy President in 2017, until her election as Shire President in 2021, a position she continues to hold.

A strong and positive leader, Kellie has been an advocate for forward planning in the Shire and was instrumental in the development of the community's strategic plan and corporate business plan. She has led many exciting and valuable initiatives throughout her service to the community, including the construction of the Narembeen Recreation Centre, the Lesser Hall Interpretation project, the Narembeen Community Precinct extension, and the design and construction of the Narembeen Emergency Services facility.

Kellie has been a member on many Council, community and regional committees, including the Plant Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, the Town Facilities Committee, the Cemetery Committee, the Development Assessment Panel Wheatbelt, the Roe Regional Organisation of Councils and the Recreation Centre Working Group. She is the chair of the Local Emergency Management Committee, and an executive committee member and Shire delegate on the Great Eastern Country Zone.

Kellie has a passion for the delivery of high-quality infrastructure in the community and continues to advocate for quality roads, improved medical facilities, new residential developments and upgraded sporting infrastructure.



Bill Mulroney

Bill Mulroney is an exceptional example of a hardworking and committed community representative who has dedicated countless hours to improving the lives of people in regional Western Australia. Formerly a police officer in Queensland, Bill moved to Pingelly with his young family, where he worked for the Shire of Pingelly for 18 years in a number of different positions. After his retirement from the Shire in 2004, Bill was elected to Council in 2005, elected Deputy President in 2011, and then Shire President in 2017. During his 18 years of elected service, Bill has spearheaded numerous large design and construction projects, including the Pingelly Recreation and Cultural Centre, Memorial Park, the Pingelly Health Centre, Aged Care Accommodation, and the innovative Virtual Village.

Bill is the chair of the Shires of Pingelly and Wandering Joint Local Emergency Management Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee and the CEO Performance Review Committee. He is a delegate of the Central Country Zone, and a member of the Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group, the Development Assessment Panel, and the Pingelly Somerset Alliance.

A local manager of the Pingelly State Emergency Service Unit since 1984, Bill has also been chairperson of the State Advisory Committee and has travelled across the State as an SES trainer and assessor. During the 2022 Corrigin and Narrogin bush fires, Bill was instrumental in establishing an evacuation centre which included arrangements for the suitable accommodation of animals, facilities for children, food for displaced people and requests from evacuees to accommodate their caravans/RVs.

Bill has been awarded an Emergency Service Medal, a National Medal and a FESA Long Service Medal.



Don Pember

Serving three separate terms as an elected member with the City of Mandurah, Don Pember was first elected to Council in 2001 to 2005, and during this first term he was Deputy Mayor for two years from 2003 until 2005. Elected again in 2007 until 2015, and then for a third time in 2019, Don continues to serve the community with dedication and unwavering commitment.

Throughout his 16 years of service, Don has contributed significantly to many community initiatives and projects, and currently represents the City on the Access and Inclusion Advisory Group, the Reconciliation Action Plan Steering Group, the Audit and Risk Committee and the Planning and Community Consultation Committee. He is a member of the Mandurah Crab Fest Steering Committee, the South West Games Committee and was heavily involved in the development of the Southern City Strategy, which looked to the future positioning of Mandurah as Western Australia's Southern City.

He has been the chair of the Mandurah Local Emergency Management Committee for over 10 years, was an inaugural member of the National Sea Change Taskforce, inaugural chair of the City of Mandurah's Reconciliation Action Group, an active participant in the Council's Values and Culture Framework, and was heavily involved in the establishment of Mandurah's award-winning War Memorial on the Western Foreshore.

Bill has been on the Peel Health Campus Community Board for over 10 years, is a past president of the Bridgewater Residents Association and board member of Derby Aged Care Homes and was the Association's representative on the Country Medical Foundation. In 2016 Bill was awarded Most Outstanding Individual Contributor to Seniors Housing in the World at the Global Awards for Seniors Housing/Care, Healthcare, Innovation/IT and Medical Tourism.

Eminent Service Award



Rex Ryles

With over 20 years as an elected member, Rex Ryles served three separate terms as a Councillor with the Shire of Laverton, beginning with his election to Council in 1997 until 2005. Rex was elected again in 2007 until 2013, and then served a further six years from 2015 until his retirement in 2021. From 2011 until 2013 he served as Deputy Shire President.

A dedicated community representative, Rex has been a member of numerous committees and regional groups throughout his long and loyal tenure. Most recently he was a member of the Shire's Audit Committee, the Outback Highway Development Council, the Northern Goldfields Inter Agency Meeting, the Goldfields Tourism Network Association, the Development Assessment Panel and the Goldfields-Esperance Regional Road Group. He has also served on the Childcare/Playgroup Working Group, the Goldfields-Esperance Regional Council, the Community Development Committee, the Works and Plant Committee, the Airport Committee, the Heritage Committee and the Cemetery Committee.

In 1998, Rex founded Desert Sands, a transport and earthmoving company, supplying water, fuel, tipping products and machinery haulage services throughout much of the isolated central Australian region. In 2008, Rex was inducted onto the Shell Rimula Wall of Fame for his commitment and tireless efforts in the transport industry.

A highly respected community leader, Rex is well known throughout the Laverton community for mentoring and assisting young business operators through his exceptional business acumen. Also dedicated to Laverton community groups, Rex continues to be involved with the Race Club, the Pistol Club, the Sports Club, and the Laverton School, to name just a few.



Gary Shadbolt

Serving the community of Mukinbudin for 20 years as an elected member, Gary Shadbolt continues to be an outstanding community leader who is held in high regard amongst his fellow community members. Elected to Council in 2003, Gary was then elected Shire President in 2007, and has led the community through numerous major infrastructure projects and exciting community initiatives over the past 16 years.

Under Gary's outstanding leadership, the Mukinbudin Aquatic Centre received a major capital upgrade, which saw the 1960s pool transformed into a modern, clean, and attractive new facility. Gary was a major contributor to the development of the 24-child capacity Mukinbudin Early Learning Facility which was opened in 2011 and was the instigator of the new \$5 million health centre in Mukinbudin.

Most notably, as chair of the Central Eastern Accommodation and Care Alliance, Gary drove the \$20 million project to build 71 independent living units within the 11 member Shires. Since its completion in 2019, the accommodation has enjoyed a 100 per cent occupation rate. The group is currently looking to build Stage Two of the project to increase accommodation availability across the Wheatbelt.

Gary also spearheaded the construction of four executive Government Regional Officer Houses, was personally involved in opening a local café to serve the community and was instrumental in the establishment of a Bendigo Bank in the town.

Gary is chair of the Council's Audit Committee, chair of the North East Wheatbelt Regional Organisations of Councils, was executive chair of the Centenary Celebration Committee, was Council's representative on the Regional Road Group, and is a Delegate on the Great Eastern Country Zone.



John Shanhun

Highly respected in the Albany community, John Shanhun is a leader in local bushfire safety, education and advocacy. Elected to the City of Albany in 2015, John has been a dedicated member of the Local Emergency Management Committee of which a significant portion of this time has been spent as chair.

Throughout the COVID pandemic, John was instrumental in the Local Emergency Management Committee's role to plan, test and have oversight of local emergency strategies, ensuring the community was kept informed of all important information, and that critical messages were relayed back to the Council.

A passionate community volunteer, John has been heavily involved with the South Coast Bushfire Brigade since March 2010 where he has attended 16 incidents of varying levels of intensity. He has shared his knowledge and experience in this field for the benefit of the wider community and is committed to raising awareness of fire safety.

Throughout his dedicated eight years as an elected member, John has been a member of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee, the Planning and Development Committee, the Great Southern Country Zone, the Airport Emergency Committee, and the Robinson Precinct and Stidwell Bridle Trail Working Group. He has tirelessly advocated for safe pathways, particularly in areas which are used by families and children.

A productive and experienced local community member, John was appointed to the Museum of the Great Southern Advisory Group in August 2021.



Sandie Smith

Deputy Mayor of the City of Albany since 2021, Sandie Smith was elected to the West Ward of the City of Albany in 2015.

Throughout her eight years of committed service to the City, Sandie was the chair of the Council's Audit and Risk Committee, involved with the Regional Capitals Alliance, a Delegate on the Great Southern Country Zone and a member of the South Coast Alliance.

A passionate advocate for Cycling Without Age, Sandie was the chair of the Albany Cycling Without Age Committee, the first regional chapter of the group in Western Australia. The concept involves riders taking out those who cannot ride for themselves on a specially designed electric bike known as a trishaw.

Sandie was instrumental in the creation of the City of Albany's Building Stronger Communities Grants Program, which provides funding for the 14 rural community halls within the City's municipal boundary to assist with the ongoing maintenance of these valuable community assets.

With an understanding of the complexities and inner workings of regional business, finance, insurance and risk, Sandie's depth of experience and her ability to provide articulated and reasoned arguments have contributed significantly to ensuring transparent and accountable decision making by Council. A highly respected community leader, Sandie brought perspective, experience and many skills to the Council that will have a long-lasting impact on the Albany community.



Harold Tracey

President of the Shire of Broome for the past six years, Harold Tracey has been a committed community representative for over 10 years, being elected to Council in 2013.

Under Harold's leadership and guidance, the Shire of Broome has seen record infrastructure investment, with the Town Beach and Chinatown precincts both undergoing major transformational change. Both projects have ensured significantly improved amenities for local residents and the tens of thousands of visitors to Broome each year.

Harold has been instrumental in driving the plans to improve the world-famous Cable Beach precinct that will deliver further economic benefits to the Shire in the future.

Throughout his committed service to the community, Harold has worked closely with the Broome Liquor Accord and the Kimberley Regional Group to address the social issues that alcohol consumption has on communities throughout the Kimberley. Chair of the Community Safety Working Group, Harold is passionate about community safety, and has also facilitated numerous public meetings, driven the investment in CCTV technology in the community, and lobbied State Government agencies to deliver local community improvements across a range of key areas.

Harold is held in high esteem by residents of the Shire of Broome and the wider Kimberley region, for having achieved a commendable amount for the community in his time as an elected member.



Rachel Thomas

A resident of the Shire of Peppermint Grove for over 20 years, Rachel Thomas was elected to Council in 2009 and has been the Shire President since 2011. Passionate about protecting both heritage buildings and the natural treescape within the Shire, Rachel was instrumental in driving the development of the Heritage Grants Scheme, which encourages owners to embrace the unique features of their properties and preserve them for future generations. She also instigated the implementation of the Shire's Public Tree Management Strategy which serves to protect the Shire's natural environment and minimise the environmental impact of activities in the Shire.

Rachel has been actively involved in a variety of community events that are held throughout the year including Australia Day Functions, Carols by Candlelight, the Cottesloe Primary School Light Spectacular, and the Cappuccino Concerts. She regularly attends and promotes community events hosted by the Grove Library which showcases the talent of local artists and musicians, or focuses on activities for seniors, celebrates local businesses achievements or promotes recycling and re-use initiatives.

Rachel provides strong leadership around the Council table, and as a result of her interest and knowledge of the R Codes and the local planning scheme, she has provided invaluable guidance to Councillors and residents on Council planning approval processes. She is also passionate about humanitarian causes by supporting Council's fundraising efforts to assist those who have endured hardship through various means such as floods, bushfires and war.



Barry West

With an outstanding 34 years of continuous service to the Shire of Kulin, Barry West is a passionate community representative who is respected for being hard working, fair and objective and always willing to listen to others. With an awareness for the importance of stakeholder engagement, Barry is an articulate communicator and often meets with politicians to lobby for improvements to local infrastructure and services.

Elected to Council in 1989, Barry served as Deputy President from 2003 until 2015, and was Shire President for six years from 2015 until 2021.

Given his long and dedicated service, Barry has been instrumental in many innovative community initiatives, including the Kulin Bush Races and the Tin Horse Highway. He was the Shire's representative on the Roe Regional Organisation of Councils from 2013 until 2021 and was a member of the Cultivating Kulin Committee from 2019 until 2021. He was integral in the completion of the Freebairn Recreation Centre and was the Shire's representative on the Central Country Zone for nine years.

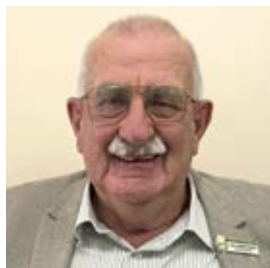
Barry is a passionate advocate for the re-opening of the Tier 3 rail lines and is a long-term member of the Wheatbelt Railway Retention Alliance. He has represented Council on many road-related committees such as the Lakes Regional Road Group and has attended several interstate National Local Roads and Transport Congresses.

He is the inaugural chair of both the Kulin Development Co-operative and the Kulin Land Care Development Committee and has been a member of the Great Southern Rail Interest Group, the Skeleton Weed Action Group, the CBH Growers' Advisory Council and the Newdegate Research Station Advisory Board.



Merit Award

Recognising notable contributions to WALGA,
the Local Government sector and the community
by Elected Members, Local Government officers
and WALGA employees.



Len Armstrong

After a total of 27 years as an elected member with WA Local Governments, Len Armstrong is in his second term as President of the Shire of Lake Grace. First elected to the then Shire of Albany in 1996, Len served the Albany community during the uncertain years of Local Government structural reform when the Shire and Town amalgamated. After the amalgamation, Len was again elected until 2001, before relocating to Newdegate. Len was elected to the Shire of Lake Grace from 2010 until 2017, and during this time he served as Shire President for two years. He was elected to Council once more in 2019 and began his second term as Shire President in 2021. Len has held numerous community and regional positions, including chair of the State Government South Coast Fishing Advisory Committee, and has been awarded a Rotary International Paul Harris Medal.



John Bromham

John Bromham was first elected to the Shire of Harvey from 2003 to 2010 and was re-elected in 2019. A dedicated community representative, John has been instrumental in securing funding to improve many local community and sporting groups and facilities, most notably working with Worsley Refinery to upgrade the Leschenault Leisure Centre's swimming pool. A long serving volunteer with the Leschenault Bush Fire Brigade, John is also passionate about environmental issues, waste management, occupational safety and health and ensuring strong fiscal management within the Council. An honest, hard-working, and respected member of the community, John is a member of many Council and community committees including the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Advisory Group, the Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Group and the Shire of Harvey Bush Fire Advisory Committee.



Francis Burgoyne

Elected for four terms with the Shire of Harvey, Francis Burgoyne has been an active and dedicated community member for many years, serving as Deputy President of the Shire from 2019 until 2020. Captain of the Brunswick Junction Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, Francis has been a fire and rescue volunteer for 39 years, culminating in his election as State President of the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association of WA. In 2019 he was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal for his many years of committed service. A highly respected and considered decision maker, Francis is a member of the Brunswick River Cottages Committee, the Heritage Advisory Group, the Brunswick and Surrounding Areas Place Advisory Group, and the Shire of Harvey Bush Fire Advisory Committee.

Merit Award



Kerry Busby

Deputy Mayor of the City of Armadale since 2019, Kerry Busby is a committed community representative who brings small business knowledge and experience to his role as Councillor. Kerry has served on the Business Armadale Chamber of Commerce, has chaired the City's Community Services Committee from 2011 until 2021, and now chairs the Corporate Services Committee. Kerry is passionate about community development, is an enthusiastic master of ceremonies at citizenship formalities, and is a regular attendee at City functions, events and conferences on behalf of the Mayor. Kerry is a Dale Cottages Board Member and maintains a close relationship with the residents of the large residential community of seniors within the Dale Cottages. Kerry has also served on the Armadale Health Service's Community Reference Group for many years.



Craig Carbone

Elected to the Shire of Harvey in 2011, Craig Carbone is a strong voice for community organisations throughout the Shire and has been a member and held board positions, including chair, of the Harvey Brunswick Football Club since 1982. As a champion for nurturing and supporting local volunteering organisations, Craig is passionate about representative Local Government and advocates for all Council decisions to meet the triple bottom line of economic, ecological, and social well-being. Craig has a long-term vision for progress within a growing Shire and is a long-standing Council delegate on the Development Assessment Panel, the Council representative on the Brunswick and Surrounding Areas Place Advisory Group, and a member of the Shire of Harvey and Dardanup Joint Town Planning Committee, the Brunswick Place Advisory Group, and the Kemerton Industrial Park Coordinating Committee.



Eva Godwin

Training Services Manager with WALGA, Eva Godwin has a passion for providing exceptional learning and training opportunities for all elected members and officers in WA Local Governments. Eva has over 23 years of experience in managing Registered Training Organisations, and throughout her loyal service with WALGA, she has developed numerous training packages, including the Certificate III in Local Government and has redeveloped the Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member. Eva regularly engages with relevant and experienced trainers to ensure course content is current, resourceful, relevant and meaningful. She is always available to students, providing an example of excellent mentoring skills for those engaged in learning opportunities. An energising and engaging leader, Eva's outstanding commitment inspires and empowers others to learn and develop both personally and professionally.



Leslee Holmes

The first female President of the Shire of Dandaragan, Leslee Holmes was elected to the position in 2015 after four years as an elected member. A small business owner in the community of Cervantes, Leslee is a strong and compassionate leader who displays a natural ability to engage people from all walks of life to help build community resilience. During the COVID pandemic, under her leadership, numerous changes were implemented across the Shire's administrative functions to help minimise the fiscal impacts on local communities, culminating in the development of an Economic Stimulus Package. Leslee is passionate about the region in which she lives and is committed to promoting her community through tourism, sustainability, economic development, and recreational opportunities. Amongst many community and regional roles, Leslee is currently a board member of the Wheatbelt Development Commission.



Caroline Knight

Elected to the City of Mandurah in 2011, Caroline Knight has been the City's Deputy Mayor since 2017. A former medical scientist, Caroline has spent many years advocating for Mandurah's environment across numerous organisations and is committed to preserving the region's waterways and natural environment. She holds many leadership positions within the community and is currently the chair of both the Peel Harvey Catchment Council and the Mandurah Environment Advisory Group, is deputy chair of the Peron Naturaliste Partnership, and is the Western Australian committee member on the Australian Coastal Councils Association Inc. Caroline led the charge for a new Cat Local Law after dozens of endangered birds were killed in 2018, and she was a vocal opponent of the proposed Point Grey development, which threatened the long-term health of the Peel Harvey Estuary.



John Logan

An elected member with the City of Joondalup since 2015, John Logan was appointed Deputy Mayor in 2022. Well known for developing quality networks and relationships, John actively fosters connections with various stakeholders, acting as a conduit and advocate to bring ideas, resources and support from external entities, such as the State Government, to benefit the City of Joondalup community. During his time with the City, John has spearheaded many positive and long lasting initiatives including the Park Amenity Improvement Program, the rollout of defibrillators throughout City facilities, the Regional Youth Driver Education Program, the School of Thought children's interactive radio program, and an innovative employment program that will create opportunities for former Defence Forces personnel. John has been the deputy chair of the Metropolitan Regional Road Group (MRRG) since 2021 and is the chair of the MRRG North West Sub-Group.



Amanda Lovitt

A highly respected and considered decision maker who is approachable and committed to representing community interests on Council, Amanda Lovitt has been an Elected Member with the Shire of Harvey since 2011. Dedicated to issues such as tourism, heritage, conservation and commerce, Amanda has been a key driver in the development of a Destination Harvey Tourism Business Unit and further serves the community as a Justice of the Peace. Passionate about improving connections within the Harvey community, Amanda is a self-proclaimed conduit between the bureaucratic side of Local Government and ratepayers. She is chair of the District Health Advisory Council and the Harvey History Online Committee, and is a member of the Harvey Region Tourism Council, the Heritage Advisory Group, the Leschenault Leisure Advisory Group, the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Group, and the Sports and Recreation Advisory Group.



John Mason

Passionate about building a vibrant and sustainable community, John Mason has been a dedicated community representative since his election to the Shire of Waroona in 2011. A resident of the Shire for over 40 years, John is highly regarded amongst community members and takes a keen interest in issues such as safety, recreation, health and employment opportunities. He also advocates for mental health awareness, aboriginal engagement and road safety. Throughout his 12 years as a Councillor, John has been a member of numerous Council committees including the Finance and Audit Committee, the Works and Services Committee, the Waste Management Advisory Committee, and the Recreation Advisory Committee. He has conducted the Shire of Waroona Australia Day ceremony for the last six years and is a life member of both the Waroona Cricket Club and the Waroona Football Club.



Blessings Masuku

Migration Agreement Officer with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's Development and Growth division, Blessings Masuku is a passionate and professional employee who has gone above and beyond in driving positive change throughout the Goldfields region. Blessings coordinates a program to bring skilled overseas workers to fill labour shortages and through this work she has lobbied for a new multicultural program which would considerably improve migrant experiences within the City. She regularly assists community members who face social, economic, and cultural barriers, and through her dedication and committed service, she has contributed to building community diversity, quality of lifestyle and improved opportunities for program participants. Blessings volunteers for multiple organisations and is often asked to speak at public events. She is a contributing member of the Friends of Africa in Kalgoorlie and the African Goldfields Community, and also an active member of the Oasis Australian Christian Church in Kalgoorlie.



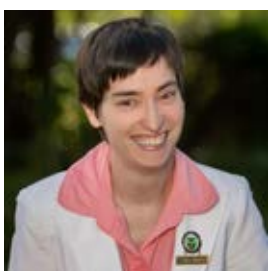
Phillip Negri

A third generation Bruce Rock farmer, Phillip Negri has always been heavily involved in volunteering for local community groups. Elected to the Shire of Bruce Rock in 2015, Phillip is also the Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer and represents the Council on a number of advisory groups and committees including the Bushfire Advisory Committee. He is particularly passionate about ensuring quality aged care facilities and health services are available in the town, and is the Council representative on Central AgCare, the Local Health Advisory Group and the District Health Advisory Group. During Phillip's service, he has been a key contributor to two projects that will have a lasting legacy for the future generations of the community, namely as a member of the Doctor Recruitment Panel, and also participating in the community efforts to establish a temporary grocery store in town when the former store was lost in a fire.



Grant Nixon

An elected member with the City of Armadale for almost 12 years, Grant Nixon brings extensive horticulture industry knowledge to his role, which has allowed him to be a committed advocate and contributor to the City's Urban Forest Strategy and Tree Retention policy. Grant has also served as the chair of the Technical Services Committee for 10 years, where his knowledge and hands-on experience have proven invaluable when shared with Councillor colleagues. His previous experience as the General Manager of Araluen Botanic Park, and his keen interest in tourism, have inspired him to drive other tourism initiatives for visitors to the Armadale Hills and City of Armadale more generally. Grant is a member of the City's Corporate Services Committee, the Standing Orders House Advisory Group, the Audit Committee, the Pickering Brook and Surrounds Sustainability and Tourism Strategy Working Group, and the Metropolitan Regional Road Sub Group.



Melissa Northcott

A highly regarded advocate for people living with disabilities, Melissa Northcott is an outstanding community representative who has overcome her own disabilities to make a real and practical difference in the community of Armadale. Elected to the City of Armadale in 2011, Melissa has served a total of eight years over two separate terms. Throughout her time on Council, Melissa's energy and determination to make changes within the disability sector have been an inspiration, and she continues to be a role model for many people throughout the community. Melissa has volunteered with the WA Disability Advisory Group and has also been a member of the Disability Services Commission Board and the Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability. She has participated in many panels and consultative groups for people with disabilities and is currently a member of the City of Perth Access Inclusion Advisory Group, the Perth Airport Access Inclusion Working Group and the METRONET Access Inclusion Reference Group. Melissa is currently a Deputy State Councillor for the South East Metropolitan Zone.

Merit Award



Scott O'Neill

Scott O'Neill was an elected member with the Shire of Kellerberrin for 15 years, including eight years as Deputy President, culminating in his role as Shire President, before retiring in August 2022. As a local business owner on the main street of town, Scott became the public face of the Shire and was often the Councillor receiving constant feedback from the community. Scott's ability to discuss issues with ratepayers in a positive and respectful manner is testament to his skills as a committed community representative. During his dedicated service to Council, Scott was pivotal in managing the upgrades to the Kellerberrin Recreation Centre precinct as chair of the Kellerberrin Sport and Recreation Committee after the construction of stage one of the facility. He was instrumental in numerous other Council projects such as the Industrial Area Land development and sale of land for new industry.



Tony Pratico

Elected in 2002, Tony Pratico has been a dedicated Councillor for the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes for 20 years. During this time, he served as President for two terms, first between 2013-2015 and then again from 2017-2019. He also served as Deputy President for over five years and was the Council's representative on the South West Country Zone for 11 years between 2008-2019. As well as contributing significantly to community events, Tony has been a member of several advisory committees and currently chairs the Local Emergency Management Committee. Tony has always been an advocate for road maintenance and upgrading of the many gravel roads within the Shire. He was Council's representative to the Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils, is patron of the Bridgetown Agricultural Society and is involved in the Bridgetown Mystery Tour of Life initiative.



Laurie Snell

Laurie Snell is passionate about agriculture and the environment and throughout her dedicated 12 years as an elected member with the Shire of Waroona she has been involved in many committees and community groups that support this interest. Some of her more recent commitments have included membership of the Harvey River Task Force, the Coolup Land Conservation District Committee, Waroona Visitor Centre Working Group, the Economic and Tourism Committee, the Recreation Advisory Committee, the Peel Mosquito Management Group, the Peel Biosecurity Group, the Wagerup Community Consultative Network, and the Regional Joint Development Assessment Panel. Author of the Waroona history book 'Drakesbrook Days and Waroona Years', Laurie is a highly respected Waroona community representative, having lived in the Shire for almost 60 years.



Belinda Taylor

Manager of Corporate Services with the Shire of Trayning, Belinda Taylor has been a dedicated employee for over 20 years. Beginning with the gardening team in 2003, Belinda worked her way into a managerial position and regularly works outside of hours, to ensure projects and services are delivered on time. Belinda is passionate about the future of the Trayning community and is a key driver of community events and initiatives, working quietly behind the scenes and letting others take the credit. She personally purchases prizes for community competitions and gifts, and she often prepares and donates food for community events and Shire meetings. During the COVID lockdowns, Belinda ensured residents in the Shire who lived alone, the elderly or those who had no family close by, were checked on regularly. During this time, she was instrumental in developing a roster system to ensure residents felt connected, safe and cared for.




Neil Walker

Neil Walker served 15 years as an elected member with the Shire of Brookton from 1990 until 2005, including the last two years as Deputy President, before retiring from Council. Re-elected in 2009, Neil served another 14 years, including one year as Deputy President in 2017, before his retirement in 2023. An outstanding community representative and contributor to the development of the Brookton community over his 28 years of dedicated service, Neil has served with eight CEOs, seven Shire Presidents and numerous elected members. He was involved in many successful community projects, most notably the establishment of the Kalkarni Aged Care facility, the sale of the Brookton Farmers Co-op, and the land acquisition project to bring the SP Hay export processing plant to the Shire. Well known for his quick wit and ability to tell a good yarn, Neil was a highly respected elected member who demonstrated wisdom and foresight in all his Council decision making.



Ian Walsh

Ian Walsh began his career in Local Government in 1989 as Senior Finance Officer at the Shire of Irwin. Since then, he has held various leadership positions in Local Government, including Deputy CEO at the Shires of Goomalling and Ravensthorpe, and Deputy CEO for the past 14 years at the Shire of Carnamah. Throughout his 34 years of loyal service to regional Local Governments, Ian has made a positive difference to all the communities he has worked with, and is an excellent mentor, not only to Shire staff, but to public sector officers across the region. Ian is often called upon for advice, and freely shares information and knowledge, and his experience and character have ensured that the Shire of Carnamah's debt-free position has remained a leading benchmark within the Local Government sector for many years. Ian is a low-profile unsung hero who daily ensures that the Local Government sector is strong, responsible and well managed.



Local Government Distinguished Officers Award

Recognising outstanding contributions made by serving officers of Member Local Governments and WALGA employees to the Association, the Local Government sector and local communities.



Nicole Matthews

With WALGA since 2017, Nicole Matthews has been a driver of change throughout her six years with the Association. A natural leader, Nicole is currently in the position of Executive Manager, Policy and has spearheaded the restructure of the Association's Policy Teams, ensuring delivery of policy outcomes to Member Local Governments is efficient and effective, while at the same time mentoring and developing staff involved in the change. With a passion for networking and developing strong and viable connections, Nicole's dedication to the sector has ensured actionable and deliverable policies that create and deliver meaningful change for Local Governments across the State. She is regularly involved in State Council meetings, providing policy and departmental advice, and was instrumental in leading the Local Government response to the COVID pandemic through her membership of the State Health Incident Coordination group. In this important role, she devoted countless personal hours to ensure information was shared, new policies were developed, and resources were available to all Local Governments.



Dirk Sellenger

Chief Executive Officer with the Shire of Mukinbudin since 2016, Dirk Sellenger's career with Local Governments across regional Western Australia has spanned 28 years. Beginning with the Shire of Shark Bay in 1994, Dirk has since held senior management positions with the Shires of Lake Grace, Trayning, and Murchison and was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Shires of Murchison, Chapman Valley, Upper Gascoyne, and Mt Marshall, before he began as CEO with the Shire of Mukinbudin. Dirk is well known for his progressive approach to community management and has spearheaded innovative projects in Mukinbudin such as relocation and construction of both a childcare facility and a medical centre, the construction of a large nature playground and park, and the installation of a major street art project to brighten the street appeal of the townsite. He has strong financial vision and through his leadership, Mukinbudin Shire is now in a strong and robust financial position as a result of strategies that have focused on reducing shire debt, streamlining the rates process, and firming up cash reserves. A committed community member, Dirk can also be found participating in fundraising for the local school, doing gate duty at winter sport, or cooking the barbeque at local events.



Amanda Sheers

An experienced and respected urban planner, Amanda Sheers moved to WA during the COVID pandemic to take up the role of Manager Development Services at the City of Stirling. During her time with the City, Amanda has overseen the finalisation of the Small Business Friendly Approval Project and was the innovator behind the renowned Stirling Fast-Track service. Under her leadership, the City's planning team has improved in terms of its customer service, assessment timeframes and quality of output. Amanda provides leadership on a diverse range of policy, planning and infrastructure matters and encourages her team to adopt lateral and progressive thinking, inspiring creative solutions to urban growth challenges, thereby producing evidence-based policy development. In her short time in Western Australia, Amanda has made a significant positive impact on the planning industry and lifted the profile of the Local Government planning sector. She was recently elected President of the Planning Institute of Australia, WA Division, where she is a passionate advocate for quality planning outcomes and the important work planners do in helping shape communities.

Local Government Distinguished Officers Award



Debra Summers

Debra Summers has extensive experience in community service provision for both State and Local Governments, much of which has been in the Pilbara and South West of WA. Currently Manager, Communities and Libraries at the City of Swan, Debra manages a number of business units including the Community and Libraries unit which includes six libraries, plus community development, youth development, place activation, arts and culture services and community grants. Debra has developed a best practice library service, developed the City's new Arts and Culture services and currently manages a budget of \$14.5 million. Throughout her extensive career she has led major projects at numerous Local Governments, including the construction and commissioning of a Multipurpose Recreation Centre, and the development of a Library and Community Centre. Previously, she was the Manager for the South West Radiation Oncology Integration Project, lead the construction of the Dunsborough Library in the Naturaliste Community Centre, participated on the Project Team for the Civic Precinct Project for the Shire of Busselton and managed a Feasibility Study into the development and construction of a Vasse Lower South West Learning Facility.



Leanne Woods

City of Melville First Nations Engagement Coordinator Leanne Woods has worked tirelessly over the last 10 years to elevate opportunities for First Nations peoples in employment, recognition, contracts, engagement and the enabling of cultural safety in the workplace. A significant leader in WALGA's Aboriginal Engagement Officers network, Leanne shares much wisdom in her journey of reconciliation planning and action in Local Government. As part of this network, she provides guidance to staff coordinating their Aboriginal Engagement and Reconciliation Forums. Leanne mentors First Nations staff across the organisation and has been involved in recruitment of First Nations staff at both the City of Melville and other Local Governments. Her efforts are focused on facilitating cultural safety whilst at work in order to promote job satisfaction and retention. Leanne initiated the City's first Cultural Growth Strategy, which aims to create culturally aware, safe and empowered local communities supported by their Local Governments. She has also worked to tackle systemic racism across the Cities of Melville and Cockburn through the development and delivery of the Let's Talk About Racism program.

Troy Pickard Young Achievers Award

Recognising notable contributions and commitment to Local Government and demonstrated potential for professional success by Elected Members or employees in the sector who are aged 35 years or under.



Rhys Williams

The youngest Councillor ever elected to the City of Mandurah, Rhys Williams was just 21 years of age when he became an elected member in 2009.

Rhys then became one of the youngest serving Western Australian mayors when he was elected Mayor of the City in 2017. Such is his reputation in the community, Rhys was elected for a second four-year term in 2021 with 85 percent of the vote. His passion for community development has seen many successful projects and campaigns undertaken in Mandurah, such as the recent high-profile

Giants of Mandurah Arts project, the Mandurah Tourism restructure project and the Mandurah Matters community consultation program. Rhys guided the community through the uncertainty of the COVID pandemic period, leading with compassion, resilience and inspiration, which included the cancellation of the much-loved Crab Fest event just one day prior to its commencement. Rhys holds numerous leadership positions such as chair of the Peel Alliance. In 2023, Rhys was invited to be a keynote speaker at the IPAA WA Young Professionals' Conference, where he shared his Local Government journey and insights.

Do you know someone in Local Government who should be honoured in 2024?

Do you know someone in Local Government who has made a notable contribution to WALGA, the Local Government sector or their individual Council? If so, why not consider nominating them for an award as part of the WALGA Local Government Honours Program?

There are many Elected Members who have made a significant contribution to their communities, Local Government and the Association which is worthy of formal acknowledgement. Chief Executives and officers too are often overlooked for the outstanding service they provide to Local Government and the Association through their various endeavours.

The Honours Program represents a tremendous opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our Elected Members and officers, and to recognise those who have given so much of their personal and professional time to the betterment of their communities through Local Government in WA.

The nominations period for the 2024 Honours Program will open in early 2024.

All enquiries relating to the Honours Program should be directed to Kathy Robertson, Executive Officer Governance, on (08) 9213 2036 or at honours@walga.asn.au.



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