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Cover: Michael and Lydia Boyd from The Fisho at the Peel Region Food & Beverage Capability Guide launch. Image: Michael Bond, Overland Media.



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Peel Development Commission is a statutory authority established in 1993 by the Western Australian State Government under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*. The Commission is one of nine regional development commissions across the State, each established and operating under the same legislation.

Chair's Welcome



There's no doubt that this is an exciting time for food and agriculture in Australia.

With the convergence of rapidly increasing world food demand, continued demand for food provenance and quality, advances in research and technology, and an increase in consumer knowledge, agribusiness is one of the top five sectors where Australia has a comparative advantage relative to our global competitors.

The Future of Food Conference held in Mandurah recently was a fantastic exploration of Australia's food and ag industry and where the industry is heading. Covering everything from value-add technologies, innovative processing techniques,

food provenance and traceability, investment attraction for small businesses, current trends and new markets, sustainable food networks, nutrition and health outcomes, zero waste and sustainable packaging, the key question was what does all that mean for us as consumers and business owners, and what it does it mean for food and agriculture in the Peel?

We know that our regions are key to Australia's agriculture and food production. For Peel, our peri-urban location offers many unique opportunities. Through continued innovation, investment, research and collaboration can be enhanced and leveraged to increase our regional food security, create jobs and build our local economy. That is, making more of our wonderful regional produce available to more people locally, across the state, and internationally.

As a farmer, I know the importance of innovation, investment, research and collaboration on a small scale as well as a large scale. It's about embracing what makes our produce unique and finding our 'particular customer' on a small scale, and our 'particular market' on a large scale. Embracing what makes our produce unique takes

innovation — using our constraints and opportunities to optimise the way we do things to achieve the best results. It takes investment to support and scale our innovations and research to test and refine. And it takes collaboration to amass our knowledge and resources and create momentum.

Peel's agriculture and food industries are prioritising environmental sustainability and synergies by adopting sustainable and innovative approaches. As a result, Peel is becoming known as an agri-food innovation hub, and a region that's committed to preserving our unique environment by supporting sustainable industries.

This issue of the *Peel* magazine celebrates just some of the exciting food and ag advances and stories from the region. From the *Peel Region Food and Beverage Capability Guide's* launch to the WA Food Innovation Precinct's ongoing momentum and achievements, the Eden Towers story, right through to next year's mouth-watering Crab Fest, there's no shortage of agriculture and food innovation here in the Peel.

David Doepel
Chair, Peel Development Commission



THE FUTURE OF FOOD CONFERENCE

Explored value-add technologies, innovative processing techniques, food provenance and traceability.

CEO's Management Report



Our vision for Peel is a progressive, prosperous and dynamic region with a culture of care. Our mission is to connect our communities, the environment, and industry to generate innovative solutions and promote the region's sustainable economic and social development.

Key to achieving that vision is ensuring that our regional workforce is highly skilled and adaptable to change to support a solid and diverse economy. A highly skilled workforce is all about capable people. To support the needs of our growing population, we need to cultivate a capable workforce through education and training, and support and leverage our capable people by providing employment opportunities through new businesses and industries.

World-class education, training and higher education systems are central to Peel's future economic growth and employment. Excellent training and education attracts people and businesses to the region and makes them more likely to stay within the community. It's also a driver in moving the region's economy from a population-driven, service-delivery nature towards a more export, strategic, innovation and trade-driven economy.

A significant opportunity lies in developing a regionally-based research industry. Building a regionally-based 'knowledge economy' is recognised as being critical to the future economic success of the Peel — enabling the development of commercial intellectual property, strategic jobs and increased capacity of our people into the future.

Agriculture and food represent enormous opportunity here in the Peel, and the WA Food Innovation Precinct's X-Protein Lab program and Enterprise Support Program marries the region's food and ag opportunities with research and development support for innovative organisations to access global markets.

The Transform Mandurah and Dwellingup Futures initiatives aim to create long-term economic resilience and employment opportunities to support a growing population whilst maintaining and leveraging a sustainable approach to our natural environment.

Local content and regional business representation in Government contracting opportunities helps build strong local economies and fosters a capable regional workforce. The Local Content Adviser Network advocates for a more even playing field for regional businesses and supports their capacity and capability development through various initiatives.

The Mandurah CoderDojo is a community for teenage neurodiverse people to expand their skills in technological fields. Through training,

education and mentoring programs, the community is creating pathways to long-term employment and addressing the challenge of attracting and retaining talent to Peel's information and communication technology fields.

It's also imperative for our local communities and economy to match our region's capable people to local jobs. Hosting the Peel Recruitment

Roundtable was a practical opportunity to help local businesses find local job seekers with the skills and experience they need.

Maximising the capability of Peel's workforce is not without its challenges and will require a high level of cross-sector engagement to achieve our vision. The People of Peel project will give us a deeper understanding of the Peel region's human capital, allowing for stronger workforce planning and development. This edition of the *Peel* magazine highlights some of the initiatives and achievements that will help us turn our local knowledge, skills and expertise into competitive advantage and economic opportunity.

Andrew Ward
Chief Executive Officer
Peel Development Commission

Moving
the region towards
an export, innovation
and trade-driven
economy.

Local producers celebrate Peel's food and beverage capability guide

WORDS | Peel Development Commission
IMAGES | Michael Bond, Overland Media

Western Australia's new Food and Beverage Capability Guides showcase the diversity of fresh premium products available in each region, and Peel's guide has just launched.

Developed by the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) in partnership with the Peel Development Commission, the food guides highlight quality regional products by local food manufacturers to consumers, retailers, buyers, wholesalers, chefs, caterers and tourism operators. This creates a single go-to resource for local food and drink and allows caterers, restaurants and

wholesalers to select quality ingredients at a glance.

In the Peel region, we're talking honey, wine, beer, cider, eggs, seafood, fresh fruit and vegetables, preserves, olive oil, meat, bakery products, coffee, and insect protein that are just some of the fresh, quality products that our region is becoming known for.

Celebrating the guide's launch, local producers, industry representatives and community members enjoyed a flavourful evening at the Dwellingup Visitor Centre. Whether brewed, baked, caught, grown, or harvested, producers of all shapes and sizes were proud to promote their local food products and the Guide that will showcase them.

Lynne Gould, of Groundswell Coffee, featured in the Guide, said it was a great opportunity for local producers to connect with and develop relationships with aligned businesses.

"The fabulous level of support available in the Peel Region is creating tremendous opportunity and a

business-friendly environment that allows you to have a dream and make it happen! It is fantastic," Lynne Gould said.

And Michael Boyd from The Fisho commented, "I feel honoured to be one of the 29 businesses in the *Peel Region Food and Beverage Capability Guide*".

David Doepel, Chair of the Peel Development Commission echoed these comments saying, "This is a fantastic resource and a win for everyone. Not only does it connect local producers with retailers, wholesalers, chefs and other food and beverage operators, but it then connects local and non-local consumers with our unique local produce. That's smarter, fresher, more sustainable local food, and it supports the growth of the agri-food and beverage sector in the Peel".

Selling and sourcing local food products is now easier than ever in the Peel. This is an essential enabler for the Peel community to support local businesses right through the supply chain and give locals the chance to enjoy the best of what the region's food and beverage businesses have to offer.

Regional food guides are currently available for the Mid-West; Great Southern, Kimberley, Wheatbelt, Goldfields-Esperance, and Peel regions and DPIRD are now working with regional partners to produce guides for the Gascoyne and South West regions.

MORE INFORMATION

The Guide is a collaborative initiative between the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), the Peel Development Commission (PDC) and Mandurah-based marketing agency Ready Aim Fire.

The Peel Region Food and Beverage Capability Guide is a digital resource that is hosted online at www.agric.wa.gov.au/capability-guides and includes links to producer websites.



Free
Discover all that
the Peel has
to offer.





Capable Coders

WORDS & IMAGES | Michelle Wong, Mandurah Neurodiverse CoderDojo

At the Mandurah Neurodiverse¹ CoderDojo, capable comes in many shapes, forms and codes! From dancing robots to producing podcasts, if it's technology based, these Neurodiverse Ninjas have got all bases covered.

Neurodiverse individuals, including the autistic community, have unique skills such as extreme attention to detail, increased pattern recognition, sustained concentration, and out-of-the-box thinking that make many of them highly capable coders. The head of the Autism Academy of Software Quality Assurance (AASQA), Prof. Tele Tan AM in collaboration with the Curtin Autism Research Group and Mandurah Catholic College, has established a community outreach group for adolescent members of the neurodiverse community to develop and expand on their skills in a variety of technological fields. The Mandurah CoderDojo is one of 4 AASQA CoderDojos, with a fifth opening in

Bunbury in the New Year. The club was originally launched with the support of Bankwest who kindly donated 30 surface laptops.

The mission of the Mandurah CoderDojo is to enable participants, (know as Ninjas) to leverage their unique talents through training, educating and mentoring programs, so as to create pathways to valued, long-term employment; whilst addressing the business needs of the ICT industry facing challenges in attracting and retaining valuable talent within the sector.

With future industry development and employment outcomes driving the CoderDojo, the weekly catch ups

serve a much greater purpose to the youth participants. The group meets every Saturday during school terms at the Mandurah Catholic College (MCC) Library. MCC kindly donate their space in support of this forward-thinking, community initiative.

The CoderDojo provides a safe, inclusive environment that allows the ninjas to come together and socialise with other neurodiverse friends and share their ideas and projects. For many of the families involved, this is the one outlet that their neurodiverse child can be themselves and enjoy the company of a supportive community.

The capabilities of the Ninjas are uncapped, as they think outside the box to make changes and adaptations to systems and software that you or I may see as impenetrable or in no need of improving. The group coordinator, Michelle Wong is a Mandurah local and member of the Curtin Autism Research Group.

"I see something working and rarely consider how it works. But the ninjas want to know how it works? What can they do to change it? Can it be broken? Yes, they love trying to break programs, software and websites to see what they can do with it. There's no malice or ulterior motive, they are truly inquisitive and curious about these things and that's why I love facilitating the group."

In August this year, Michelle Wong hosted the 'Autism at Work' breakfast event in Mandurah, for local business owners and supporters of all-things autism. The breakfast launched the Integrated Employment Success Tool to the Mandurah business community, highlighting the many strengths of autistic employees. The synergy between the Neurodiverse CoderDojo and educating employers

on the benefits of working with the autistic community is clear. Supporting employment outcomes for the neurodiverse community supports local industry by providing future skilled workers.

The Mandurah Neurodiverse CoderDojo relies on some amazing volunteer mentors who support the ninjas with their IT tasks, (and to help fix things that break!) Many of the mentors involved are autistic or neurodiverse themselves, and are wonderful role models for the ninjas. The relationships between ninjas and mentors is one of the many positive social outcomes of the group. Some of the projects currently in development are building and choreographing dancing robots utilising tools, 3D printing, sensors and code, animation, 3D game design, game creation and podcast interviews. Last year, the group won a Restart Mandurah Grant from the City of Mandurah in order to purchase the podcast equipment.

Another member of the local community supporting the incredible ninjas and their projects is Professor Lyn Beazley AO. Prof. Beazley was the 2015 Western Australian of the Year and former chief scientist of WA. Prof. Beazley is an ambassador of the AASQA program, acknowledging the talent of the Mandurah ninjas, regularly popping in for a visit. With direct links to further education, work placement and industry, the Mandurah Neurodiverse Ninjas have access to future pathways and support structures to assist them reach their goals. We are very excited to see more wonderful projects emerging, along with the wonderful community and support structure for neurodiversity, here in the Peel region.

The Ninjas are uncapped, they think **outside the box.**

MORE INFORMATION
The Mandurah Neurodiverse CoderDojo welcomes new ninjas (12+) and volunteer mentors to the group. Please contact Michelle for further information michelle.l.wong@postgrad.curtin.edu.au



¹ The term neurodiverse is used to refer to people with behaviours that are consistent with people with a wide range of mental impairments and does not need to be viewed only as a disability (Muskat, 2017). Using the term Neurodiverse allows the various communities who work with people with these disorders to refer to them as a population rather than their specific disorder. (Hosmer 2018)

Hydrogen conference shines light on Peel opportunities

WORDS & IMAGE | Nadia D'Hart,
 Peel Development Commission,

The Hydrogen Society of Australia with the support of Innovate Australia celebrated the third Hydrogen Day event on the 8th of October this year in Perth. As the Hydrogen Day movement started in the US, October 8th (10.08 in American date format) was chosen in reference to the atomic weight of hydrogen.

This event celebrates Australia's contribution to the development of green energy hydrogen and helps raise awareness of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies as well as the emerging hydrogen opportunities in Western Australia.

As a founding member of the Perth and Peel Hydrogen Cluster, the Peel Development Commission had the opportunity to share the Cluster's vision to help establish the Peel region as a leading developer, enabler and adopter of hydrogen technologies.

"Our goal is to enhance companies' individual and collective innovation and competitiveness in the global market, and build Australia's future technology and workforce in Renewable Hydrogen. Our Cluster membership now comprises a mix hydrogen producers and service providers, as well as Government, Industry and the Training sectors. We are delighted to see our membership growing,"

the Commission's Nadia D'Hart relayed to the 150 conference attendees participating either in person or online.

"We have some pretty significant users of energy in this sector but also enormous opportunity for hydrogen utilisation. We are currently in the process of engaging with these companies to try and get understanding of their energy transition and decarbonisation strategies and their view on the role of renewable hydrogen in that journey."



The Peel presents the opportunity to encourage innovative start-ups, small to medium enterprises and become a location for hydrogen commercial demonstration and pilot projects to support the existing mining, manufacturing, agricultural and food production sectors which are big employers in our region.

For example, the Peel Business Park is designed to be 100% renewable energy precinct employing an existing solar and battery micro-grid which can be expanded as the park grows. The industrial scale micro-grid is a first of its kind in WA. Within the Peel Business Park applications for H2 utilisation include food processing in the form of high temp heat, hydrogen energy storage could be used to support the micro-grid, and there will be opportunities for hydrogen in transport and logistics to support the Park.

There are also opportunities to support hydrogen to access circular economy activities by using waste streams as inputs for production of hydrogen, and other industries utilising biproducts that emerge from the hydrogen production process. For example, using agricultural waste or even wastewater as biomass to produce hydrogen and other products such as graphite, which can be used in battery manufacturing.

With access to several ports, agricultural waste products, industrial land for technology development and testing, as well as an extensive road and logistics networks, Peel certainly has a lot of opportunity to engage with the hydrogen economy as well as add value to other supply chains. Front and centre will be bringing the Peel community along for the journey and developing the workforce. The Cluster is currently guiding training opportunities for the university and TAFE sector to ensure we have a pipeline of capable people to support the emerging hydrogen industry.

MORE INFORMATION

Peel Development Commission: Phone (08) 9535 4140 or go to the Commission website www.peel.wa.gov.au

Perth and Peel Hydrogen Cluster please contact: Phone (08) 9550 3291 go to www.h2cluster.com.au

Dwellingup's Journey to Economic Development Excellence

WORDS & IMAGES | Shire of Murray

The strategic, community-centric approach that was adopted to achieve Dwellingup's economic revival, has been recognised in the 2021 National Economic Development Awards for Excellence.



Employing
 a number of
 strategies has
 ensured the town's
 success.

Selected as finalist in the category of Economic Development Strategic Thinking, the Shire of Murray's submission detailed how the community's vision for Dwellingup to become Western Australia's premier trails town, was at the core of its transformation.

A few years ago, Dwellingup lacked investment and opportunity, and was at risk of becoming another regional town in irreversible decline.

With its strong sense of community and identity, residents and

business owners partnered with the Shire of Murray to define a new, prosperous future.

Employing a number of strategies has ensured the town's success, including harnessing the community's passion and local knowledge, desire to take ownership of their future and willingness to partner with others, as was empowering its business community through capability building, and establishing effective, multi-disciplinary partnerships and leadership and project groups.

Integrated planning and delivery of program initiatives maximised impact and maintained momentum.

Evidence based, robust business cases and strong advocacy successfully pitched Dwellingup's vision to public and private investors, secured strategic partners and helped cut through a highly competitive economic climate where many other applicants were also seeking funding for impactful infrastructure projects of economic benefit.



DWELLINGUP ADVENTURE TRAILS

Sixteen trails have been constructed and operational since 2020.

The resultant outcomes which led to Dwellingup's revitalisation and which have been achieved over an eighteen month period, include the delivery of business capability programs, launch of the 'Wild at Heart' campaign brand, construction of the Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre, Skate Park and Pump Track, over 32km of purpose built, single track mountain bike trails and new canoe launching facilities as art of the Dwellingup Adventure Trails project, the establishment of place-making group Dwellingup Creative, implementation of a Facade Refurbishment Program and the hosting of iconic events such as Dwellingup 100 and Mountain Bike Month.

As WA's Top Small Tourism Town for 2021, Dwellingup is on the cusp of realising its ambitious future, as a result of a thriving visitor economy that has been achieved through significant investment in trails infrastructure, visitor services and a diverse range of quality visitor experiences.

Strategic partnerships have ensured the necessary knowledge, skills, expertise and funding needed for success and demonstrate what can be achieved through real collaboration across all levels of government, the private sector and community and when all partners are fully invested and championing a shared vision.

Unfortunately, the Shire of Murray did not receive the award but plans to nominate its Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct next year.



Economic benefits realised

Dwellingup's economic success is being measured through increased visitation and spend, return for local business, new investment in the town and increased local jobs.

The Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre is anticipated to welcome over 80,000 visitors by September 2021, its first 12 months of operation. Retail expenditure within its Visitor Centre component (excluding café, tour, retail and equipment hire), has exceeded the projected net return by 397%.

Sixteen trails of the Dwellingup Adventure Trails mountain bike network, have been constructed and operational since 2020. Counters installed on 12 of the new trails recorded over 111,000 rides between October 2020 to May 2021.

Feedback from the local tourism and small business sector confirms a

significant uplift in economic returns since the opening of the Centre and completion of the trails.

Seven new small to medium enterprises have established in the town as a result of the emerging visitor economy and 11 established businesses have expanded or upgraded their infrastructure and buildings to better cater for increased visitors, and improve efficiencies and services, which has had flow on benefits for the local and regional construction industry.

Conservative estimates place new FTE local jobs at 24 within the hospitality and tourism sector alone, which have been created as a result of the new visitor economy.

Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre exceeded the projected net return by 397%.

MORE INFORMATION

For further information contact Shire of Murray by phone (08) 9531 7675 or visit the website www.murray.wa.gov.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FOOD INNOVATION PRECINCT

Connecting Markets, Products, Businesses and Communities

WORDS & IMAGES | Shire of Murray

Construction of the Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct is past the halfway mark and already an oat milk company's product will be distributed in Singapore.

CONCEPT IMAGE

The Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct within the Peel Business Park — now well into construction.

Six alternative protein companies are working with industry experts improving business planning and developing products, with four exploring collaborations with ASEAN entities, and an indoor vertical farm company the successful applicant of a grant to undertake research and development to incorporate specialty and nursery crops into their platform.

Precinct's GrowHub signs distribution agreement to take OatUp Oat Milk to Singapore

In early October, Wide Open Agriculture Ltd. officially announced an exclusive distribution agreement with GrowHub International, to distribute its Dirty Clean Food brand's OatUP oat milk throughout Singapore.

GrowHub, founded by Fund Singapore, is the key strategic partner of the Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct (WAFIP). This relationship was established by the Peel Development

Commission and resulted in signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister for Regional Development, Fund Singapore, the Commission, SCRIPT and Murdoch University in 2018.

The agreement between Wide Open Agriculture and GrowHub is for a two-year term and is the first step for the company in growing its presence and market share in South-East Asia.

It was secured following an extensive sampling program, which indicated demand for the product and preference for OatUP's carbon neutral certification.

The agreement includes minimum purchase commitments for approx. AUD\$500,000 within the first 12 months.

The product will be sold through big box retailers, food service companies, online retailers and specialty stores.

GrowHub will train sales staff and market OatUP across Singapore.



Western Australian Businesses Expanding State's Alternative Protein Advances Abroad

Western Australia is taking a deep dive into the production of alternative proteins through the Precinct's X-Protein Lab program, with six pioneering businesses expanding state efforts in the global market.

The businesses are being mentored by industry experts from Singapore and Australia, through their research and development efforts, technology readiness, intellectual property considerations, product-market fit, business models, consumer and market acceptance, investment potential and global relevance.

The businesses will also receive three-months access to the Precinct's Innovation Centre when it opens mid-2022.

Ainsley Agroforestry and Aquaponics Pty. Ltd., a tree farm based in Greenough, is exploring the production of alternative plant-protein from dried powdered leaves of *Moringa oleifera* trees, which will initially be grown in the state's mid-west.

Whole Green Foods Pty. Ltd. is introducing Western Australia and the world to its novel proprietary processing and extraction technology. Through the program, the company is validating their technology and business model to rapidly scale up, both in Australia and abroad.

Jarra Infusion Wholesale Pty. Ltd. is focusing on business development and commercialisation to enable the supply of a range of plant-based products across WA, interstate and overseas. The business is also exploring the opportunities offered through mycelium-based protein and the medicinal benefits of mushrooms, for incorporation in its range.

The Lupin Co. are investigating Australian Sweet Lupin as a concentrated protein source for the global food market for tailored foods, specific to consumer needs including for sport, management of diabetes, obesity and other health issues as well as infant health and aged care.

Furthering the state's share in the lupin market, Wide Open Agriculture

are working through the X-Protein Lab program's networks to introduce, both to Australia and Asia, its patented process of transforming Australian Sweet Lupin into a format applicable for multiple food and drink categories. The company also hopes to grow Western Australia's regenerative farming practices.

The state's first edible insect farm, Grubs Up Australia, are expanding its target market internationally, for its product range which currently includes protein roasted crickets, roasted mealworms and high-protein powder. The company also hopes to explore the production of ready-to-eat products such as pre-workout high protein bars, muesli bars, health food snacks, protein balls, breakfast granola and pancake mixes.

To date, two of the companies have been selected to pitch for a research and development collaboration with a large food and beverage conglomerate in North Asia. Another company has been linked with a large Middle Eastern bakery to explore product collaborations, with another linked with a like-minded organisation in Singapore to identify market segments and opportunities to work together.

The projects and products will grow the state's capacity to supply sustainable sources of protein, with considerable health and environmental benefits, to the West Australian, Australian and ASEAN markets as a gateway to the rest of the world.

The global plant-based ingredients market is projected to grow exponentially over the next four or so years and these businesses are in viable positions to capitalise on this opportunity.

X-Protein Lab program and Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct Experts in Residence include:

- Dr Natasha Teakle, the founder of AgriStart. Dr Teakle is empowering businesses to support regional development and is delivering investment ready programs across regional Western Australia.



SUSTAINABLE SOURCES OF PROTEIN

The projects and products will grow the state's capacity to supply sustainable sources of protein, with considerable health and environmental benefits.



- Dr Regine Stockman is a Principal Research Scientist at CSIRO Agriculture and Food, the Team Leader for the Food Technology Team as well as the Focus Area Leader for Future Proteins - Ingredients and Foods. Dr. Stockman has worked in food product and process development for almost 20 years with a focus on separation processing to derive functional fractions and ingredients for use in foods.
- Mr Gerard Chia is a Partner at Singapore-headquartered VisVires New Protein. Mr. Chia is focused on investments and business development and backs ambitious teams who are delivering transformative solutions for a healthier, safer and more sustainable agri-food system.
- Professor Paul Teng is the Managing Director at NIE International Pty. Ltd. and Senior Advisor (Agrifood) to A*Star, Singapore's premier technology research and development organisation with substantial investments in agtech and the food industry.

Professor Teng has expertise in food security, agri- and bio-technology innovations and entrepreneurship and sustainable development.

The X-Protein Lab program is supported by the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, Peel Development Commission and the Shire of Murray. The program is supported by Austrade Singapore and GrowHub.

Grant to help vertical farm reach new heights

Eden Towers Pty. Ltd. have received a \$200K grant through the Precinct's Enterprise Support Program, to undertake research and development to investigate how specialty crops can be incorporated into the Eden Towers' vertical farming platform, how to extract the maximum nutritional benefit from the crops and commercialisation. Investigations into nursery crops will provide opportunities for advancing yields and performance and integration of traditional agriculture with the platform.

The farm will be the first commercial scale, solar powered indoor vertical farm in Western Australian and will be set up within Peel Business Park.

Eden Towers and its research partners Future Food Systems Cooperative Research Centre/Murdoch University, shall validate this portfolio across industry and innovation to ensure proper fit and alignment.

The Enterprise Support Program, a partnership between the Shire of Murray, DevelopmentWA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, offers up to \$200K in dollar for dollar co-funding to access facilities, purchase specialty equipment and pursue commercial research and development projects.

Preparing businesses for Precinct operation, workshop series

At the end of August, the Agri-Food Research and Development Facility Commercialisation Workshop, the second in a series readying business for Precinct operation, took place at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

It addressed the need for business and research to work in unison to tackle challenges of on-farm productivity, new agri-food product development and improving traceability as one of the solutions to Australia reaching its \$100B agricultural industry by 2030, falling productivity levels in the sector and achieving a greater market share in the evolving food choices of the global consumer.

This event brought together researchers and industry professionals to showcase some of the agri-food research and development commercialisation efforts underway in the state and provided a forum for participants to explore research and development commercialisation opportunities that can be activated at the Precinct.

Recognising current trends and opportunities for WA food and beverage producers to engage in the Singapore market, the Peel Development Commission facilitated a webinar, "How WA food producers can engage with Singapore". The webinar explored how Singapore can be a food and beverage hub for Australian producers into the ASEAN region and how the WAFIP will aid these opportunities.

Follow the Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct on LinkedIn, for updates about the next workshop.

The event was supported by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of WA, Peel Development Commission and the Shire of Murray.

Precinct construction set for completion in May 2022

As the Innovation Centre, Research and Development Facility and Production Building take shape on site within Peel Business Park, stakeholder input is informing the definition and design of a fit-for-purpose, iconic, enduring Precinct brand, that captures target audience attention and encourages engagement.

Keep an eye out for the launch of the brand early in the new year and the opening of this catalytic facility mid-2022.

MORE INFORMATION

To explore the opportunities on offer through the Western Australian Food Innovation Precinct, contact General Manager Dr Chris Vas on 0410 327 609 or at wafip@murray.wa.gov.au.

WAFIP is supported by \$21.75M from the Australian Government's Regional Growth Fund.

Region in focus



STATE-OF-THE-ART PARK

Features include a pump track, skate park, flying fox, nature playground, kayak launch ramp, multi-purpose half Court and outdoor gym.

WORLD CLASS BODDINGTON



WORDS & IMAGES | Shire of Boddington

If you have made the journey to the most Eastern part of the Peel region, you will be familiar with the stunning scenery that the Boddington region has to offer.

Located 15 minutes west of Albany Highway, Boddington is a hidden gem that is fast becoming a popular location for tourists looking for a weekend getaway.

The beautiful Hotham River meanders its way through the heart of the Boddington townsite and has become the centrepiece for the recently opened Hotham Park. The Park is quickly becoming a must-visit location among families and tourists after a major \$2.3 million redevelopment.

Conveniently located next door to Hotham Park overlooking the river, is the Boddington Caravan Park.

Since the redeveloped park opened in late 2020, there has rarely been a weekend that hasn't seen both the Caravan Park and the 48-hour free RV parking bursting at the seams.

What initially began as a skate park re-development in 2017, the Hotham Park vision was soon expanded after extensive consultation with the local community, businesses, and stakeholders. Bringing together the Visitor and Interpretive Centre, and Boddington Public Library, Hotham Park has created a central community hub for local residents, which also draws visiting families and travellers stopping in to enjoy the facility.

The state-of-the-art park features a pump track, skate park, flying fox, nature playground, kayak launch ramp, multi-purpose half court and outdoor gym just to name a few of the highlights, and has been the perfect location for a number of great events. *Skate Sculpture* hosted a range of skateboarding workshops for the local community which were a huge success and over the summer months the park hosted the South 32 Summer by the River series which saw amazing live music, roving performers and children's entertainment over several evenings.

Expressions of interest recently closed for a hospitality business located in the precinct, which has been managed by the Shire of Boddington in the interim.

Exciting times are ahead with EOI's set to be finalised before the end of 2021.

Boddington is also home to the largest single day Rodeo in Western Australia and celebrated its 45th year on 6 November 2021. The Boddington Lions Rodeo is the biggest event on the calendar for Boddington and is held on the first Saturday in November each year, with the town population increasing from 1,200 residents (2016 census) to upwards of 5,000-6,000 over Rodeo weekend.

Run entirely by the Boddington Lions Club and its dedicated volunteers, the Rodeo has become more than the event itself, and has evolved into an entire weekend of festivities. The Friday Night Festival is held on Rodeo Eve at the Boddington Old School Oval and is a great family event put on by the Shire and the Boddington Community Resource Centre. Rides, food trucks, live music, games and competitions, the Friday Night Festival is a great way to keep the kids happy after a long drive in the car.

The Saturday morning is for markets, fresh doughnuts and coffee before heading down to the Rodeo Grounds for the main event. An extensive program covering all age groups and skills, you'll get to see events like Barrel Racing, Steer Wrestling and Bull Riding. The Bushman's Ball kicks off after the Day's events are all over, with great bands to dance the night away to.

While many events in 2020 were cancelled or severely impacted by COVID-19, the Boddington Lions



HOTHAM RIVER FORESHORE & LIONS WEIR

Rodeo went ahead and proved to be its biggest year on record, until 2021 came along. Without the hard work and preparation from its dedicated volunteers, the Boddington Lions Rodeo would not be the success it continues to be.

Looking to continue its offering of attractions for both the local community as well as the multitude of tourists that frequent Boddington, upgrades to existing walking trails and the creation of new trails are hot on the cards. Adding to its collection through the acquisitive Boddington Sculpture Competition, the Shire of Boddington has plans for a sculpture trail to be added to the Trail Hub starting off at Hotham Park.

If it's a long hike you're after, the Tullis Bridge Trail is a 16km round trip along the disused Hotham Railway Line. Best hiked in spring while the hills are still green, the Tullis Bridge Trail makes the occasional historical reference to Boddington's past as a timber town. One of only a handful remaining timber

truss bridges, Tullis Bridge is a beautiful location to explore.

If it's something a little less intense that you're after, the Hotham Park — Ranford Pool Trail is a much more relaxing 5km walk along the Hotham River, finishing at the recently upgraded Ranford Pool. Ranford Pool (otherwise known as Darmining Pool) is a naturally deeper part of the river which serviced the Tannin Factory when it was operational from the early 1930s to its closure in 1964. It is a popular spot for a picnic and a swim with remnants of old rope swings hanging in the trees that line the banks.

Teeming with wildlife, Boddington is home to several precious native species with a recent sighting of a numbat which were estimated to have been extinct from the Boddington area approximately 30 years ago.

Carnaby's Cockatoos and Red-Tailed Black Cockatoos are frequently found in Boddington, however, unfortunately find themselves at the mercy of the

busy roads. Signs along roads where birds are often spotted can be found, warning motorists to slow down — an initiative undertaken by passionate local community group Friends of the Reserves.

A passion for the environment is something that is echoed around Boddington, with a recent Keep Australia Beautiful Clean Up Day that yielded over 200 kilos of rubbish collected by local volunteers in only two hours. Almost 30kg of broken glass, 2kg of metal bottle tops and 151 drink containers to go to Containers for Change were removed from Turnbridge Gully, roadsides, and reserves within the Shire.

In 2020, Boddington was nominated for five Tidy Towns award categories, with the Boddington Eco Club taking out the top prize for Environmental Education. Tidy Towns have inspired Boddington Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to

put their efforts into overdrive with the expansion of their community based recycling facility.

Entirely run by volunteers, Boddington RRR has a collection point based at the former Shire Works Depot, which collects all kinds of plastics, cardboard, metals and a range of other items, sorts them and processes them to be used in their next life. (See page 34 for a full story on the Boddington RRR). Keep an eye out on your travels around Boddington to see if you can spot creations made from recycled materials.

Whether it is state of the art playgrounds, wildlife and scenery, trails, or bull riding and cowboy boots that takes your fancy, Boddington has something to offer everyone. When will you make the trip? 🦋

Teeming with wildlife,
Boddington is home to several precious native species



BODDINGTON
Home to the largest single day Rodeo in Western Australia.



Award winning Regional Learning Hubs support Peel students

If you've thought about studying at university but were worried about missing out on face-to-face learning because of location, work or life commitments, ECU has the answer.

Regional Learning Hubs provide support options for online students and a space to get together.

The ECU regional learning hub located at Mandurah's Co-Working facility *Make Place*, gives students access to face-to-face study support and weekly sessions with a local ECU Learning Hub Consultant as well as the benefits of being part of an inclusive co-working environment with WIFI and study spaces available for group work and

workshops. Through local sessions, students can meet other students and ECU's Learning Hub Consultants who can assist with assignments, provide technical support or simply be someone to talk to about their studies.

Regional Learning Hubs offer:

- A mix of weekly face-to-face and peer support
- Regular student networking opportunities
- Online support using email and social media
- Occasional lectures by ECU professors and academic staff.

ECU's award-winning Regional Learning Hubs which earned acclaim in a national awards event honouring Australia's most outstanding university teachers, connect regional and remote (online) students with the support they need to succeed.

What are Regional Learning Hubs?

A space for students who can't travel to an ECU campus to connect with their peers and access one-on-one support from a Regional Learning Consultant.

Students who study online can make an appointment at one of four Regional Learning Hubs located in Mandurah, Collie, Busselton and Margaret River.

The hubs also offer regular networking opportunities for regional students to build connections with industry professionals.

Nationally acclaimed regional support program

The Regional Learning Hubs initiative run through ECU's South West Campus and operates a learning centre at Mandurah's *Make Place* in the CBD.

The Program has been recognised in the 2020 Australian Awards for University Teaching for Programs that Enhance Learning. These national awards honour Australia's most outstanding university teachers.

The Regional Learning Hubs have a wide-ranging impact drawing students together with a connectedness that is often lacking in online and regional students' university experiences. For example, online and regional students can usually not participate in the 'corridor conversations' like on-campus students. These informal in-person connections are invaluable in enabling students to assist and encourage each other by sharing information sources, organising group study sessions and contributing to a sense of community.

Regional Learning Hubs bridge the gap between the on and off-campus experience by providing general academic support, social connection, and networking opportunities with industry professionals and maker communities. This unique program enriches students' university experience and outcomes by improving employability and enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of the skills required of industry professionals.



Helping Peel students to thrive

ECU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) Professor Angela Hill congratulated the winners.

These awards acknowledged ECU's reputation for inclusive and dynamic teaching.

"These winners show outstanding leadership and innovation in teaching, equipping our students with support and skills to thrive in their future careers."

ECU's focus on putting students first has been recognised by the 2022 Good Universities Guide, which awarded the University a five-star rating for teaching quality for 15 years in a row — one of only two public universities in Australia to achieve this.

ECU was also rated 5 stars and ranked top WA university for undergraduate overall experience, skills development, student support, learning resources and learner engagement.

For the first time, ECU has been rated 5 stars for postgraduate overall experience and the top WA university. Other postgraduate 5-star ratings included skills development, learning resources, student support and teaching quality.

MORE INFORMATION

During ECU Semesters, the regional learning hubs operate at *Make Place* between 10am-3pm Thursdays. They can be contacted on 13 43 28. General enquiries on memberships to *Make Place* co-working and innovation hub located at 17/38 Mandurah Terrace can be directed to (08) 9581 4606 and info@makeplace.org.au



EDEN TOWERS PRODUCE

Tasty, long-lasting, and always in season.

EDEN TOWERS

WORDS & IMAGES | Eden Towers

Eden Towers and Western Australia's first commercial-scale, solar-powered indoor vertical farm will be located in the Peel Business Park. Eden Towers is a WA based agri-tech startup with a small scale farm currently operating in Malaga.

Eden Towers is a new type of farm, growing without soil, under millions of LED lights, with 98% less water and without any nasty chemicals or toxins. The produce grown in the hyper-efficient and clean farm includes leafy greens, herbs, microgreens and edible flowers.

The ambitions are big, and Eden Towers' founders have committed to making this a WA first project. The development is part of a future network of more than ten farms around Australia and Asia using data, artificial intelligence and science to grow produce that tastes better, lasts longer and is not impacted by the seasons.

"The expertise and knowledge a traditional farmer uses is just as critical in our farms which is why we have built it into our technology. The technology and science create an ecosystem enabling us to farm in controlled conditions all year round. Unlike the climate challenge farmers have to grapple with in traditional farms, we control the climate inside our farms," says Julia Prichodko, Co-Founder.

The ability for Eden Towers to use the data captured by the 1000s of sensors and continually optimise the crops grown, is unique and will be used to build new IP, learnings and achieve

Eden Towers' ambition to also inform traditional farming.

"Our goal is to work with traditional farmers by sharing the data with them as well as research and development partners is a way that we can enhance yields, avoid disease, enhance flavours and reduce waste across the farming value chain" Christian Prokscha, Co-founder.

Peel Business Park was chosen by the team from Eden Towers as it has the perfect infrastructure to develop an innovative project. Co-located with the WA Food Innovation Precinct (WAFIP) and other innovative food businesses, Eden Towers believes that the ecosystem will put WA and Peel region on the map for the future of new foods. Eden Towers has strong credentials in sustainability and the ability to utilise the solar power farm to use almost 100% renewable energy. We will also have ample space to recycle all inputs to reduce waste to almost zero with a goal to be a carbon-neutral farm in the future.

"Our farms are power-hungry and the park is perfect for this, having a captive solar farm and space for future solar panels will make us one of, if not the first solar powered vertical farm at our scale globally", says Julia Prichodko, Co-Founder.

Recently Eden Towers through WAFIP's Enterprise Support Program secured a grant to bring forward research and development and commercialisation in two areas — indigenous crops and nursery plants. The Peel region is a great location for commercial purposes to serve Perth City and metro area, and also serve the Southern part of WA.

The produce that will be grown, serves both the B2B market (restaurant, wholesale, grocery etc.) as well as the direct to customer B2C market. Trials have shown customers prefer the produce from Eden Towers' farm due to the authentic taste of how a leafy green or herb should taste, that the produce lasts longer in the fridge and that there are never any varieties that are out of season. Apart from the usual produce like spinach, rocket, kale, basil and lettuce, some new and amazing produce like rock-melon microgreens, specialty chillies, and Asian leafy greens are also grown for certain customers.

"Our restaurant customers love that we supply them unique produce that is grown for them in a short amount of time" Julia Prichodko. Eden Towers is able to grow produce at a very fast speed, the average crop takes between 18 to 23 days from seed to harvest, with microgreens only taking up to 6 to 8 days from seed. This is about 2-3 times as quick as a traditional farm.

As the development takes shape with a goal to start construction in early 2022, Eden Towers will be looking to hire its team of New Farmers from the local Peel region.

The Co-Founders are working closely with the Peel Development Commission, Shire of Murray and WAFIP to identify strategies to maximise local content and hire locally.

"We have had the best experience in coming to the Peel Region, it's our goal to make this project a big success with local businesses and the community all playing a role in our future success. So far the team from WAFIP, PDC, Shire of Murray and Development WA have been exceptional supporters to make this marquee project happen," said Christian Prokscha.

EDEN TOWERS

A new type of farm, growing without soil, under millions of LED lights, with 98% less water and no chemicals or toxins.



Maximising local content and hiring locally.

REGIONAL CONTRACTS ARE GOOD FOR STRONG REGIONAL ECONOMIES

WORDS | Peel Development Commission
IMAGES | IMS

The Local Content Adviser Network (LCAN) is dedicated to improving the contracting success of our regions.

With eyes and ears on the ground in each region, LCAN is focused on increasing opportunities for regional businesses and advocating for the success of regional businesses in the contracting arena.

We're doing this by advocating across State Government agencies to make the tender application process more manageable for regional businesses to apply, thus improving the regional success rate. We review all tenders advertised on Tenders WA and report on these asking questions as to how to make the process more equitable and achievable for regional businesses.

The LCAN also works with State Government procurement officers making suggestions to improve the procurement processes and fighting hard to make changes when necessary to allow for a positive regional outcome. Working with procurement teams like this provides an opportunity and the knowledge for regional businesses to learn how to 'talk government back to government' and develop the skill set to submit applications in the tendering process.

In this way, the LCAN endeavours to change the tendering process to

an equal playing field for regional businesses by providing the necessary information around the tendering process that can assist in their success. If a regional business wins a contract, then that win benefits the entire region as this increases other regional business opportunities to participate in the project. Whether as suppliers of goods or services, or simply through the financial benefits remaining in the region by spending locally, supporting, and sponsoring community organisations, and providing employment opportunities, locally awarded contracts benefit local communities.

While the LCAN encourages regional businesses to step up and take on the challenge of contracting with the Government, it is also understood that not every regional business wants to contract with the Government or has the capacity or capability to be a Head Contractor. However, many regional businesses can successfully participate in subcontracting opportunities.

Through subcontracting, regional businesses are gaining experience and exposure, which improves their ability to contract successfully in the future.

Various 'tailor-made' initiatives are in place to assist regional businesses in developing their capacity and capability, and business operations. LCAN collaborates with regional chambers of commerce and industry, and the Noongar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to identify regional businesses that can pursue contracting opportunities and advertise the availability of such opportunities.

Some of the key projects and focus areas in the Peel region include;

- Madora Bay Primary School
- Pinjarra Senior High School
- South Metropolitan TAFE Mandurah Campus
- West Byford Primary School
- Lakelands Station
- Mandurah Rail Depot Sign-on Building
- Mandurah Station Multi — Storey Carpark
- Bunbury Outer Ring Road — BORR

Aboriginal business engagement is a key priority for the LCAN. In the Peel this includes working with the City of Mandurah on the Aboriginal Cultural Centre, part of the City's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), delivering contract management and social media workshops in collaboration with the Wirra Hub, involvement in the South West Native Title Settlement and working with Indigenous Managed Services (IMS) on an Aboriginal Engagement and Participation Plan for the Peel Development Commission.

Building local business capability, another LCAN key priority, is crucial to improving regional participation in contracting opportunities. Local Content Advisers work with local government authorities and Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), the Small Business Development Corporation, the local business advisory organisations, Master Builders Association, regional TAFEs, and community organisations. They are developing and hosting workshops, networking events and mechanisms, and talking to the local business community to support regional businesses in developing their capability. That's good for local business and good for the region.

Creating an equal playing field for regional businesses.

BUSINESS IN FOCUS: INDIGENOUS MANAGED SERVICES (IMS)

Indigenous Managed Services assists organisations in growing their business, developing their staff and exceeding their commercial goals.

A team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals with a wealth of experience enable IMS to deliver services across a diverse range of capabilities including project and contract management, recruitment and labour hire, land management, training and upskilling, business coaching and consulting, dry ice blasting, water management and more.

IMS was founded in 2017 with traditional owners Garry Jaffrey and Synarah Murphy, along with Terry Collier. IMS employs 12 full time and over 100 casual staff members, is a registered Supply Nation and Aboriginal Business Directory WA business and an approved supplier to multiple Government departments and well-known private businesses in WA.

Constantly evolving their service offering to meet client and market

expectations is of paramount importance to IMS. Becoming a registered Group Training Organisation (GTO) has helped ensure their ongoing ability to employ, supply and train trainees and apprentices to meet the growing demand for skilled labour. They have also commenced a dry ice blasting division offering a highly specialised, environmentally friendly service to remove contamination from any surface or substrate without any damage or additional clear up.

IMS has a growing list of alliances with companies and businesses that complement the services they offer and are also helping other smaller Aboriginal companies grow. These partnerships and alliances have enhanced IMS's success, including a site in Mandurah, Port Hedland and Perth, with another planned for the southwest and northwest of WA over the next 12 months. IMS is also now supplying interstate services to national companies so with that growth under their belt, aim to have a branch in each Australian state within five years and to have embarked on international representation.

As IMS continues to win contracts, it's helping to create local training and job outcomes for our Peel community. In return, the Peel region benefits from newly skilled people and increased capability within the region.

IMS is incredibly proud of removing barriers to employment and creating sustainable employment outcomes for local communities. They have significantly contributed to increased employment and training opportunities by winning and becoming the approved vendor of choice for many organisations, including most State Government departments, WALGA and local governments (including the City of Mandurah), Horizon Power, Water Corporation, Rio Tinto, BHP, and Cays Engineering.

The future is bright for IMS, with unlimited opportunities for further growth and the creation of tangible, sustainable outcomes year after year. Through innovation, partnerships and government contracting opportunities, IMS is paving the way for other Aboriginal businesses to create jobs, prosperity and regional economic growth.



MORE INFORMATION
Local Content Advisers work within each of the nine Regional Development Commissions.

Peel Development Commission:
Visit www.peel.wa.gov.au/our-focus/local-content-advisor or contact Therese Ejsak on (08) 9535 4140 or at therese.ejsak@peel.wa.gov.au

Indigenous Managed Services: Visit www.indigenousmanagedservices.com
Head Office (08) 6141 1092 or for general enquiries info@imsaus.com.au

Channel 7 Mandurah Crab Fest

BACK ON THE SCENE IN 2022

WORDS & IMAGES | City of Mandurah

A highlight of Western Australia's events calendar, the much-loved Channel 7 Mandurah Crab Fest will burst back onto the scene next year with family fun, amazing entertainment and food experiences from March 18–20.

Crab Fest is Mandurah's most significant annual event which attracts visitors from across the State, all keen to get a taste of a unique experience that showcases the best of Mandurah and the Peel region.

Mandurah buzzes with excitement throughout the festival weekend, with the City Centre, foreshore spaces, local businesses, waterways and Marina all a hive of activity as festival-goers enjoy everything that's great about Mandurah.

**Channel 7
 Mandurah Crab
 Fest**
 March 18–20, 2022



CRAB FEST

Mandurah's most significant annual event which attracts visitors from across the State.



Next year, the Crab Fest backdrop will be made all the more special with the addition of revitalised foreshore spaces including the new Play Space and Skate Park on the Western Foreshore, and the incredible circular Estuary Pool and upgraded Smart Street Mall on the Eastern Foreshore. It will be a great opportunity to showcase Mandurah's exciting new spaces to locals and visitors alike.

As well as the return of the crowd favourites, there will be some new elements and a series of ticketed Crab Fest experiences added to the line-up for 2022.

Among the many attractions will include family friendly entertainment, a show-stopping headline act on the main stage, water-based activations, mouth-watering food and drink stalls with something for everyone, relaxed licensed areas, the Coles Buy West Eat Best Cooking Stage, and a fireworks

display on the Saturday night. Nova and Channel 7 will also be there to excite the crowds with various activities.

The young and young at heart will also be spoilt for choice with a range of free children's activities, games, sideshow rides, entertainment and sweet treats to be enjoyed with the family.

Stay tuned and keep an eye on the Crab Fest website (www.crabfest.com.au) for all the attractions and ticketed events.

It's gearing up to be an amazing relaunch of Crab Fest for 2022 that will ensure locals and visitors come together to celebrate the return of Mandurah's signature annual event.

MORE INFORMATION

The Channel 7 Mandurah Crab Fest is supported by the State Government through Tourism WA's Regional Events Program.

SERPENTINE JARRAHDALÉ

Celebrating **our equine community**

Serpentine Jarrahdale's thriving equine community is a key pillar of the area's past, present and future.

Horse owners, trainers, breeders and general equine enthusiasts alike contribute to the Shire's significant equine community.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale recently profiled some of the people involved in their local equine community to learn more about their passion for horses.

SJ's equine community fosters relationships and inclusive opportunities.

Darling Downs teenager Coco Mitchell started horse-riding at 10 years old after asking her mum, Paula, if she could take lessons. A horse rider herself, Paula agreed and Coco hasn't looked back.

She has achieved some significant milestones so far having won the 2020 State Tetrathlon and competing in show-jumping and eventing.

Coco says that being involved in the SJ equine community has helped her develop great relationships, but she also values the relaxing and peaceful state of mind she finds when spending time with her horses.

She often finds herself heading out for a ride as a way to put a bad day in the rear view.

Coco says there are many benefits in horse riding such as making great friends and travelling to new places for competitions.

For Jaye Barnesby-Buie, horses have been an important part of her life journey.

Jaye faced several challenges in the early stages her life, where she was deaf until the age of four and diagnosed with autism at the age of six.

Introduced to horses as a therapy, her relationship with horses has blossomed into a beloved sport that she now competes at a national level.

Jaye says she was introduced to horses with regular visits to her aunt's property in Darling Downs where she made sure to do all the carrot rounds feeding the horses.

From here, Jaye's mum enrolled her in the Claremont Therapeutic Riding Centre. She was then able to start competing and progressed to Riding for the Disabled and Special Olympics competitions at a national level with medal placings in almost all of her classes at the 2018 Special Olympics Australia National Games in Adelaide.

Jaye has also been a semi-finalist in the WA Young Achievers Surge Fitness Sports Award.



Emma Cumming

Growing up on a large property in Cardup, Emma Cumming has been surrounded by horses her entire life.

Supported by her mum, Wendy, who herself is an experienced rider, Emma is involved with dressage and jumping and is a successful competitor having achieved significant milestones such as qualifying for the WA Interschools Team eight years in a row, and competing and placing at numerous competitions at a national level.

Emma is also a successful horse trainer and finds great reward in building relationships with inexperienced horses.

As a disability support worker, Emma says that working with horses has allowed her to unwind from the stresses of her job and develop important skills that have translated into other areas of her life.

She is proud to be part of the active SJ equine community and promotes the Serpentine Horse and Pony Club as a great place for young riders.



Crissy Coletta

For Darling Downs resident Crissy Coletta, it has been a childhood dream to be a horse owner.

Her first experience with horses was meeting them in Lipica, Yugoslavia, as a child where the well-known breed of Lipizzaner horses were bred.

After emigrating to Australia, she discovered a love of trail riding as a teenager and this is where her dream started to become a reality.

Taking a break from the industry to raise her family,

Crissy moved to Darling Downs and soon returned to her passion for horses.

Crissy is now president of Southern Districts Working Equitation, a riding club based on classical principles of training dressage with obstacles and she is also currently studying to become a coach.



Jaye Barnesby-Buie



Coco Mitchell

Raising capable young people

4 DADS

WORDS & IMAGES | Relationships Australia

Research has shown that being a warm and supportive, involved and engaged father impacts positively on your child's mental wellbeing. But contrary to popular belief, we don't always know automatically what to do as a parent.

It's for this reason that Relationships Australia WA launched their popular Dads support service in Mandurah, called '4Dads'.

Community Development Officer Andre Cannavo said talking to

other Dads and learning from their experiences can be one of the best ways to learn and build new skills to improve your family relationships and raise capable young people.

"We provide a safe, male-focused service for fathers and our activities are developed with men's needs in mind so that Dads engaging in our program gain localised benefits."

One of the most popular groups is the free Dads and Kids Breakfast Club, held fortnightly on Saturday mornings.

It gives Dads a chance to participate in fun activities with their children, as well as meet and chat with other Dads living in the area in a relaxed environment. Special editions this year have included the popular circus fun day, pyjama breakfast club and Olympic fun day.

Mr Cannavo said 4Dads also ensured they were involved in major men's health and community wellbeing events, including Men's Health Week, DIY Dads at Bunnings, International Men's Day and Father's Day.

On the 11th of November, they are hosting a special Zoom presentation by parenting expert Maggie Dent at the Peel Football Club.

Tickets are already sold out for the session on 'Calming our Kids', demonstrating the appetite for parenting support and education workshops in the local area.

Mr Cannavo said families have had to deal with some major changes to their lives and the world in such a short time.

"Dads may have been feeling more vulnerable and required additional psychological and emotional support, especially during lockdowns."

"But with the support of local partnerships and service delivery agreements, 4Dads has been able to continue to deliver their services seamlessly — online and face-to-face."

Workshops and services include:

- **Dads Information and Referral Service:** One-on-one non-therapeutic support encourages men to discover and participate in services on offer in the Mandurah and Pinjarra areas. 4Dads can assist fathers to navigate the various options available to them that could be beneficial to their personal growth and parenting abilities.
- **Counselling:** Dads can also book a free one-on-one session counselling session on Tuesdays and Fridays.
- **Education:** 4Dads deliver tailored workshops, such as emotion coaching courses like 'Tuning in to Teens', 'Child Focused Tools' for those who have experienced family separation, or 'Building Resilience' seminars to enable your child to thrive.
- **Responsible Dads:** A 15-week program to help fathers improve their relationship with their children. It is child-focused, supporting fathers to make parenting choices that are caring and safe, and responsive to their children's needs. The open-ended ongoing format is designed to accommodate FIFO and shift workers when possible.

Relationships Australia WA are incredibly proud of the support they have been providing to Dads and their children since the service began in 2016.

Although COVID-19 has presented challenges, it has provided opportunities to continue to grow and adapt service delivery to ensure all members of the community who require support can access it.

MORE INFORMATION

You can contact 4Dads on (08) 6164 0619 or email 4families.mandurah@relationshipsaustralia.org.au. For more information visit www.relationshipsaustralia.org.au

This Children and Parent Support Service initiative is funded by the Department of Social Services.



Capable dogs ... and happy households

WORDS | Peel Development Commission
IMAGES | Dog Training WA

Whilst this magazine is themed capable 'People', in this article we might need to broaden our definition as we introduce Waroona's David Lacey and his eight Border Collie working stock dogs.

National and international sheepdog trialling champion and retired Waroona farmer, David Lacey, has been breeding and training working dogs for over 50 years. After retiring recently, David found himself wondering what was next and this turned into an idea. His skills and passion have now been directed to a new purpose, training the next generation of farmers and their dogs through his company Dog Training WA.

"I have been training and selling my pups to farmers for years. From the farmer's perspective, working dogs certainly make the best employees. They are low maintenance, always willing to work and beyond a good feed and pat, don't require a salary. I

wasn't shocked when earlier this year there was an Australian dog that sold for \$35,000. What people don't see is how much these animals can save a farmer each and every year'.

The working dog remains an asset to the farming community, and it is important that these skills are retained for future generations. The advantage of having a well-trained dog is not lost on our suburban communities either. David and his highly successful and extremely capable team are not only developing the next generation of Peel working dogs, but also helping to transforming suburban dwellers relationships with their pet and companion dogs.

"I see a lot of dogs from French bulldogs to Labradors to Great Danes. A lack of enrichment, purpose and training can lead to behavioural problems in any dog. My clients love their dogs but are often struggling with some areas of their dog's behaviour, like recall, jumping, pulling or anxiety. These problems have solutions, and they start with improving knowledge and implementing a proven training method. This is where I can really help people'.

Through his business Dog Training WA, David is available for working and companion dog and says his simple and effective training methods work on any dog because they focus on training the handler just as much as the dog. Much like David, his training methods are straight forward and no fuss.

"The program is suitable for beginners through to experienced stockman who may be having a problem with a trained dog or just want to build a stronger relationship to their dog. I offer simple, kind, gentle training for you and your dog'.

It is important to David that his skills improve the quality of lives for our four-legged best friends and benefit the broader Peel community. Investment in education and training that meets industry's workforce needs for the future is also a priority and will help farming communities continue to thrive for many generations to come.



David Lacey has been breeding and training working dogs for over 50 years.

MORE INFORMATION

Dog Training WA is based in Waroona and services a wide area. Offering half day private or very small group training lessons, we help people with all types of dogs and dog issues. www.dogtrainingwa.com.au www.facebook.com/people/Dog-Training-WA/100057261677858





The Children's University

WORDS & IMAGES | Children's University

We all know how empowering and inspiring education can be for children, in providing opportunities for growth and opening doors to future pathways and careers.

Yet quality learning happens both inside the classroom and beyond it, in almost every aspect of a child's life: from learning valuable life skills at home, to being part of a local football or netball team, or to visiting libraries,

museums and parks in their local community or further abroad.

Children living in regional areas often have reduced access to these extracurricular forms of learning that would support their personal and academic development. These barriers can exclude regional children from valuable learning opportunities, which can narrow the options for study and careers down the track.

The University of Western Australia (UWA) has partnered with Edith Cowan University (ECU) and Children's University Australasia to create the Children's University Western Australia Partnership, to inspire a passion for lifelong learning from a young age and as part of its commitment to support students from lower SES

and regional backgrounds to access higher education. Mr Colin Pettit, the outgoing Commissioner for Children and Young People, has been appointed the honorary Vice-Chancellor of the Children's University Western Australian Partnership.

The Children's University is an innovative, global model that runs across thousands of schools and communities in Australia, New Zealand and the UK. Through a 'Passport to Learning', children aged 7-14 from partner primary schools participate in learning activities of their choice beyond the classroom. These include school extracurricular activities, community clubs and Learning Destinations, and dedicated holiday programs on the university campus. Children's achievements are

recognised each year with a formal graduation and certificates at UWA and ECU, where children wear caps and gowns just like older students do at university graduations.

The Children's University model has a proven capacity to build children's self-confidence, well-being and engagement in learning. It is a framework that fosters aspirations for lifelong learning, that gives children agency and ownership for their own learning, and that makes families and community organisations central to children's learning journeys. Our on-campus holiday programs build belonging and excitement around higher education, connecting children and families with passionate university researchers and students, and giving an insight into the future of work. Graduations offer children, families and the broader community the opportunity to celebrate with pride the learning achievements of these young people. It gives children and parents alike the empowering experience of seeing themselves as future university graduates.

Professor David Sadler, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) at UWA, is a passionate advocate for the Children's University program. "This program is a proven model, with demonstrated outcomes that benefit students and families. The Children's University program has been proven to positively impact behaviour in and out of the classroom, to lead to improved educational achievement, and to foster aspirational thinking and conversations about what students want to be and do in the future," says Professor Sadler, "The University of Western Australia is

delighted to be engaged with schools in the Peel region through Children's University in primary schools, and our Aspire program in high schools. We know that improved education access improves long term health and wellbeing outcomes for students in later life. It is central to the University's mission to ensure access to quality education for all students in Western Australia and beyond."

Peel region

Since its 2020 pilot, Children's University has now expanded to three Peel schools: Boddington District High School, St Joseph's School Pinjarra and St Joseph's School Waroona. The Peel region also includes eleven valued Learning Destination partners, providing dozens of physical sites where children and their families can access learning activities that count towards the program. These include:

- Bibbulmun Track Foundation
- Contemporary Art Spaces Mandurah
- Dwellingup Forest Discovery Centre
- Emma Blyth
- Murray Aquatic & Leisure Centre
- Murray Library
- Peel Bright Minds
- Peel-Harvey Catchment Council
- Ranger Red's Zoo
- Shire of Boddington
- Waroona Library

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Pinjarra has been involved since 2020, as the first Catholic school to join the

WA Partnership. In 2021, it expanded Children's University to grades 5 and 6 and expects a growing cohort of graduates. Its students and families have made use of charter buses provided by UWA, taking families from Pinjarra to UWA's Crawley Campus for Children's University holiday programs and graduations.

For Principal Joy Ketteringham, "Children's University has allowed our students to broaden their academic interests and social connections in their local community, through a wide range of learning experiences. At our school, this service component involved Children's University participants assisting younger students with the development of their sporting and social skills. This has been an integral component of Children's University at our school, which has helped children to develop a better understanding of others, including their needs and expectations."

"Allowing the family to learn together through Children's University not only helps the students and their families, but also the wider community as the exposure to the ever-increasing network of Learning Destination Partners allows a broader perspective of the world and choices available to them."

Building
children's self-confidence, well-being and engagement in learning.

MORE INFORMATION

Children's University invites Schools, Funding Partners and Community Organisations to visit www.uwa.edu.au/childrens-university or contact childrensuniversity@uwa.edu.au for more information on how to get involved.



Greening Farms

supports farm productivity and biodiversity

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

The Peel-Harvey Catchment Council's Greening Farms project (2018–23) is providing direct support to over 60 farmers to improve farm productivity and protect biodiversity values, with an ultimate aim to protect and restore 1,500 ha of bushland on farms.



PROTECTING REMNANT VEGETATION

Critical to the long-term survival of species like Black Cockatoos.

Nearly 820 hectares has already been protected with >97,000 native trees and saltbush planted and >16km of fencing installed in 2020–21. These works are protecting natural habitat, combatting soil erosion and managing stock access into bushland and creeklines. PHCC's \$130,000 (2020–21) investment was exceeded by farmers own investment of ~\$142,000, demonstrating their commitment to Greening their Farms.

Raising community awareness of new practices is also a priority to assist farmers to get a productive edge in their operations. Workshops and field days are being held to raise knowledge, like improving sheep handling practices, introducing dung beetles to their properties, managing farm water priorities, protecting biodiversity and managing threats from feral animals and invasive weeds.

A focus on fencing

Greg and Mitchell Cavanagh received Greening Farms funding to fence and restore their creeklines at their farm west of Quindanning. The brothers run a mixed cereal cropping and sheep grazing enterprise and they were keen to provide increased shelter for their stock, restore biodiversity values along their creeklines and reduce erosion.

In 2019 and 2020, PHCC provided funding to fence bushland and revegetate their deeply eroded creeklines, while Greg and Mitchell added value by installing water retaining swales.

Collectively the works have already resulted in a reduction in soil erosion and improved protection of their creeklines from grazing sheep.

Creating cockatoo habitat

In addition to producing agricultural products, farms in the Peel region provide habitat for native animals and birds. Planting new habitat adjacent to existing habitat is one way to maximize benefits of revegetation on farms, which is exactly what Joanne and Wayne Perkins have done through their Greening Farms grant, planting 1500 native plants for feeding and roosting habitat on their property in Crossman. Black Cockatoos have already been seen feeding in their paddock.



A FOCUS ON FENCING

Restoring biodiversity values along creeklines and reducing erosion.



Raelene and Robert Poustie from Uduc have already planted 500 native trees and shrubs on their property for new habitat, a wind break and food for Black Cockatoos, with further Greening Farms funding secured to extend their corridor to link to a patch of existing natural bushland.

Supporting Peel farmers

PHCC Chair, Caroline Knight reinforced the PHCC's reason for involvement in the project. "Providing direct funding support to farmers in the region to increase productivity and protect farming assets, both commercial and natural, is fundamental the success of the Greening Farms program".

"Helping landholders understand and protect remnant vegetation and the species that rely on and use on-farm vegetation is critical to the long-term survival of species like Black Cockatoos, which need a landscape full of trees to roost in and native plants to feed on" explains Caroline.

"By working together with the community, providing direct financial support to farmers and raising awareness of productivity and conservation issues in the region, I believe the Greening Farms program has shown real value to our community."

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on Greening Farms program contact the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council on (08) 6369 8800 or email admin@peel-harvey.org.au

The Greening Farms program is supported by the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

@National Landcare Program

@PeelHarveyCC

#GreeningFarms

#PeopleofNRM

PEEL RECRUITMENT ROUNDTABLE 2021

WORDS AND IMAGE | Peel Development Commission

The Local Jobs Program brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to support job seekers and their communities in each region. The program has a particular focus on reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways and is part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Australian Government targeted 51 regions (8 in WA) to combat the urgency in assisting job seekers re-entering the workforce. The Local Jobs Program was created with a local task force working group to ensure that the opportunities to increase in reskilling, upskilling, and employment pathways are provided and promoted in the identified regions. In addition, it has initiated a pilot recruitment roundtable through a state initiative supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hosting a recruitment roundtable in the Peel region was an opportunity to help local businesses rapidly identify and employ the right people across a range of current vacancies. Led by the Peel Development Commission in partnership with the Peel Jobs & Skills Centre and Local Jobs Program, the Peel Recruitment Roundtable was a platform for local businesses to speed interview local job seekers.

Local jobs are critical to our community and to our economy. The Commission focuses on creating jobs and ensuring we have a capable, skilled and motivated workforce to occupy those jobs.

Focusing on the food services sector, three local businesses, Catch22, the Atrium Hotel and the Hospitality Group Training (HGT), conducted speed interviews with carefully matched local job seekers.

This sector employs approximately 3,000 people across the Peel region.

It is a foundational sector in our regional economy that is population-driven, and one that has been hit particularly hard by COVID-19 restrictions. However, the sector is resilient and showing the green shoots of recovery.

For example, numerous local Peel based businesses were amongst the first in Western Australia to embrace technology to pivot their businesses towards online non-contact take-away or home delivery. Several new local businesses have either established or are in the establishment phase as a result of these pivots.

Construction of \$16.8M Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre at South Metro TAFE's Mandurah Campus is underway. This state-of-the-art

Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre will deliver practical, on-the-job training in commercial cookery, tourism and event management, providing career pathways for aspiring chefs, event managers, baristas and front-of-house staff.

The Peel Recruitment Roundtable aimed to ensure that local job seekers fill local positions and to create pathways into the food services sector supporting the transition to employment, further study, and training. Prior to the speed interview process, attendees engaged in a presentation from Jodie Babb, from Peel Jobs and Skills Centre on interview tips and best practices, as well as presentations from each of the local recruiters.

The event attracted the registration of 44 local job seekers with 21 participants transitioning to a second interview. Three attendees achieved employment through the event and another four were shortlisted for future vacancies.

Ensuring we have a capable, skilled and motivated workforce.



McCUSKER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

WORDS & IMAGE | The McCusker Centre

The McCusker Centre for Citizenship is working with the Peel Development Commission to offer students more internships in Peel's not-for-profit, government and non-government organisations.

Internships build capacity in workplaces and offer students the ability to engage in and contribute to the workforce and contribute to the vision for developing Peel's workforce as highly skilled and adaptable to structural and technological change. Key to achieving this is that the region's young people have access to education and training pathways programs that lead to employment in priority industries.

The McCusker Centre for Citizenship partners with more than 300 not-for-profit, community, government and non-government organisations to provide a structured and quality internship program for UWA students. As of October 2021, over 1,600 students have undertaken internships through the McCusker Centre for Citizenship, with over

177,000 hours of community services contributed across the Centre's programs.

Through this award-winning internship program, students can engage in active citizenship by making a difference and contributing to the complex social issues in our community. Internships are for a minimum of 100 hours, and can be completed in any teaching period (Summer, Winter, Semester 1 or Semester 2). Projects range from social impact analysis and research projects to data modelling and 3D imaging.

Many NGO/NFP and public sector agencies are already involved in the Program, including Anglicare, Community Arts Network, RUAH, St Patricks, Mission Australia, Peel Bright Minds and Perth Festival, as well as the Department of Transport, Department of Communities, Department of Education and Department of Health, just to name a few. Feedback on the Program is overwhelmingly positive with 98% of interns and supervisors agreeing they would recommend the Program to others.

Students can receive academic credit towards their undergraduate and postgraduate studies on completion of their internship. Students are accepted and matched based on the quality of their application, current CV, experience, and the internship opportunities available.

UWA student Rp van der Westhuizen has been interning with Mandurah-based not-for-profit *The Makers Community Development Inc* since July 2021, supporting the organisation as a Youth Officer, assisting in the effective delivery of The Makers core projects and youth development initiatives. The Makers team have been extremely impressed with Rp's contributions.

More internship roles are currently in development across other Peel-based not-for-profits for the upcoming summer intensive round, including Homestead for Youth.

McCusker Centre for Citizenship Director Michelle Scott said the "overwhelming" number of applications from students to participate in the internship program was a sign that young people were increasingly seeking opportunities to engage with and give back to their communities.

"It is clear UWA students have a great appetite for internships with a social purpose," Ms Scott said.

"They have seen the very practical way that their peers can contribute toward the community and want to do the same."

MORE INFORMATION

To promote this opportunity to Peel government agencies, NFPs and NGOs, a webinar is available to highlight the Program and how to get involved as a host of internships and can be viewed at www.peel.wa.gov.au/internship-program-information-webinar

Boddington



reduce



reuse

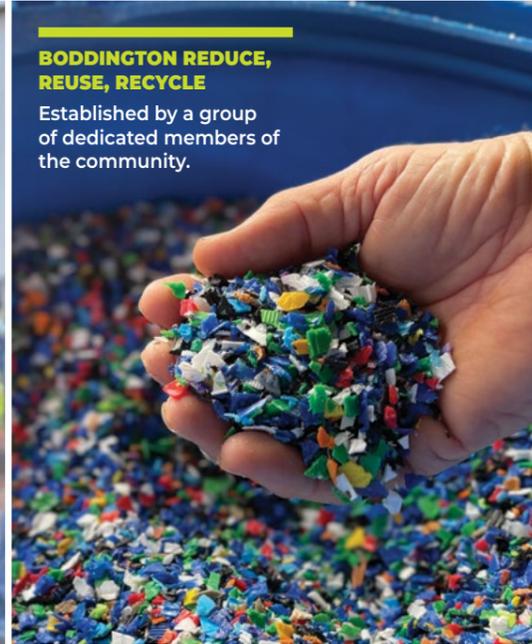


recycle



BODDINGTON REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

Established by a group of dedicated members of the community.



WORDS & IMAGES | Shire of Boddington

From initially collecting bottle caps for a sculpture project to a full-scale community recycling facility, Boddington isn't a town that does things by halves.

In January 2019, Eugene Smalberger started collecting bottle caps to create a sculpture to draw people's attention to the fact that plastic bottle caps are not able to be processed through standard recycling. Quickly overwhelmed due to the huge community support, another purpose for the caps had to be found.

Boddington Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) was established by a group of dedicated members of the community and initially started shredding plastics collected with a leaf shredder. The shredded plastic was then moulded into rectangular bars which have since been used to create a range of items including bench seating located around the town site.

Motivated to see how far they could push the boundaries, in March 2020 RRR imported a plastic shredder from overseas and started to collect all types of household plastics. By August, RRR had set up a small recycling plant based at the former Shire Works Depot and were sorting and shredding all kinds of plastic items including washing baskets, old plastic chairs, poly pipe and even old hardhats from local gold mine, Newmont. As well as processing plastics and other recycled goods, the plant also takes items such as egg cartons, pot plants and clean jars which are available to the community for repurposing.

A bright green shipping container was recently installed at the facility to allow

the community to deposit items into sorted bins at any time, encouraging locals to use this impressive facility. The mission of the group is not to receive money for the items, but rather have the assurance that the products will be available for reuse in Western Australia.

Boddington RRR has three full time volunteers, two of them pensioners who were previously not "green", however, have since learned valuable lessons and are now committed to making a difference.

In 2020 the group received a grant from Keep Australia Beautiful to build a dishwashing trailer, which holds a commercial dishwasher, cutlery and crockery. The trailer is utilised at local events such as the Australia Day and ANZAC Day Breakfasts, to encourage the community to avoid single use items. With its team of dedicated volunteers to wash against waste, the group has stopped thousands of single use items from going to landfill.

Recently, the Boddington RRR has been contacted by small groups in other towns who are interested in participating in the project, and are now receiving items from Kalamunda — Recycle Intend, Retirement Villages in Pinjarra and Perth, Claw Environmental Recycling Perth, Narrogin Wild and Waste Free, local farmers and industrial businesses throughout the region. The group is also working with a number of other regional towns who are interested in setting up something similar of their own.

This project is a great example of what can be achieved at a local level with a group of dedicated people in a small community who are motivated to reduce waste, improve recycling and make a significant difference to our impact on the environment.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, contact the Shire of Boddington on (08) 9338 4999, email shire@boddington.wa.gov.au or visit www.boddington.wa.gov.au

Invest and Trade WA Regional Roadshow

WORDS | Peel Development Commission

Western Australia's regions have a lot to offer the rest of the world. As the impact of COVID-19 continues to be realised, strategic approaches to investment and trade are crucial to rebuilding a strong and diversified economy and creating secure, quality jobs for Western Australians.

Increasing participation in global markets will help WA to bounce back from the impacts of COVID-19 and regional WA is well positioned to participate with our regions being thriving and innovative places to live, work, study, visit and do business.

The Peel Development Commission was delighted to welcome the Invest and Trade WA delegation in August to showcase our beautiful and industrious corner of WA.

Delegates included four Investment and Trade Commissioners and senior representatives from the departments of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) and Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to showcase our beautiful and industrious corner of WA.

The Commission provided the group with a highlight of what our region has to offer. Delegates discussed the Peel Business Park, Australia's first renewable energy industrial microgrid, and WA's premier food innovation precinct, which is set to position WA as a robust and vibrant food and beverage powerhouse. The visit also highlighted local businesses including in organic waste and composting, mining equipment, technology and services manufacturing and local premium wines.

Invest and Trade WA promotes the state as a destination for investment, providing a 'front door' for incoming

trade and investment enquiries, and provides information and advice to WA companies wanting to increase their investment readiness or export capability.

The Commissioners engage with industry and government in overseas markets to attract investment and grow trade opportunities for WA. Their visit was part of the Invest and Trade WA Roadshow that highlighted local investment and export opportunities throughout regional WA. The Peel tour allowed the Commissioners to increase their familiarity with the Peel region, its industries and opportunities relevant to their markets so that they can champion our region, industries and investment opportunities to global markets and investors.

Peel's growing population, diversity of industries and access to transport infrastructure puts our industries and businesses in a great position to tap into new markets and growth opportunities. The Commissioners' visit was an exciting chance to showcase the Peel region and broaden avenues to promote the region and its opportunities internationally.

Highlighting local investment and export opportunities.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit www.investandtrade.wa.gov.au



Current population forecasts predict that between 2016 and 2036, the population for the City of Mandurah will increase by 37,000, making it more important than ever to ensure Mandurah is ready for the future.

Mandurah offers an enviable lifestyle including high levels of social amenity and affordable house prices. However, Mandurah's economy is a population-driven consumer economy, characterised by retail, hospitality, tourism and housing construction. Population-driven economies are vulnerable during downturns, when consumer spending is hit.

As the population in Peel continues its rapid growth trajectory, we must establish and pursue long-term plans that address the need for industry and job growth to sustain the growing population. The region's long-term visionary projects, Transform Peel and Transform Mandurah will create the right kind of jobs by supporting the growth of new industries like food manufacturing and intensive food production, research and development, manufacturing, knowledge economy industries and mining.

Transform Mandurah is a comprehensive economic transformation initiative being delivered in partnership between the City of Mandurah and the Peel Development Commission to address the structurally high unemployment rate, raise labour market participation, and improve the livelihoods for City residents and businesses.

The vision for Transform Mandurah sets out to create a long-term economically resilient commercial and administrative centre south of Perth to attract technical, strategic industries and workers to the region. To assist with this vision, Deloitte Access Economics was commissioned to conduct research and analysis of Mandurah's Economic Opportunities.

This work commenced in August 2021 and will analyse key social and economic problems and opportunities facing the Mandurah economy over

the next 5-10 years. It will analyse and model prospective benefits of overcoming the challenges and realising opportunities, including the socio-economic impact of intervention programs.

The research will include the identification of global megatrends and align opportunities with Mandurah's strengths. While not all trends will affect Mandurah directly or acutely, they are likely to serve as the underlying drivers of changing demand for goods and services, industrial activity and employment globally. These drivers will influence change in Western Australia, as the most internationally-exposed economy in Australia, and therefore have consequences for the future population and workforce of Mandurah. Each global driver will be analysed against the likelihood of occurrence and potential benefit on Mandurah's economy.

The most advantageous opportunities will be put forward for consideration of business case development. The Deloitte study aims for completion at the end of November 2021, whereby a report detailing the findings of the work and evidenced recommendations and actions will be outlined for a Transform Mandurah Plan.

The \$22m Waterfront Project, with investments from Federal, State and Local Government, is the first cab off the rank for Transform Mandurah, which will deliver an iconic Mandurah foreshore precinct for people to meet, play and rest. Investing in a vibrant City Centre will support local tourism and local jobs for long term economic well-being. The project is underway with the first stage of the project to be completed by late 2021. The redevelopment commenced mid-2020, and will continue until 2023.

Further work around Mandurah is also under development with the \$2m Peel Regional Trails and \$2m Yalgorup Eco-Tourism Destination State Government election commitments earlier this year.

Mandurah offers an enviable lifestyle including high levels of social amenity and affordable house prices.

TRANSFORM MANDURAH

A comprehensive economic transformation initiative.

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel Development Commission and the City of Mandurah

Mandurah is a city full of potential with its beautiful beaches, waterways and proximity to Perth. With a population today of almost 90,000, that growth is not slowing down.



Future of Food Conference

WORDS & IMAGES | Hannah Lalor, CEO, WA Future Food Network

Highlighting the importance of creating a sustainable, resilient, and connected food and beverage industry in Western Australia.

On the 23rd September 2021 the inaugural Future of Food Conference gathered over 400 delegates both in person at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre and virtually to inspire and initiate change within the Australian agri-food sector. The aim of the day was to recognise future-forward businesses, champion innovative and successful agri-food professionals in their food journey, support the development of a progressive local food industry and empower consumers to make better-informed decisions about what they eat.

It was a privilege to hear from three inspirational keynote speakers: Mike Lee (Alpha Food Labs), John Foss (Fancy Plants) and Professor Duncan McFarlane (Cambridge University).

Mike discussed the importance of knowing what 21st century consumers are demanding in a post COVID world, which include a transparent food supply chain, food that can be used for medicinal purposes, reinventing the restaurant experience and changing the messaging from food being 'delicious AND sustainable' to food being 'delicious BECAUSE it's sustainable'.

John Foss described the journey he took to create an international chia industry — from figuring out how to grow a sustainable chia crop up in the Kimberly, to how he focused on connection to the farmer to promote



his brand around the world. He then explained his reasoning behind developing the Chia Pod as a consumer snack product and how he invested in processing technology to create plant based vegan snacks that are sustainable and delicious under the brand Fancy Plants.

Professor Duncan McFarlane spoke about the importance of digitalisation and how The Shoestrings Project is helping SMEs to overcome the challenges when implementing digital

solutions. He explained that most SME owners find digital solutions too expensive and complex; however, there is significant enthusiasm in digitisation and a lot of small businesses have similar digital needs. Duncan explained that they have identified and catalogued 59 digital solution areas that are common to small manufacturing companies such as automatically reading analogue displays on equipment, inventory tracking and real time tracking of internal jobs.

Two plenary panels and twelve breakout sessions were also held, with over 70 facilitators and panel speakers contributing their time and expertise to a range of topics from investment and marketing trends to technology advancements in packaging and processing and the importance of transparency in the food supply chain.

The Future of Food Conference concluded with a panel of guests including the Honorable Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Hydrogen Industry, David Doepel, Chair of the Peel Development Commission, David Eyre and Peter Schutz, from Future Food Systems CRC and John Foss from Fancy Plants.

Some of the key messages were how important the food and beverage industry need to connect and work together to generate opportunities to innovate and move forward in the value-add space, how important it is to keep in mind consumer driving factors such as sustainability and food for health and the demand for more transparency within the food supply chain.

Over 400 delegates attended the conference, either in person or virtually to participate in these discussions and the feedback received post conference is that they want more. As announced at the conference, the WA Future Food Network will continue working with all parts of the supply chain to build a connected, resilient, and progressive food and beverage industry in Western Australia. The WA Future Food Network will deliver the next conference, which is proposed for July 2023, along with other inspirational projects and events in the Peel and Southwest regions.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information please visit www.futurefoodnetwork.com.au or email hannah@futurefoodnetwork.com.au

BUY LOCAL *this Christmas*

WORDS | David Doepel, Chair, Peel Development Commission

For some, Christmas has a profoundly religious meaning, and for others, Christmas is a time set aside to focus on family and friends. For all of us, we have in common the genuine joy found in giving.



At Christmastime, there is a real opportunity for us to get creative, buy local, and give something unique, something a bit different that will mean something exceptional—and buying local means that the benefits are felt beyond the gift recipient themselves.

The Goodwill Workshop at the Belswan Lifestyle Village is run by retiree volunteers who make toys for kids. Spending their time in retirement giving of their various skills to make such unique toys is heart-warming to see, and new members benefit from learning from others who have decades of experience with woodworking.

It is an absolute joy to see the variety of handmade toys made at the Goodwill Workshop for kids in our community. It is a reminder of simpler times back when a lovingly crafted wooden toy and the power of imagination led to hours of play.

The Belswan Goodwill Workshop supports a range of different charities throughout the Peel region. As we approach the Christmas season, seeing what the group donates to others reminds us of simplicity and what's truly important.

This Christmas think about shopping locally for gifts that mean much more than the gift itself.

So, under the tree, maybe in 2021, the presents can include opportunities for experiences – a day trip, a tour, a meal, handcrafted gifts, adventure, nature, culture, food and farm fare, riverside and ocean. Just peel open for Christmas. And doing those activities together gives an experience.

Giving gifts such as a unique experience creates a memory long after the wrapping paper goes into the recycle bin, so this Christmas, think about shopping locally for gifts that mean much more than the gift itself.

People of Peel

insights into the region's human capital



WORDS | FAR Lane
IMAGES | Visit Mandurah and Russell Ord Photography

In partnership with the Peel Capability Collaborative and consulting firm FAR Lane the Peel Development Commission is leading a People of Peel project seeking to support a deeper understanding of the Peel region's human capital.

The project will provide important insights into regional economic and social development trends, disruptions and aspirations. Using these insights, a Roadmap will be developed with key stakeholders that map out priority human capital development initiatives to position the Peel to meet its economic development aspirations.

Human capital is defined as the combination of regional knowledge,

skills, experience, context and motivations of regional entrepreneurs, workers, managers, and supporters. Harvard's Complexity Report for WA (2020) explained, "Our most prosperous societies are wiser, not because their citizens are individually brilliant, but because these societies hold a diversity of knowhow and because they are able to combine it to create a larger variety of smarter and better products."

The *People of Peel: Human Capital Insights Report* is the first deliverable of the project. It seeks to provide insights into the status of human capital in the region by Local Government Area, likely future workforce requirements of growth sectors, and likely gaps (based on population projections and current industry growth/socio-economic strategies).

The report will be organised by three key areas of inquiry:

1. Knowhow Capacity — The socioeconomic characteristics of the talent knowledge and skills within an economy. For example, workforce size (number of people of working age) and educational attainment rates.

2. Knowhow Enablers — The systems, services and infrastructure that sit around these human capital pools that enable development of necessary knowledge, skills, and talent to participate and enhance a regional economy. For example, education and training providers, innovation support and service infrastructure.

3. Knowhow Application — How talent, knowledge and skills are being applied within an economy. For example, job type, local employment, employment self-sufficiency and containment, local start-ups, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Each chapter of the report will profile an element of the region's human capital, outline findings based upon analysis of profiles against the region's economic development aspirations, and benchmark regional characteristics and performance with comparative regional economies around Australia. Based on the results of this analysis, three scenarios for future workforce requirements will be explored further in Phase two of the project — Roadmap development.

Analysis to date highlights the following strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats:

Strengths

- Strong pipeline of investment in transformational economic development projects (Transform Peel, Peel Business Park, WA Agri-Food Innovation Precinct, Transform Mandurah, Dwellingup Trails).
- Strong existing industry based on natural resources creating a competitive advantage in resource and agricultural industries.
- Increasing migration of residents to the region.
- Diverse and high value assets that attract visitors and residents.
- Passionate, collaborative and connected community services sector.

Opportunities

- Leverage current visitation trends to build and consolidate the region as a major WA visitor destination underpinned by innovative tourism enterprises and experiences.
- Peel's agriculture and food production sectors need continued innovation, investment, and

research and require proactive human capital development, to develop or attract new skills, talent and knowledge, and establish new linkages to tertiary education institutions or improve existing education.

- Investigate and leverage the intersection of strategic industries and knowhow to produce globally unique innovations.

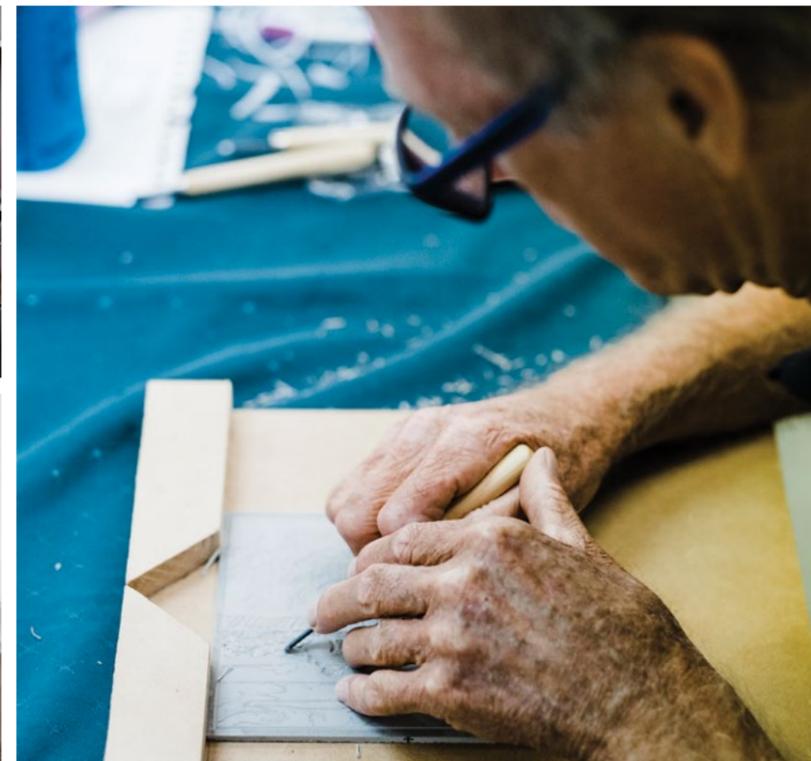
Weaknesses

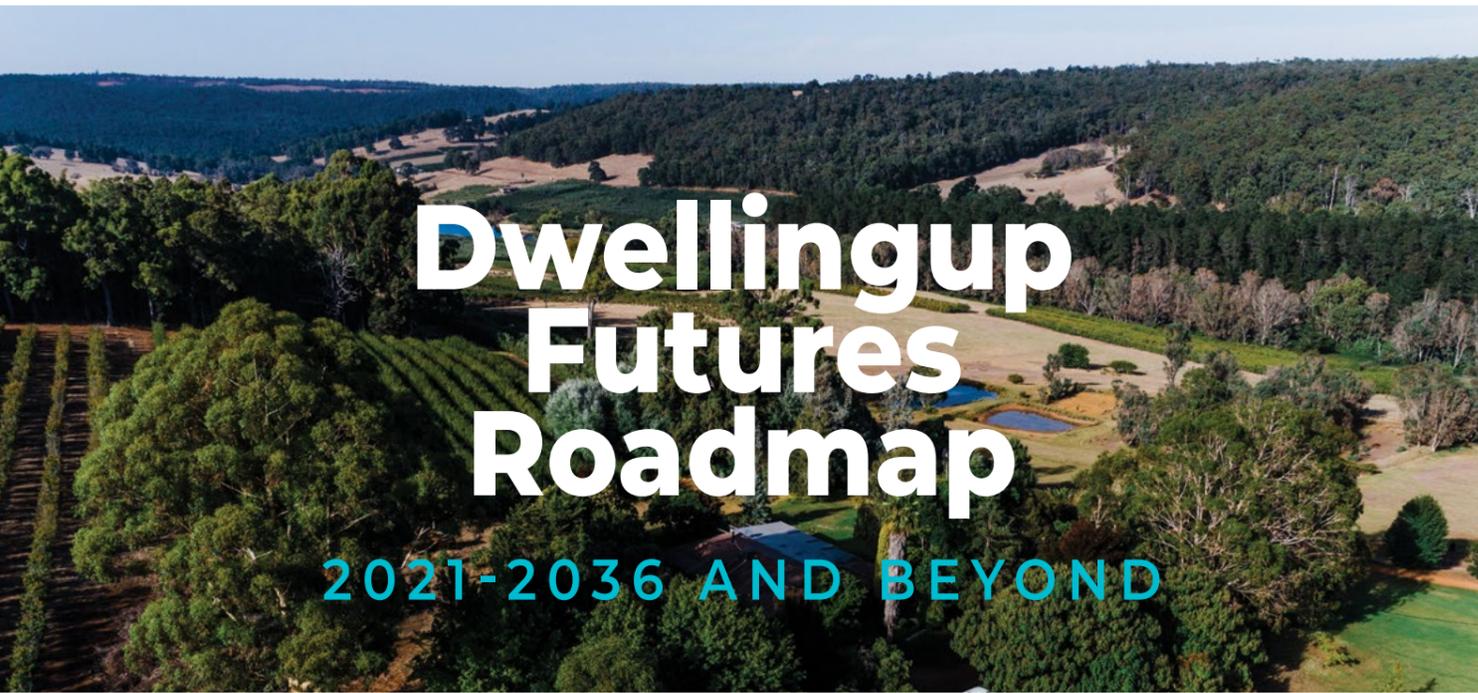
- Complex socioeconomic, health and mental health challenges constraining education attainment, training and employment
- Limited spaces dedicated to start-ups and innovators to make connections and networks, and access in-person advice.
- Housing availability and affordability is a major challenge placing pressure on residents in the region.
- Relatively low proportion of 'professional' jobs in the region, or jobs that require tertiary education.
- Lack of education and training opportunities that are aligned with the region's aspirations for an increase in professional, technicians and trades workers.

Threats

- COVID-19 continues to contribute to uncertainty and disruption, particularly within the retail and hospitality sector which has a significant impact on the Peel economy.
- Leakage of talent and knowhow out of the Peel economy if transformational projects and investments are not completed/ do not progress, limiting quality employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- The increasing impacts of climate change on the food and agricultural sector may adversely impact the natural resource base that our region will be reliant on for agricultural industry growth.
- The expected increase in population growth requires investment in additional services that can accommodate the future residents.

The next steps for this project include publication of the *People of Peel: Human Capital Insights Report* followed by exploration of the data and future scenarios with stakeholders to inform the development of the People of Peel Roadmap. To be kept up-to-date as the project evolves subscribe to the Commission's e-news.





Dwellingup Futures Roadmap

2021-2036 AND BEYOND

WORDS | Peel Development Commission
IMAGE | Visit Mandurah and Russell Ord Photography

The Shire of Murray (SOM), in partnership with the Peel Development Commission, have completed the Dwellingup Futures Roadmap.

The Dwellingup Futures Roadmap (Roadmap) outlines a vision that *'Future growth in Dwellingup will emanate from making the most of Dwellingup's best assets — enhancing our natural resources, sharing our cultural heritage, supporting our people and maintaining Dwellingup's small-town charm.'*

The Roadmap presents a shared vision and goals, strategic priorities, and key success indicators that aim to achieve the desired growth of Dwellingup by 2036.

Exploring and analysing growth scenarios enabled the Stakeholder Working Group and consultants, FAR Lane Consulting and Hatch RobertsDay, to examine the implications of a range of plausible futures on the community. This process also allowed

identifying opportunities that need to be realised and challenges that may need to be addressed to support the community's vision.

The preferred scenario centres around diversifying Dwellingup's local economy in a vision that realises diverse tourism growth while also focusing on developing arts, education, natural resource management and research industries.

In this scenario, Greater Dwellingup achieves a population sufficient to support additional local services, moderate and sustainable economic growth and a proactive approach to housing development that supports a growing population while maintaining character and protecting natural assets.

This future scenario also supports more diverse food, retail, arts, and hospitality offerings and continues mining as a key industry, providing significant local employment within Greater Dwellingup.

The Shire of Murray held a community briefing in Dwellingup on 11 August 2021 to encourage the community to have their say about the Roadmap. Approximately 100 community members attended, including local member Robyn Clarke MLA, with overall support that the Roadmap meets the community's vision for the future growth of Dwellingup.

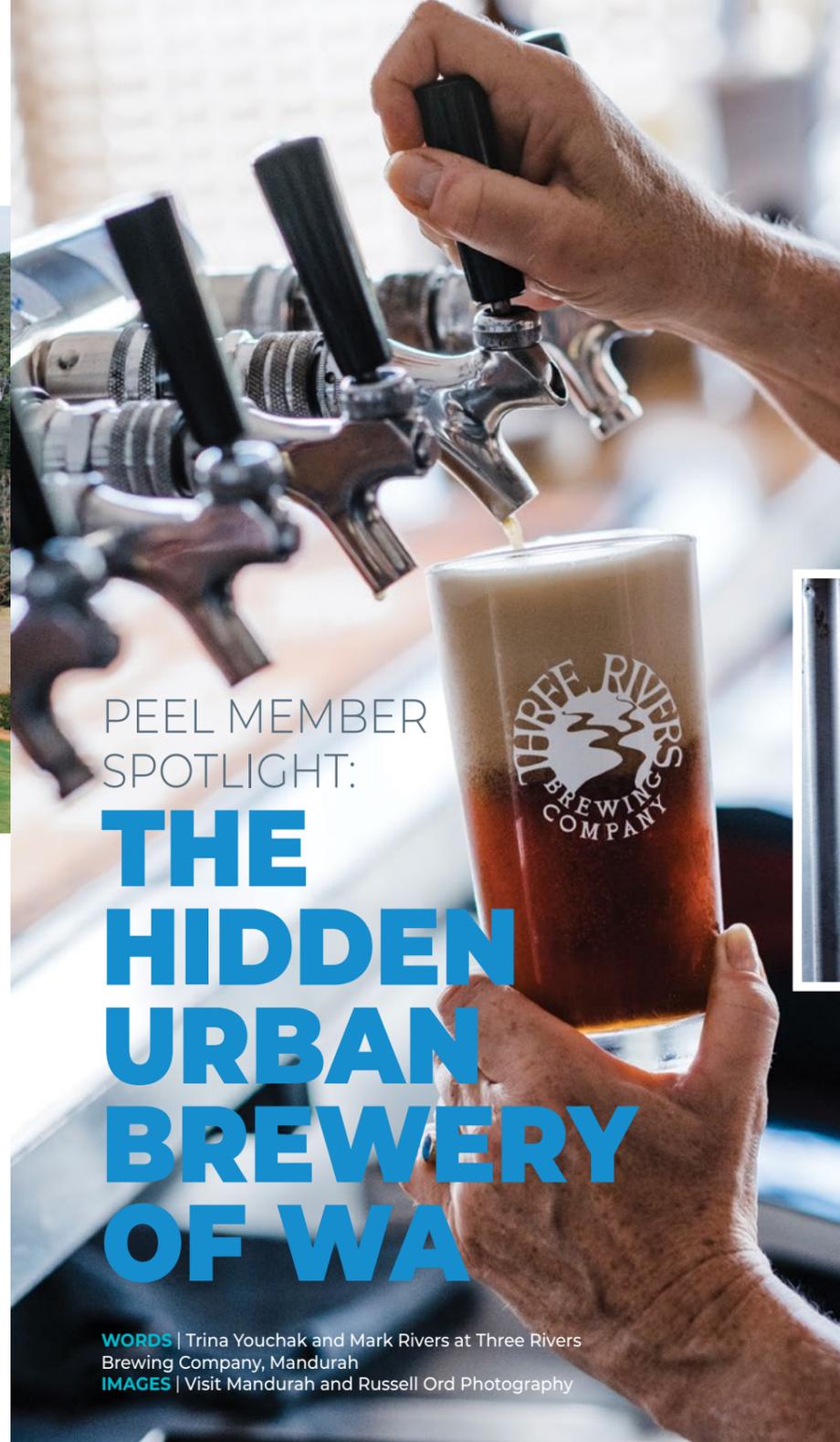
The Roadmap was endorsed by the project's Stakeholder Working Group and Technical Advisory Committee, prior to public consultation with the community, which finished on 10 September 2021.

Following a review of the submissions, minor changes were made to the Road Map and mapping to strengthen statements around diversification of the economy. Many other matters raised will be addressed in the next phase of work via the Structure Plan review and examination of townsite growth consolidation options.

The Dwellingup Futures Road Map was endorsed by Council at the October Ordinary Council Meeting.

The Roadmap Priority Programs centre around three themes: People and Place; Enterprise and Economy; and Environment, Art, Culture and Heritage. The Shire of Murray will seek investment support from State and Federal Government for future economic and social development projects that will contribute to the realisation of the Roadmap vision and goals.

MORE INFORMATION
More info at: <https://yoursay.murray.wa.gov.au/dwellingup-futures>



PEEL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

THE HIDDEN URBAN BREWERY OF WA

WORDS | Trina Youchak and Mark Rivers at Three Rivers Brewing Company, Mandurah
IMAGES | Visit Mandurah and Russell Ord Photography



Three Rivers Brewing Company have been producing their unique, yet traditional style beer and ginger beer in the Greenfields light industrial zone since December 2015.

They have a dedicated brewing shed and more recently, a tap house and beer garden, where customers can enjoy their outstanding brews.

Born in England, and with a background in Environmental Science, Mark started brewing as an amateur home brewer in Western Australia. After winning several brewing awards and the James Squire Trophy, they decided to pursue Mark's passion in Western Australia and opened the Three Rivers Brewing Company.

The name 'Three Rivers' was devised by Mark's daughter, to refer to the three people in their Rivers family. Three Rivers also links back to Trina's hometown of Pittsburgh, which is nicknamed the 'Three Rivers City'. Mark has also spent his previous career working in sustainable irrigation and water quality with local farmers. He was often found doing his research, waste-deep in the local rivers of the Harvey, the Murray, and the Serpentine. Mark's scientific background assists in the precision required to make their well-balanced signature beers.

They knew that it would take time to set up their craft brewery and even selecting a site proved difficult.





However, the light industrial location they have now is currently the closest craft brewery to Mandurah town. Their production technique is unique to the craft beer industry in the South West and they are very selective with the ingredients they choose to use. Before commercial production, Mark was awarded the best amateur brewer in WA and their Duck's Nuts Brown Ale won a Gold Medal at the Perth Royal Show. All the beers hold multiple medals and are highly awarded for their very accurate traditional styles. The company prides themselves on providing consumers 'recognisable' beers, the kind people have loved for centuries across the globe. It is also a true microbrewery in keeping with a venue style common to Europe or the United States.

Three Rivers use all natural and high-quality ingredients to brew their beers, and they aim to source as many ingredients locally as possible. Even

though hops are not a typical crop in the Peel Region, they have found some new growers beginning to establish themselves in Waroona and Dwellingup. With such specific varieties of barley and wheat required, they rely on both local and imported products. Trina would love to be able to source 100% local produce, however this would require close collaboration to ensure farmers are able to produce the specific type and amount of grains required for their needs. A value add would be if the farmer could malt and roast the grain as well!

They have a focus on sustainability, implementing several initiatives since their opening including the installation of solar panels and reusing their heat exchange water for future brews. They have also provided local farmers with the spent grain as feed and community gardens have used the spent yeast for fertilising and hops as mulch. Even their

brewing and fermenting tanks were upcycled from old dairy tanks!

Finding out what professional development our Peel producers want to attend is just one part of the Southern Dirt Peel Growers Hub project, so we can support and organise events and workshops that capture their specific needs.

She would also love to improve and encourage the philosophy of 'drinking local', which has translated well for most food and wine products, however she finds it is a work in progress for craft breweries in the South West. Beer is a product that is best consumed closest to where it is made. 🍷

MORE INFORMATION

Three Rivers will be attending and exhibiting at the South West Craft Beer Festival on Feb 15th in Busselton. Keep an eye out for their stall as they will have some of their beers available for tastings.

Q&A: Board



Michelle Sidebottom
Managing Director of Breakaway Tourism Pty Ltd, a project management, facility management, and consultancy company specialising in tourism, hospitality, events, recreation, accommodation solutions, training, and workforce development.

How long has your family been in the Peel region, and how did they come to settle in the area?

We arrived in 2000 to manage an eco tourist park and have never wanted to live anywhere else since.

What was your most memorable board or corporate moment? Why?

I feel a sense of purpose and achievement in my PDC role when I am advocating for, and seeing positive results, in areas I am really passionate about such as the tourism, small business, training and aged care sectors. This really drives me.

What important lessons from the corporate sector still shape your leadership approach today?

As an employer across multiple businesses in the Peel and Rockingham areas, I have learned that listening to your employees, creating professional development opportunities, nurturing young talent, and recognising/rewarding hard work is key to creating quality and sustainable business outcomes.

What do you see for the overall future of the Peel region?

I see so many opportunities for further investment and development (private and government sectors) in the growing Peel region but I would really love to see a major 'hero' tourism attraction developed here. Something unique and recognised as a significant national and international tourism driver (I'm also on the Board of Visit Mandurah so am always open to ideas in this space).

What are some of your favourite places/people/experiences in the Peel region? Why?

Boating on our magnificent waterways, cruising the canals, and pulling up at a nice bar, pub, restaurant, or café along the way is always very 'cool factor' — it never gets old. Due to this, we

have plenty of visitors from Perth or regional WA at our house (lucky we are in the hospitality sector), and we have made some wonderful friends here over the years too.

In your opinion, what makes the Peel region so unique?

The diversity of our localities within Peel means there is a perfect place to live, work and play for everyone. We have beaches, bushland, estuary and river systems, farmlands, city life and small townships. We really do have it all in Peel.

What do you most enjoy about living in the Peel region?

I love the outdoor recreational aspects of Mandurah and Peel. When I am not working, there's a real holiday feeling when you head out and about in nature, be it on land or water. 🍷



Q&A: Staff profiles

WORDS | Nadia D'Hart and Zoe Ibbotson
IMAGES | Peel Development Commission

Introducing

Nadia D'Hart
Principal Regional Development Officer



Tell us a bit about your role at the Peel Development Commission?

I believe in going where the energy is! Right now, there is a strong focus on industry diversification and adaptation to remain globally competitive. I am focusing on the data trends and political landscape to determine what skills our community will need for our future economy.

How did you decide on the career of regional development?

I have always been fascinated by how people shape the places they live and vice versa. It was a natural choice to blend my interest in geography and economics with design to study urban and regional planning. Nowadays, I feel a strong pull towards applying big picture thinking to regional experiences.

What do you enjoy most about working in the Peel region?

Peel presents a lot of opportunities from agriculture, advanced manufacturing, mining, tourism to education. I am particularly excited about the role the Commission can play in assisting industry and community to transition to a low emission economy.

In your opinion, what makes the Peel region so unique?

Peel has an amazing number of waterways and RAMSAR wetlands that offer refuge to international migratory birds. Not only do these special environments offer incredible ecological and landscape values, they are also places where community engage in recreation, conservation and connect deeply with themselves and the land.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

Whilst I am still very much a global citizen and believe it is important to be open to a range of opportunities, I see myself settling here or in regional Western Australia. I feel very connected to the Peel Region and in particular Serpentine area where I have fond childhood memories.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I have travelled a lot and spent years living abroad. Having returned to Australia in 2020, I have enjoyed reconnecting with friends and family. On weekends you will find me studying, horse riding or on a road trip.

Zoe Ibbotson
Customer Service Officer



Tell us a bit about your role at the Peel Development Commission?

I am the Customer Service Officer, so my role varies quite a lot which I love. Everyday is different and I work with a great team so I'm very lucky.

What do you enjoy most about working in the Peel region?

It's such a beautiful place, great coffee shops like DPM and the beaches are amazing. Everything is so close and accessible.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

Hopefully sitting on a nice beach somewhere drinking cocktails.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I spend most weekends just relaxing at home, spending time with my partner Doug and our little staffy Xena. I also love baking, shopping and watching the greatest football teams ever — the Brisbane Broncos and The Brisbane lions. 🍷

MERRY
Christmas



& HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing everyone in the Peel region a happy and safe Christmas, and a bright and prosperous New Year. We look forward to working together for continued growth, innovation and opportunity in the Peel for 2022.

From the Peel Development Commission

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FOOD INNOVATION PRECINCT



\$3.8M GRANT OPEN FOR WA AGRI-BUSINESSES

Learn more or apply:
murray.wa.gov.au/wafip

Discuss the opportunity:
Dr. Christopher Vas
Precinct General Manager

- wafip@murray.wa.gov.au
- 08 9531 7777

ARE YOU:

A WA small to medium agri-business, enterprise or entrepreneur seeking to innovate, accelerate business development, commercialise and/or deliver projects that support the scaleup of the state's food and beverage manufacturing industry?

APPLY FOR AN ENTERPRISE SUPPORT PROGRAM GRANT:

The competitive grant program offers up to \$200K in dollar for dollar co-funding to enable:

- > The pursuit of commercial research and development projects through the Precinct
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- > Access to common-use Precinct facilities and services including marketing, trade and distribution

For further information, consult the program guidelines available from the Shire of Murray's website