



peel

PROGRESSIVE | PROSPEROUS | DYNAMIC

RED Grants
Supporting new
business, job and
training opportunities
in the region

Thriving
Industry
Contributing
to a strong
and diverse
economy

**Strong & Resilient
Communities**

Investing in Peel's health, wellbeing
and social services

Drakesbrook Weir,
Shire of Waroona



In this issue

C-WISE TO INVEST IN NEW PRECINCT	3
SEASONAL WORKERS SUPPORT THRIVING FOOD HUB	4
THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS	7
LAKELANDS STATION FULL STEAM AHEAD	8
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (RED) GRANTS	10
REGION IN FOCUS: SHIRE OF MURRAY	13
FOOD INNOVATION PRECINCT	16
SM TAFE SERVES A THRIVING INDUSTRY	22
PEEL BUSINESS COMMUNITY THRIVES	23
MANPAC: THE ART OF CONNECTION	24
THE PEEL ASPIRING GEOPARK	26
INVESTING IN PEEL'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING	28
GETTING CREATIVE IN PEEL	32
CURTIN IGNITION	38
PEOPLE OF PEEL	40



Cover: Live@theWeir at Drakesbrook Weir, Shire of Waroona
Image: Josh Cowling Photography



Peel Development Commission

45 Mandurah Terrace (PO Box 543)
Mandurah Western Australia 6210

Phone: (08) 9535 4140

Fax: (08) 9535 2119

Email: peel@peel.wa.gov.au

www.peel.wa.gov.au

[www.facebook.com/
peeldevelopmentcommission](https://www.facebook.com/peeldevelopmentcommission)

[www.linkedin.com/company/peel-
development-commission](https://www.linkedin.com/company/peel-development-commission)

Peel Development Commission Board

Mr David Doepel Chair

Mayor Rhys Williams Deputy Chair

Cr David Bolt

Mrs Michelle Sidebottom

Ms Sue Daley

Ms Adwoa Abban Dwumfour

Peel Development Commission Staff

Andrew Ward

Chief Executive Officer

E andrew.ward@peel.wa.gov.au

Stefan Chappell

Principal Regional Development Officer

E stefan.chappell@peel.wa.gov.au

Nadia D'Hart

Principal Regional Development Officer

E rd@peel.wa.gov.au

Therese Ejsak

Local Content Adviser

E therese.ejsak@peel.wa.gov.au

Simone Hutton

Grants and Projects Officer

E simone.hutton@peel.wa.gov.au

Zoe Ibbotson

Customer Service Officer

E cso@peel.wa.gov.au

Anne Evans

Corporate Communications Coordinator

E communications@peel.wa.gov.au

Wendy Muir

Principal Regional Development Officer

E wendy.muir@peel.wa.gov.au

Adrian Parker

Director, Regional Development

E adrian.parker@peel.wa.gov.au

Nicole Pegg

Senior Administration Officer

E nicole.pegg@peel.wa.gov.au

Ben Robins

Regional Development Officer

E ben.robins@peel.wa.gov.au

Larissa Stacy

Regional Development Officer

E larissa.stacy@peel.wa.gov.au

Kristie Tonkin

Principal Regional Development Officer

E kristie.tonkin@peel.wa.gov.au

Kylie Wilson

Executive Officer to CEO & Chair

E eo@peel.wa.gov.au

Publisher

Peel Development Commission

Editor

Anne Evans

Corporate Communications Coordinator

Graphic Designer

Josephine Eynaud

Redtail Graphic Design

Advertising

Like to advertise in the next edition of Peel Magazine?

Please contact Anne Evans for further information

E communications@peel.wa.gov.au

Disclaimer

The Western Australian Government is committed to quality services to its customers and makes every attempt to ensure accuracy, currency and reliability of the data contained in these documents. However, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may affect the quality of this information. Confirmation of the information may be sought from originating bodies or departments providing the information.



Department of
**Primary Industries and
Regional Development**

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



A VIBRANT REGIONAL CITY HUB

The City Centre Master Plan will establish a clear vision for the City Centre and surrounds, guide future development and attract investment.

TedxMandurah will be back for a second outing at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre on May 28th.

This year's event will feature twelve local speakers exploring the concept of identity and how they have integrated this idea into their lives. With the Commission proudly supporting this event, the theme got me thinking about the Peel region's identity.

We have multiple identities, all of which can be celebrated, embraced, and promoted to the world.

The Shire of Murray is our Region in Focus, so we should look at what it is becoming known for: A thriving industry in food innovation, an exciting future for sports and recreation, redevelopment in the historic town precinct in Pinjarra, and the Dwellingup Adventure Trails attracting new visitors to the region with quality services and infrastructure that leverage the stunning and unique forest ecology that we collectively have stewardship over.

Our abundant regional produce is becoming available to more people as well. This availability is not just local but intrastate and international, thanks to investment in agrifood innovations in Peel. This investment is both at the newly branded Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia (FIPWA) and the rural productivity of Waroona and surrounds.

FIPWA's founding partners have now committed to at least five years at the centre. This commitment brings us closer to our goal of building a robust food and beverage manufacturing sector, delivering a genuine and enduring jobs engine.

With its iconic waterways and the City's commitment, **Mandurah** is getting the balance right between natural beauty and a cityscape that kisses the estuary.

Peel overlaps with the **Gnaala Karla Boodja** and the rich and enduring Noongar culture, which is an integral part of our holistic identity. We also have Waroona welcoming seasonal workers to support their thriving food hub, which adds to our rich cultural tapestry.

More broadly, our identity in terms of regional resilience is a conversation that we're committed to having all the time.

The Peel Development Commission's work focuses on investment attraction, diversifying our economy and making it resilient by partnering to identify and support projects that benefit the region. Facilitating and activating those partnerships and opportunities is at the heart of our role in developing our area.

The various identities of the Peel region can all be celebrated and promoted to the world.

This issue of the *Peel Magazine* highlights the region's multiple identities with a closer look at some of the significant works planned and underway.

Elsewhere we highlight Peel based inventors launching their products successfully with local support, arts and culture connecting our community, and exciting investment in Peel's health and wellbeing.

Read on to explore as we work to ensure an integrated network of prosperous regional communities with a vibrant regional city hub.

David Doepel
Chair, Peel Development Commission

CEO's Management Report



Through facilitation, advocacy and collaboration, the Peel Development Commission's small, but high impact team continue to work through key areas of focus for the region to sustain our communities and ensure our industries thrive.

By supporting projects which contribute to the commission's goals around thriving industry and enabling strong and resilient communities, relationships are formed beyond the business and industry community, with flow-on effects for the whole region.

As restrictions are lifted and we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the benefits of building regional resilience across all aspects of the economy and promoting economic diversification have never been more apparent.

Many of the region's businesses endured a significant impact from COVID-19 over the past two years. The State Government's additional funding for COVID-19 recovery initiatives announced as part of the 2022-23 State Budget will support local economic recovery by way of small business grants and industry assistance and relief.

As always, our medium to long term focus is moving from a population-driven, service delivery economy towards a more export, strategic, innovation and trade-driven economy and we are committed to delivering outcomes to support this transformation.

The Regional Economic Grants (RED Grants) program is a \$40.8m over seven years state government initiative that invests in community-driven projects, stimulating growth through employment opportunities and revenue that benefits regional communities.

Round 4 recipients of our Peel RED Grants feature in this issue of the magazine, with a total of \$780,000 invested to support six projects that build on the region's strengths in agrifood and beverage development and manufacturing. Round 5 of the RED Grants program opens in the

coming months, and the Commission will advise the community once we start seeking applications for this next round of funding. Please keep an eye out for announcements on our website and social media.

The State Government has signed the first option to lease at East Keralup with local company C-Wise, building an innovative organic carbon recycling business. The long-term option to lease allows the business to invest with confidence. The Commission continues to work closely with the Department of Communities, Development WA and the private sector to activate the development of this strategic landholding.

Local content continues to be supported with Lakelands Station providing opportunities for local businesses and contractors. Including the local Aboriginal community has been a focus throughout the project lifecycle, creating respectful and productive working relationships, maximising opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and creating strong, connected communities.

The Commission is always here to assist local businesses and industries by activating projects through collaboration, engagement, and partnership with stakeholders.

This issue of the *Peel Magazine* highlights how we can support the development of a skilled, adaptable and empowered workforce (see our update on the People of Peel Roadmap), help local businesses access new and expanded market opportunities, and work with key stakeholders to make Peel a strong, vibrant and resilient community underpinned by best practice social services and infrastructure.

Andrew Ward

**Chief Executive Officer
Peel Development Commission**

LAKELANDS STATION

Employment opportunities for local businesses and contractors have been a boost for the area.





C-Wise to invest in new precinct

WORDS | C-Wise

IMAGE | Peel Development Commission

The State Government has signed the first option to lease at East Keralup and local business, C-Wise, is building an innovative organic carbon recycling business.

C-Wise brings modern techniques to the age-old art of composting using a novel controlled composting process it has developed. The owners, Dave Cullen and Andy Gulliver, and staff of the business bring over one hundred years of experience to the project and 25 years of service to agriculture and food industries in WA.

A new site heralds a new era for regional communities

“The long-term option to lease allows us to invest with confidence,” said Andy Gulliver. “The new site, adjacent to our existing business, both allows an orderly expansion and development options for the owner of our current site. The East Keralup facility will address a critical shortage of local organics recycling infrastructure for the impending roll out of new community food waste collections driven by government policy and the climate challenge.”

“Customers across Australia are asking for cost-effective solutions and our improved technology provides the option that local governments are looking for.”

A circular economy and a social dividend

C-Wise is part of the circular economy in action — transforming industry by-products and community organic wastes into useful products through controlled composting. For the past 20 years, C-Wise has supported the education of hundreds of high school students through a popular, accredited course in a real-world workplace. This supports development of a workforce for the Peel Food Zone. C-Wise staff have also worked with local primary schools.

“We are keen to expand this award-winning engagement program across the region and will build a dedicated education centre and demonstration farm where modern technologies and farming techniques can be showcased,” said Dave Cullen.

Building soil health and productivity

The C-Wise technology transforms organic wastes into humus-rich products that improve soil performance and plant health in farming, rehabilitation projects, professional landscaping and even the home garden.

The stabilised humified carbon in compost is the hero. It affects all key soil functions positively and can last for decades in the soil. “The sandy soils of the Swan Coastal Plain respond particularly well,” said Andy Gulliver.

Improved soil function makes better use of precious water resources and reduces reliance on chemical fertilisers and pesticides. At the same time soil erosion and nutrient run off from the land are reduced and this protects our ground water, rivers, and estuaries.

Working with nature

The business has designed and built wetlands, reed beds and habitat. Biodiversity has bloomed and over 140 bird species have been recorded. “We look forward to applying our knowledge at a landscape scale at East Keralup,” says Andy.

C-Wise’s achievements have been recognised through multiple awards including the WA State Environment Award.

The sky’s the limit for people with purpose

For 25 years, a quiet determination and a clear vision to make a difference have empowered a team which has a simple goal to make the best compost in the world. C-Wise actively helps farmers and land managers adopt these carbon-based products into conventional soil management practices.

Dave says, “We are a group of people driven by purpose and are working at the leading edge of sustainability, industrial ecology, and the circular economy. We were doing this before these terms became fashionable. Our straightforward approach has allowed us to survive the shifting sentiments and policies over the years. What we do simply makes sense.”

The future is bright, and Dave and Andy have provided a great platform for the next generation of environmental entrepreneurs. Allied businesses are welcome to discuss how they might integrate their activities into this evolving eco-industrial park. 

MORE INFORMATION

Contact Dave Cullen or Andy Gulliver on (08) 9581 9582, info@cwise.com.au or go to www.cwise.com.au

Seasonal workers support thriving food hub

WORDS | Shire of Waroona
IMAGE | Josh Cowling Photography

The agricultural town of Waroona, located at the base of the Darling Ranges on Southwest Highway, forms part of a growers' corridor spanning from Serpentine in the north to Bunbury in the south.

The region produces high yields of beef, hay, citrus, grapes, melons, vegetables, avocados and honey, and is an important food bowl supplying local, national and international markets.

To fulfil unmet labour demands in the region, large industry producers such as Fruitico and Harvey Citrus are supported through the Australian Government's Seasonal Worker Programme, which offers employers from the agricultural sector access to a reliable returning workforce.

The Seasonal Worker Programme in Western Australia employs people predominantly from the Pacific Island groups. At the onset of COVID-19, the existing workers were offered an opportunity to extend their working Visa in Western Australia or to return home to family and friends.

Those who remained, have spent many years living in the Peel region during a challenging period of COVID-19 supply shortages and travel restrictions. In addition to the pressure of living and



working abroad, many have shouldered the responsibility of financially supporting entire villages back home, as income generated through tourism in the Pacific Islands had come to a grinding halt.

Recognising the importance of seasonal workers to the agricultural sector, the Shire of Waroona has been proactive in encouraging local growers to develop facilities to accommodate the Pacific Island workers who have been deployed to the region. Additional efforts have been undertaken to integrate workers into the local community and connect them to support networks for the duration of their stay.

In January this year, the Shire — in partnership with Alcoa Wagerup Refinery — hosted Live@theWeir at Drakesbrook Weir. The event had live music, a plein air paint out, food trucks, cultural displays, and water activities.

As well as aligning with Waroona's agricultural place themes, the event provided an opportunity to officially welcome seasonal workers to the region, acknowledging the difficulties and challenges they had faced and the key role they played in supporting growers and local industry.

The official welcome was performed by the Kwillana Va'a Outrigger Canoe Group and the Southside Cook Island Community who wowed onlookers with colourful Polynesian cultural performances from the Cook Islands, Tonga and New Zealand.

In addition, attendees were able to paddle traditional outrigger canoes under the guidance of experienced paddlers.

The Shire of Waroona recently entered into discussions with Kwillana Va'a and the Southside Cook Island community to host a large outrigger paddling regatta later in the year at the iconic Drakesbrook Weir recreational

reserve in Waroona. We expect hundreds to attend this amazing regional sporting event, which will include vibrant Pacific Island cultural displays, outrigger canoe races and further opportunities to connect and integrate seasonal workers.

By supporting local industry and connecting our seasonal workers to Pacific Island Groups through a love of water and paddling, the Shire of Waroona is supporting Thriving Industry and building Strong and Resilient Communities. 🌊

Seasonal workers were officially welcomed to the region at Live@theWeir event.

Availability of secure housing is a pillar of strong, vibrant and resilient communities

State investment on social housing brings 71 new homes to peel and a pathway to economic recovery

WORDS | PDC & Shire of Murray
IMAGE | Dwellingup Community Village

Three community housing providers in Peel were awarded over \$17 million in funding from the State Government to build new homes to help meet the demand for social housing in the region.

The grants are being provided through the Department of Communities' Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP), a \$319 million housing stimulus package that the Government announced in June, 2020.

The Peel region's successful grant recipients are:

- **Community Housing Limited:** 10 units – Mandurah
- **Housing Choices WA:** 49 units – Greenfields
- **Shire of Murray:** 12 units – Dwellingup

Community housing providers in Peel also attracted funding from the refurbishment workstream of the grants program. This funding will be used to refurbish existing public and supported residential houses and community housing properties in the region.

The Peel Development Commission (PDC) works with the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to identify and confirm investment in secure housing.

The funding is a great win for Peel and will provide a much-needed boost

for the region's social housing supply and strengthen community resilience. Secure housing is a critical enabler of people's ability to participate in the community and workforce.

New community housing units for seniors in Dwellingup

Through the SHERP program, The Shire of Murray has been awarded more than \$4.5 million to build 12 new universally designed dwellings for seniors in Dwellingup as part of the second stage expansion of the existing Dwellingup Community Village. The new dwellings will be built in partnership with Dwellingup Community Village (DCV) Inc. which currently manages seven existing dwellings on the same site.

Shire President Cr David Bolt said the new homes would offer a welcome diversity of housing in Dwellingup in alignment with the vision of the Dwellingup Futures Roadmap.

"The DCV enjoys enormous support from the local community and so it makes sense to build on the success of the Dwellingup Community Village's previous development of seven homes.

"By adding these new dwellings to the DCV we will create more affordable seniors housing allowing people to remain living in Dwellingup for longer," said Cr Bolt.

The 12 universal-access turn-key dwellings will be for residents aged over 55 who will meet income and asset eligibility in accordance with the SHERP funding criteria.

Local resident and DCV Chair Bill Healy said the expansion of the Village will support Dwellingup in its goal of securing more homes and forms an important catalyst for broader investment in community services which are needed by the town.

"We would really like to see medical and care services expand in the town and the Village's Community Building could be repurposed for this as more funding becomes available.

We are looking forward to welcoming more residents to our beautiful Village. It's one more step towards securing a sustainable future for Dwellingup!"



CREATING MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

L to R: Dean Unsworth, Shire of Murray CEO, Robyn Clarke MLA, Member for Murray-Wellington, DCV representatives Bill Healy & Sue Fyfe, Cr David Bolt, Shire of Murray President.

Cultural awareness training

Walking Together

PART OF THE OLDEST LIVING CULTURE IN THE WORLD

The Bindjareb Noongar people have lived along the Swan Coastal Plain for at least 50,000 years.

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel Development Commission

Recently Commission staff and board members spent the day with Bindjareb Elder, George Walley. While the purpose of the day was Cultural Awareness Training, what George really gave us was an appreciation of the Bindjareb Noongar people and their culture as the bedrock of our region, part of the oldest living culture in the world.



The Bindjareb Noongar people have lived along the Swan Coastal Plain for at least 50,000 years. Thanks to their vast knowledge of this environment, their culture, language, education and health system, land management practices and their spiritual connection with the land, the Bindjareb people endured and adapted to the many changes 50,000 years brought.

To put 50,000 years into perspective, George asked the team to each collect 200 bush nuts. We then assembled the nuts in a line to represent 50,000 years.

It was a surprising way of thinking about British colonisation as such a recent event compared to the time the Bindjareb people had already spent living in harmony with this land.

Understanding Aboriginal people's spiritual connection to the land, including their responsibilities to land management, food production and farming, the importance and organisation of families, their education system, sharing of knowledge, and their work shows us our differences and similarities.

For many non-Aboriginal Australians, or wedjulas in Noongar language, our knowledge and connection to our ancestry is relatively recent and relates to when our early family descendants came to Australia. For Noongar people, the link to their ancestors reaches back for thousands of years and generations, and the paths made by their ancestors are the paths they continue to follow and pass on today.

The impact that colonisation and the 1905 Act had on Noongar people's family, health and education structures, their sense of identity and connection to their land had devastating, far-reaching and long-lasting effects.

Before colonisation, Noongar people didn't know the terms 'land management' and 'sustainability', but they embraced these concepts in their way of life. Through storytelling, their incredible knowledge was organised and passed down through thousands of generations. Some of this knowledge was lost through the disruption of recent history, but much of it can be relearned and reintroduced to honour our shared history and forge a path forward together. Many traditional practices, such as fire management, are being recognised for their effectiveness and adopted in modern land management approaches today.

Understanding the history of our country and region from a Noongar perspective goes a long way in creating respectful and productive working relationships and maximising opportunities for Aboriginal businesses to flourish. The WA Aboriginal Ranger program helps Aboriginal organisations manage country and protect our environment while creating jobs and building leadership and economic opportunities.

Developing organisational Reconciliation Action Plans show a commitment to changing the way we work together to build better relationships and opportunities in the future. Cultural awareness training benefits everyone by bringing clarity, transparency and understanding to the history we share. Custodian ceremonies like Welcome to Country and smoking ceremonies are reconciliatory ways of teaching people past and present cultural practices that set the scene for important conversations.

Cultural knowledge and positive memories are part of the experience that George shares through his Mandjoogoordap Dreaming cultural awareness training.

As an Uncle once said, “to teach about culture, the best place to teach people is outside”. There are more than enough places around the Mandurah area and the Bindjareb region to use as a resource in complementing the journey of Noongar people, dissecting the dual history and acknowledging the struggles and survival stories. George explains that “We need to know and understand where we come from to move forward. In that way, we can work together in the right spirit of reconciliation or conciliation, as some people say, to build resilience and capacity in the community we are working with”.

The Commission would like to thank George for sharing so much of his knowledge and wisdom about the Bindjareb Noongar Boodja and its first people with us.

It was an honour to be on country with George learning to see the bush like a book, considering our shared history from a cultural perspective, and how we can walk together as one Australian people. 

The value of *volunteers*

WORDS & IMAGE | Shire of Boddington

Have you ever considered how many hours are volunteered by individuals every year? Imagine what it might cost if all of those hours were paid?

The Shire of Boddington recently held a Thank a Volunteer Day Breakfast with the support from the Department of Communities to recognise the incredible contribution our local Volunteers make to the community.

The theme for National Volunteer week 2022 is “Better Together”, a theme that resonates with the Boddington community and is essential to small regional towns across WA who rely on volunteers for a wide range of roles in a variety of different community groups and organisations.

Boddington has a residential population of approximately 1,800 people, with over 30% of the local population aged 15+ doing voluntary work through an organisation or a group that year (Census 2016). With roughly 55 community organisations in Boddington, volunteers are essential to their continued existence.

To demonstrate the financial impact of what volunteers contribute, Volunteering WA provided a methodology to calculate in dollar value what volunteers give back to their community. The methodology is the replacement cost of a volunteer

calculated using the average hourly part-time wage of a person of their age in their State of residence, plus 15% employer on-costs (inclusive of superannuation, payroll tax and administration expenses.)

Out of the 21 organisations that attended the breakfast, the dollar value of those volunteers to the Boddington community was approximately \$558,500. That is roughly six times Boddington’s annual median wage (Census 2016) and includes less than half of all of the volunteer run organisations within the town.

Volunteers cover a diverse range of organisations including emergency services, sports and recreation, arts, local history and culture, environmental groups and more. Not only does the local community thrive with the support from volunteers, but volunteering has also been shown to benefit people by offering a solid support system, preventing loneliness and isolation and gives a sense of purpose and community, with the added benefit of learning new skills.

Without the sacrifice and dedication from local volunteers, Boddington would not be the amazing place that it is today. 



Lakelands Station

full steam ahead

WORDS & IMAGES | Carli Allen, ADCO Constructions

With Lakelands Station rapidly taking shape and soon to add another transport option for residents in the Peel region, the number of employment opportunities created for local businesses and contractors has been a big boost for the area.

Lakelands Station is being built by ADCO Constructions, on behalf of the Public Transport Authority. Being nestled next to Black Swan Lake, a huge focus of this project has been finding ways to incorporate nature into the design, to pay respect to the local area and culture.

The ADCO team includes Annette Panaia, who has been hired as the Aboriginal Engagement Lead for the project. ADCO contracted Aboriginal Engagement consultant Alliance Projects & Consulting, who recommended Annette to work with the greater project team, stakeholders and wider community

Annette's role is to engage with both the local and greater Aboriginal community. Utilising the project's Aboriginal Engagement and Participation Plan (AEPP), Annette is guiding ADCO and the greater project team on Aboriginal inclusion within the project, incorporating employment, procurement, cultural recognition, site management, public art and place-making.

ADCO made an early commitment to ensure local Aboriginal community inclusion was considered throughout the project lifecycle. This included opening communications and building relationships with the local Aboriginal Bindjareb community, through Winjan Aboriginal Corporation.

ADCO
has ensured local Aboriginal community inclusion throughout the project lifecycle.

"My job as Aboriginal Engagement Lead is more than ticking boxes; for me it signifies and complements my life's passion working for and on behalf of my Aboriginal people," Annette said.

"I am first and foremost a strong community-minded person, and it is that focus that drives me to role model my 'mob' and build their capacity and confidence in themselves to achieve goals.

"I enjoy meeting people from all walks of life and getting to know their story and being able to educate

LAKELANDS STATION

ADCO Aboriginal Engagement Lead
Annette Panaia.



Money Mentors

WORDS & IMAGE | Money Mentors

Money Mentors has been providing free financial counselling from its Mandurah office since 2005. Families supported by Money Mentors are often facing very difficult circumstances.

Whilst Australia is a wealthy country, many families struggle from week to week. Socio-economic factors continue to have an enormous impact on people's financial wellbeing. Factors such as earning potential, employment, and health, have a much greater impact than saving or spending behaviour.¹ The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the vulnerability of those already struggling in the community. However, financial counselling can make a huge difference for anyone experiencing financial and personal distress.

Financial counsellors are extremely good at helping negotiate with creditors. They can often negotiate more manageable payments — and at times, can see debts waived altogether. It is not unusual for Money Mentors to see over a million dollars of debt waived in a year.

The past six months have been very exciting for the organisation, with a total rebranding, including a name change. The old name, *Finucare*, served the organisation well for many years. Broken down, the 'Fin' represented 'financial,' UCA, represented the Uniting Church in Australia and 'care' indicated the compassionate nature of the organisation. Like many social services organisations, Money Mentors/Finucare was born out of the compassion of a local church (Mandurah Uniting Church).

Initially, support was offered to families by a volunteer financial counsellor. Over time, the organisation has grown and professionalised along with the sector and has moved its Mandurah operations to new offices. Its old location, near the town library, was run-down and uninviting for families seeking support, nor was it very accessible for people with disability.

A long-term relationship with another local support agency, Peel Community



Legal Services (PCLS), provided just the opportunity Money Mentors was looking for. PCLS had recently moved into new offices with plenty of space for another small organisation. The CEOs of both organisations spoke during the past few years about the frustrations of their old premises. It was obvious that a co-location model would work brilliantly.

PCLS and Money Mentors are now co-located at 61B Pinjarra Road in bright, cheerful, professional, and most importantly, accessible offices. The two organisations have cross-referred families seeking support for over a decade, with operating from the same premises making it easier for them.

Money Mentors will continue to build on its strong history of providing free, impartial, compassionate, and confidential financial counselling. This support is offered throughout Bindjareb Country (Peel Region) via the Mandurah office. They also provide support throughout Wadjuk Country (Metro) from their Byford office. 

MORE INFORMATION

Anyone facing financial difficulty, including small businesses can contact Money Mentors at (08) 9581 1281 or go to www.moneymentors.org.au.



non-Aboriginal people and people from other culturally diverse backgrounds about the first nations people.”

ADCO Construction's Lakelands Station Project Manager Jason Ball said Annette had provided ADCO with a window of understanding into how the project is able to engage with our first nations people.

“Respect, understanding, and agreement is hard won,” he said.

“Annette has enabled us as a team to collectively work towards improving our journey and achieving the common goal of inclusion.

“Her cultural understanding and respect has helped ADCO understand how to better connect with Aboriginal people and businesses. As a result, we have engaged eight Aboriginal companies to date in various capacities, all contributing to the construction of the Lakelands Station.”

More than 200 positions have been created overall on the project, with the continued search for individual employment opportunities ongoing.

Lakelands Station is due to be completed in 2023 and will provide residents of Lakelands, Madara Bay and surrounds a new travel option, reducing the need to travel significant distances to access train services. 

¹ ANZ. 2021 ANZ Financial Wellbeing Survey — Australia. www.anz.com.au. Published December 2021.

FUTURE SITE OF EDEN TOWERS @ PEEL BUSINESS PARK

RED Grants announcement event, December 2021.



Regional Economic Development (RED) Grants *Round 4*

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel Development Commission & RED Grant recipients (various)

The Regional Economic Development Grants (RED Grants) program is a \$40.8 million (over seven years) State Government initiative that invests in local projects to stimulate economic growth and development in regional Western Australia.

It is part of the State Government's job-creating investment across regional WA.

Delivered locally by the State's nine Regional Development Commissions, up to \$250,000 was available for individual projects that contribute to increasing or sustaining jobs, expanding or diversifying industry, developing skills or capability, increasing business productivity and attracting new investment to the regions.

The grants boost investment in local regional projects that contribute to population and economic growth initiatives and innovation pilots, and importantly, are driven by the community.

The objectives of the RED Grants Program include:

- sustainable jobs;
- expanding or diversifying industry;
- developing skills or capabilities;
- attracting new investment in the region;
- increasing productivity

The Peel Development Commission sought applications for round 4 of the Regional Economic Development (RED) Grants program and the round closed for applications on 21 October 2021 with the six successful recipients announced on 14 December 2021. Round 4 of the Peel RED Grants will deliver \$780,000 to six projects building on the region's strengths in agrifood and beverage development and manufacturing.

A \$170,000 grant will support **Eden Towers** to establish an Australian-first solar-powered vertical farm in the Peel Business Park as part of its Growing Bush Foods program, which aims to establish new product segments in a growing bush food market.

Caravan King will use a \$160,000 grant to expand its workshop, allowing the business to meet supercharged demand for caravan maintenance and repairs in the Peel and support 10 new full-time jobs on the ground in the region.

Spinifex Brewery will receive \$150,000 to increase its packaged beer sales in the Australian domestic market and

export the "Taste of Australia" range by installing a canning line in the Spinifex production brewery within the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia.

Smartstream Technology's \$120,000 grant will help fund the procurement, installation and commissioning of a rotomoulding machine, allowing the company to expand and meet demand for its waste and stormwater products used by the civil and industrial industries.

Chaff City's expansion will be backed by a \$90,000 grant for equipment to semi-automate the mixing and packaging processes for their muesli and grain mix production.

Hunsa Smallgoods will receive \$90,000 towards new equipment, including a vacuum fill and portion system, to increase its capacity to service its increasing export contracts.

RED Grant funding is helping regional communities embrace new and exciting business, job and training opportunities.

The State government is committed to supporting regional local business and creating the diversity of jobs needed to help our regions meet their full potential.



Eden Towers

\$170,000

Indoor vertical farm operator **Eden Towers** will use their \$170,000 RED Grant funding to construct a laboratory and establish a commercialisation program.

The lab will support the current Growing Bush Foods project that is exploring the many different varieties of bush foods, see which of these grow best in a vertical farm environment and assess the nutritional value of plants. Successful crops will be developed into commercial goods such as edible products, downstream processing for commercial uses, or support reforestation. The Australian brand has a strong reputation internationally and they believe in developing bush food products into a new industry for export.

Since being awarded the grant, Eden Towers has secured a location at the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia, is finalising architectural drawings to submit with the Shire of Murray and is actively building relationships with the local Winjan community and Murdoch University.

Spinifex Brewery

\$150,000

Established in 2019, Spinifex Brewing Co is an Indigenous and Veteran owned craft brewery specialising in the creation and production of a quintessentially Australian craft beer range infused with native Australian botanicals.

Spinifex will use their \$150,000 RED Grant funding to purchase and install a canning line in their production brewery within the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia. The canning line is essential equipment to enable Spinifex to package beer for sale into the Australian domestic market and to export their product.

Spinifex currently offers two brands: 'Taste of Australia' and 'F88'. The 'Taste of Australia' range won silver and bronze medals in the prestigious 2020 and 2021 London Beer Competition. The 'F88' brand has been developed to

support veteran charities, where 50% of profits from the sale of F88 Lager are donated to the F88 campaign.

This project will expand and sustain jobs within the Spinifex Production Brewery. Direct employment will grow as the sales and production capacity grows from 500,000 litres to full capacity of 1.5million litres. The direct production jobs will start with four full-time positions and grow to seven full-time and four part-time positions as the production required to meet both domestic and export demand grows.

Preparing for growth

\$160,000

The team at **Caravan King** have been welcoming new team members and roles into their business in support of their expansion project set to increase productivity and create new employment opportunities to keep up with the demand for sales and services that has been occurring year on year nationwide in the Caravan and Motorhome sector.

"Detailed plans for the new workshop are near completion, and it will be an exciting day for us when we break ground for the build," says Aleisha Kaeding.



"To accommodate the increased workload, and create new jobs, we are currently preparing our people, including looking at how changes will impact our team, and job design."

"To create these new positions, we are looking at our end-to-end processes, reporting lines, and task management so when our site is complete, the transition to basically double our workshop will be much smoother," Ms Kaeding says.

"We have already created and filled three new positions, and whilst COVID and labour shortages are providing some challenges, the team and I are collectively embracing working smart to address and manage these impacts."

It is anticipated that the workshop will start construction phase in early May and be fully operational by the end of 2022.

Smartstream Technology

\$120,000

Established in the early 2000s, **Smartstream Technology** is a wholly Western Australian owned company providing civil engineering infrastructure solutions through its scientifically developed, in-house range of innovative sewer/wastewater and stormwater products.

The company places a strong emphasis on research and development and is continually investigating new processes and materials for sewer/wastewater and stormwater applications. In the early 2000s, the company introduced its durable, lightweight, roto-moulded polyethylene manufactured products to the civil construction sector in WA, replacing the inferior, more costly and energy-intensive manufacturing processes of traditional concrete access chambers (manholes). This was a 'game changing' event that

continues to this day, to be replicated nationally and internationally. The plastic maintenance shafts also have a significantly lower carbon footprint than the concrete alternative.

Smartstream Technology recently celebrated the milestone of over 120,000 successful Poo Pit maintenance shaft installations completed throughout Australia, New Zealand, Bali Indonesia, Fiji and North America. RED Grants Round 4 will contribute significantly to the company's ongoing success, exponential

growth, and will greatly assist and encourage the company's export initiatives. The current project includes the procurement, installation and commissioning of a second Roto-moulding machine which will increase the production capabilities to meet the future demand and create sustainable employment.



Hunsa Smallgoods

\$90,000

Hunsa Smallgoods

have partnered with a Philippines based company to manufacture a variety of Filipino style products for distribution into the Australian market, and are now preparing to export this range into Asia.

The RED Grant funding will be used towards the purchase of a new sausage filling line, enabling more efficient throughput and increasing production capability to cater for the new export business. This growth will create new jobs, enhance the reputation of Peel as a food hub and attract investment into the region.

Chaff City

\$90,000

Chaff City is a leading supplier of all Steam Cut Chaff products (Oaten, Wheaten and Lucerne) and processed grains including all clipped and dressed, steam rolled/flaked grains, pellets, mueslis and mixes blended to customer requirements.

Chaff City produces quality products designed for the Equine Industry, Alpacas, Lamas, Poultry and other farm animals.

This project will see the purchase and installation of equipment to semi automate mixing and packaging processes for muesli and grain mixes produced by Chaff City. The modernisation of processes will increase production capacity, lower production costs, reduce manual handling requirements, thereby making the job more attractive to prospective employees and improve job safety for staff. These improvements will ultimately result in Chaff City being able to expand further into the Australian market and export their products internationally.



They are eagerly awaiting the arrival of all their ordered equipment so they can get the project underway.

Region in focus

Shire of Murray...

...inspiring change

**LANE POOLE
RESERVE**

Dwaarlindjirraap
Stairs.



DWELLINGUP ADVENTURE TRAILS

Making the town a key destination.

WORDS | Shire of Murray
IMAGES | Chad Gerber

The Shire of Murray has long had a reputation for doing things differently and innovatively, and the next few years are no different.

With a population that will quadruple in coming decades, several major projects are reaching completion, with more waiting in the wings.

Dwellingup Adventure Trails

Since the Dwellingup Adventure Trails (DAT) project was begun three years ago, the town has transformed into a nationally significant premier trails and adventure destination.

Dwellingup has been named a finalist in WA's Top Tourism Town Awards for the second year in a row! It was also a finalist in the national Australian Tourism Awards in 2022.

Local businesses have already seen an influx of trail tourists visiting following about \$15 million in State and Commonwealth funding. Visitor numbers have risen significantly

and there's evidence people are staying longer.

With 32km of attractive hillside routes in the Murray Valley Mountain Bike trails, bikers are recognising the benefit compared to the mainly gravel-based routes of much of the southwest.

That mountain bike trail network is now complete, and the award-winning Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre is hot on its heels. With a café and bike shop already installed, interest is now being sought from operators to run a retail or hospitality venue at the western end of the building to complete the line-up.

Work has also started on the 148m suspension bridge over the Murray River that will link the Dwaarindjirraap picnic area, the Baden Powell campground and the planned Waypoints Trail Centre on the north side of the river with the Murray Valley mountain bike trails network on the south side.

More trails are being planned around the town. Including a three-day, two-night walking loop off the Bibbulmun Track which will use the Swamp Oak campsite to the south of Dwellingup, and the Chadoora campsite to the north.

Food Innovation Precinct

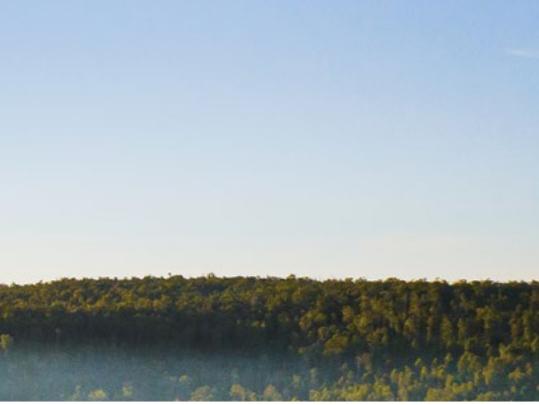
The state's first centre of excellence for food innovation, the precinct will be an economic and investment game-changer, transforming Western Australia's food and beverage manufacturing industry.

The Shire of Murray secured \$21.75 million through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Growth Fund, as well as support from some key partners, and this investment could bring a billion dollar boost to the region in the next five years.

Up to 1500 direct and indirect jobs will be created over the same period helping make the Peel region a focus for growers and producers.

At the precinct, they will be able to:

- undertake commercial research and development
- prototype and market-test food products derived from Western Australian produce
- use common facilities to develop and refine products
- network and co-create with others in the same industry
- access support and training to help grow and commercialise food and drink products
- improve long-term sustainability and access export markets



THE EXCHANGE HOTEL

Offering a unique site nestled between the town centre and the Murray River.



The precinct will be a catalyst for the conditioning of the next generation into a highly skilled workforce to satisfy job requirements and is a genuinely momentous benefit to Murray businesses and ratepayers.

Building progress has been on time with the development on course to be completed by July, when the first tenants will move in and begin their own fit outs. A grand opening will be held later this year.

Bushfire Centre of Excellence

An Australian first, the Bushfire Centre of Excellence was announced in 2019, and in less than three years has opened as an education hub. It's a place where bushfire management personnel can come together for training and learning, and examining bushfire knowledge, research and the traditional fire practices of Aboriginal Australians.

Sir Ross McLarty Sports Precinct

There's an exciting future ahead for sports and recreation teams in the Shire of Murray with work beginning on the Sir Ross McLarty Sports Precinct. Over the next 15 years, the development will be transformed to include contemporary, all-gender changerooms, universally accessible public toilets, access to water and an

undercover area, accessible pathways, a new pavilion, and an extended oval.

The plans will significantly increase the utility of the site, and encourage new users and programs like dog training, outdoor fitness classes, park runs, and yoga. It will also elevate the quality of facilities for current teams and clubs such as:

- Pinjarra Cricket Club
- Pinjarra Hockey Club
- Pinjarra Football and Netball Club
- Pinjarra Junior Football Club
- Murray District Sea Scouts
- Pinjarra Bowling and Recreation Club
- Peel Community Care

The Exchange Hotel

As has been noted more than once, there aren't many local government organisations that buy a hotel and then run it for the benefit of their ratepayers. But the Shire of Murray has done just that!

With the much-loved Exchange Hotel closing its doors in 2008, the Shire purchased the site in 2012 and is looking to define the next chapter in the story of the Hotel through

redevelopment and reactivation and a strong brand identity unique to the Hotel and Pinjarra.

Following unsuccessful attempts to attract an investor in the past, with the most recent in 2019 not progressing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Shire of Murray Council resolved to investigate redeveloping the site itself.

In 2021, a shared vision with the community was developed for the site, and the next step in that process is to invite expressions of interest for a food and beverage operator. By inviting potential operators now, the successful applicant will play a role in the design and branding of the iconic development.

The Shire is defining the next chapter in the story of the Exchange Hotel.

Given the space also lends itself to business events, weddings, private events and farmers markets, and has the potential for a providore or retailer, there's huge potential for the right operator in a project that could deliver up to \$58 million of new economic output over five years into the local economy, create 67 fulltime jobs and see more than 38,000 new visitors to the Murray Region each year. 🌿

Food Innovation Precinct

Western Australia

WORDS & IMAGES | Dr Chris Vas, General Manager, FIPWA

The construction of the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia (FIPWA) is almost complete with the Research and Development Centre and Innovation Centre buildings nearly finished.

In the lead up to practical completion (targeted for 30 June 2022) the focus will be on the Production Facilities which will house the Production — Food Technology Facility and the Production — Brewery.

In March 2022, the Shire of Murray Council endorsed the leases for the R&D Centre, Innovation Centre and Production-Brewery with Murdoch University, The GrowHub Innovation Centre and Spinifex Brewery respectively. The Production — Food Technology Facility will be licensed to Murdoch University operating under the imprimatur of the agreement between the State Government, via the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and the Future Food Systems Cooperative Research Centre (FFS CRC).

From 1 July 2022, these anchor partners will commence their internal fit-out works in preparation for operationalising the work programs scheduled for late Q3–Q4 2022.

While the construction works are underway, industry activation continues. Murdoch University continues to progress Research & Development collaborations with



FIPWA

Lease agreements for core facilities within the precinct were signed in May this year, along with the unveiling of FIPWA's new brand.

various businesses while also building the talent pipeline via its Food Science and Nutrition program. Working closely with the Future Food Systems CRC, R&D projects are taking shape e.g. working with Eden Towers, the first recipient of the Precinct's Enterprise Support Program, to develop specialty and nursery crops. The academic network continues to deliberate on the shape and form of the Food Technology Facility as a common-use facility to support industry scale-up.

Singapore's GrowHub continues to engage in trade and distribution opportunities for WA growers and producers with a view to sustaining and expanding their current product list which comprises honey, beer, oat milk, black barley, canned wine and more. An industry-focused program offering is being planned for the Innovation Centre which will include international market access, services to better understand Asian consumer preferences along with taste profiles to aid with product development, digital services for provenance, and traceability from farm to fork and more.

The Shire continues to engage with industry exploring opportunities to

become part of the Precinct ecosystem via the Enterprise Support Program, which recently received approval to boost the funding cap from \$200K to \$600K. This development should enable businesses that are keen to scale up, create new products and export.

The Shire is also in the final leg of its Experts-in-Residence program that was funded by the Australian Government and the Peel Development Commission. Four national and international experts have mentored six WA agrifood businesses on their development journey through the X-Protein Lab. Working through relevant Federal and State Government programs, the Shire is exploring opportunities to scale the success from this program.

Finally, the Precinct has a new brand that was revealed in May. Working with the anchor partners in industry and government, nationally and internationally, this brand provides a strong visual identity which will sustain our activities in the future. 

MORE INFORMATION

For more information go to www.fipwa.com.au



Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia X-Protein Lab programme

WORDS | Professor Paul Teng, FIPWA Expert-in-Residence

When the first cohort of X-Protein Lab (XPL) participating business entities first came together in August 2021, there was overwhelming enthusiasm and high expectations evident among the six entrepreneurs.

What unified the group was the interest to scale up their businesses in protein or functional food which was congruent with the XPL's purpose. The participating enterprises were also selected because they were assessed to have one or more viable products which could have a positive impact on society and aligned with the strong push towards sustainability.

However, in spite of the best efforts at a rigorous selection process, not all six participating enterprises started from the same baseline with respect to their readiness to scale up. While all met the selection criteria, some were more established in their product development, marketing and market penetration while others were at stages of finalising their product for scale up from piloting. In retrospect and for future cohorts, a finer sieve would be needed to assemble a group of enterprises that are at approximately the same stage of developing their business, and with products already clearly determined.

The four "Experts in Residence" were appointed to advise on research and development, technologies, IP, product-market fit, business models, consumer and market acceptance, investment potential and global relevance. The composition and work dynamics among the expert team were effective for that purpose because the experts complemented each other with their expertise and experiences. The assignment of experts to each business with the possibility of inputs from others was an

important feature as it allowed each business to have access to diverse viewpoints. Overall, the expert — startup interactions were positive experiences on both sides. The enterprises that were ready to "move up the curve" benefited most from the interactions. But, the enterprises which still had to determine their unique product offering (s) or business models, also benefited by the reality check on their own preparedness. The less-ready enterprises were encouraged to re-think and re-design their product offerings and consequently were able to avoid going down 'blind alleys'.

As one of the experts, the experience has been a satisfying one for me and I feel that as a team we have made substantive contributions to growing some of the participating enterprises. The experience also brought home the realisation that the innovation system supporting business expansion dreams of startups is enabled by many different players both from within WA and in overseas markets. And to this end, the WA ecosystem needs to grow and sustain its interactions and engagement with the burgeoning agrifood startup landscape across Asia. Bringing these together can help create opportunities and expedite scale-up of startups from the WA ecosystem.

So, even if one of the six in this first cohort succeeds in its expansion plans, then I would consider it a success! But of course the aspirational metric of success would be if the programme led to developing a unicorn!

Whole.

WORDS & IMAGE | Nicholas Stamatou, CEO & Co-Founder

Whole. is a West Australian food-tech business that is revolutionising the way that the food industry thinks about waste and nutrition.

As the name suggests, the business specialises in developing next-generation food processing technology that eliminates waste by creating highly-functional 'whole' food ingredients. With almost one-third of all food produced never being consumed, it is no surprise that Whole. has been inundated with enquiries from both growers and ingredient/food manufacturers. So far Whole. has conducted sample runs on oats with lupin, flax, faba, hops, pea, hemp, chickpea, canola and more to come. The technology is also playing a vital role in improving nutrition and giving consumers access to new, tasty, and clean-label ingredients that are not only better for health and wellness, but better for the environment.

Although the Whole. team have been developing and de-risking their technology for the past three years, they only recently emerged from 'stealth' after being accepted into the X-Protein Lab Program led by the Shire of Murray and supported by the Australian Government's Entrepreneur Program and Peel Development Commission. Whole. was also the only Australian business to be selected recently to pitch at the prestigious FoodHack Demo Day, along with 25 other top global food-tech businesses, and was a finalist in the WA Innovator of the Year Awards 2021.

The Whole. business has recently commissioned a 700sqm+ research and development facility in Mount Claremont, Western Australia that will be the first of its flagship 'Nutrition Labs' — a concept that it expects to take globally within the next 12-18 months. Co-founder and CEO, Nick Stamatou, is excited about the global potential of the technology and is currently leading a capital raise to accelerate the commercialisation of this novel processing innovation.



COMMUNITY

helps shape future of Mandurah's City Centre

WORDS & IMAGE | City of Mandurah

The City of Mandurah is looking at how Mandurah's City Centre will grow and develop into the future, and is encouraging land owners, businesses, local residents and the community broadly to help guide the vision for these iconic and much-loved spaces.

A community survey has just wrapped up, with respondents telling the City what they value within the City Centre, and what they'd like to see more of.

The survey feedback will help the City to develop the Mandurah City Centre Master Plan and Parking Plan, both of which are integral to the city's future development, growth and character.

People were invited to share their thoughts and vision for the transforming City Centre, with City officers focussing on three key areas:

- 1. Movement** — the way we travel to and move around the City Centre,
- 2. Character** — how we celebrate and embrace Mandurah's point of difference, and
- 3. Activity** — how we create a City Centre environment that inclusively invites people to work, live and play.

With the survey coming to a close, Mayor Rhys Williams thanked participants for sharing their views and helping to form the future vision of Mandurah's City Centre.

"We're seeing huge momentum with Mandurah's transformation right now, including capital works such as the Waterfront Project and significant private developments in the pipeline," Mayor Williams said.

"This is an exciting time for our City and as we build on this momentum, it is important that we continue to check in with our community to make sure we're successfully delivering on our shared vision for how the City Centre should grow into the future."

A City Centre Master Plan will establish a clear vision for the City Centre and surrounds to guide future development and attract investment in a way that builds up Mandurah's waterfront character.

Providing this clear vision will work towards creating economic benefits for Mandurah by encouraging private sector investment to get involved in Mandurah's future.

The City Centre Parking Plan is one component of the Master Plan with City officers assessing the car parking provision to look at how best this can be managed and made more accessible.

In progressing the City Centre Master Plan and Parking Plan, the City will be holding a series of workshops and reference group meetings in the coming months which will include business and landowners, local advisory and community groups, and government agencies to help bring all the feedback together and create a clear vision for the future. 

MORE INFORMATION

To keep up-to-date about the City Centre Master Plan and Parking Plan, go to www.mandurahmatters.com.au



Setting up the suburbs, WOTSO WorkSpace

WORDS & IMAGE | WOTSO

The way we work has changed, and where we work has also changed. So, it's no surprise that vibrant, flexible workspaces boasting amenities such as meeting rooms and podcasting studios have found their way to suburban and regional areas.

In an exciting development, this model of flexibility and innovation is making its way to WA, with WOTSO acquiring a property in the Peel region, becoming its first WA location. WOTSO Mandurah will be situated at 22 Ormsby Terrace — the once Australian Sailing Museum. The historical site appeals to the WOTSO brand, which values properties with character in unique locations. WOTSO Mandurah will be a source of collaboration, connection, and development for surrounding businesses.

WOTSO is an Australian flexi space provider with a long history of

designing space that appeals to businesses and employees, focusing on suburban and regional areas since 2014. What started as an innovative approach to vacant space has developed into desk hire by the day or month — under no lock-in contracts. As a result, WOTSO has become an ever-expanding network of businesses hustling and growing under the WOTSO roof. Flexible workspaces bring businesses and industries together, providing the opportunity to connect, share and grow. In addition to housing a community of businesses with the same purpose of getting work done, the industry serves the community it operates in by bringing businesses to the area that otherwise wouldn't be there.

The new development in the Peel region will provide businesses with products and services once only available in CBD locations. WOTSO has products for businesses of all sizes, providing offices for those who need privacy or simply a desk for a sole trader looking to escape the chaos of working from home. In addition, WOTSO has built a workplace culture that feels great to be a part of — fostering this through member events, well designed communal areas, and the inevitable

exposure to organic networking opportunities. As a result, business owners will find themselves surrounded by other like-minded professionals from an array of industries.

Flexible workspaces are an alternative to the traditional or home office setup. Flexible workspaces provide desks, private offices, meeting rooms, podcasting studios and more for hire by the day, month or on a longer-term agreement. This model allows businesses to access professional amenities and work environments without committing to a long-term lease and everything else that comes with managing your own space.

Considering itself as more than just a flexible space provider, WOTSO strives to integrate itself into the area it operates within. A local workspace will allow people to work close to home, reduce commute times, and generate spend in the local economy. WOTSO can't wait to bring its services to Mandurah and is set to open in early June. 🐦

Businesses

in the Peel will have access to a flexible WorkSpace close to home.

MORE INFORMATION

Further information can be found at www.wotso.com.au



ADVANCE TO ZERO

Assisting people in accessing permanent housing.

Nobody lost or forgotten

Quality data central to solving homelessness in our community

WORDS & IMAGE | Australian Alliance to End Homelessness

In early 2019, the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness brought key representatives from capital cities around Australia to co-invest in learning about, and developing, the 'Advance to Zero' approach to end homelessness.

Advance to Zero is an approach to achieving 'functional zero' for those experiencing homelessness in a city or town area. Using a combination of quality real-time data and service coordination, this approach assists people in accessing permanent housing, triages support resources and where possible, utilises a Housing First approach.

One of the key tools used in the Advance to Zero approach is the 'By-Name List'. This tool collates real-time inflow and outflow month-by-month data about how many people are actively experiencing homelessness in a community, whether this is reducing or not (Inflow), and how many people are moving out of homelessness (Outflow).

Funded through the Housing First Homelessness Initiative and Lotterywest, Zero Project (led by Ruah Community

Services) provides backbone support for service collaboration and leads the Advance to Zero methodology in WA.

A spokesperson from the Zero Project explained how the Improvement Team is gaining quality data and critical insights to change the way the Region quantifies and understands homelessness.

"We started the project in early 2021 with a shared goal, 'to achieve functional zero for people experiencing chronic homelessness in Mandurah CBD & Suburbs by 2025."

"Of the 136 people currently on the Mandurah By-Name List, (as of 6th May 2022), 104 people are experiencing chronic homelessness, meaning over 75% have been experiencing homelessness for a period of six months or longer. Whilst this data is confronting, it's also an opportunity to understand the experiences and needs of our community."

Through the adoption of the Advance to Zero Methodology and collective impact approach in Mandurah, 48 persons identified on the By-Name List have secured permanent housing provided by a range of community, public, private and specialised housing providers.

The By-Name List provides a dignified way to acknowledge an individual's unique journey and experience of homelessness, and by capturing this journey we can work across the social

support network to triage a bespoke response and tailored support for that individual.

The State Government has committed \$73.5 million for the development and construction of two Common Ground facilities in WA, located in East Perth and Mandurah respectively. The 28.1m Mandurah Common Ground project will comprise of up to 50 self-contained apartments. The facility will provide a critical supply of permanent, supportive housing in Mandurah for people experiencing chronic homelessness or are low income earners.

"This project is a game changer for the Mandurah community. We will continue to work with the Department of Communities to ensure the allocation of future units reflects local need and accommodates those persons we know to be experiencing chronic homelessness and long-term hardship in our Region."

Concurrently, the Improvement Team is undertaking other projects such as the recent Mandurah ID Connect and COVID Clinic. These projects address the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage, such as having access to a formal form of identification, in addition to support with accessing Centrelink, housing, health and the courts board profiles. 🦋

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Zero Project: www.zeroprojectwa.org.au and www.endhomelessnesswa.com

Ruben forges Peel school STEM connections



WORDS | The McCusker Centre
IMAGES | The McCusker Centre, Peel Bright Minds

UWA student Ruben Droogmans has contributed 100 hours towards a new youth education initiative that seeks to strengthen opportunities for school students in the Peel region to follow careers in science, technology, maths and engineering (STEM).

Ruben completed the internship through UWA's McCusker Centre for Citizenship with a role at Regional Development Australia Peel, a network of Peel-based leaders who strive to support the development of the Peel region.

For Ruben, a Peel resident based in Halls Head who loves problem solving, the internship project struck close to home.

"Having grown up in Mandurah, I understand the issues students face in accessing STEM subjects in the Region. I instantly connected with the work that Peel Bright Minds is doing. The opportunity to give back to the community was a big factor for me, especially if it meant I could make a difference," said Ruben.

Ruben, who is studying a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Business Law and Mathematics & Statistics, drew on his STEM expertise to support the Peel Bright Minds Trail Blazers Program, a six-month science engagement and youth development initiative that aims to ignite and promote young people's passion for learning in the areas of STEM.

"Ruben had a strong realisation that the work he was doing would be most beneficial to the young people of the region having career aspirations in STEM," said internship supervisor and Director of Regional Development, John Lambrecht.

Ruben's role saw him develop a comprehensive evaluation model for the Trail Blazers program, which runs annual summer camps, allowing the Peel Bright Minds team to demonstrate the program's impact and seek critical funding and advocacy.

"My personal highlight was my final presentation and cumulation of all my work throughout the semester. I could clearly demonstrate what my 100 hours created and watch it make a social impact," said Ruben.

The opportunity has reinforced Ruben's passion for STEM education, especially in regional towns.

"It really opened me up to the discrepancy between opportunities presented in Peel region and Perth areas. What seems normal for some Perth students isn't even a possibility for some students in the Peel region," he said.

The Peel team was extremely impressed with Ruben's contributions, commending his professionalism, drive and passion.

"Being a resident of the Peel region and a recent participant in STEM education, here he was able to apply his personal experiences to the project, developing a deep personal investment in it," said Mr Lambrecht.

Ruben says his McCusker Centre for Citizenship internship was an "amazing experience" and he recommends it to other students.

"I was exposed to an amazing network of other interns and a great workplace, which is something I believe many students can greatly benefit from," said Ruben.

Ruben's contribution of 100 hours made a demonstrable social impact.

MORE INFORMATION

More information on the McCusker Centre for Citizenship and internship opportunities for host organisations and students can be found here:
www.mccuskercentre.uwa.edu.au



SM TAFE serves a *thriving industry*

WORDS & IMAGES | South Metropolitan TAFE

South Metropolitan TAFE (SM TAFE) is committed to meeting the training needs of the growing hospitality and tourism industry in Peel.

In a recent showcase of their hospitality capability, SM TAFE delivered the Mandurah regional Hospitality Job Connect program in collaboration with Tourism WA.

The free five-day nationally accredited course was one of six regional programs delivered last year with the aim of providing participants with the basic skills and competencies to confidently secure a job in the hospitality industry.

Run at SM TAFE's Mandurah campus last December, the course included masterclasses with WA chefs Tony Howell and Don Hancey, customer service training, barista skills and safe food handling techniques, CV writing support and introductions to local hospitality employers.

SM TAFE's specialist hospitality training will be bolstered with the construction of a \$16.87 million training centre currently underway at the Mandurah campus, giving approximately 500 students from the Peel region access to the very best learning environment.

The new facilities will provide specialty training in hospitality and tourism, and hair and beauty for the Peel region.

The 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.

Hair and beauty training facilities will also be incorporated into the new centre, skilling the next cohort of hairdressers, massage therapists and beauty therapists.

The facilities will include a student hub, two training kitchens, a production kitchen and a live works restaurant, as well as a new hair salon and dedicated training spaces for beauty therapy and massage.

Construction is expected to be completed later this year with the first students to commence using the facilities in Semester 1, 2023.

The project was announced in July 2020 as part of the State Government's WA Recovery Plan, incorporating a record \$215.8 million investment to fund upgrades to essential infrastructure across the State's TAFE colleges.

In addition to the TAFE infrastructure spend, the State is investing heavily into training through the 'Lower fees, local skills' initiative, which has slashed course fees for 210 vocational education



and training qualifications by up to 72 per cent.

The existing list of 'Lower fees, local skills' courses was expanded last year to include a wide range of hospitality courses run at the Mandurah campus, including kitchen operations, events, tourism and commercial cookery.

MORE INFORMATION

Visit southmetrotafe.wa.edu.au for more. Applications to study in Semester 2, 2022 are now open.

New Mandurah facilities will provide specialty training in hospitality and tourism, and hair and beauty.

South Metropolitan TAFE's Mandurah campus is part of the Peel education and training facility, sharing the campuses of Murdoch University and John Tonkin College. The campus offers training in accounting, business, IT, community services, childcare, fitness, beauty, fabrication, aged-care, hospitality and horticulture. The Peel Jobs and Skills Centre (JSC) is also located on campus offering a one-stop-shop for anyone looking to improve their skills and job prospects, they also regularly run CV-writing workshops. The Peel JSC is supported by Aboriginal services from SMYL and career services from Bridging the Gap.

Peel business community thrives by working together

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The past 24 months have resulted in the toughest economic operating environment for our regional business community in a generation.

However, it has proven one thing beyond a shadow of a doubt — Peel business operators are agile, resilient, and never give up. Even in such times, the Peel region's diverse economy continues to experience growth.

As the largest organisation representing businesses in the Peel region, the Peel Chamber of Commerce and Industry's role is to influence and inspire business vitality in the region. Whilst we have seen our community struggle, we have also seen green shoots and opportunities being grasped with both hands. The adaptive mindset our business community channels to seize such opportunities is one the Chamber also adopts, as we collectively strive to positively influence the environment in which businesses operate both within our region and beyond.

Operating in the Peel Region since 1960, the Chamber is not new to such challenges and opportunities. Being driven by and for local businesses, the Chamber continues to understand the grassroots needs of Peel businesses because the Chamber is a business as well. This history and understanding have established the Chamber as the trusted voice of business on a range of issues. Our core mission is to provide fair and active representation of all members and to lobby on behalf of business interests with commitment, honesty and ethics. The Chamber actively promotes these interests across business, government and the wider community. The result of such action is the collective understanding across business, government and professional organisations that working and connecting with a proactive Chamber and its network of members, brings a range of positive outcomes for not only their activities, but for the entire Peel Region.

In business, connectivity is often foreshadowed by other needs, however in a similar fashion to the importance of family, being connected to like-minded individuals who not only understand what it's actually like to be in business, but through this understanding and lived experience can provide solutions, the critical importance of such connection proves

to be vital for business resilience. Through such connections facilitated by the Chamber, business owners can find a new, complimentary family, their business family.

This is ultimately what the Chamber is — a family, and just like a traditional family, the Chamber family meets regularly for the good times, and bands together when things get tough, working together to achieve collectively for business what individual businesses cannot achieve alone.

By positively influencing the environment in which businesses operate, we begin working together. Through working together, we build the capacity to grasp the opportunities that were once out of our individual reach. These new opportunities develop into positive outcomes and those positive outcomes produce strong and resilient business communities.

A strong and resilient business community is the backbone of a thriving regional industry.

Acknowledging the past 24 months have indeed been the toughest our business family and wider regional business community has ever faced, it is always darkest right before the dawn, and whilst it might be pretty dark now, our Region's dawn is looking incredibly bright. 



The art of connection

ManPAC

WORDS | Nadia D'Hart (PDC) & Alison Pinder & Mark Labrow (ManPAC)

IMAGES | Mark Labrow & Mandurah Performing Arts Centre

Resilience is a word we have heard a lot about lately. It means different things to each of us, and the way we build resilience is a deeply personal journey. Research universally shows that connection and finding purpose in lived experiences are central to maintaining wellbeing during challenging times.

The Arts are and always have been a resilience-building pathway for individuals and communities.

The Arts can be about entertainment, such as attending a show, but they can also offer opportunities for reflection and self-expression when we engage and participate in their creation.

ManPac's Community Engagement Co-ordinator Mark Labrow and Marketing Manager Alison Pinder spoke with the Peel Development Commission about how the last few years have shaped both her own and ManPAC's appreciation and understanding of the role the Arts play in supporting the community through testing times.

"The past two years have been a challenging time for the arts and entertainment industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but despite these challenges, ManPAC has built resilience and adapted quickly to the constant changes," Alison says, referring to ManPAC's program of events having been impacted by over 200 cancelled or postponed shows since 2020, prompting a rethink of the way they do business.

Whilst headline acts such as The Ten Tenors, Ben Elton, Jon Stevens, The

Waifs, Jon Butler, Cosentino and WASO still attracted a significant increase in occupancy rates and multiple sold-out shows, Alison and the team were innovating and getting creative in the background.

In 2021, ManPAC delivered its Community Engagement Strategy entitled 'The Art of Gathering' which illustrated the importance and value of participation in the arts.

"Performance is shifting from passive entertainment to an immersive experiential practice and our program reflects the value and benefit we see from our own evolution into a more community-centred space for the Arts. We want to see more of our community (including our young creatives), influencing the work we program, participating as performers, and sharing stories that are meaningful and relevant to their own lives.

"We want our community to see themselves as creators in their own right, not solely, as consumers of art. The Arts are an integral part of our lives and by participating, we hope that our community can feel the benefit and impact that the arts can have on their mental, physical and social wellbeing," said Alison.



The Strategy resulted in the launch of several community-based initiatives including ManPAC's Creative Café, Youth Art Gallery and 'Resonance X', a 10-week musical development program.

Similarly, ManPAC brought the Arts back into the lives of children and older residents living in Mandurah, and explored the impact of these activities on their sense of belonging, wellbeing and connectedness; in a 10-week program called 'The Art of Connection' which ran from February to April 2022.

"We were inspired by the ABC program 'Old people's home for four-year olds' and loved to see relationships forming between young and old. We knew that people were suffering from isolation and that children hadn't seen their grandparents for a long time and



very heart warming,” said Ali referring to the positive feedback ManPAC has received.

Being an independent incorporated non-for-profit organisation that receives operational funding from the City of Mandurah, ManPAC works hard to forge strong community partnerships. Programs like The Art of Connection demonstrate the strength of ManPAC’s participatory approach to the use of Art as a medium to build connection, enable self-expression and foster a sense of belonging — all fundamental building blocks of resilience.

ManPAC exists to enrich the lives of our community culturally, socially and economically.

They’re passionate about connecting our community through the power of the Arts, to challenge, inspire, excite and entertain. It’s about sharing stories and bringing people together through the Arts.

ManPAC has survived the COVID-19 crisis and has repositioned its operations for a sustainable future by continuing to present a diverse and quality artistic program that is relevant to the Peel and Mandurah community.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Mandurah Performing Arts Centre’s programs and to find out What’s On, visit www.manpac.com.au.

older people may not have seen their families (especially if they lived over east or overseas).

“This really got us thinking about our own community and the different audiences that use our building. We have activities for young people and lots of events for our older residents but rarely do those two groups meet. That is how the idea for ‘The Art of Connection’ was born,” said Alison.

ManPAC established this opportunity for pre-school aged children to work with a trio of local, experienced, and talented artists to develop artistic skills and benefit from the wisdom of older residents in the community.

The program incorporated a variety of activities including drama, music, song creation, dancing, painting, sewing and

lots of crafts, giving the children and older participants the chance to try new things.

At the end of the process, the participants performed a ‘review’ performance showcasing what they created and sharing moments from throughout the project.

The benefits derived from the program included relationship building, finding new people to connect with and using the arts to bring people together in a fun and meaningful way.

“We always hoped it would be well received, but we’ve been surprised at the level of engagement. It’s the highlight of most people’s weeks (including ours) and that’s lovely to see. The connections between the participants have been incredible and



The Peel Aspiring Geopark

WORDS | Professor Ross Dowling AM, Chair, Australian Geoparks Network

IMAGES | Dr Alan Briggs

The Peel Region has positioned itself as a progressive, prosperous and dynamic region with a number of strategies to achieve this goal.

Three key strategies are to develop a Thriving Industry; build Strong and Resilient Communities; and foster Tourism Excellence. One way of capturing all these goals is through the development of a geopark in the region.

A geopark is a vehicle for achieving sustainable regional economic development whilst protecting the environment, underpinned by geological and landscape attractions. They foster economic development, community well-being and conservation. Geoparks are a program of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). They were started as a concept in 2004 and became a full UNESCO Program in 2015. 'Aspiring' geoparks become 'National' geoparks before applying to be included as a 'UNESCO Global Geopark'.

Today there are hundreds of aspiring and national geoparks around the world as well as 169 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 44 countries. However, there are no geoparks in Australia and it is time now for us to embrace them as an effective tool for regional development. Western Australia is well placed to establish the first geoparks in the country and use them as vehicles for generating regional economic and social-cultural benefits.

In the Peel Region a Working Group has been meeting since August 2021 to establish an Aspiring Geopark. Initiated by the Peel Development Commission and led by local tour operators Sebastian (Base) Jones and Jamie van Jones of Salt & Bush Eco Tours, the group comprises representatives of the Peel Development Commission, Visit Mandurah, the City of Mandurah and several traditional custodians.



THROMBOLITES

RAMSAR wetlands at Peel-Yalgorup lake system, living rocks as a primitive life form resembling stromatolites.

THE PEEL ASPIRING GEOPARK GROUP

Visiting the Cultural Circle near Yalgorup Lake.

The group is supported by Geoparks WA and the Australian Geoparks Network.

With funding support from the Peel Development Commission, Base and Jamie are assessing approximately 40 sites across Peel, for their alignment with Global Geoparks requirements of significant abiotic, biotic and cultural heritage components.

Base says “The Peel Region has so much to contribute to an Aspiring Global Geopark, including the geological wonder of the largest microbialite reef in the Southern Hemisphere — The Thrombolites. The working group with local Bindjareb community leaders were able to visit this site and four other possible sites of interest for the geopark on a recent field trip.”

Geoparks foster economic development, community well-being and conservation.

“In May, I will be travelling to Canada to visit two UNESCO Global Geoparks — Stonehammer in New Brunswick and Cliffs of Fundy in Nova Scotia. I will bring these valuable learnings back with me to the Peel working group.”

Dr Alan Briggs, President of Geoparks WA notes that “There is strong interest in establishing geoparks across Western Australia to create improved communities, enhance businesses and create jobs. A number of regions are actively working towards establishing geoparks including the cities of Joondalup and Wanneroo, Margaret River & Busselton, the Shire of Nannup, and the already established Murchison GeoRegion”.

He adds, “The Peel Geopark project is exciting with a strong working group

driving the project with the support of the Peel Development Commission”.

Professor Ross Dowling AM, Chair, Australian Geoparks Network, is excited about establishing a geopark in the Region, something he first suggested in the Spring/Summer PDC Newsletter in 2018. He says, “This is a perfect time to embrace the geoparks movement which I have seen add value to local communities around the world. It would be great if the innovative Peel Region could lead the way in Australia by establishing an Aspiring Geopark with the goal of becoming a UNESCO Global Geopark down the track. That would put Peel on a global map”.

MORE INFORMATION

Visit <https://en.unesco.org/global-geoparks> or contact Wendy Muir, Principal Regional Development Officer: wendy.muir@peel.wa.gov.au

Investing in **Peel's health and wellbeing**

WORDS & IMAGES | Peel Health & Wellbeing Taskforce

The Peel's population is on a trajectory for strong growth. As the population expands, we need to give greater consideration to ensuring that our health and wellbeing infrastructure services are strong and well-coordinated.

In order for health and wellbeing infrastructure and services in the region to continue to be high quality and effective, there is a need to plan now and be coordinated and responsive. A model of regional care which integrates health, wellbeing and social services is required. Services designed from this perspective, take into account the whole spectrum of an individual's needs, enabling earlier intervention and prevention strategies to be implemented.

The Commission hosts the Peel Health and Wellbeing Taskforce which regularly brings together leaders from Local Government Authorities, State Government Health sector and private health providers to share updates on priority projects, challenges and work towards innovative health and wellbeing solutions. The following provides an update on three of the health and wellbeing initiatives underway in our region.

Byford Health Hub — Building healthy communities with healthy people

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale (SJ Shire) is a rapidly growing government area. This growth has been met with significant investments and proposals to develop the local infrastructure and built environment.

In February 2021, the McGowan and WA Labor Government made an election commitment to support the fast-growing Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale with the delivery of the Byford Health Hub (BHH), including \$30.6M to fund the project.

The East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS) has partnered with the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale to design and deliver this new infrastructure and develop a service model.

This project presents an exciting opportunity to develop an integrated care model that focuses on and addresses a range of health and social needs, to positively impact the health and wellbeing of the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale community.

The Hub aims to meet the health and social needs of the SJ Shire community through timely, quality amazing care delivered via an integrated health and social care model. The Hub will provide the opportunity to provide care closer to home, extending care beyond the traditional hospital walls with a focus on hospital avoidance and linking patients back to primary care providers; facilitate partnerships and pathways between health and social care providers to deliver integrated care in the community; enhance the patient experience; and improve long term health outcomes in the SJ Shire community.

Current status

The planning and establishment of the BHH continues to progress into 2022. The EMHS Byford Health Hub Interagency Steering Committee and Project Reference Group were established in 2021 and are committed to moving the Hub forward.

The Community and Consumer (CaC); and Service Provider and Clinician (SPaC) Advisory Groups have also been formed to provide advice and support

SHIRE OF SERPENTINE JARRAHDALÉ

Right: Shire Chief Executive Officer and Steering Committee member Paul Martin, EMHS Chief Executive and Chair of the Interagency Steering Committee Liz MacLeod, EMHS Executive Director Clinical Service Strategy and Population Health and Project Reference Group Chair Joel Gurr.



in shaping the Hub. This is to ensure that the Hub is representative of the needs of the whole community.

The initial phase of engagement for the Health Hub program focused on cross-sector collaborative planning with the local community, the SJ Shire and other partners; and highlighted the service innovations included in the Hub concept design.

The EMHS Byford Health Hub Program will continue to develop a comprehensive Business Case to be finalised by the end of 2022, to be submitted to Government.

For further information and program updates, please visit the Byford Health Hub — Building healthy communities with healthy people | Your Say SJ (sjshire.wa.gov.au)

Peel Mental Health Taskforce: improving the coordination of mental health service delivery in the Peel region

The Peel Mental Health Taskforce was established in August 2021 to bring a renewed focus on mental health service delivery for consumers living in Mandurah, Murray and Waroona.

The taskforce brings together over 90 representatives from 40 organisations in the Peel region, including government and non-government organisations and people with mental health lived experience. This diverse representation ensures service providers and people with lived experience of mental health are actively involved in developing and delivering solutions to improve mental health service delivery in the Peel region.

Initially, the taskforce is focussing on initiatives to improve mental health and alcohol and other drug service delivery for young people (12–25 years).

Currently, a key piece of work being carried out is the development of a local mental health and alcohol and other drug service directory. This will provide consumers, carers and service providers with an accurate, easily accessible way to navigate and contact local services.

You can keep up-to-date with the Peel Mental Health Taskforce by subscribing to the newsletter by emailing PeelMHTaskforce@health.wa.gov.au or by visiting the new web page: <https://smhs.health.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Mental-health/Peel-Mental-Health-Taskforce>.



PHH 2.0 is an exciting new project building on the success of the Peel Health Hub

The Peel Health Hub (PHH) opened in December 2018 as a solution to tackle the number of youth suicides in the region by coordinating client care across organisations.

All co-locators delivering services from the PHH are committed to reducing barriers and providing a ‘one-stop-shop’ for health issues impacting young people, families, carers and for those at risk of poor health outcomes, however:

- Presentation of clients at Peel Youth Medical Service for mental health and alcohol and other drug related issues have increased from 40% to 85%;
- Walk in clients in crisis are increasing. Clinical staff estimate that 50% of these clients would present at Peel Health Campus ED without intervention; and
- Co-locating organisations have reported increases in client numbers of between 20 and 100% since opening the PHH.

Demand has exceeded expectation and there is clear evidence of the need for additional services, particularly for those suffering eating disorders and for women and families.

An expanded Peel Health Hub footprint adjoining and linking to the existing facility bringing new priority health

PEEL HEALTH HUB

Design image for PHH 2.0.

services to the Peel region is proposed and will provide care for 300 additional clients, and 40,000 additional occasions of service per year.

PHH 2.0 proposed priority services include:

- Eating disorders
- Women’s health
- Forensic sexual assault
- Family & domestic violence
- Head to Health (adult mental health)

PHH 2.0 will not only mean an expansion in space, but also in service provision.

GP down south and Allambee Counselling have collaborated to develop a Business Case for the project, with support from the Peel Development Commission, and are currently seeking funding to construct and deliver services from the proposed PHH 2.0.

MORE INFORMATION

For further information and updates please visit the GP down south website — www.gpdownsouth.com.au/all-news/peel-health-hub-expansion

Mandurah *Muscateers*

WORDS & IMAGE | Mandurah Muscateers

Mandurah Muscateers Charity Computers Inc. (MMCC) is a not-for-profit charitable organisation operating in Greenfields (Mandurah) that refurbishes computers donated by members of the public, government departments, private businesses, schools, and others in the community.

MMCC is made up entirely of volunteers who refurbish the donated computers and load each of them with a modern operating system. Once the computers are ready for a new owner, they are either donated free of charge or sold at heavily discounted prices to community members who fit our

criteria for receiving assistance, such as community support groups and low-income members of the public. Our focus is to assist those living and operating in the Peel Region.

Mandurah Muscateers aims to see that no child, disadvantaged person, or charitable organisation is hindered by a lack of access to computers and the skills required to operate them due to financial situation or disability.

These objectives are also being helped by sponsors who donate equipment as well as the enthusiasm and contributions of members.

Local talkback radio show at the heart of Muscateers history

MMCC was established in 1996, starting from an idea aired on ABC Local radio show "The Grapevine". Hosted by legendary presenter Peter Holland, listeners joined in on the broadcast to request assistance and to offer donations of equipment for people and organisations in need. The Mandurah Muscateers organisation was originally formed with requests and donations of computers that came from listeners and businesses following the airing of the radio program.

Since then, MMCC has gone from strength to strength, as an organisation to turn to in a time of information technology (IT) needs.

In earlier times, MMCC provided valedictory prizes which were awarded annually to senior students at several high schools in the region, but nowadays MMCC is more into supporting *all* students with a need. Three years ago, in November 2018, MMCC embarked on an outreach programme, resulting in spending of \$160,000 to date on primary and secondary-aged students who we present as 'disadvantaged' in some way, big or small.

It is our aim to see all school students live a 'normal' school life equal to their peers. This may see them being helped with procurement of school uniforms, attending class excursions, school camps and in-term swimming lessons, or just receiving help to procure booklist items that their families may not be able to afford.

We have also funded white goods items such as fridges, washing machines, clothes dryers and items needed for school breakfast clubs.

MMCC works closely with school chaplains who remain a vital part of this outreach programme as spotters. Testimonials fed back to us by chaplains verify the value of the service provided.

Thanks to our sponsors, donors and volunteers, Mandurah Muscateers has grown from humble beginnings to become a major support organisation in the Peel Region. It is not known if a similar service is being offered anywhere in Western Australia, but we suspect none would match our unique history and dedicated team of Muscateers. 

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit www.mandurahmuscateers.org



VOLUNTEERS

Refurbishing computers and equipment ready for new owners.

Five decades of fun:

Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service celebrates 50 years



SERPENTINE JARRAHDALÉ LIBRARY SERVICES

(L-R) Branch Librarian Belinda Dunkley, the Shire's first library officer Yvonne Lutey, Shire President Cr Michelle Rich and SJ Library Friends President Jan Johnson cut the birthday cake.

WORDS | Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale
IMAGES | Stu Mckay Photography

Having first opened its doors with just one staff member stocking the shelves back in 1972, the Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service has grown with the community and has a membership of more than 4,000 people.

In February, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale celebrated the service's 50th anniversary with a community birthday party, including a historic photo display for residents to take a walk down memory lane as well as free fun and entertainment.

Shire President Cr Michelle Rich said it was important to recognise the wonderful work and contribution the Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service had provided to the community over the past five decades.

"The Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service has been an invaluable asset to our community for 50 years and it's important we celebrated this remarkable achievement," Cr Rich said.

"Most importantly, the Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service has been a community hub for residents to connect with other residents, share experiences and learn new things."

Cr Rich said the library had operated from different locations over the past five decades, with it having first welcomed customers from the front room (now the customer service area) of the Shire's administration building.

"As we prepare to re-locate the library service to Byford Hall by the middle of this year, the 50th anniversary is a great opportunity to reflect on the library service's history and look forward to its next chapter," Cr Rich said.

"Our Library is entwined with the history of our Shire, and will continue to be a key feature of our community for many years to come."

As part of the 50 year celebration, the Library also delivered a campaign showcasing how local residents have found a connection with the Serpentine Jarrahdale Library Service, which goes [#BeyondBooks](#).



LOVE OF LEGO LEADS TO FAMILY BONDING

Brent Cornell and his children Bryce (10), Summer (9) and William (5) have been building relationships at the Mundijong Public Library for years now — literally!

The family have been attending the Library's monthly LEGO Club program since oldest child Bryce was just four years old, originally getting involved for a "bit of fun for the kids".

"We first signed up just because it looked like something the kids would enjoy, but over the course we've really noticed how the kids have grown from it," Brent said.



LIBRARY HELPS JOSIE EXPLORE HER CREATIVE SIDE

It only takes a quick drive around the Shire to see the region is full of quirky DIY projects, and perhaps that's why the Library's SJ Creators program continues to be a popular monthly event.

SJ local Josie Cudmore is one of those creatives and has attended many different SJ Creators sessions where she has learnt several new talents, including how to finger-knit and how to crochet.

"I've always liked anything crafty so to have these local sessions to go to is fantastic. They're always well organised and the staff are friendly and helpful," Josie said.

Getting creative in Peel

Combining passion and skills with purpose leads to truly innovative inventions

WORDS AND IMAGE | IPS Business Advisory

For most of us, starting our own business may seem like a daunting dream. However, for these innovative Peel residents, the opportunity to combine their passion and skills with purpose has led to truly innovative inventions that are leading industry and making their mark on the national and international scene.

Their stories show, even in the most testing of times, what is possible with the right support, a solid game plan and a bit of old fashioned community spirit!

Operating from Mandurah, Business Advisors Jackie Campbell, Jerry Hoekman, Veronica Smith and Steve Walker from IPS Business Advisory have spent many years building their own businesses and are now giving back to the Peel community by focusing their entrepreneurial passion on helping others do the same.

The IPS Business Advisory team continue to be inspired by how people identify problems and develop solutions. Of course, transforming lives by turning ideas into opportunities, doesn't happen by chance and from a practical perspective, Jackie says there are six main steps to consider, each of which takes work and determination:

1. Research and refine your idea
2. Make or build and test your prototype
3. Write a business and marketing strategy and plan
4. Launching your product
5. Keep reviewing your product
6. Protect your idea

"Building supportive business networks are a key component to successfully navigating these steps," says Jerry, as we see from the four product developers highlighted in this feature.

1. Expert Pendulum — engaging local shearers for prototype testing, patent specialists to help commercialise the product and local manufacturers to scale parts production.
2. COCKATUBE® — their success has been built on leveraging the capacity and passion of a whole community united with a shared vision.
3. So2Go — success continues and is the result of sharing the journey, mentoring and lovingly handing the baton on.
4. TAC Test — securing business support and financial backing of an entrepreneurial investors network to ensure a successful product launch in March.

All these stories have a common theme — our business community is better and stronger when we work together.

The Business Local program is a FREE service funded by the Western Australian State Government and provided by IPS Business Advisory for small businesses in the South West and Peel regions. Whether you are thinking about starting up your own business or have already taken steps along the path towards making your dream business a reality, they are here to help you. 🐾

MORE INFORMATION

Services may be accessed face to face, online or by phone. Contact details: 1300 275 477 and www.ipsbusinessadvisory.com.au



Expert Pendulum

Mandurah local delivers efficiencies for the sheep shearing industry

WORDS & IMAGE | Peel Development Commission

Phil Jones set out to solve an industry problem for sheep shearers by inventing a pendulum that creates even pressure on the teeth when grinding, allowing consistent sharpening of shearing cutters and combs.

“I knew when I started that the pendulum couldn’t be as good as what is already on the market; it needed to be better.”

Phil trialled and tested many different designs and construction methods using local shearers to test prototypes along the way. Through the design process, he created a pressure system that allows the contact points between the pendulum and the cutter to be flexible, allowing the pendulum to take the shape of the cutter resulting in all the teeth being ground in the one plain.

By improving the grind, Phil says shearers will get a longer cut life from their tools alongside a quicker grind time.

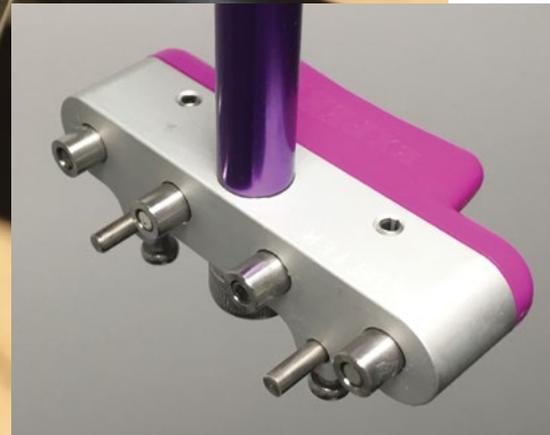
“I’m proud of enabling shearers to shear more sheep with less effort due to a premium cut,” he said.

With assistance from AutoCAD and patent specialists, Phil commercialised the product and worked with manufacturers in Mandurah and globally to scale parts production. Phil and his partner Coral assemble the parts in their backyard shed before shipping them to distributors for sale to the industry.



EXPERT PENDULUM

Enabling shearers to shear more sheep with less effort due to a premium cut.



The product is promoted through Facebook posts, the Sheep Shearing Equipment website and YouTube videos with instructions on how to use the pendulum and fix any problems encountered.

“The beauty of the shearing industry is that no one works on their own; they all work in a team, and if there is a new product on the market that is delivering efficiencies, word soon gets around and drives demand.”

Around 1,800 Expert Pendulums have been sold over the past five years in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, England and Ireland. A future challenge is the limited number of shearers who each need two pendulums, which don’t wear out. As such, there is a need to capture markets globally to create sustainable demand.

Looking to the future, Phil recognises the need to market his product through new videos and marketing channels and work with his partner distributors. Securing his supply chain with various parts manufacturers is also a focus.

“I’ve travelled with work to around 20 different countries around the world and without a doubt, Mandurah is for me heaven on earth. Running my own show gives me freedom to enjoy the lifestyle Mandurah has to offer.”

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about the Expert Pendulum visit www.sheepshearingequipment.com.au

COCKATUBE®

Innovative local product used in cockatoo recovery efforts nationwide

WORDS | Nadia D'Hart and Landcare SJ Inc.
IMAGES | Landcare SJ Inc.

Communities across Australia unite to save critically endangered birds with the aid of an artificial nesting box designed and manufactured here in Peel.

We have all heard the term, 'necessity is the mother of invention' and this could not be truer for Landcare SJ Inc. and its approach to conservation which has led to the design and development of the COCKATUBE® artificial nesting box.

The COCKATUBE® was researched and developed by Landcare SJ in cooperation with the Western Australia Museum, the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPAW), and people with a passion to help critically endangered birds.

Not only is this product performing an essential and proven conservation function, but its development and continued evolution exemplifies the unity, spirit and industriousness of the region and its people.

Durable and custom design for cockatoos

The nest boxes are specially designed for the four species of black cockatoo found in Western Australia but are suitable for all black cockatoo species Australia wide. The species is in decline primarily due to loss of breeding hollows as a result of urbanisation, agriculture, and hollow competition, particularly from feral bees.

As cockatoos are inherently big birds, the COCKATUBE® nest box is remarkably large, standing 1.2 metres in length and almost 40cm in diameter with an expected lifespan of over 50 years.

Co-inventor Alan Elliott of Landcare SJ explains that artificial nest boxes made from modified hollow branches have been in use for more than 40 years, however Landcare SJ's original design in 2005 was an innovation with the use of waste poly pipe.

"After working with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and CSIRO for over six years to optimise the design, we switched to a much lighter double-walled culvert pipe in 2014 and we haven't looked back.

"We remember the first-born black cockatoo, and we realised IT WORKS! Then came the second born and third born... these are some of our proudest moments and biggest achievements.

"Now, Landcare SJ nest boxes can be found in Jurien Bay, Esperance, and everywhere in between (including Perth Zoo and Peel Zoo)," Alan says.

COCKATUBE® aids in bushfire recovery efforts

Following the devastating 2019–20 bushfires which saw more than 17 million hectares of bushland lost, Landcare SJ started sending more products to the east coast to aid with multiple bird population recovery projects. Suppliers donated materials and time to manufacture a total of 112 nesting boxes for glossy black cockatoo recovery, including on Kangaroo Island (SA) where Landcare SJ had already been working with environmental groups in support of their restoration efforts.

"We are humbled and immensely proud to support communities across Australia who share our conviction and are doing all they can secure a legacy of care and conservation."

In 2021, Landcare SJ partnered with BirdLife Western Australia to install hollows after the Woorlooloo bushfires.

Collaboration and partnerships key to future growth

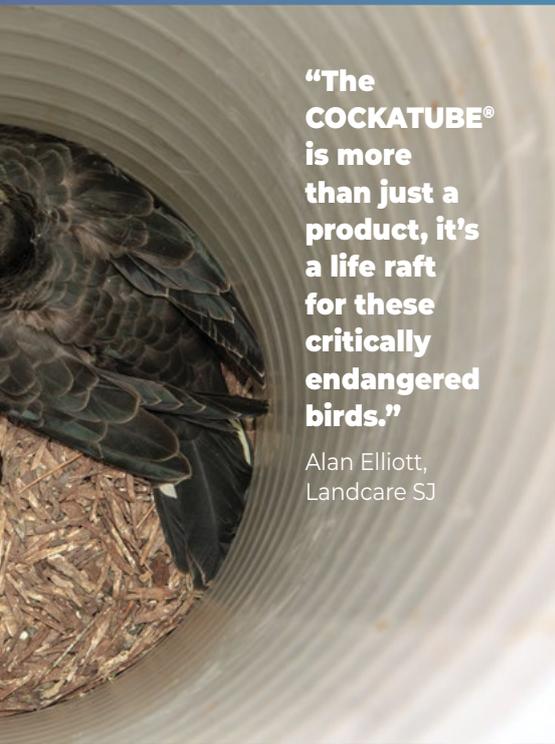
By partnering with government, industry and private organisations, Landcare SJ is increasing brand recognition and creating further pathways for business expansion. SJ Landcare's program is wide and diverse including enhancing and restoring flora and fauna habitat; river, stream and drain restoration; community



engagement and support, among other initiatives.

"Critical to our success is the partnerships we maintain with community landcare groups, government and schools who monitor and analyse nesting activity in various sites around the State," Alan says. "The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has been a long time and essential supporter of Landcare SJ, ensuring we can operate as an important regional landcare group."

In a recent development, Landcare SJ was offered the opportunity to construct 10 COCKATUBE® nest boxes for a Rio Tinto habitat offset in Far North Queensland which is home to Australia's largest cockatoo species, the Palm Cockatoo.



“The COCKATUBE® is more than just a product, it’s a life raft for these critically endangered birds.”

Alan Elliott,
Landcare SJ



“These jet-black beauties with full crowns and bright red cheeks can reach up to 60cm in length! They naturally construct a nest almost half a metre wide and made from sticks, prompting us to create an even bigger version of the product.”

A community united with a shared vision

The group’s vision and mission have clearly resonated with the community, attracting over 100 volunteers to the organisation, including a volunteer board of directors who oversees Landcare SJ’s strategic operations. The organisation has four staff members who contribute to project design, grant application, project implementation and reporting.

Volunteers support the entire program and supply chain, from sourcing the materials to assembly and installation right through to monitoring, maintenance, and product design modification.

The nest boxes are manufactured in Mundijong by SJ Landcare’s dedicated team of volunteers. Alan suggests that the “screeching black cockatoo call drives them — the fact that they don’t want it disappearing from the landscape.”

“Our people work to provide the means for the community to care for the land today, in a way that will leave it better for tomorrow. We are united in this vision, and it has added much value to the Peel region.” 

MORE INFORMATION

COCKATUBE® nest boxes can be privately purchased or donated to projects Australia wide. To find out more about the amazing work of Landcare SJ and how to get involved please visit www.landcaresj.com.au.

Landcare SJ Inc. is a not-for-profit community based organisation that coordinates landcare, bushcare and catchment care in the districts of Serpentine Jarrahdale and North Murray.

So2Go

No headaches for Denise as she takes So2Go into a new era

WORDS & IMAGES | So2Go

Over 15 years ago, Mandurah local Claire Emanuel saw an opportunity to develop and promote a product to help people like her who suffered from the effects of preservatives, namely sulphides, loaded into most wines.

She carried out research that eventually led her to a Margaret River winemaker who was experimenting with oxidising agents. After further research and negotiations with the developing winemaker, Claire bought the rights and created "So2Go".

So2Go is a unique and innovative product that eliminates preservatives from wine and Champagne at the time of consumption (either by a spray for glasses or a sachet for bottles). It is based on age-old technology used in the winemaking industry and has enabled the public wine drinker to remove these same preservatives in the comfort of their home or restaurant.

So began a fledgling business that has since grown and expanded to global markets including Canada, the USA, South Africa, Great Britain, New Zealand and more recently, South America.

"Over the years, we have rebranded, introduced new products, expanded across Australia and into overseas markets. It's funny to remember, we started making So2Go in our living room and had our retired neighbour assist us with our labelling and packing," reflects company founder Claire.

A natural entrepreneur with an unwavering commitment to her product and business, Claire has spent the better part of a decade developing the So2Go product. When you have been this successful it is not surprising to consider legacy and 'what is next?'.

2022 is shaping up to be a big year for So2Go, as Claire has recently sold the business to a local investment company who has appointed Denise Coleman as the Manager. Denise is equally committed to the brand and knows its potential after working for Claire for some time.

"Having worked with Claire, I really understand the business and feel I

can build on the strong foundation and brand recognition already established. I am looking forward to building the brand so it's everyone's second nature to carry it with them when out and about enjoying the beautiful wines this world has to offer. Or even having it on the table ready for guests to use. No more headaches or regrets the next morning. Just great memories.

"One of the great benefits of the company is that we can manufacture, package, and export all from our factory in Mandurah. The Peel region provides us with everything we need without being caught in the hustle and bustle of the big city.

"It's perfect to be able to go from the factory to the water within a few minutes and start enjoying a few wines with other boat owners. Mandurah has amazing waterways and whether it's a picnic on the estuary shores or cafés on the strip, it is a wonderful way to meet people and become part of this amazing community," says Denise.

MORE INFORMATION

You can find Denise's So2Go product at www.so2go.com.au, phone 0474 088 884 or email so2go@so2go.com.au.

SO2GO

A unique and innovative product that eliminates preservatives from wine and Champagne.



TAC Test

Mentorship programs helps local entrepreneur commercialise new product

WORDS & IMAGES | TAC Test

Mandurah local Chris Field is the founder and creative force behind the TAC Test portable test box; an all-in-one diagnostic tool to help people in the automotive trade test vehicle and trailer lights, trailer wiring and electrical components. It also operates as a portable power source to charge devices and power tools such as tire compressors.

The use of a wireless remote during the testing process makes it easier for a single technician to diagnose issues and repair trailer wiring by eliminating the need for the vehicle to be connected or for a second person to press on the brakes and switch lights. This is especially useful when servicing road trains and large haulage setups, where it takes a long time to check each individual component.

During his apprenticeship as an automotive electrician, Chris learned about common shortfalls plaguing the transport and mechanical industries. However, it wasn't until Chris was running his own mobile electrical business that he started inventing his own tools, including the very first testing box prototype, to help him do his own work.

"I knew that 'sparkies' and transport companies didn't have a product like mine, which led me to consider the potential of commercialising my test box," Chris explains.



MANDURAH LOCAL

Chris Field is the founder and creative force behind the TAC Test portable test box.

Chris admits he had limited experience starting a business, so his research led him to find qualified help through the Business Advisory South West and AusIndustry. Through these organisations, Chris says he found the right resources and industry connections and successfully applied for a scholarship at Curtin University's Ignition Program and secured a place in the UWA Management of Technology and Innovation (MOTI) Commercialisation Program.

"This [program] gave me invaluable knowledge about how to run a business, as well as commercialising a new product in today's market. It not only gave me a roadmap of my next steps, but it also helped give me the knowledge I needed to make the best possible decisions."

After taking some time to perfect and patent his design, Chris successfully launched his product at WA's biggest annual showcase of new tech and

innovation, West Tech Fest 2021 and was one of three startups to secure funding.

"Not only did it [West Tech Fest] provide capital investment, but it also gave me access to a wide range of mentors with a huge array of business experience. Having advice from these mentors is as important, if not more, than the injection of funds," says Chris.

This investment allowed Chris to purchase materials needed for the first commercially available stock of TAC Test boxes, which he manufactures from his Mandurah based workshop. As demand increases, Chris will look at hiring employees and moving to a larger workspace.

The TAC Test story shows us what can be achieved when we foster our spirit of creativity and determination and invest in ourselves with the aid of industry experts. Chris makes a special mention to this mother, partner Chrissy and WA's entrepreneurial support network who have assisted him in the TAC Test journey thus far.

"I couldn't have done it without their help, and I think having family, friends and colleagues that believe in what I am doing, has made this what it is today. This was a huge step out of my comfort zone."

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about TAC Test visit www.tactest.com.au.

Applications for Curtin Ignition open on 26 May. The Peel Development Commission is pleased to sponsor one scholarship for an eligible Peel resident to participate in this year's program. See page 38.

Curtin Ignition

Do you have an idea or innovation that could become a high growth business?

WORDS & IMAGE | Curtin Ignition Program

Curtin Ignition is an intensive, one-week training program for aspiring entrepreneurs, academics and corporate innovators to both trial and prepare business ideas for the commercial environment.

The Peel Development Commission is proud to sponsor one fully funded place in this year's program, valued at **\$3,250**. The PDC funded scholarship is open to applicants residing in the Peel region. Scholarship applications open **26 May and close 15 July**. Criteria for scholarships along with how to apply can be found at curtin.edu/ignition.

Ignition comprises of practical teaching sessions, expert clinics, mentor sessions and experienced advice and support from leading entrepreneurs and innovators. The program will give you the tools, contacts and confidence to transform your idea into a successful business venture.

The program is aimed at Founders of an early stage business and anyone with a specific idea for a new or improved product or service, and a passion for developing that idea into a real business proposition.

Ignition is suited to those who are:

- Thinking of starting a novel business;
- Currently employed or at home and looking to propel your idea;
- A student, graduate or academic considering your own venture;
- An owner, founder or senior manager of an existing business considering



diversification of products and markets, or a new venture.

By attending the program you will have:

- Prepared a business plan presentation and a clear way forward for your business idea;
- Learned how to explain your business opportunity in commercial terms;
- Learned a commercial approach in the development of innovative ideas;
- Learned how to identify good opportunities in a short period with minimal investment;
- Clarified your business idea and tested it within a high calibre and safe environment;
- Had a great week of thinking time to accelerate your ideas.

What do past alumni say about Ignition?

"Ignition has helped me develop a lot of skills I didn't know I needed! I have grown in every area of my business including, understanding the market and how best to interact with my specific market. You will gain a lot from this program — just go for it!"

Amanda Healy, Kirrikin Managing Director, Ignition Alumni 2014

"Learning financials, legals, marketing, how to pitch my concept and how to network really helped my growth. I tried to soak up all advice where possible. The program allows you to focus on the areas that your business needs improvement in. Fantastic."

Tom Young, Founder and CEO, Ignition Alumni 2016

When is Ignition?

Ignition program will run from 4 September to 9 September 2022.

How to apply

Applications for Ignition Perth will then open on 26 May and close on 27 July.

To help with your application, Curtin is running several information sessions in May, June and July 2022 that will cover:

- What is Curtin Ignition?
- Who is Ignition for?
- What you will learn, what are the benefits?
- Who is involved?
- How to apply

MORE INFORMATION

Visit <https://curtin.edu/ignition> to attend an online information session or contact execed@curtin.edu.au to reserve your place.

Taking advantage of the 'Great Resignation'

Finding great staff, training and retaining them

WORDS & IMAGE | IPS Business Advisory

If there's one thing that business operators know for sure, it's that the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic have had massive implications on hiring and retaining good staff. Global trends suggest the worst is still to come.

Impacting the US in 2021, the "Great Resignation" is predicted to hit Australia in the first half of 2022. Research is repeatedly showing that around 40% of the workforce is currently looking for a new job.¹

While instinctively, this feels like another negative thing business owners need to deal with, it may provide opportunities for employers and business owners to obtain new talent. But it comes with the caveat that the working environment you provide may need to change.

Re-evaluate what is important

With the world in and out of lockdowns, business owners, employers and employees have had the opportunity for some time out and to consider what is important to them. What has resulted is a collective shift of people looking to be more purpose-driven.

The 'great resignation' is being driven by people seeking employment with businesses that align with their values, rather than taking a job just to keep the lights on.

As such, business owners and employers should be taking the time to

look at their vision, remind themselves WHY they started doing what they do and clearly communicating this to their staff and any potential new talent they are looking for.

Communicate your business values, the WHY you get up every day, and you will find good people whose values align with yours.

Flexibility

Whether we like it or not, COVID-19 has proven that we don't all need to work from an office, 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, and that there are alternative ways to not only stay productive, but increase productivity.

Hybrid workplaces are now 'a thing' and they are not going anywhere any time soon. Now is the time to think about transforming your business practices, adapting to this new way, and staying agile if you want to attract great talent for your business.

Speaking of attracting great talent...

Stay at home 'mums'

Stay at home 'mums' (parents) are an undisputedly underutilised segment of the workforce. These (mostly) women who have chosen to step away from skilled employment to raise a family may offer untapped solutions to closing skills gaps in our local businesses and local workforce.

Cast your mind back to 2018PC (pre-Covid) when the work life balance struggle was real.

Working full time over set hours, in a set location while juggling life and family are misaligned. So much so, that skilled women were choosing to stay out of the workforce completely.

Who knew it would take a pandemic to create the hybrid office solution that solves our skilled resource shortage issue?!

Ask yourself these questions

Can your workplace be flexible? Have you considered the highly skilled stay-at-home parent resource?

Do you need some assistance?

You don't have to do solve these issues on your own.

IPS Business Advisory offers free advice for businesses in the Peel region via the SBDC's Business Local program. We have several HR experts who will assist you with human resourcing and other employment issues.

Beyond IPS Business Advisory, the broader IPS team offers world class services and skills in Organisational Capability; Research, Policy and Evaluation; Indigenous Advisory and Project Services. IPS works at the cutting edge of social inclusion, new industries, leadership and innovation and our door is always open via the IPS Business Advisory team right here in Peel. 🐾

MORE INFORMATION

IPS Business Advisory: 1300 275 477, email admin@ipsba.com.au or go to www.ipsbusinessadvisory.com.au.



¹ Source: HRDept.com.au article Get Ready For the Great Resignation, Dec 2021.



People *of* Peel

Driving a thriving regional society and economy

WORDS & IMAGE | People of Peel Roadmap

A region's most powerful resource is its people. Building regional capacity is an investment in a region's future society and economy, giving it the adaptability and talent to not only survive uncertainty and challenge, but to thrive through positive disruption and innovation.

Drawing on the *People of Peel: Human Capital Insights* research profiled in the Spring/Summer 2021 edition of the *Peel Magazine*, the Commission in partnership with the Peel Capability Collaborative and consulting firm FAR Lane has been developing a People of Peel Roadmap.

The Roadmap sets out a framework to support and develop a skilled, adaptable and empowered workforce to drive a thriving regional society and economy, recognising that this will involve proactive planning, vision and aspiration, and addressing the socioeconomic challenges facing people living in Peel. It is also critical that the continued investment in the region's emerging and future strategic industries results in benefits for the People of Peel.

Three pillars

With this in mind, three pillars are identified for action through partnerships with industry and a range of stakeholders:

1. **Build capacity at all ages**

Complex and entrenched socioeconomic challenges are preventing some communities in the Peel from building their capacity. Addressing these challenges will require interventions outside of the status quo developed through collaboration, regional leadership and a focus on families (see Table 1).

2. **Link local capacity to regional opportunities**

Connecting people with opportunities to live and work

TABLE 1. Building capacity at all ages

Action area	Why is it important
Build leadership to drive change	Real social change requires strong leadership, long term vision and sustained action. A vehicle is required that brings together State Departments and local service providers to drive, coordinate and resource effective interventions.
Engage and inspire early	You can't be what you can't see. The Peel's young people must be engaged, feel connected to their community and see a bright and meaningful future for themselves in the region. This will require increasing investment in skills development in childhood to set children up with the life skills and resilience to empower them in the future.
Address entrenched socioeconomic challenges	Communities and individuals who are isolated or prevented by systems and entrenched cycles of disadvantage must not be left behind as the region seeks to realise its economic aspirations and potential. Access to health and community services, coordinated support for children and families and access to safe and affordable housing will be critical for building a strong future workforce that wants to stay, live and work in the region.

TABLE 2. Link local capacity to regional opportunities

Action area	Why is it important
Strengthen connections	Matching skills to jobs is critical to keep talent in the region, and realise the investment made in building the capacity of Peel's people. To do this, there is an opportunity to utilise alternative delivery models to enhance access to engaging tertiary education and training options that are currently unavailable in Peel region. At the same time there should be a focus on upskilling the existing trade base by matching employment skills development to the region's emerging strategic industries and incentivise training and professional development. There is also a need and opportunity to build excitement and optimism around the current and future jobs in the Peel to help residents understand the value and potential of a life in the region, reducing the trend of talent leaving to Perth and the eastern States. Peel's skilled and semi-skilled residents who are working outside the region should also be actively encouraged to take up local training and work opportunities.
Upskill and reskill	Peel has underutilised human resources that can be targeted and empowered to re-engage in the workforce. Increasing opportunities for all People in Peel with a focus on women, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, and people over the age of 55 to engage in skills development will enable them to enter new areas of work and maintain their connection to employment, networks and the community.

TABLE 3. Attract talent to strategic industries

Action area	Why is it important
Partner with industry	Industry are a vital partner for human capital development. By partnering with regional industry, Peel's training and education pathways will better align with the needs of the regional economy, providing local business with access to a relevant, highly skilled and available workforce.
Cultivate entrepreneurial spirit and ecosystem	Creativity, inspiration, culture — all are important elements to a productive and competitive economy. Economic development initiatives must encourage local enterprise creation and growth and identify and cultivate unique intersections of knowledge, talent and skills amongst the region's strategic industries that enhance the region's competitive advantages.
Drive strategic industry development	To attract exceptional talent, the Peel must continue to drive transformational economic development projects that position the region's industries as centres of excellence and innovation. At the same time, new and existing businesses should also be the focus of attraction, through the development of southern technical and strategic zones and job hubs.

within the region and creating clear pathways to those opportunities, for example, jobs in tourism, food, agriculture, and population services will help to build strong, vibrant, and resilient communities (see Table 2).

3. Attract talent to strategic industries

The region has plenty to offer. However, to attract talent and investment into the region, there needs to be a promotion of its strengths and benefits and an active effort to cultivate an environment that supports entrepreneurship and excellence around the region's strategic industries (see Table 3).

Next steps

The Roadmap identifies priority action areas and initiatives under each pillar that will be delivered through stakeholders collaborating effectively around the common objectives. These initiatives will be delivered via public and private sector partnerships and the innovation and drive of individual enterprises and communities.

The Peel Development Commission and the Peel Capability Collaborative will take a lead role in supporting initiatives aligned to the Roadmap through:

- Checking in regularly with lead stakeholders
- Advocating in a targeted manner

- Supporting the identification of opportunities for cross-industry and agency collaboration
- Contributing to or enabling processes that drive initiatives and transformation projects to progress

The Commission is also ensuring alignment with other regional projects such as Transform Mandurah and the Peel Away the Mask research report through regular engagement with the lead stakeholders. 

MORE INFORMATION

More information on the People of Peel project can be found on the Peel Development Commission website — www.peel.wa.gov.au or by contacting the Commission on 9535 4140.

Q&A: Board profiles

WORDS | Sue Daley, Cr David Bolt and Adwoa Abban
IMAGES | Peel Development Commission

Introducing

Sue Daley
Board Member



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

Our family has had a long association with the region, and we were always enjoying time out here to escape the hustle & bustle of Perth. On New Year's Day 2017, standing on the banks of the Peel Estuary, we asked ourselves "If we could live anywhere in WA where would it be?" We have been living here ever since.

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

Being appointed to the Peel Development Commission board as a community representative. It is an incredible opportunity to help shape the future of the Peel region and the community that we live in, whilst having the honour to work alongside the amazing individuals who make up the board.

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

Owning and operating my first business solely for 10 years taught me that you need a network around you in order to grow. By surrounding myself with others who have the same values & ethics, allows me to focus on what I do best and use my network for the rest. Collaboration and teamwork are essential components for being successful in all things. It is for this reason that our businesses are members of the Peel Chamber of Commerce and advocates of the Local Supporting Local ideal.

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

I see a very vibrant future for the region. The Peel Region is fast becoming the place to live and work, due to its accessibility to Perth and as the gateway to the South West. The opportunities are endless and the business growth in the past two years is staggering. I believe that the next decade is going to see the Peel region become the epicentre for lifestyle, tourism and industry in WA.

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

I love the bush and the water, so the region as a whole is my favourite place. I always enjoy meeting the locals who have lived here all their lives and hearing the stories, as well as learning all about the history of the area. It doesn't matter where you go in the region, there is always scenic places to walk, wonderful people to meet and fantastic food to enjoy.

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

The people, the sense of community, the history (both good and bad), the wonderful bush and waterways environment. The Peel region is truly the best of both worlds. We also have the best sunsets.

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

Being so close to everything we need but still having that country feel. It's a relaxed lifestyle, with great community spirit and comradery, plus there are so many places to explore in our own backyard. I get to experience the natural environment & wildlife, as well as a stunning sunset, on a daily basis. What more could you want?

What do you do in your spare time?

We don't get a lot of spare time away from our two businesses, so when we do get some time for ourselves, we either take a drive to visit a local attraction or look for a café/restaurant that we haven't been to before and take the time to enjoy the experience while supporting as many small businesses as we can.

Cr David Bolt
Board Member



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

My parents purchased land along the Murray River in South Yunderup from a local farmer and constructed a modest holiday house in the early 60s. I believe they paid around £300 pounds, which was quite a lot of money at the time. Many happy school vacations were spent swimming, fishing, and prawning from the jetty or stacking hay bales and milking cows on the farm. For my brothers and I, and our friends, Yunderup was a magical place to escape from the city and boring schoolwork.

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

I was on the board of a company when friendly merger discussions were underway with the objective to expand into new markets. The negotiations eventually stalled, so plans were shelved and both organisations agreed to go their separate ways. Several months later, I think it was Christmas Eve, our chairman called and said the other company had launched a Hostile Takeover Bid for our publicly traded shares and was

out to take over control. It was a very challenging time fighting for our company's survival.

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

The founder of a global IT company I worked for had a saying, "Only the Paranoid Survive". It seemed a rather odd view, but working in the ICT sector, I see how quickly new technologies can disrupt whole markets. Software and the continuing digitisation of many products and services is lowering the cost of entry and reducing the barriers due to distance. Businesses that don't keep pace can quickly lose customers or their most talented workers. It's too late if no one values what you offer. Today's rapid advances in areas like AI, Crypto, VR and AR means it's more important than ever to reassess your offerings or skill sets and prepare for new opportunities or competition, which can come at light speed from any location or direction.

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

We have a bright future if we manage our assets and use our talents wisely. By protecting our natural resources and the fragile environment, they will continue to bring us benefits. Once gone or damaged it's impossible to replace or at best, expensive to restore. Broadening our economic base while protecting the most vulnerable in our community must be a priority. We can't leave people behind while we seek to grow more local businesses, skilled jobs

and expand opportunities. Adding lanes to the freeway, or car spaces at train stations, while important, is not a long-term solution to economic self-sufficiency. But creating lasting and fulfilling local jobs for the tens of thousands of new residents forecast to move into this region over the coming decades, will be.

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

I love the clear air and seeing the blue sky and golden sunsets. Open roads, beautiful rivers, waterways, and farmlands, I find it a peaceful and beautiful place to live. There is so much to experience if you chose to get out and explore. From beaches to trails and forests, city cafés and restaurants to country towns with old pubs and quirky shops, roadside farmstalls, community events and local festivals, this region has it all. Every weekend can be a brand-new adventure without ever having to travel far, it's like a vacation all year round.

What do you do in your spare time?

Switching off my mobile phone, relaxing by the river and throwing a crab net or line off the jetty, canoeing, or just boating in the estuary. I'm also a foodie and enjoy sampling our fresh local produce. But being a big geek, means doing "important research in my lab". Or more accurately, tinkering with software, electronics or trying out any new gadget in the shed. Recently I have discovered the amazing world of 3D printers and additive manufacturing, a rabbit hole I am sure to be down for quite a while.

Adwoa Abban
Board Member



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

We have been living in the Peel region since 2014, we were attracted to the area due to the rural feel and the natural environment.

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

My memorable moment was being selected to be part of the Peel Development Commission Board. I am excited about my contribution to the Board and the Peel region as a whole.

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

I have worked with many leaders, and the leadership approach that has stuck with me is leading with empathy and having an open-door policy that I practice now.

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

The Peel region is one of the fastest-growing regions in WA. This growth rate comes with the increased need for infrastructures like the extension of the Armadale

line to Byford and other amenities. I can see the Peel region growing and rivalling the Perth metro region.

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

I like shopping for local produce. I always like to know where the products I use come from, so I do this by shopping locally. And I can see the process. I also love taking a drive through the hills. It is so beautiful out there. There are many things to see and places to visit, like the truck museum.

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

Even though the Peel region shares a border with Perth, it still has a quiet and rural environment. The uniqueness also comes from having a lot of natural landscape across the Peel.

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

I can find most things locally and there are a lot of activities to get into and enjoy such as festivals and racing. Also, I like having the rural environment feel.

What do you do in your spare time?

I love going on road trips, spending time with the family doing fun things like baking, kayaking and carrying out academic research on areas I am passionate about. 🦋

Q&A: CEO profiles

Mark Goodlet

CEO Shire of Waroona



Who do you look up to for inspiration or mentorship?

- Saint Mother Teresa for her selfless, uncompromising compassion.
- Everyone involved in the decision and development of the James Webb Telescope, for their vision and dedication to science.
- Hans Rosling, co-author of *Factfulness*, for giving us hope through truth telling.
- Jordan Peterson, for showing young men and old, their value and purpose.

What important lessons still shape your leadership approach today? What are the most essential attributes of successful leaders today?

This sounds like a book title — “Five Secrets of Successful Leaders”. Here are some of my guiding leadership thoughts.

- The best leadership has personal authenticity stamped all over it.
- You aren’t a leader if no one’s following. Check behind you.

- Anyone can make easy decisions. Leaders need to be prepared to make tough calls.
- With time and experience, leadership becomes an instinct.
- From a philosophical viewpoint, the end doesn’t justify the means. It’s not OK to ride roughshod over others to get to an outcome, even if it’s a good outcome. Certainly, it can be easier to simply apply pressure to achieve an outcome, but it’s much harder to respectfully listen, accommodate and strive to work together to achieve a goal.

What do you see for the overall future of Waroona?

From a tourism perspective, Waroona is a hidden gem. When I told people I was coming to work at Waroona, I typically got two responses — “Oh yeah, I used to go to the dam years ago;” and “Where’s Waroona?” Council has a strategic plan that is looking to change this and has started with some big projects that the Shire is now delivering to make the Waroona Town Centre more attractive and interesting, with a new Waroona Community Precinct as well as Drakesbrook Weir Precinct Master Plan. A lot of good work has been done to plan and attract funding for projects now being delivered.

On top of these projects, we will be looking for new opportunities for tourism whether it’s in the escarpment or down at the beach, with one theme already in place around lifestyle activities, such as 4x4 beach runs, skiing at Lake Navarino and the like. There is some important work to be done to make sure these activities are well managed so that we can keep offering them into the future. Nature tourism is another theme and one that is growing. This includes the likes of trails development and exploring the natural wonders of the Thrombolites, and the escarpment with some of the world’s oldest rocks that one can stand on, at 2.5 billion years old.

Rural industry is a major strength of Waroona. There are some areas of high-value agricultural land and these bring

intensive agriculture opportunities. We have a long history and future in mining, with the Shire being rich in bauxite and extractive industry sands which will service Perth in the years to come. There is a renewable energy industry that has started in the Shire with two solar farms now approved. I believe this is just the start of what can be a highly successful renewable energy sector industry in Waroona. We just need to ensure it’s compatible with the Waroona lifestyle.

Importantly, we have a self-reliant, supportive community that exemplifies country Australia. This shows in a multitude of community groups, clubs and the big annual Waroona Agricultural Show which attracts thousands of visitors.

What are some of your favourite places/people/Waroona or Peel experiences and why?

I’ve only been here for four months, so I will say that I’m still learning about the Shire. Still, I have been looking around the Waroona escarpment and think that it is one of the most attractive parts of the Darling Scarp. Lake Navarino and Drakesbrook Weir are obvious favourites. I also had the opportunity to visit Hamel Eco-Park, which is full of exotic trees left over from when it was the State nursery. It was a fascinating visit.

In your opinion, what makes Waroona so unique?

The Ramsar Wetlands, the Thrombolites, the 2.5-billion-year-old rock formations at the top of the escarpment and the Waroona Show of course.

What do you do in your spare time?

In order, time with the family and the pets, house renovating, gardening, and surfing. The last item should be higher on the list. 



Pre-sale campaign at Pinjarra Industrial Estate sets stage for local business growth

Strong demand for land at Pinjarra Industrial Estate has driven the pre-sale release of a range of new lots at the popular Peel precinct, opening up opportunities for local businesses to establish and expand their operations.

8 fully-serviced lots have been released to market by pre-sale, sized from 2,230m² with a starting price of \$330,000 (ex GST).

DevelopmentWA Chief Executive Frank Marra said the new release of land at the 90ha Pinjarra Industrial Estate had been brought forward in response to buyer appetite, with all available land from previous stages now sold.

“Industrial land in Pinjarra has been in demand, with growth in local businesses and those supporting surrounding industries combining with the momentum delivered by the \$116 million Regional Land Booster Package released last year,” he said.

“The challenges presented by COVID over the past 12 to 18 months very much highlighted the importance of industrial land and activities to WA’s economic recovery and ongoing growth.

“Through the Industrial Lands Authority, we are very pleased to ensure the continued supply of strategically-located and well-serviced industrial land to support businesses in creating jobs and prosperity for communities across WA.”

Located just minutes from the centre of Pinjarra and 15 minutes from Mandurah, the Pinjarra Industrial Estate offers outstanding access to major transport links including the Forrest and South West Highways, with all major centres from Perth to Bunbury able to be reached within an hour by road.

The estate is suited to a wide range of industrial uses, with current occupants including Western Power, Huckleberry’s Tank & Water Service and businesses supporting the agricultural, mining, manufacturing and construction industries.

Local business Murray Engineering Group established its operations within Pinjarra Industrial Estate 10 years ago, purchasing a 5.5ha site. Today, the business employs between 250 and

300 people and has a turnover of more than \$110 million a year.

Murray Engineering Group CEO Mark Coughlan said the business had now purchased a second 2ha-plus lot on its northern boundary from DevelopmentWA to futureproof its growth trajectory.

“We are the second biggest employer in the Murray Peel region after Alcoa — and we are proud of the fact we are a big employer in this area,” he said.

“We have a target to have at least 10 per cent apprentices on our books at any one time, so we have a large apprenticeship intake.”

Growth in the Pinjarra Industrial Estate has also created the impetus to plan for a new road linking Munday Avenue with Greenlands Road to improve access for owners, their employees and their customers.

With mounting interest in the estate, DevelopmentWA is optimistic in achieving the pre-sales required to unlock Stage 3 construction in 2022. 

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on Pinjarra Industrial Estate, visit <https://developmentwa.com.au/projects/industrial-and-commercial/pinjarra-industrial-estate/overview>

PINJARRA INDUSTRIAL ESTATE STAGE 3 PRE-RELEASE

- 8 lots sized from 2,230sqm
- Fully serviced with power, water, gas, sewer and NBN
- Just minutes to Pinjarra Town Centre
- 15 minutes from Mandurah
- Outstanding access to major transport links including the Forrest and South West Highways
- All major centres from Perth to Bunbury able to be reached within an hour by road.



**CONTACT US
TODAY**

Realmark

MIKE ROWE
0408 470 074

REALMARK COMMERCIAL
9328 0909

 **Pinjarra Industrial Estate**

Industrial Lands Authority

Shaping our State's future

 **Development WA**