

AUGUST 2026

Welcome to Djilba | Growth of plants and flowering explosion

THIS MONTH...

A message from our
Shire President
and CEO

Disability Access and
Inclusion Plan

Ongerup Bushfire
Brigade Shed
Progress

Full issue can be found on our website www.gnowangerup.wa.gov.au
Council > News and Information > [Gnowangerup Shire Newsletter](#)



Contact us:

-  28 Yougenup Road
-  gnpshire@gnowangerup.wa.gov.au
-  08 9827 1007
-  www.gnowangerup.wa.gov.au

Shire President - Kate O'Keeffe Monthly Message



Council is a very busy place at the moment, and our council meetings are a reflection of that. Once again, I would like to remind everyone that our council meetings are open to the public on the fourth Wednesday of every month. In September, we will be holding our council meeting in Ongerup. The councillors and executive staff will also spend time that Wednesday afternoon looking around the townsite of Ongerup, and we welcome any feedback from town residents — if you have any places or roads you would like us to look at, we will add them to the list.

Last week, we held a farewell event for our police sergeant, Todd De Sousa, and his wife, Tasma, who are leaving us and moving to Moora. We paused to celebrate the work Todd

has done in our community from a community policing perspective, his voluntary contributions, contributions to the Local Emergency Management Committee, assistance with the community response to both the IGA fire and recent fuel crisis, applying for grants, and generally striving to make the Shire of Gnowangerup a better place. For us all to enjoy We wish Todd and Tasma all the best and look forward to seeing them back in the Shire when they visit for Wild Gravel.

As you all know, Wild Gravel is scheduled to be held on the 24th of October, and we are super excited for this event as it grows from strength to strength. Borden is going to hold a friendly community gravel event on the 8th of October called Borden Backtracks. This is going to be a great opportunity for us all to come together, celebrate the gravel event, and do a bit of practice if we need. Registrations for Borden Backtracks will be opening soon.

Recently, Council held the responsibility of naming the bridge on the way to Mallee Springs on Park Road. The opportunity for community members to make suggestions was offered, and it was terrific to read the many wonderful submissions. Councillor Miniter led the process and engaged with the community for suggestions. *Moort Crossing*, which means "families" in Noongar language was the most popular choice. It also symbolises the history of children of all nationalities coming together to play, hunt, and gather in that area.

At our next council meeting, it will be wonderful to see tenders for roadworks being passed so they can be put out to the public. This is a true advantage of organising our budget so early and getting our rates notices out in August. I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the finance team at the Shire and, of course, our CEO, David Nicholson, both of whom made it their mission to achieve this milestone for the financial betterment of our Shire.

Shire President - Kate O'Keeffe Monthly Message

The weekend just been was the last fixture in the Ongerup Football Association's rounds, and now we move on to finals. The Borden Pavilion hosted the Ongerup Association Winter Sports Award Luncheon and I would like to congratulate all award recipients on their achievements. I wish all teams within the Shire the best of luck for the final season.

As we all look to the skies for rain, I wish everyone in the rural sector good spirits. Hopefully, by the time I write the September newsletter, we will have enjoyed plenty of rain and puddles everywhere.

Ongerup Association Winter Sports Ladders

Football					
League		Reserves		Juniors	
1	Jerramungup	1	Jerramungup	1	Lake Grace/Pingrup
2	Lake Grace/Pingrup	2	Boxwood Hill	2	Gnowangerup
3	Gnowangerup	3	Lake Grace/Pingrup	3	Jerramungup
4	Boxwood Hill	4	Newdegate	4	Newdegate
5	Newdegate	5	Gnowangerup	5	Boxwood Hill

Netball					
A Grade		B Grade		Juniors	
1	Jerramungup	1	Gnowangerup	1	Jerramungup
2	Gnowangerup	2	Newdegate	2	Newdegate
3	Lake Grace/Pingrup	3	Jerramungup	3	Lake Grace/Pingrup
4	Boxwood Hill	4	Lake Grace/Pingrup	4	Gnowangerup
5	Newdegate	5	Boxwood Hill	5	Boxwood Hill

Hockey					
Ladies			Juniors		
1	Newdegate		1	Lake Grace/Pingrup	
2	Gnowangerup		2	Gnowangerup	
3	Boxwood Hill		3	Newdegate	
4	Lake Grace Pingrup		4	Boxwood Hill	
5	Jerramungup		5	Jerramungup	

From the CEO's desk



It has been a busy and productive month for the Shire, with plenty of activity happening across advocacy, governance, community events, infrastructure and staff development.

We continue to advocate for fairer treatment for regional medical services which included an important advocacy trip to Canberra, where the Shire joined five other councils in continuing to push this important cause. Together, the alliance is seeking improved funding to help offset the significant costs rural communities face in securing access to a local GP. Residents already contribute through Medicare, out-of-pocket GP fees and local rates and it is important that this issue continues to be raised at the highest levels.

There have also been several staff updates to share. A warm welcome is extended to Emily Murray (Wild Gravel Social Media) and Chloe Watson (Regulatory Support and Contracts) in their new roles. Congratulations to Venice Ampon on her excellent Diploma in Accounting results, and to Penny Wells and Rory Murray, who attended the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's National Impact Forum in Mildura. Their participation recognises the strong contribution they continue to make to the Shire and wider community.

Planning is well underway for Wild Gravel 2026 and excitement is building. Following last year's strong turnout of competitors, volunteers and spectators, the Community Development team is working hard to make the next event even bigger and better. With options ranging from a five-kilometre walk through to endurance rides and untamed events, there will be something for everyone.

Council and the Shire's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) had meetings during the month, and both had full agendas. We recently adopted a new approach to ARIC meetings with this proving valuable, allowing more discussion and better-informed decision-making. Council briefings and workshops covered a wide range of important matters, including the Virginia Estate Business Case; Workforce Planning; the Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP); the Council Plan; the Community Emergency Services Manager operating model; Strategic Waste Planning; Weir Park upgrade; and the Gnowangerup Caravan Park Strategy.



From the CEO's desk

A recent visit to the Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation and Heritage Centre was a powerful and humbling experience. The displays share the history and stories of the Gnowangerup Noongar people, including difficult truths about past discrimination. It was an important reminder that reconciliation is an ongoing journey and that listening, learning and acknowledging history are essential steps forward.

The Shire is also making strong progress on its roads programme. Early budget approval has enabled Council to call tenders sooner than last year, helping secure contractors, competitive pricing and an earlier start on grading and repair works. This is a significant achievement and reflects the proactive work being done by the team.

Finally, there has been positive news regarding the sale of surplus Shire land. Council's decision to sell selected lots in House Street, Whitehead Road and Carpenter Street, Ongerup is aimed at supporting future housing development. Competitive submissions were received and the best offers are being considered. This is an encouraging step toward seeing more homes built in our communities.



The above photos are taken inside the Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation headquarters. Manager Peter Twigg gave Shire staff and their families an overview of the organisation, which encompasses the Ngowanjerindj Rangers program, and their recent achievements. The rangers work closely with the Gnowangerup bushfire mitigation crew and there will be more information on that in coming editions.

Peter also gave us the exciting news of renovations to the building. They have recently had the kitchen replaced, they're currently putting up a shed for storage, next up is new flooring. This is all due to tremendous efforts in applying for funding and lobbying for their corporation.

The Wild Gravel team are also working with the Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation on ways to further showcase their culture through the Wild Gravel event in October, stay tuned for more!

Roads with Rick – Infrastructure and Assets



Wet Roads and Road Closures – Protecting Our Gravel Road Network

“Closing a road following heavy rainfall protects motorists from unsafe conditions and prevents damage that can take considerable time and money to repair.”

Winter rainfall can quickly change conditions across the Shire’s extensive gravel road network. Roads that appear trafficable may have saturated pavement, soft shoulders, hidden washouts or water flowing across floodways. These hazards may not always be obvious to approaching motorists.

Why Gravel Roads Are Closed

Following significant rainfall, the Shire may temporarily close individual roads or sections of the gravel road network. These decisions are made to protect public safety and prevent vehicles from causing extensive damage while the road pavement is wet and vulnerable.

Driving on a saturated gravel road can create deep wheel ruts, damage the road’s shape and drainage, and make the road unsafe for other users. This damage can remain long after the road has dried and may require substantial grading, gravel replacement and repair work.

Road closures remain in place until Shire staff have inspected the affected roads and determined that they are safe to reopen. Motorists must obey all road-closure signs and use an alternative route.

Staying Informed About Road Closures

The Shire provides advice about road closures and reopening decisions through its text message notification system and social media channels. During and following significant rainfall, residents, farmers, contractors and other road users are encouraged to monitor these updates before travelling on the gravel road network.

Road conditions can change quickly, and further closures may be introduced as inspections are completed. Motorists must obey all road-closure signage, avoid closed roads and use an alternative route until the Shire confirms that the road has reopened.

Residents who would like to receive text message notifications can contact the Shire office on 08 9827 1007.



Roads with Rick – Infrastructure and Assets

Driving Following a Rain Event

Even when a road remains open, motorists should expect changed conditions after rainfall. Water may be present across floodways, potholes and washouts may have developed, and road shoulders may be soft or unstable.

Reduce your speed, allow additional stopping distance and avoid sudden braking or steering. Never drive through floodwater when you cannot confidently determine its depth, the strength of the current or the condition of the road underneath.

“As always, it is your responsibility to drive to conditions and be safe.”

Notice a Problem? Please Report It

The community plays an important role in helping the Shire identify road damage and hazards following rainfall. Issues such as flooding, washouts, damaged culverts, fallen trees, missing signs, severe rutting or other road hazards can be reported through:

- Phone: 08 9827 1007
- Email: gnpshire@gnowangerup.wa.gov.au
- Snap Send Solve: Use the free mobile app
- Shire website: www.gnowangerup.wa.gov.au
- In person: Shire Administration Office, 28 Yougenup Road, Gnowangerup.

When reporting a problem, please provide the road name, approximate location or nearest landmark, the type of hazard and, if possible, photographs taken from a safe location. Clear information helps Shire staff find the problem, assess the risk and arrange an appropriate response more quickly.

Do not enter a closed road or place yourself in danger to inspect or photograph an issue.

Road Safety – Community Feedback in Action

Following feedback from local residents, the Shire has relocated the electronic speed-feedback “smiley” signs on Moir Street in Borden and Jaekel Street in Ongerup.

The revised locations will improve the visibility and effectiveness of the signs by reminding motorists to check their speed as they travel through the townsites. Community feedback assists the Shire in identifying local road-safety concerns and determining where measures such as speed-feedback signs can provide the greatest benefit.



Roads with Rick – Infrastructure and Assets

Strategic Projects – Thank You to Participating Landowners

The Shire would like to thank the landowners who provided property access to the consultant recently undertaking visual assessments for the Strategic Gravel Resource Plan.

Your cooperation and local knowledge are greatly appreciated. The information gathered through these assessments will assist the Shire in developing a map of potential gravel resources across the district. This will support better long-term planning for gravel sourcing, road maintenance and future renewal works while helping the Shire identify resources located closer to planned project areas. Once agreements are in place and gravel is pushed up, these stockpiles will be signposted and identified as shire stockpiles for shire roads.

How You Can Help Us Help You.

Drive to conditions, slow down around road crews and worksites, and report hazards or storm damage promptly. Together, responsible driving, sound planning and continued investment will help deliver a safer and more resilient road network.



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Have Your Say on the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

The Shire of Gnowangerup is inviting the community to help shape its updated Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP).

A Disability Access and Inclusion Plan helps guide how the Shire can improve access to buildings, facilities, services, information, community events and employment opportunities, ensuring people with disability have the same opportunities to participate in community life as everyone else.

Community feedback is an important part of developing the new plan. Whether you have a disability, care for someone who does, work in the disability sector or simply have ideas about how accessibility and inclusion could be improved, your input is encouraged.

Providing feedback is quick and easy. Complete the short online survey, collect a printed feedback form from the Shire Administration Office, call the Shire to provide your comments over the phone, or email your feedback directly to stuart.drummond@gnowangerup.wa.gov.au.

The online survey and more information are available on the Shire website.

Feedback closes Friday 28 August 2026.

Every suggestion received will help identify practical improvements that support a more accessible and inclusive Shire of Gnowangerup for everyone.



Monday Night Sports – Giving Young People More Ways to Get Involved

Monday Night Sports is the latest activity being delivered as part of a broader Shire initiative aimed at giving local young people more opportunities to get active, try something new and connect with their community.

The program came about following conversations between the Shire of Gnowangerup and local Police, with a shared concern that some young people were experiencing boredom and were not engaging in community activities.

While there is great participation in traditional local sports such as football, hockey and netball, organised sport isn't for everyone. Some young people may not be interested in traditional sports, while others may not have the equipment, ability to commit to a full season, or means to pay registration and other costs.

The aim was to create opportunities that are free, fun and non-committal – where young people from Gnowangerup and Tambellup can simply turn up, have a go and be included.

To help make this possible, the Shire successfully applied for a Place Based Sport and Recreation Grant through the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport.

Since receiving the funding, local young people have had the opportunity to take part in basketball clinics with former Wildcats Greg Hire and Damian Martin, football clinics, dance, martial arts and a range of other activities.

The latest part of the program is Monday Night Sports, working with State Sporting Associations and other providers to bring quality 'have a go' sessions to Gnowangerup.

There is no need to be part of a club or have previous experience. The sessions are about having fun, trying different activities and giving every young person an opportunity to participate.

MONDAY NIGHT SPORTS



Session 1 | 5–9yrs 5–6pm

Session 2 | 10+yrs 6–7pm

 **Every Monday**  **Sporting Complex**

New Ongerup Bushfire Brigade Shed nearing completion



Construction of the new Emergency Services Facility continues to progress, with the project now entering its final stages.

Recent works have focused on the building's internal fit-out, with the toilet and wash-up facilities taking shape. External wall cladding is now in its final stage, while plumbing and electrical installation are expected to be completed by the end of July.

Connection of water, septic and power services is planned for early August, with the facility on track to open in late August 2026.

Once an opening date has been confirmed, an invitation will be extended to the State Emergency Service Minister to officially open the facility.



WILD GRAVEL NEWS



Live on the Big Screen at Wild Gravel

Wild Gravel 2026 is bringing even more of the action into Event Village, with live coverage from out on course broadcast straight to the big screen!

Last week, the Wild Gravel team met with John from Dartfish – who you may have seen filming at local football matches – to work through the logistics of capturing the action across the course and beaming it back to Event Village.



The big screen will give spectators a chance to follow participants as they make their way through the spectacular Stirling Range, creating a great atmosphere and keeping Event Village connected to the action throughout the day.

There will also be a fantastic opportunity for local sponsors and businesses to get involved, with pre-recorded interviews and advertising to feature throughout the broadcast.

The Gnowangerup Aboriginal Corporation is also coming on board to help share the cultural significance of the Stirling Range with the audience, adding another important layer to the stories being told throughout the day.

It is shaping up to be an exciting new addition to Wild Gravel 2026!

Volunteer Registration now open

Not much of a runner? Don't own a bike? That's ok, we still want your involvement in Wild Gravel 2026. There are so many fun ways to help out on the day that puts you right in the heart of the action! Head out on course to man a pit stop or marshal and cheer the participants on, or stay in event village and help with registrations, selling merch or logistics. There are many options to suit you so why not get in touch with Neah today on 9827 1007 to find out more or sign up through the Wild Gravel website, wildgravel.com.au



“

I loved volunteering at Wild Gravel because it's such a great community event with a fantastic atmosphere. You can choose a volunteering time that suits you, meet wonderful people, and enjoy a delicious lunch while helping out. It's a fun and rewarding way to get involved.

”

How would you like to receive your monthly Shire newsletter?



- ☒ Delivered to my PO Box
- ☒ Online on the Shire website
- ☒ Pick up from Shire office/CRC
- ☒ On social media



The Shire newsletter is published on the first Thursday of every month and is packed with updates on local events, road works, projects, Council decisions, community opportunities and more. It's one of the best ways to stay informed about what's happening across the Shire. The challenge is making sure it reaches everyone. Rather than printing hundreds of copies that may go unread, the Shire would like to know how you would prefer to receive your newsletter.



Printed copy – Call the Shire office and register to have a copy placed in your PO Box each month.



Email notification – Register your email address and receive a reminder when the latest newsletter is available online.



Online – Read it anytime on the Shire website under Council > News & Information, or use the quick link on the homepage.

However you choose to receive it, the important thing is that you stay connected with what's happening in your community.

To register for a printed copy or email notification, contact the Shire office on (08) 9827 1007.

Telstra Disruption

4G/5G Upgrade 14-23 August

Telstra will be upgrading its mobile base station that services Gnowangerup to bring a better 4G and 5G user experience.

Mobile services in the area will be temporarily disrupted while the upgrade works are underway.

Upgrade works will commence on site from Friday 14 August for a period of 9 days.

During these works, the site will need to be switched off for periods of up to 8 hours to safely complete works.

While we do our best to deliver planned works as scheduled, there may be occasions where timings or impacts change due to factors outside our control. Keep up to date on this outage via telstra.com/mobile-outages

Important details

Telstra mobile customers will receive an SMS advising of the upcoming work.

These works will not impact NBN, Satellite internet services, PSTN landline services, or mobile coverage from other providers.

Any calls to Triple Zero from a Telstra mobile when the site is off air will automatically connect to another mobile network if available for connection to emergency services.

For more information and tips on how to prepare, visit telstra.com/mobile-outages

Regards,

Telstra Regional Australia

MEET THE AUTHORS

Jeffrey Peirce



AUGUST 19, 2026



12:00pm



FREE LUNCH

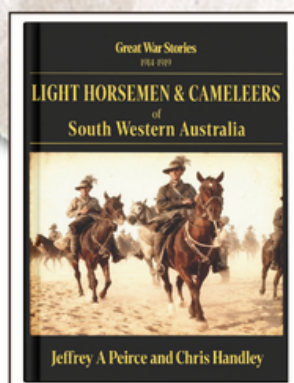


Gnowangerup CRC,
47 Yougenup Rd

Chris Handley



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



YOUTH SURVEY: AI IN EDUCATION



Are you between 15-25?



We want to hear from you!

Fill out the survey and go
into the draw to win a
\$100 voucher!

Survey closes 23 August 2026



Survey opportunity: Have your say on AI's role in education!

The Fogarty Foundation wants to hear from young people aged 15–25 across Western Australia about how AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude and Copilot should be used in schools and education.

The Generation AI Youth Survey is anonymous, takes around 10 minutes, and gives you the chance to go into the draw to win a \$100 voucher. Your responses will contribute to a Youth Insights Paper shared with government, education leaders, researchers and industry which will shape the decisions that get made about AI's role in education.

If you would like to participate, the survey will close at 11.59 pm on Sunday 23 August 2026: AI Youth Survey



It's as easy as

One

Two

Tree



Plant a Native Tree and Receive a Rebate

Western Australians are being encouraged to help grow greener, cooler communities through the WA Government's Treebate program.

The initiative provides eligible residents aged 18 years and over with a rebate of up to \$150 when they purchase and plant an eligible Australian native tree on their private property.

Native trees do more than enhance a garden. They provide shade, improve local biodiversity, create habitat for wildlife and contribute to cooler neighbourhoods. Across the Great Southern, mature native trees are a defining feature of the landscape, and planting more today will help ensure future generations enjoy the same benefits.

To claim the rebate, participants should:

- Purchase an eligible Australian native tree capable of reaching at least three metres in height at maturity.
- Keep the tax invoice.
- Take a photo of the plant label.
- Submit the claim through the ServiceWA app.

The Treebate program opened in July 2025 and will continue for four years.

For more information, including eligibility criteria and a list of eligible species, visit wa.gov.au/treebate.

CYBER SAFETY WORKSHOPS

With Catriona Forde from calT

Open to GGA Network Members and regional WA not-for-profit community groups.



Cyber Resilience for Regional Not-for-Profit Groups



Wednesday 19 August



Pagoda Resort, South Perth



10:00 AM – 12:00 PM



FREE



Practical workshop helping regional groups understand evolving cyber threats, including AI-driven scams, recognise attacks, and apply simple steps to protect operations and data.

Cyber Resilience Health Check: Turning Awareness into Action



Wednesday 19 August



Pagoda Resort, South Perth



1:00 PM – 3:00 PM



FREE



Hands-on workshop helping regional groups assess cyber resilience, identify priorities, and create practical action plans to strengthen security without technical expertise or large budgets. Participants will leave with a tailored, practical action plan for their business.



**GROWER
GROUP
ALLIANCE**
Together we grow



An initiative of the GGA Capacity Building Program, enabled through support from the CBH Community Investment Fund