

OCTOBER 2025

Welcome to Kambarang The Wildflower season.

THIS MONTH...

A message from our
Shire President
and CEO

Wild Gravel 2025

WALGA 2025
Convention



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



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Shire President - Kate O'Keeffe Monthly Message



There is only a week to go before our Wild Gravel Weekend, and I hope your households are as excited as mine. Next Friday will see the warm-up event held in the town of Gnowangerup, followed by Saturday's Wild Gravel Run in the most beautiful part of our Shire – the Stirling Range National Park. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Shire staff for their hard work in preparation for this event, and most importantly, our incredible community volunteers who once again have put up their hand to help out both in the lead up to the event and on the day. Without them, events like this simply would not be possible.

As always, there is much happening within the Shire. Yesterday I had the privilege of speaking with the Hon. Emma McBride, Federal Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health. We discussed the significant imposition that has fallen upon local governments in providing doctors to support both our communities and local hospitals. This remains an ongoing challenge for our Shire, and one we will continue to advocate strongly on.

On Tuesday, Council held its September Ordinary Meeting, and it was wonderful to see so many community members in attendance. I remind everyone that our meetings are open to the public – you are welcome to join us, ask questions during public question time, or simply observe proceedings. Questions raised can often be answered on the day if the information is available, or alternatively, taken on notice and answered formally at the following meeting.

Our recent Council elections saw three of the four vacant positions filled. An extraordinary election will therefore be held in March 2026 to fill the remaining seat. I encourage community members with an interest in shaping the future of our Shire to consider nominating. A full Council of seven members is vital for strong representation and decision-making.

Congratulations must go to the Ongerup community for hosting the opening of the 2025 Blooms Festival. Almost 300 people attended the luncheon and associated events on Saturday, 27 September. It was wonderful to see Ongerup celebrated in the Great Southern, and I extend my thanks to Cr Mick Creagh for representing the Shire as MC on the day.

This month will also see Borden Primary School celebrating its 100-year anniversary. It will no doubt be an incredible celebration of the school's history, and as a member of their board I am delighted to be attending. For Borden community members who attended the school, I am sure this will be an amazing opportunity to reconnect with old classmates and families. I wish everyone the very best for the celebration and look forward to seeing it unfold.

Shire President - Kate O'Keeffe Monthly Message

In September, our CEO David Nicholson and Councillors Kiddle, Callaghan & Minter attended WALGA Local Government Week. The Rural Health Alliance motion – seeking support for increased funding to assist local governments that are currently subsidising GP services – was endorsed, which is a very positive outcome. I also congratulate our CEO on his excellent presentation, which showcased the Fields and Fortunes event and promoted the impressive work being done within our Shire. His commitment to highlighting our region on the state stage is to be commended.

As mentioned last month, Council is aware of growing community interest in the proposed renewable energy project in our shire. At this stage, no formal development application has been submitted. Council continues to build its knowledge in this area and will engage with all stakeholders. Further community consultation is expected to take place in the New Year.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Cr Shelley Hmeljak and Cr Lex Martin for their dedicated service to the community during their time on Council. Their years of commitment and contribution are greatly appreciated.

Finally, as we prepare for the Wild Gravel Weekend, I again wish all competitors the very best and extend my sincere gratitude to staff and volunteers for their dedication and effort. I look forward to seeing many of you at the events and sharing in what will no doubt be another outstanding showcase of our Shire.



WALGA 2025 Convention – Reflections by Cr Callaghan

The WALGA 2025 Convention once again brought together Local Government representatives from across Western Australia to share knowledge, hear from leading thinkers, and reflect on the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for our sector. This year our Shire was represented by Councillors Kiddle, Minter and Callaghan and our CEO David Nicholson.

Highlights from the Program

The program offered a broad mix of perspectives. Among the keynote speakers was futurist Dr Richard Hames, who encouraged Local Government to embrace its unique strength as “the custodian of place and belonging.” He reminded us that, through close connections with community, councils can provide the listening and responsiveness that often proves difficult for other levels of government. His message was clear: Local Government continues to play a vital role in maintaining trust and democracy at a grassroots level.

We also heard from Kristy McBain, Federal Minister for Local Government, who confirmed that the long-awaited national report into Local Government Sustainability is due for release soon. The State Minister, Hannah Beazley, contributed an address as well. Their remarks highlight the ongoing attention being given to issues of financial sustainability and governance across our sector.

Energy and Infrastructure

A valuable session was provided by Western Power, outlining the progress being made in renewable energy generation. Currently, around 40% of total electricity generation in Western Australia is renewable, with half of that coming from rooftop solar feeding into the grid. Government subsidies for household battery storage are expected to reduce peak demand while also increasing self-sufficiency—an important development for future energy resilience. While much of the investment in new transmission lines is focused on the northern wheatbelt, the broader trends are highly relevant to all regional communities.

Broader Contributions

The Convention also included keynote presentations from respected figures Glenn McGrath and Adam Goodes. Both shared insights that reached beyond sport, focusing on resilience, leadership, and the importance of inclusion in modern Australian life. These contributions were well received and added to the richness of the program.

WALGA 2025 Convention – Reflections by Cr Callaghan cont.

Reflections and Value

Like any large gathering, some sessions were more engaging than others, but overall the Convention provided significant value. It offered professional learning, exposure to fresh ideas, and opportunities to network with councillors and staff from across the State. Attending such events helps ensure that our Shire remains informed and connected to broader trends and debates shaping Local Government.

Looking Ahead

The WALGA Convention is not just a chance to learn, but also an important forum for reinforcing the role of Local Government in building stronger communities. I would encourage councillors and staff to consider attending the 2026 Convention to continue this vital exchange of ideas and experiences.



Update from the Chief Executive Officer - David Nicholson



Roads

One of the fundamental tenets of a local government is to ensure its roads are in good order. Delivering on this commitment is however a perpetual challenge given the length of the road system and resources in terms of money and staff. While the Shire receives grants from the State to help offset the cost, the lions share rests with the local government.

The Shire has budgeted \$3.4m in 2025/26 to maintain our road network.

A big part of road maintenance includes gravel re-sheeting and I'm pleased to advise we went to the market seeking tenders to undertake this work in mid-September and received a strong response. We're currently working through these responses and a report will be presented to Council in the near future with a recommendation to award.

The work includes re-sheeting portions of Oakdale Road, Jackitup West, Tie Line Road, Old Ongerup Road, Magitup Road, Sandalwood Road, Cowallellup Road and Jackitup Road North.

Housing

One of the Shire's priorities is housing and we've been working with the Great Southern Development Commission developing a research paper, and now a business case, to access grant funds. With a rates base of only \$5.3m from which the Shire must pay all its bills, this leaves the Shire with little to spend on major projects such as housing.

We've budgeted to take out a \$2.0m loan in 2025/26 to build three staff houses, and we're in the process of preparing a business case to build a complex of houses in Quinn Street. The Quinn Street project is likely to cost over \$10.0m and given this complex will be designed to accommodate State and Shire staff, it's appropriate that the State provides financial assistance.

The Shire is also making progress on assessing the viability of releasing lifestyle blocks as part of the Virginia Estate. This is a large tranche of land on the edge of Gnowangerup and if viable, will see land become available for those who would like extra large blocks from one to three hectares in size.

Development WA are also nearing the end of preparatory work to release six residential blocks on Corbett and Whitehead Roads. This land will be available for sale over the next few weeks.

Wild Gravel 2025

Building on the success of Wild Gravel 2024, Wild Gravel 2025 is taking place on Friday 10 and Saturday 11 October. The Friday event is a free community event which includes the opportunity to ride with the Wild Gravel Ambassadors or participate in a 5km or 10km gravel run. Saturday 11 October is the big day. Same as last year it takes place in the Stirling Ranges. We currently have nearly 500 registered participants.



Government of Western Australia
Department of Transport
and Major Infrastructure



FREE ENTRY

GNOWANGERUP COMMUNITY GRAVEL



2025



**FRI, 10 OCTOBER | 2PM - ONWARDS
AT THE GNOWANGERUP COMMUNITY PARK**

-  Ride with our Wild Gravel Ambassadors
-  Timed Gravel Run 5km or 10km
-  Gravel Riding Workshop
-  Junior Bike Course and Guided Ride
-  Heaps of Prizes Up for Grabs
-  Bike Check and Repair
-  Food Vendors and more
-  Music and Entertainment

- 2PM | Kids Activities
- 3PM | Ambassador Ride
- 3:30PM | 5km Run
- 4PM | 10km Run
- 5PM | Night Continues



Southern
Ports



We  WA Bike Month

wabikemonth.com.au

KOI KYEUNU-RUFF
STIRLING RANGE NATIONAL PARK, WA
11 OCTOBER 2025

**WILD
GRAVEL
2025**

RACE

100|150

RIDE

12|30|60|100|150

RUN

5|12|21|42

RIDE + RUN

5+12|12+30|21+60

**WALK
OR RUN**

5|12



wildgravel.com.au

Wild Gravel/Gnowangerup Community Gravel

Wild Gravel Weekend is Coming!

The countdown is on for Wild Gravel 2025 – an action-packed weekend of cycling, running and community fun right here in the heart of the Stirling Range.

Gnowangerup Community Gravel – Friday 10 October

The weekend kicks off in town with Gnowangerup Community Gravel, a family-friendly afternoon of activities at 40 Yougenup Road (the vacant block opposite Nobarach Community Park). From 2.00pm, enjoy:

- A 5km kids' and family ride
- A 10km warm-up ride for anyone keen to stretch the legs before the big day
- Stalls, food and plenty of community atmosphere

Registration pack collection for Wild Gravel will also be available here from 2.00–6.00pm.

Please note: Aylmore Street will be closed between Yougenup Road and the laneway during the event.

Wild Gravel – Saturday 11 October

The main event takes over the Stirling Range with riders and runners lining up from 7.00am on Stirling Range Drive in the Stirling Range National Park. Whether you're competing or cheering on, it's set to be an unforgettable day.

The Event Village will be buzzing with stalls, food trucks and live entertainment – everyone is welcome to come along and soak up the atmosphere. On the front page of this newsletter you will see the location of this years event village with a stunning view of Toolbrunup Peak.

Getting there:

- Spectators are encouraged to use the shuttle bus service from Mt Trio Bush Camp & Caravan Park.
- Parking is also available along Stirling Range Drive. If you park 7km from the start line, don't worry – regular buses will be running to and from the Event Village.

For more information visit wildgravel.com.au and check out the event guide.





Congratulations Ongerup on a wonderful Bloom Festival Opening



Image by Jenny Feast

Shire of



GNOWANGERUP

BORDEN ♦ GNOWANGERUP ♦ ONGERUP

Heart of the Stirlings

**IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS
OF PROPERTIES IN THE SHIRE OF GNOWANGERUP**

2025/2026 FIREBREAK AND FUEL HAZARD REDUCTION ORDER

Bush Fires Act 1954 – Section 33

FIREBREAKS

**MUST BE INSTALLED ON ALL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE SHIRE BY
15 OCTOBER 2025
AND MAINTAINED CLEAR OF ALL FLAMMABLE MATERIAL
UP TO AND INCLUDING
30 APRIL 2026**

DATES YOU MUST REMEMBER

RESTRICTED BURNING PERIOD	PROHIBITED BURNING PERIOD *NO BURNING ALLOWED*	RESTRICTED BURNING PERIOD
15 OCTOBER TO 31 OCTOBER You must obtain a permit to burn from your nearest Fire Control Officer	1 NOVEMBER TO 16 FEBRUARY *Protective Burning may be carried out between 4pm – 12 midnight provided you obtain a permit from your nearest Fire Control Officer	17 FEBRUARY TO 30 APRIL You must obtain a permit to burn from your nearest Fire Control Officer



Borden Primary School CENTENARY

A CENTURY OF MEMORIES:
BORDEN PRIMARY TURNS 100!



Friday, 17th October 2025

1:30 - 4:00 PM

Borden Primary School

Join us for a special centenary assembly,
exciting school tours, P&C afternoon tea,
and the burial of a time capsule.

Everyone welcome!

FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2025

BORDEN DEVELOPMENT GROUP INC. PRESENTS

BORDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

SOLD OUT

BUT PLEASE SIGN UP TO THE WAITLIST

BORDEN PAVILION

FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2025 - 5PM

- . Sit down dinner from local caterers **Table & Thyme**
 - . Live music from Albany's **The Numbats**
 - . Special video screening by **Our Photo Stories**
- . Kids meals & free creche (under 5, bookings essential)

LIMITED TICKETS

events.humanitix.com/bps100

or scan the QR code



Borden Primary School Centenary daytime event 1.30 - 4pm: assembly, school tours, P&C afternoon tea & time capsule burial - free, all welcome, no ticket required.