

## FROM THE COAST

### Local Government Week

Last week was Local Government Week, an annual delegation giving those involved in the local government sector the opportunity to expand their knowledge and meet with inspiring community representatives from all over the world with wide and varied experience. This is a valuable form of support and information for elected Members, Chief Executive Officers and upper management of local shires, enabling us to bring that new knowledge and perspective back for the benefit of our communities, as well as sharing some of the knowledge we've gained for the benefit of others facing similar challenges.

The theme this year, local impact, kept us all enthralled and focused as we listened to examples of how one person can make an impact on their local community. All of our councillors who attended have come home with new ideas and motivation. There were many inspiring guest speakers at the conference, providing an opportunity to see how we might do things differently, and what we are doing well. Dealing with the ebbs and flows of the economic environment is something our Shire continues to do effectively by maintaining responsible, financially sustainable plans and strategies that focus on a better future for Esperance.

Transparency and empowerment are always important for Local Governments and were one of the topics of discussion. Transparency can help to demonstrate what your Local Government does for you, as well as empowering communities by better understanding Council business and financial realities. Not everyone is a financial expert so this topic gave us the skills and tools to help present information in a way that everyone can understand. Working together, community members, all levels of Government and the not-for-profit sector can produce significant outcomes that benefit our community as a whole.

With the fires experienced last year, the topic of Emergency Management was a particularly relevant one for our Shire, which was covered at the conference. Work undertaken by the Shire was not limited to response, communication and coordination during the emergency, but also long term support to help those affected, the recovery of our environment and keeping the day to day business of the organisation running. At Local Government Week, we had the opportunity to share our experience and also to see a fresh perspective on Emergency Management enabling us to better enhance recovery and build community resilience into the future.

We were delighted and excited to receive a high commendation for our entry into the Banners in the Terrace competition, a banner designed by local resident, Tanya Jenkyn. The kangaroo on the beach flew proudly in the terrace and certainly stood out from the crowd. Congratulations Tanya.

Being away from home always provides clarity and in this case it has reinforced that we are an inclusive and involved community. Our slogan "We Make It Happen" is more than a catch cry – it's who we are. We are a community that values every member's opinion and that take the opportunity to fully participate in the life we enjoy in Esperance.