



Shire of Lake Grace

22 October 2025

Ordinary Council Meeting

INFORMATION BULLETIN

ITEM 16.0 - ATTACHMENTS

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Information Bulletin
Infrastructure Services Report

Shire of Lake Grace

Prepared for the October 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting
presenting information to the end of September 2025

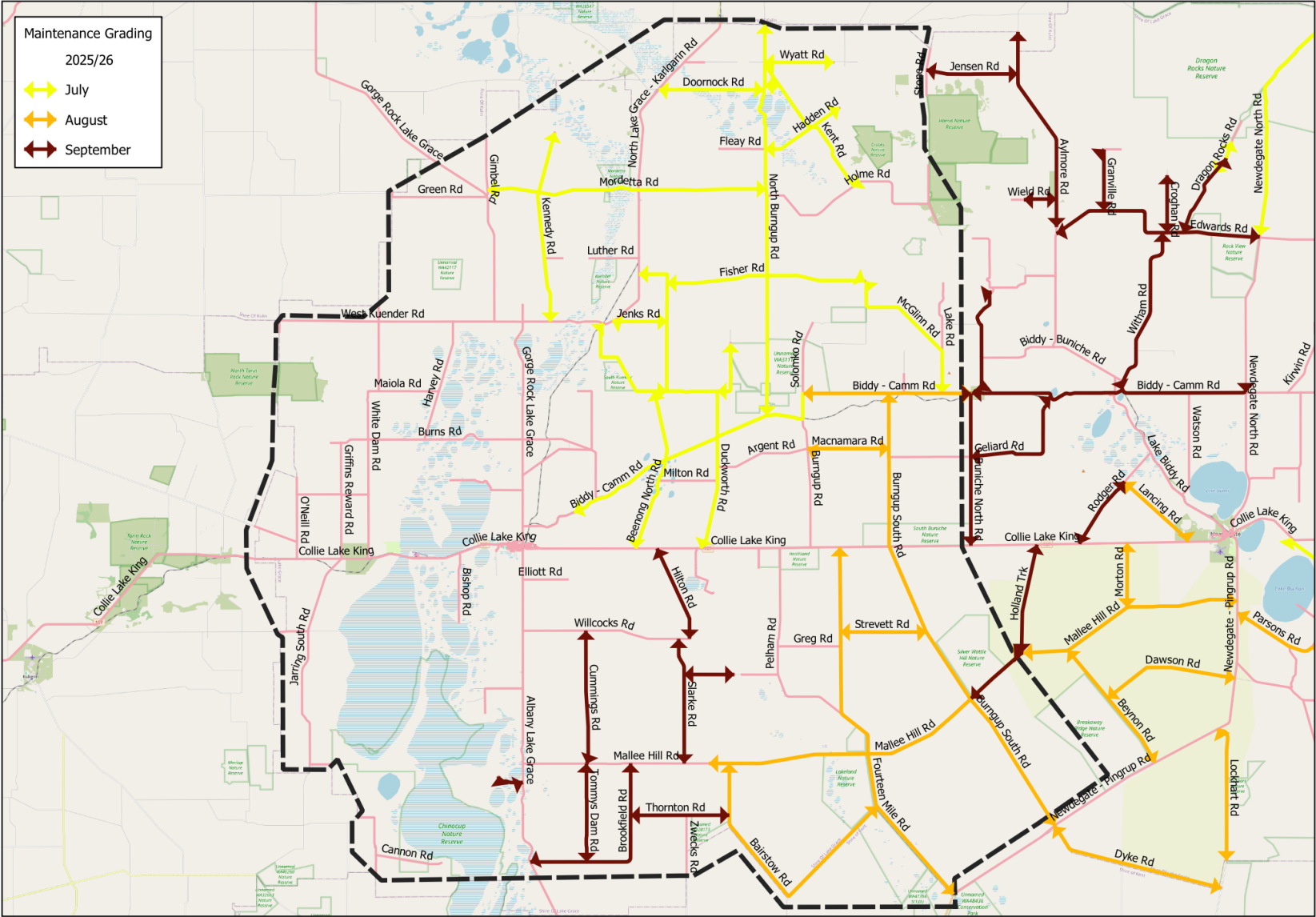
Road Maintenance Grading

For the month of September 2025

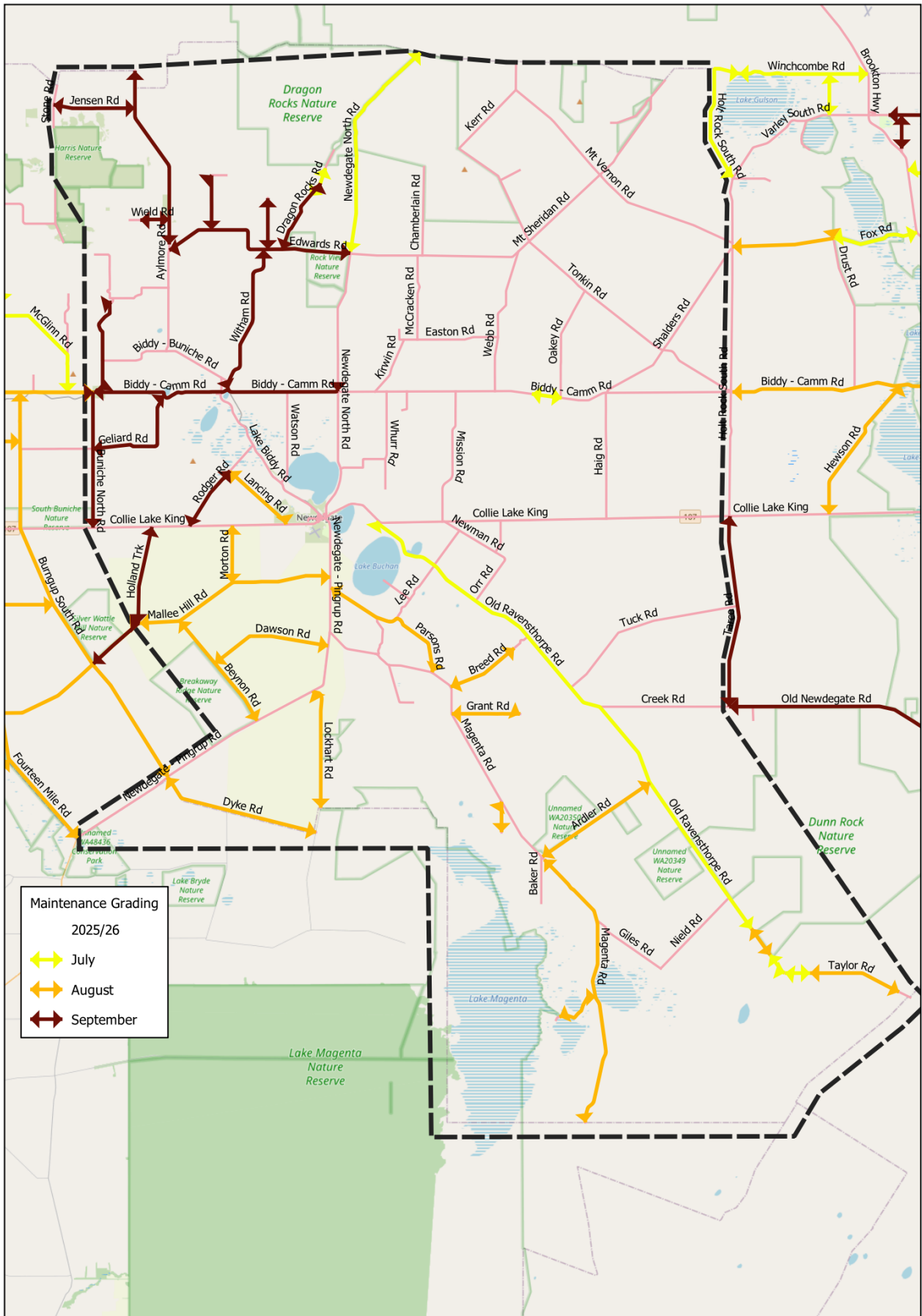
<i>Lake Grace Area</i>		<i>Newdegate Area</i>		<i>Lake King-Varley Area</i>	
<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Graded (km)</i>	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Graded (km)</i>	<i>Road Name</i>	<i>Graded (km)</i>
Beetacoo Rd	2.03	Aylmore Rd	15.18	Carstairs Rd	15.96
Brookfield Rd	14.40	Biddy Camm Rd	23.76	Frenchs Rd	2.72
Cummings Rd	9.74	Buniche North Rd	18.98	Kanny Rd	9.91
Hilton Rd	7.13	Croghan Rd	4.21	Long Creek Rd	2.90
Jugos West Rd	4.15	Dragon Rock Rd	6.45	Magdhaba Tr	5.60
Mallee Hill Rd	5.08	Edwards Rd	17.08	Mallee Tree Rd	9.32
Slarke Rd	9.21	Geliard Rd	9.66	Milstead Rd	5.23
Thornton Rd	7.24	Granville Rd	4.50	Old Newdegate Rd	36.66
Tommys Dam Rd	7.17	Hollands Track Rd	14.45	Stennetts Lake Rd	11.43
		Jensen Rd	6.95	Tarco Rd	15.80
		McDonald St	0.67	Tuck Rd	0.28
		Rodger Rd	5.67		
		Wield Rd	2.40		
		Witham Rd	12.71		
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>66.15</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>142.67</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>115.81</u>

2025/26 Year-To-Date Grading by Month

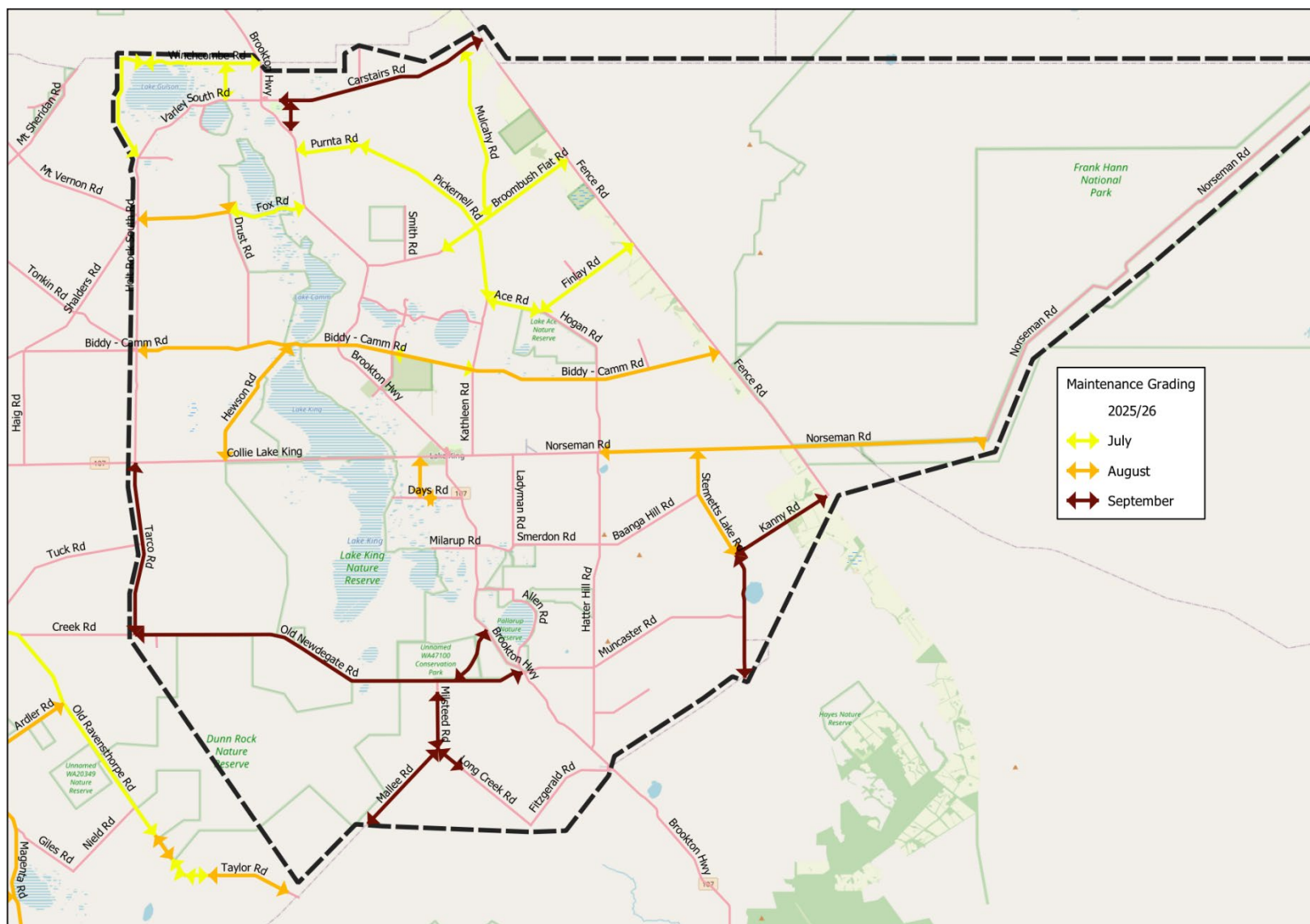
Year	Month	Lake Grace Area (km)	Newdegate Area (km)	Lake King-Varley Area (km)	Monthly Subtotal
2025	July	210.21	72.08	114.49	396.78
	August	134.11	148.09	91.60	373.80
	September	66.15	142.67	115.81	324.63
	October				
	November				
	December				
2026	January				
	February				
	March				
	April				
	May				
	June				
	<u>To-Date</u>	<u>410.47</u>	<u>362.84</u>	<u>321.90</u>	<u>1,095.21</u>



Monthly maintenance grading – Lake Grace area



Monthly maintenance grading – Newdegate area



Monthly maintenance grading – Lake King-Varley area

Plant Maintenance

Plant Acquisitions

- Caterpillar 950GC Wheel Loader.
- Caterpillar CS16 Steel Drum Roller.
- John Deere Ride-on Mower

Plant Repairs

Plant	Plant Description	Action
PLVU45	2020 Ford Ranger Ute	Puncture repair.
PLVU46	2020 Ford Ranger Ute	20,000 km service.
PLVU58	2023 Isuzu D-Max Crew Cab	Tyre repair.
PLVU63	2024 Isuzu MU-X	30,000 km service.
PGRA08	2020 Cat 140 Motor Grader	2,000 hour service.
PROL11	2022 Cat CW34 Tyre Roller	General service.

Building Construction & Maintenance

Capital

- Nil.

Maintenance

Lake Grace

- Daycare.
- Hall, Lakes Village.
- Hall, Public.
- "Pink Building" on Stubbs Street.
- Shire Depot.
- Shire Office.
- Toilets, Railway Station.

Newdegate

- Country Club.
- Public Hall.

Lake King

- Nil.

Varley

- Public Hall.

Other

- Nil.

Parks & Gardens Maintenance

Lake Grace

- General maintenance, gardening/mowing & tidying of gardens and parks.
- Cut back of vegetation behind Lake Grace Visitor Centre.
- Mosquito fogging during evenings.

Newdegate

- General maintenance, gardening/mowing of the recreation grounds, parks and skate park.
- Waste collection during Newdegate Machinery Field Days.
- Mosquito fogging during evenings.

Lake King

- Carried out general gardening, mowing and spraying to all parks and gardens.

Varley

- Carried out gardening maintenance and general maintenance, including spraying, mowing, raking of the town site, sports complex and cemetery for weeds.

Pingaring

- Nil.

Customer Service Requests

For the period of 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025:

Category	Complete	Incomplete	Total	% Complete
Works	13	3	16	81.3%
Building	13	8	21	61.9%
Parks & Gardens	5	0	5	100.0%
<i>Total</i>	<u>31</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>73.8%</u>



INFORMATION BULLETIN

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT

July - September 2025

HEALTH

This report is to highlight issues and activities ongoing within the environmental health area for the period July - September 2025

Events

- Newdegate Machinery Field Days

Food Businesses

Inspected the following premises for Food Act compliance-

- Newdegate IGA
- Lake Grace Hotel
- IGA Lake Grace
- Rosies Café and Bakery
- Spenser's Shearing Kitchen
- Mrs G's Catering
- The Gate Catering
- Newdegate Hotel
- Hollands Track Farm
- Overall Farms
- Lake King Agencies
- Lake King Tavern
- Lake King Sports Pavillion
- Lake King Memorial Hall
- Varley Ag Services

Food Recall Notices circulated to all food businesses

- Coles Supermarkets- Peanut Butter Smooth 1kg and Peanut Butter Crunchy 1kg
- UPDATED 04.08.2025 | Innovative Nutrition Solutions Pty Ltd - Snack Switch Plant Protein Bar Varieties 60g
- Samyang (AUS) Pty Ltd- Oh Gamja 95g and Oh Gamja BBQ 136g
- ALDI Stores- Urban Eats Japanese Style Vegetable Gyoza 750g
- Mondelez Australia Pty Ltd - 10 Piece Sharebag Marvellous Creations Jelly Popping Candy Beanies 160g

- Washed Rind Pty Ltd - Bûche Belle du Bocage
- GLOBAL FOODS GROUP PTY LTD - Mon Ami and Emborg soft cheeses 125g, 200g, 300g
- Caris Grocer trading as Sunrise Trading (WA)- NY Siok Uncooked Prawn Crackers 500g
- UPDATED 22.08.2025 | Cocobella - Cocobella Coconut Yoghurt Products, various sizes, all flavours
- ALDI Stores - Mamia Organic Baby Puffs, Apple & Cinnamon, Blueberry and Carrot flavours 12g
- Woolworths - Seafood Salad 250g
- Aldi Stores - Urban Eats Japanese Style Vegetable Gyoza 750g
- Fine Food WA - Crunchy Brown Rice Salad Bowl 500g
- UPDATED 23.09.2025 | Tasti Products Limited - Smooshed Wholefood and Protein Balls Various Sizes
- UPDATED 23.09.2025 | Aldi Stores - Made Real Wholefood Balls - Various Sizes and Flavours
- Miss Chow's - Various Sauce Products

New Food Standard 3.2.2A notification circulated to all Food Premises, this requires some food premises to have the following from December 2023:

- Food safety supervisors: Food Premises will need to appoint a food safety supervisor for their business.
- Food safety training: All food handlers will need to show they have had food safety training.
- Key food safety controls: Food Premises will need to keep records of important food safety controls or be able to demonstrate safe food handling practices.

Lodging Houses & Caravan Parks

Inspected the following for compliance -

- CBH Lake Grace
- CBH Newdegate
- Spencer's Shearing Lake Grace
- Spencer's Shearing Lake King (Health Act Notice – Unfit for Human Habitation)

Orders and Requisitions

- A4667 – Lot 3092 Newdegate Ravensthorpe Road
- A3755 – 26 Gumtree Drive Lake Grace
- A6937 – 7B Quondong Court Lake Grace
- A6920 – 667 North Lake Grace – Karlagrinn Road, Kuender
- A3585 – Lot 352 Stubbs Street, Lake Grace
- A3637 - 54 Griffin Street, Lake Grace

Onsite Effluent Disposal Systems

- Lot 595, 1033 Biddy-Buniche Road, Buniche
- 2756 Newdegate-Pingrup Road Newdegate WA 6355
- Lot 1 Stennetts Lake Road Mount Madden
- Jam Patch toilets
- Lot 300 Newdegate-Ravensthorpe Road Newdegate
- Lot 607, 500 Newman Road, Newdegate

Pool Water Sampling

- Offseason
- Follow up remediation works Newdegate Pool

Public Buildings

Inspected the following for Health Public Buildings compliance -

- Lake King Sports Pavillion
- Lake King Memorial Hall
- Newdegate Recreation Centre
- Newdegate Hall
- Lake King Tavern
- Newdegate Hotel

Recycled Water Scheme

- Recycled water scheme currently offline
- Annual Report submitted to Department of Health

Stallholder / Street Trading Permits

- Hillz Softserve Van
- Runnin' Roasts

Waste Management

- Ongoing inspections of waste facilities
- Various enquiries for disposal of asbestos
- Works request for clean up of waste sites at Varley and Lake King
- DWER Annual Waste Report

Other

- Food Act 2008 and Public Health Act 2016 Report to Department of Health
- Pool water sampling equipment replacement
- Registration to attend Land Capability Assessment for On-site Wastewater Management Course
- Registration to attend Asbestos Assessor Training
- Lot 4 Pitt Street Varley - Health Act Notice Unfit for Human Habitation
- Lot 5 Pitt Street Varley - Health Act Notice Unfit for Human Habitation
- 11 Morrison Ave Lake Grace – sewerage blockage
- Decision to retain exclusion areas for Swimming Pool Inspections in the Shire of Lake Grace
- Lake King Caravan Park Permanent Site follow up with Joe Douglas and Jason Lip



Brendon Gerrard

Principal Environmental Health Officer

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Email: roeeho@corrigin.wa.gov.au



Registered Building Surveyor BSP2797



July - September 2025 Tourism Statistics

Prepared by Jo Morgan



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Introduction

This document is prepared for the Lake Grace Shire Council to illustrate visiting statistics to the Lake Grace Visitor Centre.

It is a snapshot of visitor profiles that visit our Shire and is not all inclusive. The Lake Grace Visitor Centre (LGVC) only records visitors that physically enter the centre. The use of signage, open flags and being positioned in the main street of town we feel we are getting the majority of genuine visitors calling into the centre.

One of the goals of the LGVC is to provide accurate information for visitors. We also want to provide an enjoyable experience for the visitor by sharing our history with them, i.e. through telling them about the Station Masters House. While in the LGVC we dispense brochures and maps highlighting places to see and things to do in our Shire foremost.

Equipped with additional information about the Shire of Lake Grace and its attractions, the tourist is more inclined to spend more time seeing and doing things in the Shire of Lake Grace. If they have the time visitors often add additional time in Lake Grace after visiting the Centre.

The graphs presented in this document are tracking several different measurements of tourism data. It must be remembered that not all visitors are comfortable with revealing information of their travels so it is based only on the information that has been offered and is not conclusive.

Visitor data measurements recorded include;

- Number of people
- Age
- Origin
- Route
- Mode of transport
- Accommodation
- Yearly tracking from 2017

The graphs provided in this document are mainly based on the visitor numbers and profiles and exclude route, transport, accommodation and sales although data for these has been recorded also.

Origin of visitors to the Shire of Lake Grace

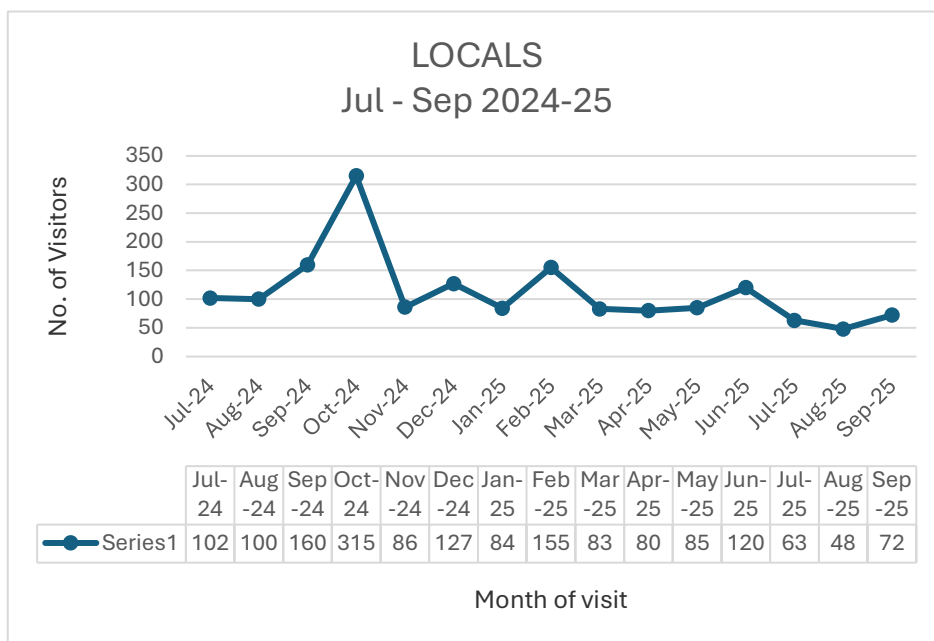
For the purpose of recording data visitors are classed into five groups;

- Locals – indicating they are from the town of Lake Grace. No purposeful travelling was required to visit the centre.
- Intrastate – this term is used to describe visitors from surrounding Shire of Lake Grace towns and the rest of WA, e.g. Newdegate, Kukerin, Wagin and Perth
- Interstate – this term is used to describe visitors from within Australia, including Tasmania who travel through the Shire
- International – this term is used to identify visitors from outside Australia including New Zealand
- Unidentified – Travelers who don't disclose where their place of origin.

Locals

A quiet few months from locals. No events were held as it was a very cold winter. Local winter sports kept many engaged and visiting nearby towns. There was also a lot of influenza and COVID illness around town that kept people away.

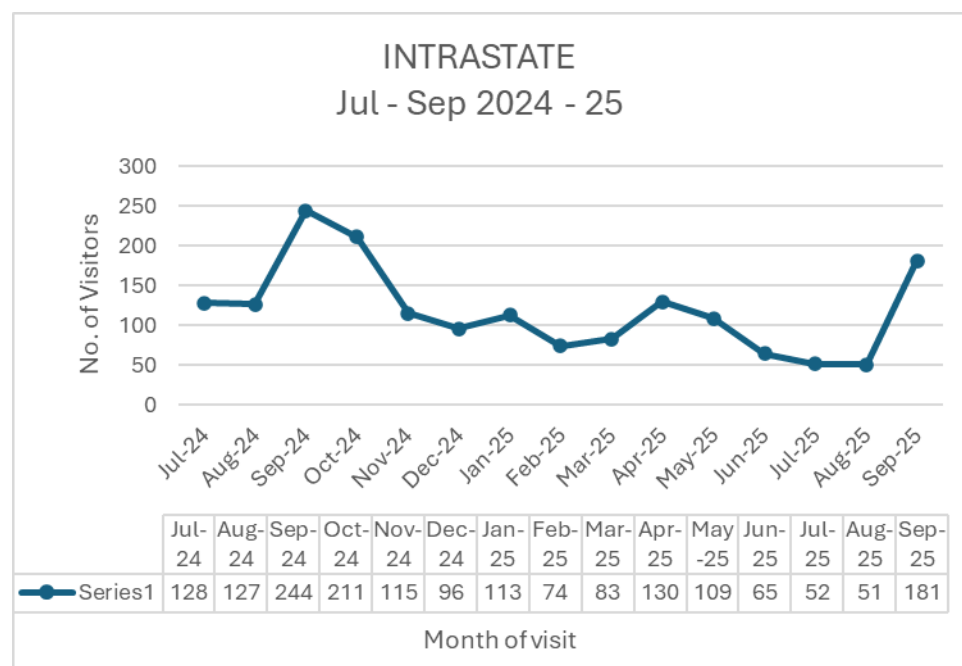
We sadly had to close on weekends during July due to staff shortages. Our amazing weekend staff member left, and it took us a little while to find a replacement. It was a hard decision to close as we have been open 7 days a week for so long but we were thrilled to find 2 casual staff members to join our team.



Intrastate Travellers

Another drop in numbers sadly. The cost of living in WA is really affecting our holidaymakers; there seems to be less caravans lining our streets. Having a long cold winter will guarantee crowds stay up north a little longer chasing the sun. Alternatively, people could also be travelling overseas for warmer weather.

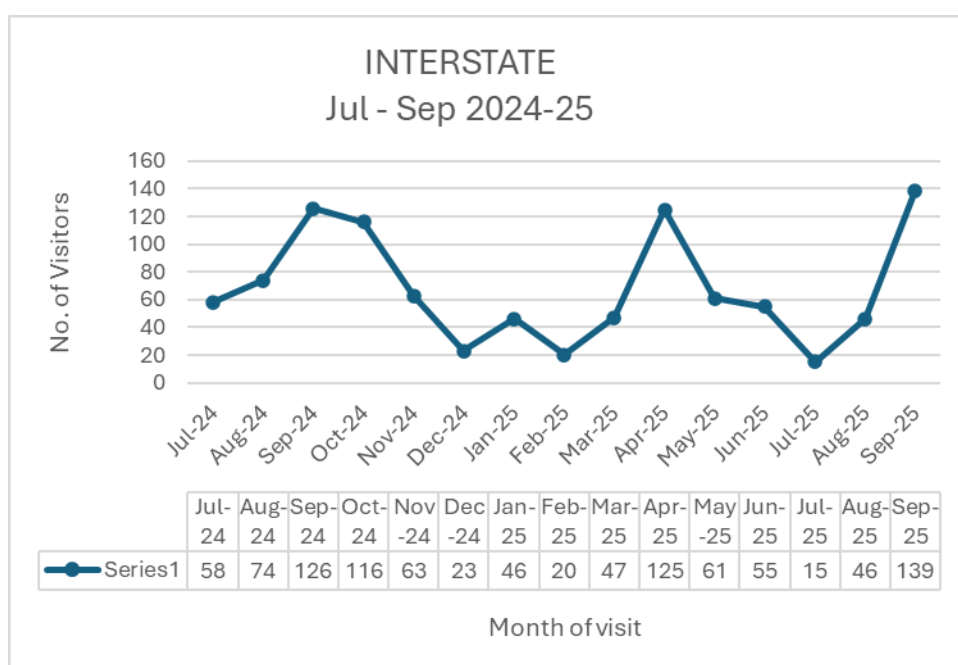
Closing on the weekends during July would have also contributed to drop in numbers. However a common spike in numbers occurs each year when the wildflower season hits start of September. Although our region is known for its orchids they were only out for a short while. This year they came and went within a few weeks making it tricky to pinpoint exactly when to visit. The infamous Queen of Sheeba Orchid was spotted mid August which seemed earlier than usual and they were almost no orchids left mid September. Ravensthorpe was a very popular destination in September with their annual Wildflower show.



Interstate Travellers

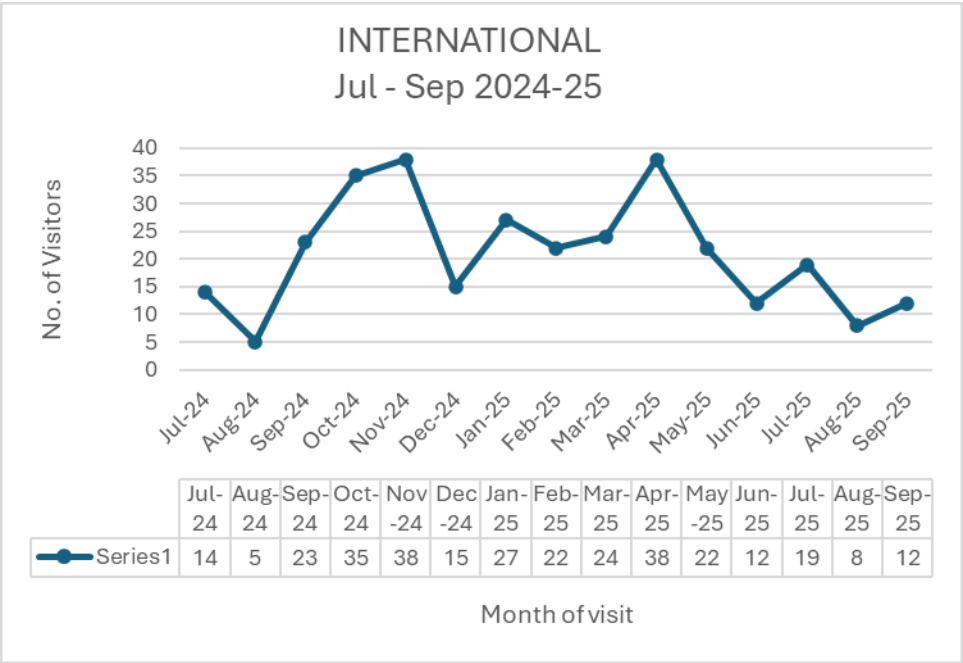
We're still a popular destination to our Eastern staters! A mixture of Caravanners and car travellers to our region. Many travellers were on their second or third trip to WA after enjoying first trip. It's great to hear travellers are also looking for quiet town destinations rather than highly populated and often more expensive coastal towns.

Queensland continues to be a popular group of travellers headed our way. They often remark how great WA roads are! Quite the compliment considering how far they've travelled to be here. Fantastic to see September ending on a high. Great start to the Wildflower season!



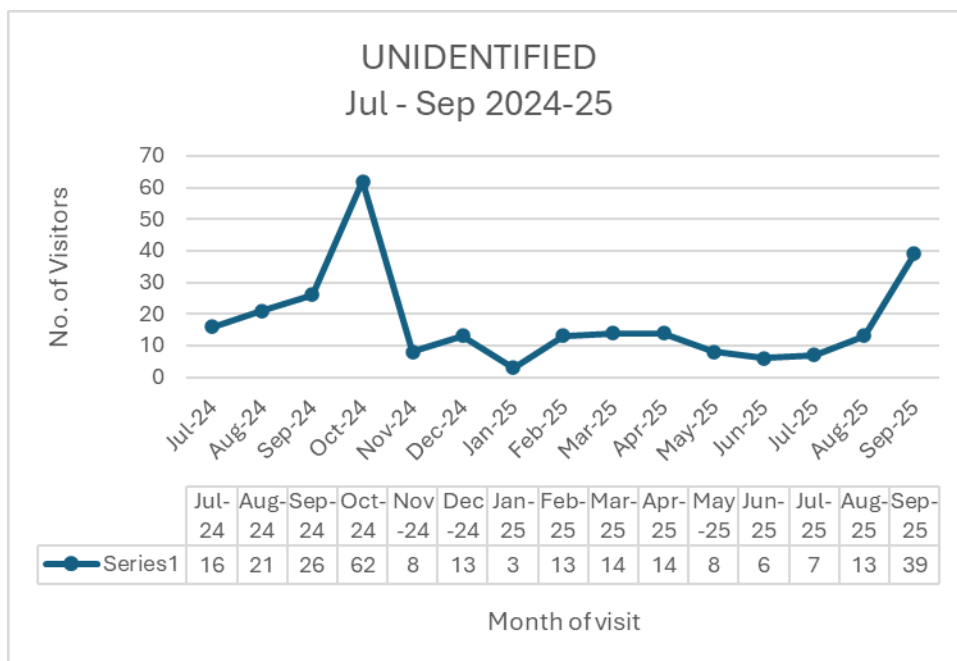
International Travellers

A difficult group to measure as world trends and safety affect the amount of internationals entering WA. They aren’t coming through in droves but we sure are delighted when they come through our region. These countries included Singapore, Malaysia, China, France, UK, Germany, America and New Zealand.



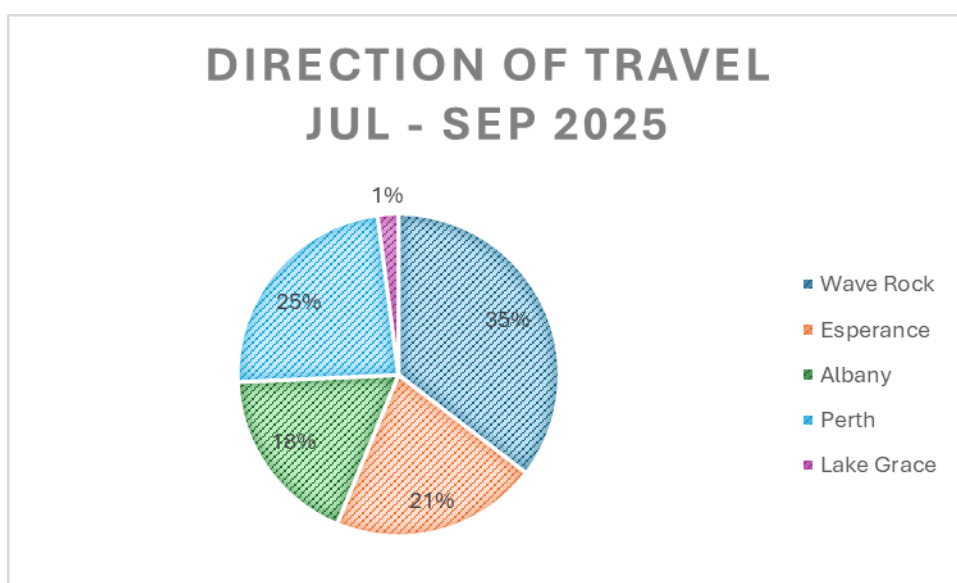
Unidentified Travellers

A group of travellers we try our very best to engage with but keeping in mind some people wish to simply browse and have a look around. We've noted some people prefer to keep in the background and not engage and others could talk for days! Having new staff onboard can often take a little while to learn how to ask ALL the questions. A fine art indeed!



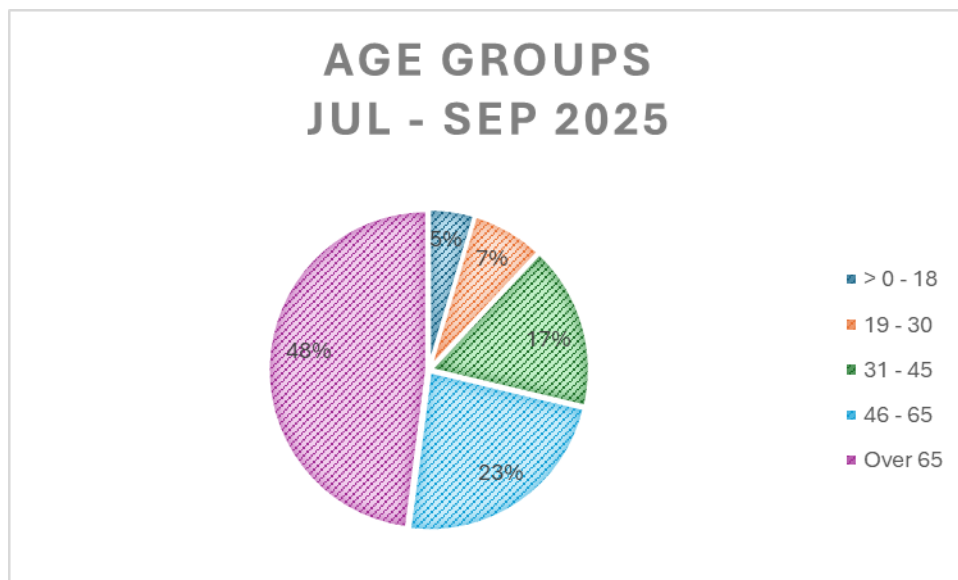
Direction of Travel

It's interesting to note where our visitors are traveling to as the Visitor Centre is positioned near a vital crossroad. Our traffic consists off those heading to either Wave Rock/Hyden, Esperance, Albany and Perth. Wave Rock is often popular in the cooler months.



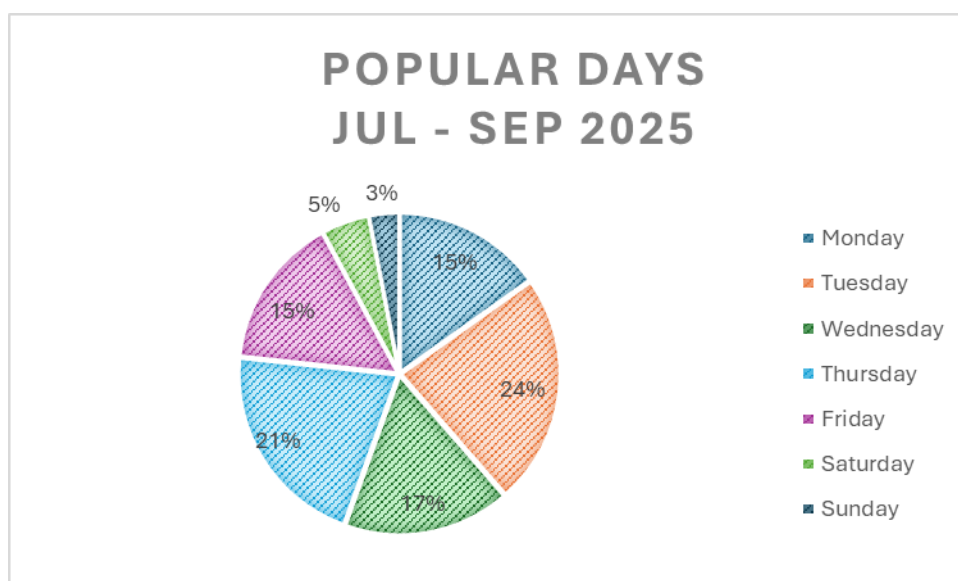
Age Group

The information tracked in this graph is reliant on the recorder's ability to judge the ages of visitors, therefore probably not entirely accurate in all cases. Although the largest group recorded in the graph below is concurrent with local visitor statics from other centres.



Popular Visiting Days

As we record our daily statistics it was interesting to note which days were popular amongst our visitors. This information over time can be used for staffing needs of the Visitor Centre along with tourism dollar spending in our shire. Tuesday seems to be the stand out day!



Mode of Transport

People travel to and through our Shire in various forms of transport. We have recorded the transport used by those who called into the Visitor Centre. It's a great indication as to how people are moving through our region and how travelers are using our region. This data measures January to March 2025.



55%



39%



5%



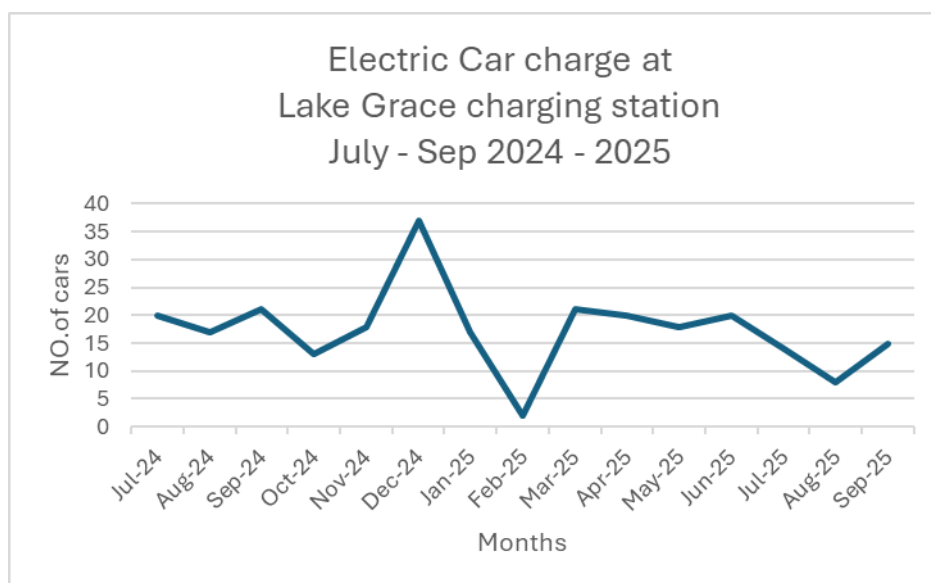
0%



1%

Electric Car charges

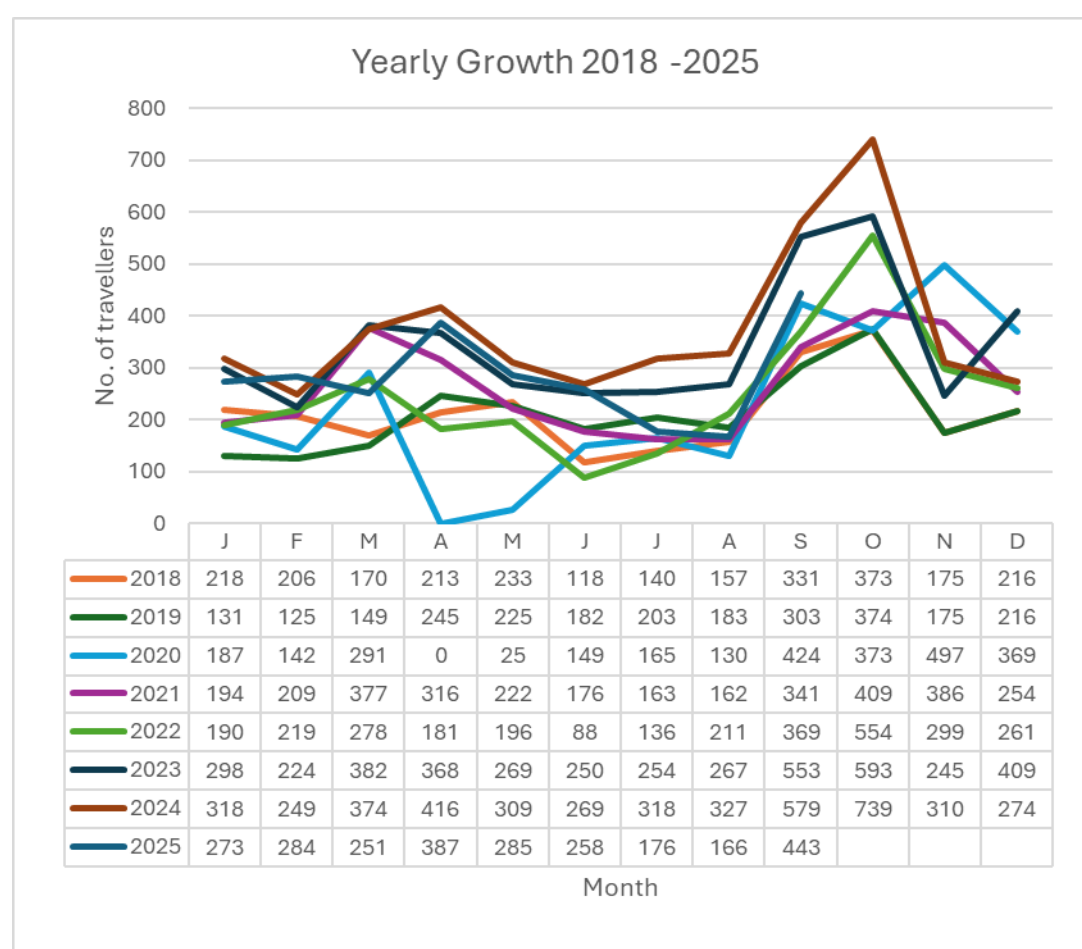
We have the data to view exactly how many charges are happening at our charge post each month. This can show our highs and lows throughout the year and know when a good time to service the machine is, any feedback from travellers etc. Great to see it's getting some great use so far. A drop in August but great to see its consistent use.



Yearly Trends

The chart below shows the LGVC recorded visitor trends over the past eight years. There has been steady growth in visitor numbers to the Shire of Lake Grace leading up to 2020. After the lockdowns we grew our visitor rate again with 2024 being our standout year to date.

This quarter we have had average to good results; not record breaking but not the worst either. As we move into the warmer months we hope to gain wildflower crowds and those seeking Esperance, Hopetoun and Bremer Bay coastlines. As we approach the harvest and festive season there shall be no doubt more traffic on the road. We shall reiterate with our visitors to travel safe especially.



Newdegate Library Report July - September 2025

The library is often used for pilates, meetings, school assemblies & dance on Monday's. We have also had the school use the library space for school photos and book week.

We are still receiving our monthly box of books from the state library and sending them our old books back. For the gate post we do use our library books for our 'This week we are reading' section.

Our monthly loan statistics are:

July: 2

August: 11

September: 9

Regards

Jade Parker

Newdegate Library Statistics												
Issued and Renewals	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2005	12	45	37	21	46	33	4	16	6	15	15	14
2006	21	21	27	7	21	22	14	34	27	6	20	15
2007	17	16	24	3	24	32	15	39	25	19	19	4
2008	9	30	15	14	33	14	6	16	9	20	17	8
2009	2	23	20	15	25	28	12	15	10	17	15	8
2010	3	13	16	14	13	23	28	26	27	26	35	27
2011	5	37	52	27	77	54	22	42	35	76	72	38
2012	10	69	33	27	50	20	49	18	26	54	59	31
2013	8	34	30	20	30	21	36	28	18	27	36	29
2014	39	50	35	33	53	36	61	29	24	61	32	47
2015	23	50	52	58	62	53	42	59	45	38	88	38
2016	17	77	29	45	42	15	53	39	43	43	65	42
2017	26	55	40	43	29	29	40	13	29	39	29	28
2018	9	37	15	30	19	36	33	18	51	30	66	48
2019	31	26	54	34	33	39	29	34	7	43	35	33
2020	6	33	42	2	12	23	27	24	39	54	21	16
2021	17	36	51	53	22	32	25	31	38	33	20	27
2022	5	23	27	8	31	13	19	32	8	42	8	17
2023	13	9	14	10	26	29	9	28	21	37	14	10
2024	6	12	18	13	26	16	6	15	12	31	16	4
2025	1	15	9	8	39	19	2	11	9			

Lake King Library Report for July - September 2025

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A quieter time over the school holidays in July saw the completion of our Public Library Statistical Survey for the financial year 2024 – 2025. This yearly task provides valuable information to highlight the important work of public libraries, their contribution to the Western Australian community and some of the challenges faced by the sector. Despite being a small library and not offering the services many larger libraries can, we seem to be holding steady. Looking back and comparing results from previous surveys, usage and the number of resources available remains constant.

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Our second suitcase with a 'Maths' theme arrived from the State Library in August. Although we didn't find this selection as useful as the 'arts' one previously borrowed, it still provided different resources to prompt story time and engagement with our younger patrons. Not deterred we will endeavour to borrow other different themed resources over the coming months.



The "Lake King 100 Years" planning committee meets in the library once a month. The group is gathering momentum and starting to work through the logistics of sourcing, storing and organising photos and stories from the community.

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	July		August		September	
	Libby	Borrowbox	Libby	Borrowbox	Libby	Borrowbox
Audio Book	1	54	0	54	3	36
E book	2	8	4	9	4	8
magazines	7	6	7	16	3	7



Lake Varley & Districts Progress Association General Meeting Minutes 16th September 2025

Meeting Opened: 6.39pm

Present: CEO Alan George, Cr Len Armstrong, Cr Roz Lloyd, Cr Ross Chappell, Acting CEO Peter Clarke, President Cr Grant Robins, Cr Brad Miller, Executive Manager of Works Judd Hobson, Sarah Mudge, Melissa Atkins, Tristan Cornwall, Colin Tapper, Cameron Mudge, Clare Hyde, Carla Hyde, Graeme Atkins, Jim Sullivan, Sue-Anne Naughton, Nicola Slabbert

Apologies: CEO Alan Leeson, EMCS Taryn Scadding, Cr Deb Clarke, Cr Benjamin Hyde, Cindy Nicholls, John Cornwall, Naomi Cornwall, Brent Hyde, Anna Scheepers, Bennie Slabbert, Margaret Sullivan

Presentation & Endorsement of Previous Minutes:

Emailed to affiliated clubs and community members. A copy is tabled.

Moved by Melissa Atkins

Seconded by Clare Hyde

Business Arising from Previous Minutes:

- *Change in Works Manager at Lake Grace Shire (Sarah Mudge)*- Information between the Lake Grace Shire and what needs to be done in Varley has not been clear. Carla has started making a list again to re-affirm what really needs to be done in Varley. Clare emailed the Shire of Lake Grace to put in a works request and some things get done and others don't. The Shire of Lake Grace advised Clare she will need to put in a new works request to the Shire email.
- *Varley CBH (Sarah Mudge)*- A letter was sent to Maneka Daw in March requesting the Varley CBH site be kept tidy. There has been no response from Maneka. Sarah will need to follow this up.
- *Bendigo Bank Term Deposits (Sarah Mudge)*- New term deposits have been set up.
- *Varley Voice (Sarah Mudge)*- Linda Cornwall is now doing the Varley Voice. The changeover has gone smoothly.
- *Housing in Varley (Sarah Mudge)*- The committee is still looking into the buildings in Varley. Will report on it at the next meeting.

Presentation & Endorsement Finance Report:

Moved by Tristan Cornwall

Seconded by Nicola Slabbert

- *Finance Report -*

Tristan Cornwall- We've been paid \$115 000 for our lupins from Patmores. We got \$1500 from Drum Muster which is our major income. Thank you to the Shires who have paid their final share of the FM Tower due to it being shut. The major expense is the VarleyAg chemicals. The Miscellaneous in the running costs is for the lounge chairs, the silo painting and the community tractor tyres. The lounge chairs were just over \$4000, the silo painting was \$5500 and the tractor tyres were about \$3000. Thank you to the Lake Grace Shire for the money for the tractor tyres. Tristan received a letter from the Lake Grace Shire agreeing to give us \$5000 towards the silo painting. We've got a 12 month term deposit for \$40 000 and a 7 month term deposit for \$30 000. In the bank at the moment there is \$38 000 so it totals \$108 000. We're through the major bills at the moment.

Presentation & Endorsement Correspondence:

Incoming letters/email to be read.

Moved by Melissa Atkins

Seconded by Cameron Mudge

Business Arising from Correspondence:

Nil

Reports:

- *Lake Grace Shire –*

Cr Len Armstrong- There were 4 vacancies at the Shire of Lake Grace in the Local Government elections. There were 4 nominations so no need to hold an election. There was a minor saving in the budget because they didn't have to pay the W.A. Electoral Commission. There is a new councillor coming in because Ross Chappell is here for his last meeting.

- *CEO Alan George-*

Varley Hall is in the budget for getting some painting done. There is money in the budget for air-conditioning at the hall. Over the last couple of weeks 500 000 tonnes of gold ore has been carted over Frenchs Road and Carstairs Road. They come every 12 months - 4554 load movements a year. The Shire has found someone that will do the bad areas of gravel on Carstairs Road in the short-term. Been working with the mining company telling them lots of money is needed to bring the roads up to scratch. Varley and Lake King are on the Water Wise list with the Water Corporation this year for rain water tanks and toilets. The Department of Water will look at the Dempster Rock dam. Currently don't have a Works Manager but the Shire are working on it.

- *Kulin Shire –*

Cr Grant Robins- The budget has gone through for the Varley Centenary for the next few years. The Shire was unsuccessful with the grant to continue the seal on the Holt Rock Road this year. Hoping to be successful with that next year. Were unsuccessful with the Black Spot for the Aylmore Road crossing so the Shire are doing that out of their own money. The Crossroad Breakfast is coming up in October. Taryn will speak to Linda and advertise that. Started widening the seal on the Holt Rock Road. Got another couple of years on the program to secure and widen all the old bitumen seals as well as extend the bitumen network.

Executive Manager of Works Judd Hobson- There is a bit of gravel sheeting on the Kulin-Holt Rock Road. Looking for gravel if anyone has any to part ways with. The corner of the Pingaring-Varley Road was assessed by someone for Black Spot but it was too late to get in for this year. The Shire will come out and do some work, review

the signs, make it more visible and get the surface right. If the Shire is successful in getting the grant for the Kulin-Holt Rock Road that will provide 3km beyond Krupa Road. Would have to look at funding options for the Varley North Road.

Cropping Committee –

Cameron Mudge- Firebreaks done recently. Will wait until harvest and look for volunteers. Hopefully get some more funds in. Barley crop is in this year.

Carla Hyde arrived at the meeting.

- *Townscaping Committee –*
Sarah Mudge- Carla can bring a report to Progress meetings of tasks being done around Varley that need to be noted.
- *Social Committee-*
Clare Hyde- Everyone can come to the Big Hoo Haa! that is coming to Varley next Wednesday night. You can buy tickets online and Clare has advertised in the Varley Voice and on the Facebook community page. There's a kids' workshop from 5-6pm and then we'll have hot beef and gravy rolls available for purchase from 6 until 7.30pm. Then the show will start. It's BYO drinks. The show is family-friendly. Everyone put their hand up for the Varley Christmas Tree.

General Business:

- *Varley Hall Door Needs Fixing*
Sarah Mudge – Anna Scheepers brought up the front door at the hall is sticking where the lock code is. Sue-Anne has sent an email to the Lake Grace Shire already. Leaks are on Carla's list of what needs to be fixed at the hall. It would be good to get a lock code on the supper room or the kitchen door so there's no key involved. It would be another access point.
- *Supper Room at the Hall*
Jim Sullivan – One piece in the middle of the supper room ceiling is sagging. Over one of the windows is a large water stain. The outside of the hall also needs another coat of paint to keep it in reasonable condition. Painting at the hall is in the Lake Grace Shire's budget.
- *Thank You*
Jim Sullivan – Thank you to the community on behalf of Margaret and myself for the gift and card for our contribution to ANZAC Day.

Meeting Closed: 7.08pm



**Lake Varley & Districts Progress Association
Finance Meeting Minutes
16th September 2025**

Meeting Opened: 6.32pm

Present: CEO Alan George, Cr Len Armstrong, Cr Roz Lloyd, Cr Ross Chappell, Acting CEO Peter Clarke, President Cr Grant Robins, Cr Brad Miller, Executive Manager of Works Judd Hobson, Sarah Mudge, Melissa Atkins, Tristan Cornwall, Cameron Mudge, Clare Hyde, Graeme Atkins, Jim Sullivan, Sue-Anne Naughton, Nicola Slabbert

Apologies: CEO Alan Leeson, EMCS Taryn Scadding, Cr Deb Clarke, Cr Benjamin Hyde, Cindy Nicholls, John Cornwall, Naomi Cornwall, Brent Hyde, Anna Scheepers, Bennie Slabbert, Margaret Sullivan

Presentation & Endorsement of Finance Report:

Moved by Melissa Atkins

Seconded by Clare Hyde

Bank Balance:

\$108, 000

Finance Applications:

- *Museum-*
Request for \$600 to purchase a stick vacuum cleaner.

Request for \$170 to place metal mesh screen in the “machinery shed.”

Approved

Meeting closed: 6.39pm

Varley Progress Assoc 2024

Opening Balance 19/02/25 \$30,636.23

	June	Sept	2025 Total
Credit			
Term Deposit's Interest	\$525.33	\$208.05	\$733.38
Subs	\$6.00	\$3.00	\$9.00
Varley Number Plates - Cr	\$1,125.00	\$250.00	\$1,375.00
Social Committee	\$11,897.25		\$11,897.25
Varley Voice Ads		\$350.00	\$350.00
FM Tower Re-Imbursement		\$2,129.28	\$2,129.28
Cropping income	\$1,920.87	\$115,000.00	\$116,920.87
Misc	\$12,235.17	\$1,535.24	\$13,770.41
Total Credit	\$27,709.62	\$119,475.57	\$147,185.19
Debit			
Cropping Costs			
Fert, seed etc	-\$25,041.11		-\$25,041.11
Varley AgSolutions (Chemicals)	-\$4,635.40	-\$21,849.30	-\$26,484.70
Total cropping			-\$51,525.81
Running Costs (10k)			
Cleaning	-\$630.00		-\$630.00
Water	-\$172.73	-\$156.96	-\$329.69
Insurance			\$0.00
Tractor License		-\$98.45	-\$98.45
FM Tower (Synergy, Repairs, Ins.)			\$0.00
Varley Ag Misc			\$0.00
synergy museum		-\$428.91	-\$428.91
Misc	-\$911.49	-\$13,627.96	-\$14,539.45
Total Running costs			-\$16,026.50
Other Costs			
Varley Number Plates - Db		-\$1,925.00	-\$1,925.00
Newsletter Editor		-\$8,280.00	-\$8,280.00
Donations- RFDS, P&C, St John		-\$15,325.00	-\$15,325.00
Social Committee		-\$6,161.40	-\$6,161.40
Total Debit		-\$99,243.71	-\$99,243.71
Total Profit (Loss)		\$47,941.48	\$47,941.48
12 month TD	\$40,000.00		
7 month TD	\$30,000.00		
Closing Balance - Bank	\$38,577.71		
Cash on Hand - Subs	\$131.00		

WALGA Central Country Zone

COST SHIFTING AND COMPLIANCE



Executive Summary

Fifteen Local Governments in the WALGA Central Country Zone have significant financial burdens on their ratepayers due to the consistent increase in shifting of responsibilities from Federal and State Governments to Local Governments. This has been compounded by rising costs associated with statutory requirements, the rising costs of doing business and limited or no ability to generate revenue or recover costs.

The population and rate base varies across the Zone members but the legislative and regulation requirements do not.

A large number of Acts impose requirements on Local Governments to devote resources to implement Federal and State Government legislation and regulations. Often the resourcing costs are under-recognised, meaning that the true cost of performing these functions is not always adequately provided for and Local Governments are also unable to set appropriate fees and charges to recoup these costs – limited either by legislation, economics or community expectations.

Local Governments are committed to the delivery of their community's priorities however they are required to allocate resources to implement and meet Federal and State legislation and regulations without adequate funding, which diverts funds away from core services such as roads and community facilities.

Additionally, the need to provide essential services, which are typically the responsibility of State or Federal Governments—such as the provision of primary health services—due to market failures in rural areas, further exacerbates the financial strain.

What is Cost Shifting?

For the purposes of this report the following definition of cost shifting applies:

Cost shifting occurs when the responsibility for, or merely the cost of, providing a certain service, concession, asset or regulatory function is shifted from one sphere of government to another, without corresponding funding or revenue raising ability required to deliver that new responsibility. Cost shifting forces local governments to divert ratepayers' funds away from much-needed local infrastructure projects, to meet additional demands placed on them by state and federal governments.

Zone Snapshot

- Largest population base is 4779 (Shire of Narrogin) with rates income of \$5.446 million.
- Smallest population base is 356 (Shire of Wandering) with rates income of \$1,338,041.
- Rate base in majority of Zone members is stable to declining, whilst cost shifting by the State and Federal Government becomes more frequent and inadequately proportionate to costs directly incurred by Local Governments.
- The internal capacity to meet compliance set with regulatory and service shifting varies. The majority of Local Governments have an average of 32 employees with resource sharing across multiple Local Governments also in place to improve wider service delivery requirements (both within the Local Government's control and outside of it).

Key Findings

Third Sphere of Government administering State Government Legislation and Regulation

A key issue for Local Governments is the difficulty of raising sufficient revenue from rates to deliver the services they are required by law to provide or which their communities increasingly demand. This is particularly the case when Local Government responsibilities change – either because of statutory/regulatory change by another level of government, or because that other level of government fails to provide services in line with community expectations.

A large number of Acts impose requirements on Local Governments to devote resources to implement State Government legislation and regulations. Examples of such requirements include functions under the Planning and Development Act which has had no indexing since 2013; administering the emergency services levy on behalf of DFES with no increase in remuneration paid to Local Governments to do so for over a decade despite wages and the cost of doing business rising; and collecting on behalf of the State Government building levies and training fund levies (BCITF). To note is that the Local Government's also pay the BCITF levy for Shire infrastructure projects however can not access the training funds to develop its building and construction workforce.

The resourcing costs to implement these State Acts are under-recognised, meaning that the true cost of performing these functions is not always adequately provided for, remunerated by the State Government and Local Governments are also unable to set appropriate fees and charges to recoup these costs – limited either by legislation, economics or community expectations.

For example, the average cost per Development Application for Local Governments who undertook the first stages internally, then engaged an external larger Local Government with capacity was a net cost of \$2,003 per application. Recouping costs associated with Development Applications is heavily dependent on the type received. In 23/24 a Local Government in the Zone invoiced \$18,912 in charges and income was only \$10,873 incurring a loss of \$8,039. Another indicated that they provide advice to the applicant which cannot be recouped in Development Application fees.

Another example is Building Permits. The Shire of Corrigin received \$6,413 income for Building Permits in 2023/24. It is estimated that for the internal administration of Building Permits by the Shire of Corrigin and other Local Governments in the Zone, it costs \$836 per application. The Shire of Corrigin receives between 10-15 Building Permits each financial year, amounting to \$12,540 internal costs yet the Shire charges only the statutory fees to the applicant. In the 2023/24 year this left \$6,127 unaccounted for in costs that is borne by the ratepayer.

Local Governments in the Zone also forgo millions in rates as a result of section 6.26 of the Local Government Act.

Firstly, land owned by the CBH Group (a charity) that is used solely for the storage of grain and where there is a written agreement to make a contribution to the Local Government, is not rateable land.

Secondly, the costs to Local Government to provide a local and regional road freight network for industry such as the CBH Group is significant – particularly if there are no Main Roads in the network. Road construction and maintenance is borne by the Local Government.

For example, in the Shire of Williams, the Narrakine site has a total grain storage capacity of 573,810 tonnes and consists of 15 permanent open bulk heads, two silos and one permanent open bulkhead. It has seen an 8.5% increase in grain tonnage over the last five seasons (up from 607,660 in 2019/20 to 659,000 in 2023/24). Grain movements to the Narrakine site impact on the local and state road and bridge network. It is estimated that there are upwards of 10,000 truck movements to get grain to the Narrakine site each harvest. That grain is then moved out of the site via truck to ports or other markets. The Shire of Williams are responsible for maintaining and upgrading the local road network and bridges that connect growers to the CBH site. There is significant cost associated with this upkeep including expenditure on plant and equipment, staff and related overheads and capital improvements. Because the CBH Group is a charity (different to the mining industry), they cannot be rated appropriately and the State Agreement does not include road freight funding arrangements.

A number of years ago the State Government set the requirement that amendments to legislation and regulation had to undertake a regulatory impact assessment. The Zone believes that it should be mandatory for regulatory impact assessments to be undertaken for any amendments to legislation and regulation.

ZONE POSITION: Reinstate the requirement for a Regulatory Impact Assessment for all amendments to legislation and regulation.
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There should be transparency and a statement of benefits in State Agreements to reduce risk and financial costs on Local and State Governments.
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Audits

Audits for the Local Governments in the Zone can be either completed by the Office of Auditor General or subcontracted (CAFs) to a third party. Audits are a requirement by the State Government and the Zone members understand and support the requirement, however the audit process and costs associated with the annual financial audit have significantly changed in the past few years.

In 2024, 92% of all WA Local Government audits were contracted and of those, **two thirds were affected by increased prices from contract audit firms (CAFs).**¹

In the 2023/24 financial year across 11 Local Governments in the Zone, total fees for the annual audit were \$395,660.

¹ [Information-on-local-government-fees.pdf](#)

Over time the scope of the audit for Local Governments has increased. The Local Government is provided with a CAF or the Office of Auditor General (directive) and there is considerable time spent by Local Government staff preparing and educating auditors about Local Government. Additionally, if the CAF has completed the audit on behalf of the Office of Auditor General, there is additional time spent on liaising between three entities (Local Government, Auditor and Office of Auditor General) and in turn costs to the Local Government. One Local Government indicated that there was more than 40hrs spent preparing the audit alone.

Audit fees cannot be recouped by Local Governments and this is a direct cost to ratepayers.

Appointing an auditor previously involved a three-quote procurement process by the Local Government. Under the OAG process, this is not required.

The movement of annual audit costs for the Zone members between 2017/18 to 2023/24 ranges between 96% to a 276% increase. As an example, the Shire of West Arthur had annual audit fees of \$28,790 plus other audit fees for State Government grants of \$4,600 amounting to **1.6% of their rate income**. The Shire of Dumbleyung had a total of \$43,934 in audit fees in 2023/24 which was **2.1% of its rate base**.

All Band 4 Local Governments (fourteen members of the WALGA Central Country Zone are Band 4) experienced a median increase of 25% in annual audit fees in 2024/25 with annual audit costs ranging from \$29,600 to \$75,300.²

The additional compliance on the Zone members has necessitated the appointment of Governance Officers and engagement of external contractors to prepare and assist Local Governments through the audit process, further adding to the costs to complete this compliance.

The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (Commonwealth) and Roads to Recovery (Commonwealth) grants required additional audits outside of the annual audit of the Local Government. As an example the Shire of Wickepin incurred an additional \$4,250 for the LCI Audit and \$1850 for the Roads to Recovery audit for a qualified audit on top of its \$26,500 annual audit cost (representing 2.16% of its rateable income). Not included in these fees are the internal cost of senior staff time preparing, submitting and reviewing the audit.

ZONE POSITION: That the Office of Auditor General review their costing formulae for Local Government audits and show constraint in audit costs, reflective of the Local Government Band.

That the Office of Auditor General provide a breakdown on the cost of the audit and justification for any variance to the estimate to the Local Government as part of the final billing process.

Provision of Doctors

In the absence of adequate State and Commonwealth health services, many rural Local Governments are required to fund or subsidise general practitioner (GP) and medical services to ensure basic access, and proximity to primary healthcare for their communities. These contributions often include cash contributions to the Practice, housing, vehicles, and facility maintenance, support for a Practice Manager—costs which are absorbed through rates and place considerable strain on limited rate bases.

Local governments are required to step into the space of primary health care because the per capita expenditure by the Commonwealth and States on health is lower in the regions, the viability of practices is challenged due to remote geography, increased business costs and less patients.

² [Information-on-local-government-fees.pdf](#)

For example, the Shire of Lake Grace allocates **\$250,000** cash annually to support the attraction and retention of a GP. In addition, the Shire of Lake Grace incurs costs for accommodation, two surgeries, a vehicle and fuel, representing **7.3% of its total rate income**. If there was no doctor in the town of Lake Grace or Newdegate, the closest distance a resident would have to travel is 184km one way.

The Shire of Corrigin reported annual costs of **\$222,340** to engage a GP practice, equating to approximately **7.4% of its rates revenue**. In addition, the Shire of Corrigin incurs costs for the provision of a medical centre, its maintenance, a house, vehicle and operational costs.

The cash contribution made by Local Governments are in addition to incentives provided by State and Federal Government for health and medical services in the regions and are necessary contributions due to significant shortfalls in funding by both tiers of Government.

ZONE POSITION – The Australian Government increase the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments in remote and very remote locations that are providing funding, sourced through their rates, to attract and retain general practitioners.

The Medical Facilities Cost Adjustor in the Financial Assistance Grants provided to Local Governments, administered by the WA Grants Commission, be increased to \$200,000.

Conclusion

The persistent and increasing trend of cost shifting from Federal and State Governments to Local Governments—without corresponding funding or revenue-raising ability or capacity—has placed a disproportionate burden on ratepayers and compromised the delivery of essential local services and core Local Government responsibilities. Local Governments are compelled to absorb costs that are beyond their core responsibilities and financial capabilities and cannot generate fees and charges accordingly as its directed by a higher tier of government.

This systemic issue erodes the Local Governments ability to invest in critical infrastructure and achieve priorities of communities. The examples provided illustrate the cumulative impact of unfunded mandates and regulatory compliance, which divert limited resources (rates) away from roads, facilities, and other vital services. There needs to be meaningful reform to increasing funding associated in the delivery of State Government regulations; a commitment to mandating regulatory impact assessments for amendments to legislation and regulations; transparency in State Government agreements; and an increase in funding arrangements under the Financial Assistance Grants if Local Governments are fulfilling the core responsibilities of the Commonwealth – such as primary health care.

It is imperative that Commonwealth and State Governments acknowledge the true cost of legislative and regulatory impositions and work collaboratively with Local Governments to ensure adequate funding, flexibility in revenue generation, and a fairer distribution of responsibilities. Only through such measures can Local Governments maintain their essential role in fostering resilient, well-served communities.

*Shire of Beverley | Shire of Brookton | Shire of Corrigin |
Shire of Dumbleyung | Shire of Kulin | Shire of Lake Grace |
Shire of Narrogin | Shire of Pingelly | Shire of Quairading |
Shire of Wagin | Shire of Wandering | Shire of West Arthur |
Shire of Wickepin | Shire of Williams |*

