



Tidy Towns

Your contacts are:

Keep Australia Beautiful Council (WA)

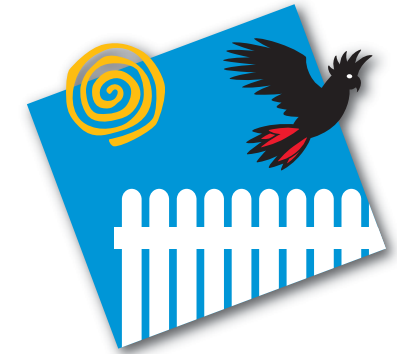
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If you have a question specifically about natural heritage conservation, waste management or freshwater conservation, please contact your closest Department of Environment regional office.

Department of Environment

Tidy Towns Region	Regional Office Location	Telephone
South West	Bunbury	9726 4111
Peel	Kwinana	9411 1777
Great Southern	Albany	9842 5760
Wheatbelt	Northam	9622 7055
Midwest	Geraldton	9964 5978
Gascoyne	Carnarvon	9941 4921
Pilbara	Karratha	9144 2000
Kimberley	Kununurra	9168 1082
Goldfields and Esperance	Kalgoorlie	9021 3243



Tidy Towns

Community Progress Awards 2004

Tips and Information



Keep Australia Beautiful
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

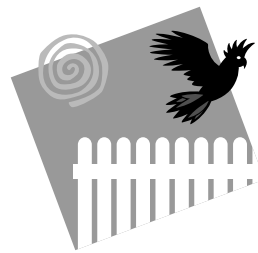


Tidy Towns Regions

Tidy Towns

Community Progress Awards 2004

Tips and Information



Tidy Towns

★
Keep Australia Beautiful
WESTERN AUSTRALIA ★



Department of
Environment



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
environment
AWARDS 2004

Tidy Towns is proud to be a partner of
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Welcome to Tidy Towns



Uniting rural, remote and regional communities across Western Australia to promote attractive towns, healthy environments and a sustainable future

Tidy Towns brings together different sectors of the community including:

- Schools
- Community Groups
- Individuals
- Business
- Industry
- Local Government

Tidy Towns aims to have such widespread benefits as:

- Public awareness of litter and waste management
- Conservation of native bush, creek lines, dunes and local flora
- Pleasant and attractive suburbs and streets
- Increased pride and morale
- Tourism promotion
- Improved health standards
- Improved facilities and town presentation
- Social cooperation
- Recycling and waste reduction programs
- Higher youth participation
- Environmental innovations for saving energy and resources
- Respect for Australia's indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage
- Protection of fresh water resources



Chairman's Foreword

Welcome to the 2004 Tidy Towns Awards. 2003 was an exciting year for Tidy Towns. We saw the Wheatbelt town of Wyalkatchem take out the National Tidy Towns Awards as Australia's Tidiest Town, Collie won the WA State Tidy Towns Competition and Mrs Bobbie Reilly from Wyalkatchem was awarded the prestigious 2003 WA Environment Award for Individual Achievement.

I was extremely proud to be part of the audience that cheered our people on when they were awarded their prizes in Perth and Sydney. On behalf of Keep Australia Beautiful Council I would like congratulate Collie and Wyalkatchem for the hard work they have put in to get to this level. Most importantly however, I would like to congratulate all towns that enter the competition each year and welcome everyone to the competition again this year. It is pleasing to see that after nearly 35 years of operation of the Tidy Towns Competition, Western Australia is still leading the way.

2003 also saw KABC introduce a regional tier to the competition. Bruce Rock, Collie, Esperance, Three Springs, Marble Bar and Kojonup were all deemed worthy regional winners. Regional awards ceremonies were held at Mingenew, Collie, Wyalkatchem and Tambellup and were well attended with participants enjoying bus tours of the host towns and taking the opportunity to browse through each town's portfolio. For many, this was the first time people had come together to share ideas. People had such a good time, that we will try to do more of these in 2004. We would also like to thank Wickepin and Pingelly for hosting luncheons in their towns to share ideas on recycling and discuss tips for involving local communities. We would like to encourage other towns to host similar events.

This year the number of regions will be extended to nine to encompass the Kimberley, Pilbara, Midwest, Gascoyne, Goldfields-Esperance, Great Southern, Wheatbelt, South West and Peel. This helps us to standardise the judging a bit more by comparing 'apples with apples'. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the regional Department of Environment staff who continue to provide technical expertise and coordination of the regional judging panels. KABC welcomes the assistance they provide to the program and encourages all communities to make contact with their closest Department of Environment office.

In 2003 we were pleased to receive assistance from the Wheatbelt Area Consultative Committee, Roadnight and Associates, Pilbara Area Consultative Committee, Gascoyne Development Commission, Mid West Development Commission, Wonderful Ways with Waste, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Mid West Area Consultative Committee, Great Southern Area Consultative Committee, Great Southern Development Commission, Great Southern Department for Community Development, Great Southern Area Consultative Committee and WA Department of Agriculture's Rural, Remote and Regional Women's Network. We were most appreciative of the support these people and organisations gave and are currently recruiting judges to assist with this year's judging.

In response to feedback from 2003 and in order to cater more effectively for smaller communities, this year's competition provides you with the option of choosing which categories you would like to enter. Regional awards will then be given for General Appearance and Community Action (which are still compulsory criteria) and each of the Initiative criteria.

I would like to thank you for your continued support of the Tidy Towns program and wish you the best of luck for this year's competition. I will look forward to meeting you all at the State Awards ceremony again in November and the National Tidy Towns Awards, to be held in Perth in April.

Best wishes for the coming year.



Trevor Wright

2004 Judging Criteria

The following is a brief description of the Tidy Towns Model, which should be viewed in conjunction with the portfolio provided.

1. Community Action (Compulsory criterion)

- Tidy Town committee or coordinating group commitment
- Community groups and individual effort
- School(s) participation, including students, teachers and parents
- Business and Industry commitment
- Local government support
- Youth encouragement/mentoring

2. General Appearance (Compulsory criterion)

- Approaches to towns, including signs and features
- Business, retail and industrial areas, including adequacy, servicing of litter bins, signs etc.
- Parks, gardens and sporting areas, including adequacy, servicing of litter bins, signs etc.
- Homes and gardens
- Streets, including footpaths, verges etc.

3. Initiatives

(Choose one or more Initiatives in this criterion)

Initiative 1.

Recycling and Waste Management

- Concept plan
- Local government support
- Education and awareness raising programs
- Community involvement

Initiative 2.

Natural Heritage Conservation

- Concept plan
- Local government involvement
- Community involvement
- Promotion of values to residents and visitors

Initiative 3.

Cultural Heritage Conservation – in recognition of the International Year of the Built Environment

- Concept plan
- Local government involvement
- Community involvement
- Promotion of values to residents and visitors

Initiative 4.

Focus on Fresh Water

- Concept plan
- Local government support
- Community involvement
- Innovative methods

Timeline for 2004

- February – March 2004 Program launched at Collie, Three Springs, Bruce Rock, Kojonup and Boddington.
- February – March Standardised portfolio kit sent to all registered towns and an officer of Department of Environment assigned to assist towns throughout the competition with information, contacts and other technical advice.
- * 31 March Registration forms due from towns.**
- * 30 July Portfolios due from towns.**
- August – September Regional Judging Panels with community, government and industry representation visit all towns to decide on regional category winners, regional finalists and regional winners.
- September State Assessment Panel meets with Regional Panels to decide on State Winner.
- October Regional category winners and regional finalists announced at regional events.
- November TBA Regional winners and overall State winner announced at Western Australian Environment Awards.**

* Please note that late registrations or portfolios will not be accepted after the due date.



What does it mean to be ‘Tidy’?

Tidy Towns is a program that brings communities together throughout Western Australia to undertake practical actions to enhance and conserve their built and natural environment. Traditionally, the program has focused on tidy streets, litter prevention and beautification. While these are important, tidy in today’s environment means so much more.

In many ways the program is redefining what it means to be ‘tidy’. To be tidy in today’s Tidy Towns competition involves taking stock and looking after all the town’s assets and their surrounding environment. Being tidy involves keeping these assets ‘shipshape’ and looking after them for current and future generations. Towns investigate and conserve assets such as their cultural heritage, bushland, rivers and coastlines and limit their impact on the environment through recycling and resource recovery. It is a sophisticated package that ensures towns do the best with what they’ve got to ensure a sustainable future.

Congratulations to our 2003 Winners

State Winner –
Collie

Kimberley and Pilbara Regional Winner –
Marble Bar

Midwest and Gascoyne Regional Winner –
Three Springs

Goldfields and Esperance Regional Winner –
Esperance

Wheatbelt Regional Winner –
Bruce Rock

South West and Peel Regional Winner –
Collie

Great Southern Regional Winner –
Kojonup

Is it your town’s turn in 2004?

Who should be involved in Tidy Towns?

A 'Tidy' Town is a community that works together to improve its towns appearance and environmental quality. A Tidy Towns committee generally oversees activities in the town acting as an umbrella group to link all interests together. The committee can vary greatly in size, structure and focus but generally coordinates the activities of community groups representing a link between community, local government and the Keep Australia Beautiful Council.

The 'Community Action' section of the competition gives a good indication of who should be involved in Tidy Towns activities. We realise that as town sizes and services vary considerably not all towns will have a full complement of services and it is simply encouraged that towns do the best with what they've got.

Local Government authorities are an important players for providing assistance and guidance to the Tidy Towns Committee. They also ensure liaison between councillors, gardeners, council/shire workers, council-sponsored community groups and schools to ensure work is carried out in accordance with the town's wishes.

Business and Industry can help analyse environmental problems specific to the operation of businesses within the town. The Tidy Towns Committee may also wish to instigate and maintain beautification projects in the commercial areas or seek sponsorship for these activities through the provision of plants or building materials. This group may also include tourist and visitor centres, Chambers of Commerce, mining companies and other large industries operating in the town.

Local Schools are a rich source of ideas and committees are encouraged to approach them to assist with the preparation of the portfolios. Negotiations are currently under way to incorporate the Tidy Towns program into the school curriculum for country schools. The Tidy Towns program has an important role to play in helping to develop effective environmental programs in all grades and sections of schools. School

children are an important group for getting messages out to Mums and Dads as well as forming or modifying public opinions. When approaching schools you might also want to consider parents and citizens committees, adult education groups and school councils in addition to teachers and students.

The media is an important asset in helping to disseminate messages. Media outlets can publicise and gain assistance for projects and help with public awareness campaigns. When approaching the media, think about newspaper, radio, television and editors of community newsletters such as schools, service clubs, community or environmental groups and businesses.

Community and Service Groups may be undertaking many Tidy Towns type activities and their efforts should be recognised as part of the Tidy Towns effort. They may develop innovative projects related to environmental challenges, litter control, or specialist projects such as the restoration of historic buildings or places. Liaison with groups such as Land for Wildlife, Bushcare, Ribbons of Blue or World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) may also provide a good opportunity to broaden the environmental impact of Tidy Towns.

Youth can be classified as not only students but also those young people that have left school up to the age of about 30 years old. These people can be some of the most difficult to engage in Tidy Towns. You might want to consider getting advice from your local Rotary, Apex or Lions Club, young farmers group, church group or Youth Officer at your local government.

If this is all a bit daunting, remember that a Tidy Towns Committee belongs to your town. It can be as simple or as complex as you need – basically it is whatever works for you best and is often an evolutionary experience!

It is not about how much money you spend on infrastructure, your ability to desktop publish the portfolio or the relative size of the town, it is simply your ability to do the best with what you've got.

Getting help with Tidy Towns

Although there is a very strong level of competition amongst towns entering the Tidy Towns Competition, there is also a strong sense of 'mateship'. The towns that do best in the competition are those that share their ideas and invite other communities to come to their towns. These towns know the benefits of gaining the experience of others, in how to engage the community and work effectively.

There are several opportunities to share ideas. Program launches and awards ceremonies are coupled with bus tours of the host town. This gives an opportunity for everyone to get together to share lessons and experience from their towns and see how another town may have approached a similar challenge. Where distances prevent

towns from visiting each other, we have tried to keep an e-mail network going to share ideas.

Advice can also be sought from the regional offices of the Department of Environment and state office of the Keep Australia Beautiful Council for technical expertise, contacts or as a sounding board for new project ideas. You might wish to ask for the contact details of a town near you or one of last year's regional or state winners. These towns are extremely proud of their achievements and will be more than happy to share their knowledge and experience. We also know some older Tidy Towns participants who are willing to act as ambassadors for the program and be readily called upon.

What sorts of projects are included in Tidy Towns?

This booklet seeks to provide a list of tips, contacts and background information to help you prepare your Tidy Towns projects. Tidy Towns projects are only limited by your imagination, but could include any of the following:

- Improvements to town approaches
- Development of community reserves
- Restoration of old buildings
- Tidy Street and Tidy Garden competitions
- Development of tourist attractions and facilities
- Restoration and preservation of historic sites
- Development of a historical society or local museum
- Heritage and cultural activities
- Roadside vegetation conservation
- Median strip and roundabout beautification with native flora
- School environment displays at shopping centres, field days etc.
- Local awards for a variety of community efforts
- Community litter cleanups
- Native tree planting and biodiversity corridors
- Home or yard improvements for incapacitated, elderly or disadvantaged people
- Management of remnant vegetation reserves
- Establishing and maintaining rare flora gardens
- Removal of civic eyesores
- Provision of civic facilities (e.g. seats, litter bins, shelters, BBQs)
- Environmental education programs in schools
- Clean housekeeping programs in industry
- Tourism programs
- Street banners and window displays
- Competitions for reuse of waste items
- Recycling programs, improvements to waste collection, transport and disposal systems
- Development of environmental innovations to reduce water and energy use in public spaces
- Promotion of water harvesting or water minimisation practices
- Strategies and partnerships between community and government to address regional hardships
- Creation of wildlife corridors or rehabilitation of native bush land
- Eradication of environmental weeds
- Waterwise native gardens

How to enter the competition

You need to make a choice:

- enter one or more of the Initiative categories to compete for regional category awards or
- enter all the initiative categories to be competitive at the state level.

Regional Competitions

For the first time this year, it is possible to enter just one Initiative category if you prefer. This means that your Committee can focus on one area of interest or special need in your town, for instance, recycling or natural heritage, in addition to the compulsory criteria of Community Action and General Appearance. This makes it easier for smaller towns that don't necessarily want to compete at the state level or don't have the resources to do so.

State Competition

To become a regional finalist, which means you may become a regional winner and compete at the state level, you need to enter all Initiative categories. This ensures you are a good all round performer, taking into account all the facets of Tidy Towns, and will be competitive at the national level, should your town be chosen as the state winner.

Steps for entering

- 1. Fill out the enclosed Nomination Form and post it back to us at KABC by 31 March.** Make sure you include contact details for two key people on your committee.
- 2. Make contact with your local Department of Environment Office** to discuss project ideas and seek any technical assistance you require. **It is essential that you make contact with them as early as possible.**

3. Do a review of all activities you have completed, maintained or intend to complete between 1 July 2003 and 30 June 2004. Start collecting photos, news-clippings and local stories for your Portfolio.

4. Make a choice on which of the Initiative categories you would like to enter.

5. Make sure you send your portfolios to your closest regional Department of Environment Officer by the 30 July. Towns are encouraged to approach their local schools to seek assistance in documenting town achievements.

6. Nominate a committee member to meet with a local Department of Environment Officer between August and September. Every town will be visited as part of the judging process. The personal visit will be used to judge on general appearance and gather further information that has not already been gleaned from the portfolio. The visit will also be used to verify the achievements claimed in the portfolio.

7. Attend your regional awards ceremony. The following category awards will be presented for each region:

Regional Achievement Award –
Community Action and General Appearance

Regional Achievement Award –
Waste Management and Recycling

Regional Achievement Award –
Natural Heritage Conservation

Regional Achievement Award –
Cultural Heritage Conservation

Regional Achievement Award –
Fresh Water Conservation

Regional Finalists –
Best performance over all categories

8. Attend the WA Environment Awards – Tidy Towns State Awards Ceremony. The following awards will be given:

Regional Winners –

Best performance over all categories

State Winner –

Best performance by a Regional Winner

9. If you are voted the State Winner, you will receive a visit from the National judge between December and February and attend the National Awards in 2005. Each State will win one of the following awards given at this event:

- Spirit of Australia Achievement Award
- Young Legends Australian Achievement Award
- Australian Achievement Award for Litter and Waste Management
- Australian Achievement Award for Community-Government Partnership
- Australian Achievement Award for Environmental Innovation
- Australian Achievement Award for Protection of the Environment
- Outdoor Advertising Association of Australia Community Pride Award

In addition, your town may be awarded the prestigious title of:

Australia's Tidiest Town!

***Note:** A Tidy Towns Committee is not expected to carry out all of the activities that are listed in this booklet. The Committee should be involved at the ground level by participating in projects, but it should also act as a coordinating body for other groups within the community.*

You should plan your projects in line with the capacity of your committee. For example if you are part of a large town or city you might want to concentrate your efforts on only part of the town or city this year and move your efforts to another part in the following year depending on your long term plan for Tidy Towns. Similarly you may wish to only undertake one or a couple of suggestions for each initiative (Waste Management and Recycling, Natural Heritage Conservation, Cultural Heritage Conservation or Fresh Water Conservation) this year and pick up on other suggestions in future years. Remember that this booklet is a list of suggestions, and new innovations or ideas are always welcomed.

We want to reward community achievement, but we don't want to promote volunteer burnout as well!

You will be judged on the improvements you make in between July 2003 and June 2004, taking into account some projects are small and succinct while others are the culmination of years of effort – so we are looking at efforts to maintain projects as well as start new ones. The Tidy Towns competition is not simply a matter of picking the Tidiest Town, it is about rewarding community action and initiative.

1. General Appearance

(A) Approaches to Town

Tips

- Construct an eye-catching entry statement with a 'Welcome' message. This can be as simple or as elaborate as local funds permit. The best entry statements are often those that use locally available materials like old machinery or local stone.
- Erect a sign on approach road or at the information bay stating that the town is entered in Tidy Towns.
- Plant an avenue of trees along the approach roads.
- Landscape the road verge with native shrubs or wildflowers.



- If the entrance to your town has many native wildflowers or trees, make sure they are preserved to showcase your town's natural heritage assets.
- Remove or improve any eyesores along the approaches to town.

- Remove long weeds on the verge such as wild oats, blue lupin, radish or veldt grass.
- Ensure that Information Bays are well maintained, interesting and easily visible to visitors entering town. Try to keep the design eye-catching and simple. Avoid small writing or heavy metal gates or grids obscuring the view.
- Organise regular clean ups of the roadsides, by the community and local government. You might want to encourage local landholders to adopt a section of road and take responsibility for keeping it litter free.

- Ensure that there is sufficient lighting to guide visitors to public amenities, shops or caravan parks at night.
- Ensure that there is adequate signage for visitors to quickly locate picnic facilities, beaches or parks where they can let children or pets stretch and have a break from travelling.

(B) Business and Retail Areas

Tips

- Remove or improve any eyesores.
- Have a plan in place to control vandalism or graffiti.
- Encourage businesses to improve their premises by having an award for the best-kept business premises.



- Include the internationally renowned 'Tidy Person' symbol on bins.
- Devise your own Tidy Town message to be placed on bins.
- Ensure that there are adequate, well placed litter bins in commercial areas with lids to prevent wind blown litter or rummaging by birds or vermin.
- Erect anti-littering signs in areas prone to litter.
- Develop a streetscape theme and compliment this with street furniture and signage.
- Ensure frequent and adequate collection from litter bins and recycling facilities.



- Examine the feasibility of providing cigarette butt disposal facilities to prevent people dropping butts on the ground. More cigarette butts are found than any other litter item on Clean Up Australia Day and over 32 billion cigarettes are consumed in Australia each year (that's enough to circle the planet 16 times). In addition to seriously affecting the quality of the environment, cigarette butts have been found in the stomachs of young birds, sea turtles and other marine creatures. Young children have been known to pick butts up and put them in their mouths. They are serious contaminants of our waterways and can cause major bush fires when not disposed of properly. Contrary to popular belief, they can take up to 15 years to break down in the environment. For more information see <<http://www.cleanup.com.au>>.



(C) Sporting Areas, Public Parks and Gardens

Tips

- Remove or improve any eyesores.
- Have a plan in place to control vandalism or graffiti.
- Construct an entry statement to the town's sports ground.
- Paint murals on bare walls. This adds color to the town and also acts as a deterrent to graffiti. Contact Community Arts Network WA on 1800 681 021.
- Landscape around carparks or buildings using native plants.
- Remove any long grass or weeds.

- Supply enough bins or recycling facilities so that all users can dispose of their waste responsibly.
- Examine the feasibility of providing visitor and tourist facilities, including toilets, picnic areas, barbecues, shaded playgrounds, car parks and tourist information services.
- Ensure the provision of multi-lingual signage (if appropriate), or universal signage to guide the visually impaired, non-readers or non-English speaking visitors to facilities and tourist sites.
- Ensure that there is appropriate access to, and from, public facilities and local attractions for the disabled and elderly.
- Ensure frequent and adequate collection from litter bins and recycling facilities.

**General Appearance
Sporting Areas,
Public Parks and Gardens**



**General Appearance
Private Homes and Gardens
Streets (Including Footpaths, Verges)**

- Examine the feasibility of dog prohibition, or the provision of dog-litter bags and disposal facilities in public areas such as parks and beaches. Dog owners should be encouraged to carry a bag so they can pick up dog litter, and dispose in a litter bin. Dog litter is not only offensive for visitors and locals alike but is also a major contaminant of storm water and waterways and can lead to increased levels of harmful bacteria.
- Examine the feasibility of providing cigarette butt disposal facilities to prevent people dropping butts on the ground.

(D) Private Homes and Gardens

- Conduct competitions to provide residents with extra incentives, e.g. Best Native Garden, Best Garden for Wildlife, Best Kept Street.
- Encourage the use of low water use gardens and lawn substitutes.
- Encourage local nurseries to make local native species available to the general public.
- Ensure frequent and adequate collection from litter bins and recycling facilities.

(E) Streets (Including Footpaths, Verges)

- Conduct an audit of signage in your town and look at ways of improving the standard of signs or adopting a common theme for signage.
- Ensure that your town has adequate, well-placed signage for parking, amenities, information services or tourist attractions.
- Identify any litter 'black-spots' and organise for these to be cleaned during a busy bee.
- Conduct an audit of litter bins in your town and identify any areas where street bins might be appropriate for the collection of waste and recyclable products.
- Ensure that visitors and locals know where to take waste or recyclable products by providing adequate direction signage to litter bins, recycling centres or refuse tip facilities.
- Ensure streets and verges are clean and litter free.
- Landscape street verges with flower beds or shrubs. Use native plants where possible.
- Remove long grass and weeds from street verges.
- Encourage residents to maintain their front verges by including an award for 'Best Kept Verge' in your town's garden competition.
- Construct new footpaths and cycle ways or improve existing ones to cater for disabled and elderly access.
- Ensure frequent and adequate collection from litter bins and recycling facilities.



2. Community Action

(A) Tidy Town Committee or Coordinating Group Commitment

- Encourage the establishment of a Tidy Towns Committee to coordinate your entry. The Tidy Towns Committee need not be large and can be taken on as a subcommittee of an existing local community group (e.g. Lions Club, Progress Association, Community Development Association). Ideally the committee will work closely with local government and have representation from a broad range of interests. The Tidy Towns Committee should be a valuable asset to local governance by ensuring community involvement in the preparation and implementation of management plans and strategies for the town.
- Setting up a Tidy Towns Committee is rather like preparing for a voyage, you will need:
 - A willing leader and at least a couple of ‘ship’s mates’ to assist with managing funds, recording outcomes of meetings and facilitating the generation of new ideas
 - A team of trusty crew to help turn your ideas for Tidy Towns into reality
 - Good foundations in the form of an action plan that details when and how you are going to undertake activities over a number of years
 - To fly your flag to publicise your efforts and enlist new crew
 - To give recognition for achievement and thus sustain your committee and community’s morale

Tips

Recognising Leaders

- In order to succeed, the Tidy Towns committee needs a core group of leaders who are prepared to commit time, priority and belief to the concept of creating a sustainable community. As leaders are ‘often created by



situations’, the committee needs to identify and foster these people. The active engagement of women and young people as part of this group is essential. Some key attributes of leaders may include:

- The possession of or ability to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge or attitudes to promote sustainable living and community pride
- The sharing of a vision for the community and have a definite stake in securing its fulfilment
- The provision of inspiration that captures the imagination of local people and provides a sense of hope
- Being aware of the need for an ongoing process of identifying, recruiting and developing new local leaders
- Being transparent in all their activities
- Being constantly aware of the need to report, listen to and ensure the support of the community

(Taken from ‘A Manual for Small Town Renewal: Vol 2 Change the Future of Your Community’ Rural Industries Research and Development Commission. Pub No. 01/043)

- Currently in Western Australia there are a number of leadership development opportunities available. They include courses offered through the not-for-profit sector and accredited course offered through TAFE and the Centre of Leadership and Community Development, national programs such as the Australian Rural Leadership Program and the Indigenous Leadership Program. A full list



of training providers can be obtained from the WA Government's Community Leadership Program Website at <<http://www.wacommunityleadership.com>>. Follow the links to Resources, then Training Providers and Community Development.

Getting Volunteers Together

In most cases, the greatest benefit will be gained from involving local community people as volunteers. However, there may be some instances where outside volunteer help is needed to complete specialist tasks. Below are some good contacts to consider.

Help from Outside the Town or Community

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations anywhere in Australia can ask for a volunteer with any particular skills that are needed. Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) work with each community to develop the project but communities drive the process. The community decides what skills they need, how and when the project will proceed, and they choose the volunteers. ICV provides a cultural awareness program for volunteers before they start a project. There is no cost to communities, but they do need to provide accommodation for the volunteers, ICV pays for travel and a basic living allowance. ICV has a three-year commitment of Commonwealth seeding funds

to undertake projects linking skilled volunteers with Indigenous communities that have asked for short-term assistance. If you would like to find out more about the program, please contact ICV at PO Box 2213, 15 Moore Street, Canberra ACT 2600 or ring Tollfree 1800 819 542 or e-mail <info@volindigenous.org.au>.

- Organisations wanting assistance with environmental or cultural projects may wish to contact Conservation Volunteers Australia. Founded in 1982 in Ballarat as the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers, the organisation has grown into Australia's largest practical conservation organisation with offices in every capital city and regional centres across Australia. Volunteers on this program complete more than 1500 week-long conservation projects across Australia each year. As part of CVA's north-west activities, Woodside Energy Ltd has provided sponsorship for disadvantaged young Western Australians to participate in a remote area conservation experience. The hands-on experience includes on-site training in specific project skills such as trail construction, revegetation, protection of endangered species, project risk assessment and broader social skills in teamwork, group communication, setting and achieving tasks and the satisfaction of completing solution-focused activities. CVA also does lots of work in the south-west through their various programs. You can contact them on 9336 6911 or e-mail <perth@conservationvolunteers.com.au>.
- If you require assistance with tree planting activities or revegetation projects you may wish to speak to Men of the Trees. They can also give you some good advice on setting up a local nursery. They also run the Farm Tree Help Scheme and the Million Trees Program. Contact their office on 9250 1888.

Enlisting Help from Within the Town or Community

The following extract is from the information sheet summarising the key points from the Seminar 'Attracting Volunteers to Your Project and Maintaining Volunteer Involvement.' This seminar

was part of the Swan Catchment Centre, Department of Conservation and Land Management's Ecoplan, and Greening Australia's Bushcare Support 1999 Seminar and Project Management Series. ©. Acknowledgments: R. Guy, J. Huston, M.O'Byrne and L. Western.

Volunteers are attracted to joining a community group for a wide range of reasons: the chance for increased social contacts, to be part of a team, to be involved in the local community, for work experience, new skills, shared experiences, personal growth and satisfaction, as well as 'what's in it for me?'

- **Attracting volunteers** to your group or work days probably needs an approach that uses a range of options. It can be useful to have a strategy using some of these ideas:
 - Market your project – have a drawcard for activities (e.g. breakfast or the popular sausage sizzle).
 - Make eye-catching flyers and brochures to display in shop windows, libraries, community noticeboards and other public places.
 - Do a letterbox drop.
 - Use the community notices section in your local newspaper to publish your needs or write a 30 second community service announcement for local radio.
 - Encourage current volunteers to 'bring a guest'.
 - Find out what volunteers enjoy and give it to them.
 - Provide opportunities to develop skills and knowledge – use what's available.
 - Have a range of activities for different interests and personalities.
- **Keeping volunteers** happy and involved in the work also needs some attention. There is a whole range of ideas to draw on:

For the work

- Involve everyone by spreading the tasks.
- Be honest and give honest feedback.
- Avoid reliance on too few people.
- Provide a range of activities.
- Have seasonal activities so burnout is avoided.

- Cater for a range of ages.
- Have regular sessions at fixed times.
- Ask volunteers how they are going during an activity.
- Make sure the correct equipment is available for the task at hand.
- Make sure there is a purpose for meeting.
- Manage project start times to avoid slumps in activity and achievement, and to reduce negative energy.

Celebrate and Reward

- Celebrate successes.
- Apply for national, state and local awards for recognition.
- Offer encouragement, acknowledgments and pats on the back.
- Frame certificates and other important documents that promote achievements.
- Develop local community awards.
- Help develop achievement recognition within the group via celebration.
- Create your own logo and use it on letterheads, car stickers, signs and on shirts or windcheaters – to give a sense of pride.
- Create a scrapbook of all newspaper articles to form a historical record.
- Keep statistics of achievements such as how many seedlings planted, kilometres of fencing etc.
- Make a video of what you do.
- Review your achievements annually and promote that widely.

On the social side

- Have fun and keep giving volunteers what they enjoy.
- Do 'self' things such as tours, dinners with a guest speaker, picnics and family activities.
- Try informal meetings involving a meal.
- Have background music or videos of interest during breaks in meetings.
- Encourage family involvement in group activities.

Managing Volunteer Groups and Projects

- Make use of different skills. Some people may be good at taking photographs but they

- may not want to attend meetings. Respect that.
 - Make sure you have a plan – what do you want to accomplish this year?
 - Identify clear group goals including short and long term goals.
 - Ensure goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely).
 - Develop a sense of purpose.
 - Ask volunteers how they may want to be involved.
 - The coordinator needs to ‘manage’ the volunteer involvement.
 - Explain the group’s work to newcomers.
 - Support may be needed in times of making decisions. Consider whether the task is achievable and know when to let go.
 - Remain open to suggestions.
 - Be good communicators.
 - Beware of catering to a minority.
 - Provide support. It leads to growth in confidence, ability and self-esteem.
 - Remain open and treat people with respect.
- Volunteering Western Australia is the peak body in Western Australia for volunteering. The coordinators at the centre are only too happy to help you with any questions you might have. The organisation provides a voice to Government and also to the national body Volunteering Australia. Visit their website at <<http://www.volunteer.org.au/>>, contact Volunteering WA directly on 9420 7288 or e-mail them on <community@volunteer.org.au> to find out if there is a regional centre near you that can help with your specific request.
 - As part of the International Year of Volunteers Dr Judy Esmond wrote an excellent publication ‘Count Me In – 501 Ideas for Recruiting Volunteers’. In 2001, the Fire and Emergency Services Authority provided a copy to every Local Government in the State. See if it is sitting in your council/shire’s library and examine it for tips on involving volunteers in your community. If you are unable to locate it contact the publisher ‘Newseason Books’, PO Box 402, Victoria Park, WA 6979. If you search in the library system, the ISBN is 0646408941.
 - The Department of Sport and Recreation’s Volunteer Improvement Program has an excellent website with resources and links to other websites that talk about how to recruit, keep and maintain volunteers in sports and recreation. The lessons however, can equally be applied to Tidy Towns Committees. Check it out at <<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/programs/volunteers/volunteers.asp>>. You will need to follow the links under ‘Other Helpful Resources’ to access the information you need. Most of the publications such as ‘Volunteer Management: A guide to good practice’, ‘Recruiting Volunteers’ and others can be ordered online for around \$5.

Building Good Foundations for Your Committee

The following extract is from the information sheet summarising the key points from the Seminar ‘Now That You Have the Grant – What to do Next?’ This seminar was part of the Swan Catchment Centre, Department of Conservation and Land Management’s Ecoplan, and Greening Australia’s Bushcare Support 1999 Seminar and Project Management Series ©.

Clarifying your group’s objectives and milestones

Objectives set down what you want the end product or the outcome to be for your project. The milestones are the series of tasks or achievements you can tick off along the way.

- Clarify your group’s objectives and milestones – as a group, decide on what you want to achieve and write it down. You should aim to keep this as clear and simple as possible.
- Make your objectives SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. Check them off against these criteria.
- Put your objectives and milestones up on a board or visible list and tick them off as you achieve them.
- Measure decisions you make or actions you carry out against your objectives and milestones to help you keep on track.



- Congratulate yourselves as you achieve each or your objectives and milestones. Let all of your group members know.

Planning the Actions

Brainstorming with your group or committee and setting up charts helps action planning. Annual action planning is a useful way to plan for short-term activities of the group and helps with reviewing the group's progress at the end of the year.

- Break down your group's overall objectives into workable units (e.g. setting up a can recycling unit, creating water wise garden at the council/shire, planting street trees, holding a cultural planning meeting).
- Decide on the series of actions needed to achieve each objective using as much detail as possible.
- Decide who will do the work, what the budget is required and the time frame. A simple table could be used to help with this planning.
- Draw a calendar on a big chart or year planner for all to see and then use it!
- Make sure you put suitable monitoring activities into place (e.g. before and after photographs, methods for measuring amount of recycling collected, water monitoring for creek revegetation etc)
- Will you require continued funding? If so the ball may need to be already rolling to apply for another grant or allocation from the council/shire.

Determine the level of volunteer involvement

- Do you have enough volunteers for each step of the plan?

- Are you able to work with others in the community such as schools, service clubs, environment centres and community groups?
 - Invite and advise volunteers and potential volunteers to attend group activities with plenty of notice (two months at least).
 - Keep volunteers and potential volunteers informed about the project.
 - Include a reward for participants. Make work days friendly by supplying food or drinks etc.
 - Always thank people involved for their effort at each session.
- The Department of Sport and Recreation also has an excellent series of fact sheets on what is required to build a better, safer and smarter club. Again it is tailored to the sporting scene but the lessons are equally applicable to Tidy Towns Committees. Check out their tips by visiting their website at <http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubs/clubdevelopment.asp>. This will lead you to a whole series of free fact sheets and downloads on getting started, running your club, volunteers, litigation, inclusive club practices and how information technology can help your club or committee.

Promoting Your Tidy Town's Cause

- Liaise with the local media for publicity and promotion of your activities. This may take the form of writing regular articles in a community newsletter as part of a Tidy Towns Corner or inviting the local paper to key community events held by the Committee. This will serve to raise the profile of the Committee in your town and encourage more volunteer efforts.
- Public seminars could be held to educate the community on various topics concerning Tidy Towns. It could be used to get the community together to discuss the future of the town, potential projects, new ideas for change and recruitment of volunteers.

Giving Recognition to Volunteers

- Organise a social event at least annually where contributions from volunteers and the local community are recognised. This recognition process is very important and can help to

reduce burnout. Invite your local Member of Parliament or Ward Councillors where appropriate.

- Reward all participants in some way e.g. a casual social event, certificates of merit, special badges etc. Present to funding bodies and others such as council/shires, volunteer associations etc.
- Give 'Certificate of Merit' awards to schools, businesses, community groups, individuals for assisting with Tidy Towns. This will ensure that they receive acknowledgment for their efforts and will encourage them to help the Committee in the future.

(B) Community Groups, and Individual Effort

Once an action plan has been put together to determine Tidy Towns activities for the next year, the road ahead may look pretty daunting. One of the ways that you might sustain the plan is to build connections between the Tidy Towns Committee and other community groups in your town. There may also be valuable lessons to be learnt from other community groups as well as the opportunity to build new friendships and value-add to each other's projects. Make a start by listing the groups in the community who you think could be valuable in assisting with projects, but who currently don't. You can then use this information to approach them for support.

Tips

- Find out if there are active Landcare groups in your area or programs such as Greening Australia's Living Landscapes (Phone 9335 8933) or World Wide Fund for Nature's (WWF) Woodland Watch (Phone 9387 6444). See if there are opportunities to link in with these organisations and look after wildlife habitats, wetlands, riparian vegetation, woodland areas or other environmentally sensitive areas as part of your local townscape strategy.
- Make contact with your local Rotary Club, Apex, Lions Club, CWA or Sporting Club to see how you can combine resources to

undertake Tidy Towns Projects such as welcome statements, litter pickups, recycling programs or creation of visitor facilities.

- Make contact with your local Community Development Officer to see if they can provide assistance or contacts to plan cultural events, help with rural development projects or assist with engaging young people in town.
- Make contact with the local historical society, arts or cultural group to see whether there are opportunities to collaborate in Tidy Towns activities.
- Recognise individuals who may be potential leaders in the community and encourage and reward their contributions through merit certificates or other appropriate social events.
- Older citizens in town have often put in years of effort, regularly collecting litter along roadsides, tidying parks and gardens or championing the Tidy Towns cause through office bearer roles. Make a point of recognising these leaders at annual Australia Day or Seniors' Week ceremonies.
- An annual social event coinciding with Australia Day or other locally significant community events is an excellent way of recognising and rewarding volunteers in your community. You may wish to approach your local council/shire or businesses for donations of sausages or barbecue foods and give merit certificates accordingly.

(C) Youth Participation, including Students, Teachers and Parents

The Tidy Towns Program has a valuable role to play in encouraging sustainability values amongst the next generation. Sustainability can be described as the ability of current generations to meet their needs without compromising ability of future generations to meet their needs. Through involvement in Tidy Towns projects school children have the opportunity to learn about caring for the environment through waste

management and recycling, conserving cultural and natural heritage and protecting our fresh water resources. Through the relationships they build with the Tidy Towns Committee, teachers and other members of the community, they are also developing a sense of place.

The drift of young people from rural areas to the cities has become an Australia-wide phenomenon and deprives communities of a socially active group and potential leaders. By involving young people in Tidy Towns projects the committee can encourage them to have pride in their community and surroundings. The fostering of leadership qualities amongst youth may also make them feel more valued and encourage them to seek employment or lifestyle opportunities in rural areas.

Tips

- Encourage local youth organisations such as scouts, guides, fishing clubs, school, church or young farmers to include environmental, cultural or community care projects in their calendar of activities.
- Encourage young people in town to join environmental programs such as Green Corps (managed by Greening Australia WA, 9335 8933).
- Encourage young people to explore opportunities presented by national youth enterprise programs such as the NESCAFÉ Big Break program. Nescafe Big Break gives young people the chance to do what they want with their lives. It's not an achievement award but for people who have an ambition or dream, and are just getting started. Entries are accepted from both individuals and groups. \$256 000 in prize money will be awarded across Australia and New Zealand. There are 12 cash prizes of \$20 000 and 8 cash prizes of \$2 000 to be won. The age range is 16-24 with prize money awarded in two age categories. There are no project categories and basically any idea or pursuit goes. Some ideas that have been funded in the past have included zero till planting systems, polyurethane horseshoes and community service announcements aimed at

discouraging teenage drug use. There are possibly many innovative ideas that can provide a link to the initiative sections of the Tidy Towns Program. Contact Nescafe on 1800 630 630 for further information or view their website at <<http://www.nescafe.com.au>>.



- Encourage your local school to participate in the Department of Environment's Waste Wise Schools Program. The program empowers schools to minimise their waste outputs and incorporate waste issues into the curriculum. The program provides free teacher workshops, the Waste Wise schools kit, a network of support schools, accreditation and awards programs and ongoing support. For regional and remote schools there is the option of undertaking professional development training externally. Contact the Waste Wise Schools coordinator David D'Arcy-Burke at the Department of Environment on 9278 0642.
- Organise a visit by Captain Cleanup to your school or next community event. The Captain has enjoyed more than 20 years of visiting WA schools as part of the Keep Australia Beautiful Council. He's now joining forces with Waste Wise and will be delivering educational entertainment with waste and litter themes. Captain Cleanup can arrange individual class sessions or perform to whole school assemblies. For more information about Captain Cleanup contact Quinton George on 0416 089 746.
- Encourage your school to book a visit by the Waste Wise Display Trailer which contains interactive activities for schools on waste minimisation topics such as the 3Rs, composting, worm farming and shop smart. Trailer visits can be tailored to suit waste activities which are planned or currently underway at schools. For more information about the Display Trailer contact Department of Environment on 9278 0681.



- Check out your school's eligibility for the Waste Wise WA Youth Grants. The Youth Grants help WA youth community groups (including schools) to minimise waste going to landfill in their own area. Grants of up to \$5 000 are available towards youth-led waste minimisation projects. Download a copy of the Youth Grants Application Kit from the Waste Wise Schools website at <<http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au/schools/>> or contact David D'Arcy-Burke at the Department of Environment on 9278 0642.
- Encourage your local schools to enter the Western Australian Schools Environmental Education Awards (formerly Education for Sustainability Competition). Sustainability is becoming an increasingly important element in school design and management. In modelling sustainable practices, schools provide a key educational role both for the community and for future generations of Australians. The aim of the competition is to involve students in investigating their school/community's attitudes and behaviours about sustainability, conducting an environmental audit, and using the results of their investigations to develop a Sustainability Action Plan for the school. Further information can be obtained by contacting Joey King at the Department of Environment on 9278 0679.

(D) Business and Industry Commitment

Local business and industry have a valuable role to play in ensuring sustainable development.

They can assist the Tidy Towns Committee to improve the general appearance of the town, support community action and value-add to Initiative projects. These efforts all help to raise the level of community pride and in turn encourage more people to visit and do business in the town. Have a representative from local business on the Tidy Towns committee to help plan Tidy Town activities that help business and industry as well as the community, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development.

Tips

- Examine what is required for sustainable economic development in your community and identify actions that can be undertaken as a partnership between the Tidy Towns Committee and local business. You may wish to talk to your local Chamber of Commerce, Regional Development Office or Business Enterprise Centre to help you identify opportunities.
- Encourage local businesses to improve the appearance of their premises by including a Best Kept Business award in the town's garden competition.
- Examine local hardships within the community and seek partnerships with local businesses to address these through fundraising activities or sponsored cultural events to boost local morale.
- Encourage local businesses to adopt 'Cleaner Production' practices as outlined in the Waste Management and Recycling initiative section. See if there are opportunities for community and business to work together to achieve these outcomes.
- Develop a partnership with local businesses to ensure Tidy Towns input into tourism plans or area/regional development plans.
- Examine opportunities for the Tidy Towns committee, community and business to work together to undertake projects which focus on water re-use or recycling and protection of the environment
- Examine ways of encouraging businesses to adopt purchasing policies for goods, services or infrastructure that focus on water minimisation or energy efficiency.

- Encourage local businesses to sponsor youth to attend leadership training courses or environmental activities.

(E) Local Government Support

Small towns and their rural districts face accelerating demographic, economic, social, technical and environmental changes and challenges. An understanding of these changes and their root causes is an essential starting point for community revitalisation. The Tidy Towns competition represents an excellent way for local governments to gain an understanding of the activities being undertaken in their communities to promote vitality, help build resilience, forge connections between different sectors of the community and above all, foster a commitment to 'place'.

The community often looks to local government for guidance, beyond its roles of 'roads, rates and rubbish'. The formation of a code of practice for effective community consultation, regular community forums and effective promotion of local government activities and services to the community, ensure that there is strong and regular two way communication.

An excellent resource to assist local government is '*A Kit for Small Town Renewal*' it is available on the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation's Website at <<http://www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/01-043.pdf>>.

Tips

- Encourage your local government to set an example to the rest of the community by maintaining gardens around the shire or council offices in excellent condition. Use local native plants where possible in town planting schemes.
- Develop a partnership with your local government to provide administrative support and financial assistance to the Tidy Towns Committee and have a representative from local government at meetings.
- Encourage local government to provide technical support and assistance for community care, presentation or enhancement

activities e.g. use of machinery and know-how and sound maintenance of local facilities such as playgrounds, shower and toilet facilities, car parks and public open spaces.

- Encourage your local government to improve the appearance of the town and help the community reduce its production of greenhouse gases by establishing or upgrading footpaths and cycle ways. This will encourage town people to use bikes or to walk to the shops, swimming pool or sporting events.
- Look at how the community, business community and local government could work together to acquire facilities for chipping or mulching of green waste or to provide a subsidy for worm farms or compost makers. The council/shire sponsoring the town's garden competition and providing mulch or compost as prizes could complement this effort.
- Encourage local government to sponsor litter removal programs, through encouraging fundraising opportunities for local community groups e.g. payment for each bag of rubbish collected along entrance ways or after community events such as the local country show or Bachelor and Spinsters' Ball.
- Encourage local government to adopt principles of participatory planning by involving the community in consultation processes, community forums and/or workshops to ensure effective feedback on the level of service to the community. This will also allow them to evaluate how effectively they promote local government activities to the community and ensure strong two-way communication with the community.
- Encourage local government to support innovative partnerships with business and community to undertake projects, develop concepts, hold workshops or field days, or undertake research into cleaner production, sustainable development, pollution prevention and/or environmental protection.
- Encourage local government to take an active role in supporting youth activities such as welfare, health, environment and conservation activities.

(F) Training and Mentoring

The Tidy Towns Committees are important community leaders in their towns. Their ability to provide training and mentoring to both peers and younger generations are important steps in building capacity and passing along knowledge.

Tips

- See whether there are any local teachers, youth group leaders or young farmers who can be involved in your Tidy Towns Committee to provide new ideas on involving youth or providing a mentoring role for youth in town.
- Youth Advisory Councils (YACs) have been established throughout the State, in conjunction with local government authorities. The YACs are made up of young people aged 12-20 years who represent their peers and their communities. YAC's are designed to enable members to advise government about issues facing young people, and ways to address those issues in local areas. Phone Paul O'Connor at the Office for Children and Young People's Policy at the Department of Community Development on 9476 2000. You may like to refer to the report 'Telling the Emperor' which can be obtained by contacting the Department.
- Encourage youth representatives from the local school or youth club to visit a Tidy Towns committee meeting and talk about the things that give them a sense of place in the community and what they would like to see changed. This could be done as an outcome of a school activity involving the whole class. In inviting the students to the meeting, resist the urge to lecture, be prepared to accept new ideas and work together to see how their needs or aspirations can be realised while respecting where each other is coming from. If this session goes particularly well, the council/shire may be encouraged to establish a Youth Advisory Council.
- Set youth the challenge of providing a service to the community in exchange for the provision of recreational equipment or a site for a youth club. Be sure to clarify what you would like the

young people to contribute, and keep the negotiation simple.

- Introduce students to people in the community, by way of classroom talks or visits to project sites. Give them the opportunity to ask Tidy Towns related advice.
- Gather some of the young farmers in your community (perhaps half-a-dozen) and ask them why they are staying in farming and what has to happen to keep them there?
- Host a barbecue of other appropriate event between school children and young farmers or business people in town to talk about why they have stayed in town and share some of the difficulties they face living in rural WA.
- Some towns have set up exchange programs with city schools to have students come and live with farming families. This helps young people in the city to actively consider life in rural WA as an option.
- To help build the skills and knowledge of the Tidy Towns Committee, encourage resident environmental experts or local historians to come and talk at the next Tidy Towns committee meeting about your region's unique natural features, wildlife or cultural heritage and look at ways of developing a partnership to work on natural or cultural heritage issues.
- Encourage visits between Tidy Towns Committees by having an open day/half day where neighbouring towns can come and see the achievement of your Tidy Towns Committee, learn new skills and share experiences. Combine it with a sausage sizzle to ensure plenty of opportunity for networking.
- Examine the suitability of youth representatives to attend The Fogarty Foundation Youth Leadership Program (FFYLP). The program is a joint venture between the Fogarty Foundation and Local Drug Action Group Inc (LDAG Inc). The program seeks to identify potential young leaders and role models within our local communities, offers them the opportunity to participate in an interactive two-day training program and then support or fund them in running drug free youth events when back in

their communities. In the past, graduates of the Fogarty Foundation have been involved in the creation and beautification of skate parks and other Tidy Towns type events. For further information please contact Jessica Gray at the Local Drug Action Groups organisation on 9370 0364 or visit their website at <<http://www.localdrugaction.com.au>>.

- In 2003, the WA Department of Local Government and Regional Development released the 'West Australian Community Leadership Plan'. A range of resources and training providers can be accessed by visiting the website at <<http://www.wacomunityleadership.com>>.
- A valuable source of inspiration lies in the Federal Department of Transport and Regional Services (DoTRS) Rural and Regional Women's Unit. Visit the site and look at the section 'Women Taking Action' at <<http://www.dotrs.gov.au/rural/women/>>.
- Tidy Towns Committees may have women representatives who may like to explore the option of joining the Rural, Remote and Regional (RRR) Women's Network. The RRR Network consists of over 5000 members throughout Australia. The Network's charter is to bring together women from rural, remote and regional Western Australia to recognise, promote and expand the contribution they make to their communities. It aims to provide a mechanism for women to disseminate and share information on topics of interest to women and relevant to the development of regional communities. RRR produces a quarterly magazine, RRR Network News, which features a wide variety of articles on family, agriculture, business and stories of relevance to women everywhere. The RRR Network News is different from other magazines in that women mostly write the articles, on topics ranging from post-natal depression to fish farming. The Network's website <<http://www.rrr.online.wa.gov.au/>> is designed to



facilitate communication and networking for rural, remote and regional women. The website allows women to read and post messages on a variety of topics by means of a series of community bulletin boards and to join e-mail groups, linking them to others with similar interests.

- Many rural towns are suffering from population decline, chronic youth unemployment and land degradation. One answer could be to attract new residents, but how can your town compete with popular coastal towns such as Margaret River? And how do these new residents become experienced and responsible farmers, and not create environmental problems by mismanaging their land? The Rural Towns Revitalisation Project is developing a model at Dowerin for subdividing rural land into managed farmlets. The RTR project aims to be a catalyst for sustainable rural management, attract new residents to the town, provide training and employment opportunities for local young people, promote economic development and incubate new local businesses. For details on how to get involved in your area, contact Chris Ferreira on 0409 662 704, 9593 3282 or <landcare@southwest.com.au>; or Garry Heady on 0418 958 594 or 9537 1935.

3. Initiatives

There are lots of great case studies for how communities around Western Australia are working to conserve our natural resources and reduce our impact on the environment. Stories of looking after native vegetation, harnessing natural energy, sustainable building design and community development can be found on the WA Sustainability Units website at <<http://www.sustainability.dpc.wa.gov.au>>.

(A) Waste Management and Recycling

Concept Plan

- In today's society, waste reduction is becoming increasingly important, particularly as the volume of waste we produce is rising. Waste reduction should focus on the principles of **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**. The Waste Wise WA website <www.wastewise.wa.gov.au> is an excellent place to start when planning your waste reduction program. It has lots of great tips and practical solutions for offices, industries, households and schools. There is even a special section for country areas and some contacts for purchasers of recycled products.
- Conduct an audit of the litter and waste management activities your community or local government actively undertakes, and an assessment of the main waste streams produced in your town. This can form the basis of a Waste Management Strategy for your town or area. You may want to undertake this as part of a regional association of council/shires so that resources can be shared, infrastructure costs reduced and common markets can be identified for bulk deliveries or pick ups. This should be combined with regular and competent community or regional waste audits to provide feedback to the community on the difference their contributions are making, and to provide a means of evaluating the success or feasibility of efforts.



- If you live in a remote community you may want to contact your local Aboriginal Environmental Health Worker or Environmental Health Officer to get some assistance with forming a plan for Rubbish Management and Landcare. These workers can be found at the Aboriginal Medical Services, Kimberley, Gascoyne and Pilbara Health Services or local shires. These officers have been trained in a wide variety of areas concerning rubbish collection and handling and how to prevent some of the common diseases associated with its disposal.

Local Government Support

- Take a trip to the tip with the local council/shire. Check whether your tip has adequate fencing to prevent litter blow, measures to prevent odour and whether waste material is covered to discourage pests and vermin. You could discuss the possibility of planting a buffer of trees to provide a wind barrier, beautify the area and lower the water table to prevent pollution.

- Encourage the local council/shire to set aside areas for garden waste at the local tip. If they have access to a chipper, see if the garden waste can be processed to form mulch. Some towns have also incorporated cardboard and shredded paper into the compost as a valuable additive when it is uneconomic to transport these materials to Perth. Residents can then come and collect compost as it matures and the council can use it on public gardens to reduce water consumption.
- Do a self-assessment or litter audit for your town and determine the locations of litter black spots. Once these have been identified, meet with the local council/shire to look at possible solutions, such as the appropriate placement of bins or the supply of larger or moveable bins during peak use times, including festivals and holiday periods.
- Enlist the support of your local government to help let visitors know they are in a Tidy Town by investigating if bins can be provided for waste and recyclable materials at Information Bays, local stores or prominent places in town where visitors stop. Ensure that they are large enough and emptied regularly to prevent overflowing.
- Encourage your council/shire to promote the use of compost bins or worm farms to recycle green waste and provide rebates to residents. If there is not the budget for rebates, the council/shire could coordinate a bulk order of bins to make the system cheaper for residents and reduce the amount of green waste going to the tip. Typically, the major component of waste collected from domestic sources is organic, with green (20-30%) and food (35-45%) wastes collectively accounting for 60-70% of the total waste collected.
- If there are a lot of reusable items such as furniture, building materials, bikes or other items going to the tip, encourage your council/shire to set aside an area at the tip for their collection. Some towns have used these items as a basis of a 'tip shop' that allows local community groups to raise funds from their sale. Contact Albert Adams at Green Skills on



9842 1334 to find out how your town can set up a similar system.

- If your town does not already have a waste transfer station or actively recycle, encourage your council/shire to look at the Waste Wise WA website under the Country section <<http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au/pages/rural.asp>>. This section gives a range of suggestions for recycling and waste management options and the steps needed to promote the service to residents and make it happen. Some of the items you might want to consider include glass, paper, cardboard, aluminium, plastic and oil.
- Encourage your local government to incorporate a 'Waste Wise Scoreboard' in your local newspaper that will show residents how much organic or recyclable waste goes to the tip and reductions over time that have resulted from people reusing or reducing the amount of waste they create.
- Work with your local council/shire encourage farmers to use local tips instead of bushland. In conjunction with this, examine the suitability of waste station opening times and tipping fees to prevent people from driving past the tip when it is closed and dumping in the bush.
- A vast number of rural shires have become part of the drumMUSTER program, a national program for the collection and recycling of empty, cleaned, non-returnable crop production and on-farm animal health chemical containers. Contact the regional field officer for WA on 9574 6409 or the national office on (02) 6230-6712 to find out how your town can get involved. An excellent website is set up at <<http://www.drummuster.com.au>>, which



gives a list of the towns currently involved and the collection dates.

- Encourage your local council/shire to adopt the principles of an Eco-office as outlined on the Waste Wise WA web site <<http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au/pages/office.asp>>. The website has an environmental management strategy, posters, and staff surveys that can be down loaded and filled out for a particular workplace. It looks at issues such as reducing paper use, energy efficiency, recycling, purchasing and a host of other areas.
- Learn about smart building design and encourage your council/shire and community to use and promote energy efficient building materials, source energy-smart building designs and use self-generated electricity or heating products. Contact the Denmark Environment Centre on 9848 1644 to find out about their sustainable building expo, or for more information on the above and on solar power and wind generation, ring Peter Stuart at the Murdoch University Environmental Technology Centre on 9360 7310, or visit <<http://www.etc.murdoch.edu.au>>.

Education/Awareness Programs

- The Bag Smart Campaign helps local communities to initiate community education programs to reduce plastic bag litter. It encourages local partnerships to reduce plastic bags by using the strategy Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Contact Campaign Manager Lesley Brooks on 0407 221 854 or e-mail <lesleybrooks@bigpond.com> for assistance.

- Enlist the support of your local school and community newspaper to get the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle message out to the community. You might want to use the following suggestions from the Waste Wise website <www.wastewise.wa.gov.au> as a start. Your committee and school can probably think of many more ways to reduce waste than can be added to the list.

Reduce

To reduce means to cut down the amount of resources we use each day both as individuals and as a society. Some of the ways that this can be done by householders include:

- Switching off lights and appliances that aren't being used to reduce energy use.
- Saving water by using reduced flow shower heads, setting up grey water systems for gardens, planting waterwise gardens and using lower water consumption appliances (AAA rated).
- Reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by using alternative modes of transport such as car pooling, public transport, cycling or walking.
- Buying products with minimal packaging and using alternatives to plastic shopping bags such as string bags or crates.
- Preparing more meals at home instead of buying take-away foods or convenience foods that contain large amounts of packaging waste.
- Making gifts and cards for family and friends, rather than buying them.
- Growing your own vegetables, fruits and flowers.
- Repairing clothes, toys, tools and appliances rather than replacing them with new ones.
- Hiring, sharing and borrowing tools and equipment with friends and neighbours rather than buying new equipment.

Reuse

Reducing our consumption is one way to minimise the amount of waste going to landfill. Another way is to reuse items you have bought rather than throwing them away. Reusing items



that would normally go to waste means that you buy new products less often. This saves, money, space in landfill, energy and resources that would have been used to make a new product. Some examples of items that can be reused include:

- Jars, icecream containers and yoghurt containers which can be used for storage. Some health food shops may refill these containers.
- Plastic bags can be reused for many purposes around the home, alternatively they can be returned to supermarkets for recycling.
- Ink cartridges and ribbons can be re-filled or re-inked.

Recycle

Remember: If you can't use it, others probably can! See the suggestions under the Community Involvement section to find out how your community can set up a collective recycling depot in your town and refer to the Waste Wise WA website to find out who can take items you no longer need.

- Your town could create its own personal litter awareness message or slogan that can be used around the town. Students could be involved in this to encourage their participation, and discourage them from littering.
- Set up a display or information booth at local events such as agricultural shows to promote waste minimisation initiatives happening in the town. The Waste Wise display trailer can be booked to support these events. For more information phone 9278 0681.
- One way to minimise waste is to look for certain features when you shop. Approach your local

supermarket to see whether they can help put a display together that sends a 'Shop Smart' message to consumers. Shop Smart not only has environmental benefits, but also saves money because you get more use out of what you buy and waste disposal costs are reduced.

Encourage businesses to produce more environmentally friendly products by encouraging consumers to buy products with the following features:

- Have the minimum amount of packaging material
- Are reusable/refillable
- Are recyclable
- Are made from recycled materials

You might also want to consider promoting:

- Products that can be stored in reusable containers
- Products that are durable, reusable and easily repairable
- Products made with minimum amounts of material and maximum recycled content
- Second hand/refurbished products
- Share with friends or family or hire rather than buying items like trailers and lawnmowers that you don't use daily
- The Tidy Towns committee could encourage some creative solutions to reusing waste items for the greater good. In the past we have seen some interesting projects including the use of tractor tyres as structural support for cement garden planters, the use of 44 gallon drums for street tree watering systems, and public sculptures using old machinery or plough discs.

- A specific area that we require assistance with is illegal dumping. Illegal dumping, commonly referred to as 'fly tipping', is the disposal of waste in an area that is not a designated waste disposal facility. It is both unsightly and unhealthy for the environment. The most commonly dumped materials are non-hazardous materials including abandoned and stolen cars; domestic and garden waste; white goods and furniture; tyres; and construction and demolition waste. More recently, there has been an increase in the amount of hazardous materials found illegally dumped including industrial waste, oil, other liquid waste, asbestos and medicinal waste. Unfortunately, the impacts of illegal dumping are not confined to the high cost of removing rubbish from these dumping sites. Contamination of our precious ground water and drinking water catchment through the dumping of hazardous wastes, and the spread of weeds from dumped green waste are just some of the environmental impacts that result. The Tidy Towns Committee may like to assist in identifying 'dumping blackspots', recording the amounts and types of waste. You could also devise ways to work with local governments and litter enforcement officers to educate their local communities that this is not acceptable behaviour.

Community Involvement

- Using the Waste Wise website as a guide, try to establish the types of waste that are produced in your community. Select a few priority or problematic wastes and find alternative ways to manage them. Waste minimisation involves reducing, reusing and recycling to divert waste from landfill. It is not just about cans, bottles and paper – it involves many other resources.

Minimising waste conserves valuable resources including:

- Minerals – used to make many useful materials (e.g. bauxite is used to make aluminium).
- Energy – used in mining or harvesting, processing and transporting of raw materials.



- Native forests – which may be cleared for mining or used to make paper and other wood products.
- Petroleum – used to make plastics.
- Landfill sites – used to dispose of our waste. By minimising waste, the life of existing sites is extended, reducing the need for new landfill sites.

Reducing waste saves money because:

- You get more out of what you buy.
- Businesses become more efficient.
- You don't need to buy new products as often, so household incomes stretch further.
- Waste disposal costs are reduced

Waste minimisation protects the environment because:

- Less land is affected by waste disposal or resource extraction (e.g. mining or harvesting).
 - Less fossil fuels are consumed for energy, reducing the release of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.
 - Less landfill and toxic wastes are produced.
- Remember that 'litter attracts litter'. An attractive, unspoiled landscape is less likely to be littered than one that is heavily littered and overgrown with weeds. Encourage local

clean up days that coincide with key community events or combine the day with a sausage sizzle or other suitable award.

- Encourage the local sporting, youth, or church group to establish a recycling depot in town for locals to drop-off recyclable materials. Approximately 20% of municipal solid waste consists of recyclable materials, including paper, cardboard, mixed plastics, metals (mainly aluminium and steel) and glass. Use the Waste Wise WA website to source a contact for a purchaser or contact the Waste Wise program on 9278 0681 to talk about your options further. Some towns have reached agreements with local transport providers to cart materials back to Perth as backload free of charge.
- If you are part of a large town or city that has local companies that use recycled products a Community Recycling directory could be established. This could list companies and organisations in your town or surrounding towns who accept various materials. The directory could be incorporated into the local phone book.
- Encourage shopping centres to reuse plastic bags or supply alternatives to plastic bags. Some shopping centres have begun selling calico bags with their logo on at a nominal price. In some instances bags have been produced locally and used as a fundraising option for community groups.
- Encourage your local nursery or garden club to have a demonstration on composting or worm farming to help reduce the amount of organic or green waste going to the tip. Compost bins and worm farms can be made out of a variety of old unused items such as wooden crates, bathtubs, fridges or sinks. The Households section of the Waste Wise WA website has some excellent tips on how to set a system up <<http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au/pages/households.asp>>. You may also want to see if there is a local member of the Permaculture Association of WA in your area that can come and help you with technical know-how. Phone them on 9381 6156 for further information.
- Encourage local businesses, offices and industries to examine the waste they produce and look at actions for achieving cleaner production. Some excellent examples of activities they can undertake are included on the Waste Wise WA website <<http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au/index.asp>>. They include things like the Green Stamp program for the automotive industry; a guide for creating an Environmental Management Plan; details on the National Packaging Covenant; and how to become an Eco-Office, looking at reducing paper use, energy efficiency, recycling, purchasing and a host of other areas.
- Our air is a precious resource. Many rural families enjoy sitting down in front of a pot-belly or log fire in the winter. However if not used properly, wood heaters can emit a lot of smoke into the air and cause haze, especially in the colder months. Most of the nation's firewood (72%) is collected from the south-west and south-east and Australians burn approximately five million tonnes of firewood per year. Encourage community members in your town to consider alternative means of heating. Some basic hints for cleaner burning of firewood include:
 - Reducing the amount of smoke emitted by always burning dry, seasoned, untreated wood.
 - Never burning treated or painted wood or garbage in your heater, as these can emit toxic gases.
 - Keeping wood stacked loosely under cover in a dry, well ventilated area.
 - Always keeping the fire burning brightly by opening up the airflow so it doesn't smoulder and produce too much smoke.
 - Splitting larger logs into smaller ones, as these dry out quicker and produce a better heat when burning.
 - Never 'banking' the fire back by closing the airflow down – allow the fire to go out overnight, as a well insulated home will maintain enough heat until the morning.
- Encourage residents to compost or recycle as an alternative to backyard burning of waste. If they do have to burn, encourage them to avoid

clear and calm nights when the smoke will linger around the neighbourhood.

- Many country people are heavily reliant on their cars, however there may be some instances in towns where a car trip is not always necessary. Encourage residents to walk or cycle to work, school, shops or the swimming pool. Even if people left their cars at home once a week it would result in a decrease in air pollution and less driving also means less dust thrown up by cars.

(B) Natural Heritage Conservation

Concept Plan

- Your town may wish to create its own Biodiversity or Natural Heritage Plan to ensure the protection of natural vegetation, wildlife and other natural features in the town and/or shire. It has often been found that people in towns and 'built' environments benefit from daily contact with wildlife and native vegetation in many different ways - for example, trees help keep down levels of airborne pollution; parks and other public green spaces provide a welcome escape from vehicles and a safe and stimulating environment for children to play; native gardens provide people with intimate contact with vegetation and wildlife. Their level of contact with the natural environment determines a larger part of what people in towns and cities call quality of life. There may be a local Environment Centre Landcare officer Bushcare officer or Land for Wildlife officer who can assist you in preparing local bush management plans.
- The following sections give suggestions for some activities that you might want to undertake in your town. However the possibilities are always endless and new and innovative ideas are always welcome.

Local Government Involvement

- Encourage your council/shire and local businesses to use native species when planting around town. Not only do they help to



preserve the species, but they also provide natural habitats for wildlife. Native species are more suited to the local environment and are Water Wise. The use of species whose seeds have been collected in that specific area (local provenance seed) is even better. Your local Landcare Coordinator, Bushcare officer or Woodland Watch officer can help you with this. Some towns have put a local law or regulation in place that ensures any new street trees are native.

- Many visitors to Western Australia are enticed here by the State's unique wildflowers and woodlands. When your local government is undertaking roadside grading, encourage them to leave strips of native vegetation to avoid accidental destruction of threatened species. They may even want to designate roadside areas as wildflower drives or flora roads. A good example of this is the Midlands Biodiversity Project, which sought to identify roads with high concentrations of wildflowers and native vegetation. A 'Kwongan Connections' Roadmap and associated website was produced to guide visitors to areas of interest. Check the website out at <<http://www.kwongan.asn.au/>>. Roadside vegetation is also important as many of our critically endangered wildflowers are only found on the roadside. The vegetation is also an important wildlife corridor for birds, reptiles and mammals.
- Work together with your community and local government to put a Biodiversity or Green Plan together. This plan identifies areas of high conservation or local significance and maps

them. The maps can then be used by town planners to protect green space or other natural features. For more information on constructing a Green Plan, contact the Denmark Environment Centre on 9848 1644.

- Some Progress Associations, Tidy Towns Committees or local governments have received grants from Bushcare, Landcare or Coastwest to improve visitor access at beaches or revegetation projects within the town or shire. Examine whether there is opportunity to undertake similar activities in your town. If your committee is not incorporated, the local council/shire may need to act as the auspicing body. Funding opportunities may be sought from your local Bushcare officer (contact Greening Australia on 9335 8933), your local Landcare contact (contact your local council/shire or Department of Agriculture) or the State Coastwest Coordinator on 9264 7834.
- A few local governments with areas of native bushland in their towns and shires have started to adopt suggestions from 'Beyond Roads, Rates and Rubbish', a report by Carl Binning, Mike Young and Emily Young for Land and Water Australia (<<http://www.lwa.gov.au/downloads/PR990332.pdf>>). The document helps local governments to plan policies for townspeople and local government to work together to conserve native vegetation. Find out what your council/shire's commitment is to protecting native vegetation and whether they have active programs that encourage residents to protect native vegetation. Find out about whether the Tidy Towns Committee can have an influence or lend a hand in promoting the conservation of native vegetation.
- Work with your local government to develop or implement public and/or protected open space plans within the town and its surrounds. This can serve to protect areas with significant conservation value or create wildlife corridors in residential, industrial and agricultural areas.
- Work with your local council/shire and community to develop and implement a management plan for natural areas in the town or its surrounds. This may include the



rehabilitation, management or protection of a woodland, landform, town common or coastal and/or riparian vegetation in residential, industrial or agricultural areas that protects local flora and fauna.

- Encourage your local government to work with the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment or Department of Conservation and Land Management to identify feral animals and problem weeds in the town and surrounds and see whether a solution can be reached to lessen their impact.

Community Involvement

- Some towns are fortunate enough to have fantastic areas of natural vegetation that represent the types of plants and animals that have commonly been lost due to clearing or development. The local school, church, golf course, old homestead, wetland or public open space may be important natural assets for the town. Find out whether there is an active program to stop rubbish or garden weeds invading these areas and see if their removal can be incorporated into regular Tidy Towns or other community environmental activities. The Environmental Weeds Action Network has an excellent website <<http://members.iinet.net.au/~ewan/info.htm>> to help community members recognise and control weeds.
- Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) undertakes many projects restoring cultural and natural heritage as part of their regional



assistance program. If you require help to undertake projects such as natural heritage trails; restoration of lakes, coastal dunes or bushland; or building of structures and interpretive signs, you may wish to contact them on 9336 6911 or e-mail: <perth@conservationvolunteers.com.au>. They can point you in the direction of a local work team or assist you to start a team of volunteers in your area. CVA volunteers are generally overseas visitors, local youth or older people wanting to make a difference for their environment.

- Some towns have created community nurseries to grow plants for a town arboretum, street trees or landcare efforts. Projects such as these are a great way of involving younger and older members of the community alike. If you are going out to collect native seed for a school, town or farm nursery project, take a little extra time to find out more about the species of plant. Assistance can be provided by contacting the WA Herbarium (Phone 9334 0500); the Land for Wildlife Officer or Bushcare Coordinator at your local Department of Conservation and Land Management; Greening Australia WA on 9335 8933. World Wide Fund for Nature to find your closest Woodland Watch Officer on 9387 6444. Be aware that if seed is collected from a reserve or from a species that is rare, you will need a permit from the Department of Conservation and Land Management – ring 9334 0333.
- Encourage members of your community to learn how to help frogs by visiting the program's website at <<http://heini.museum.wa.gov.au/frogwatch/pages/frames.html>> and looking at the extract from the book 'Building Frog Friendly Gardens'. If you don't have web access, give the Frogwatch coordinator a call on 9427 2750.
- Encourage your local school to find out about the CALM Bushrangers program. Bushrangers is an excellent youth program that teaches young people to care for the environment through practical projects that can benefit your community as well giving them the opportunity to develop teamwork and leadership qualities. Lots of towns have benefited enormously from their help. The program is expanding rapidly so to find the nearest unit, simply contact the State Coordinator, Bronwyn Humphrys on 9334 0137.
- Many species of birds occur in close proximity to people in towns and cities, and some species have benefited from this close association and increased in numbers. Sadly, many smaller species have been lost due to such factors as the use of pesticides on lawns or capture by feral cats. On the Birds Australia WA website <<http://birdswa.iinet.net.au/>>, you can check to see which birds are likely to occur in your area. You can encourage people to protect and enjoy birds by planting native vegetation in their gardens, using non-toxic means of controlling garden pests, placing bells on their cats' collars, providing nest boxes in their gardens or protecting nesting sites from over-zealous pruning.
- Insects are an important part of the environment and are often important indicators of environmental health as they are near to the bottom of the food chain. Insects often benefit from the sheltered and warm climate of the built environment. Encourage residents to take note of the insects in their gardens and encourage the planting of local native vegetation that will attract native bees, beetles, grubs, stick insects and other interesting creatures. These will in turn provide food sources for other animals such as birds and reptiles.
- In towns affected by drought, some Tidy Towns committees have encouraged townspeople to act as 'tree wardens', whereby residents adopt a street tree and ensure that they receive adequate watering throughout the dry months. Sometimes schools have become involved in this activity or innovative watering systems have been developed using old drums.

- The local lake, creek or river is an important habitat for birds, fish, frogs and aquatic invertebrates. They also provide important places for recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing or picnics. The challenge lies in being able to make use of the wetlands without compromising its ability to support wildlife and a high level of water quality. Wetlands are under threat from a number of factors including grazing cattle, introduced fish, dumping of rubbish, over fishing, dumping of effluent and erosion of banks by vehicles. Find out whether there is a local environment group who protects the wetlands by contacting your local shire. Tidy Towns committees can help the wetlands by encouraging people not to dump their rubbish or unwanted pets, they may also want to look at creating visitor facilities that control access and help people appreciate the wetlands without damaging them. The local school may also be encouraged to contact Ribbons of Blue on 9278 0646 to find out who their closest coordinator is and see if they can get help to start a local project to monitor water quality.
 - Many native animals use fallen logs and debris as homes. Encourage residents to be conscious of where their firewood is collected from. If they use a wood fire they may well be burning someone else's home to keep their own warm. If they are collecting firewood, encourage them to leave hollow logs alone whether they are standing or lying. Although they may burn well, they are homes to some of Australia's most beloved animals. Encourage them to try to take small diameter solid pieces of wood instead of large diameter hollows. For further information visit the Department of Environment and Heritage's website at <http://www.deh.gov.au/land/pressures/firewood/>.
- the species inhabits the town-site. Some towns have incorporated images of these species into murals, signs or town logos. Ring the State Threatened Species Network Coordinator for further details 9387 6444 or your local Department of Conservation and Land Management.
- Most shires have a floral emblem. This has probably been chosen because it is unique or more common in that area. As such, it should be promoted so that it is well known. This could be done on letterhead, signs, or even by planting projects around town. The promotion of the floral emblem also helps to promote the conservation of native flora.
 - The creation and promotion of nature trails is important to encourage the community to take an interest in wildlife, landforms and native vegetation. The use of interpretive signage along nature trails allows visitors and locals to find out a bit more about the environment and appreciate the uniqueness of the area. By drawing attention to its values it will also help them appreciate the need for it to be respected and conserved. In some cases Tidy Towns Committees or Progress Associations have worked with their local government to develop these as part of a 'town common' or 'community woodland' project or to showcase a natural feature such as a granite outcrop, orchids, wreath-flowers or creek-line. See whether there is an opportunity to promote the bushland near your town to help others appreciate our natural heritage.
 - Encourage your town to create a threatened species garden. Some wheatbelt towns have created gardens for visitors to appreciate and recognise the unique wildflowers in their area. Having representative samples of these species in a secure environment also helps to protect the species from becoming extinct from the wild.
 - If you run a local garden competition make sure there is a section for wildlife-friendly gardens. You might want to combine this event with your next Tidy Towns or Garden Club meeting, and provide a guest speaker who can teach residents about growing natives to promote

Promotion of Values to Residents and Visitors

- Find out if there is a group in your area working on threatened species such as malleefowl, pythons, ground parrots or chuditch. See if your committee can visit their next project to find out more about their activities and how you can help promote the species, particularly if

wildlife-friendly gardens. The WA Naturalists Club (phone 9228 2495, e-mail <wanats@iinet.net.au> or website <<http://www.wanats.iinet.net.au>> may be a good starting point in recommending someone for your group. You might want to build on your efforts by having a naturalist walk in a local patch of bushland to show residents first hand how wildlife interact with native vegetation.

- Your local garden centre might be able to help to promote natural heritage conservation by hosting awareness events on growing native species, distributing publicity leaflets or stocking garden wildlife products such as nest boxes or wildflower seed mixes. Another important role they can play is providing advice on tending gardens, so that plants that have the potential to become environmental weeds are managed in a way that prevents their escape from gardens. Some daisies, bulbs, herbs and plants that are prolific seeders are prime candidates for escape.
- Many rural towns are suffering from population decline, chronic youth unemployment and land degradation. One answer could be to attract new residents, but how can your town compete with popular coastal towns such as Margaret River? And how do these new residents become experienced and responsible farmers, and not create environmental problems by mismanaging their land? The Rural Towns Revitalisation Project is developing a model at Dowerin for subdividing rural land into managed farmlets. The RTR project aims to be a catalyst for sustainable rural management, attract new residents to the town, provide training and employment opportunities for local young people, promote economic development and incubate new local businesses. For details on how to get involved in your area, contact Chris Ferreira on 0409 662 704, 9593 3282 or <landcare@southwest.com.au>; or Garry Heady on 0418 958 594 or 9537 1935.

(C) Cultural Heritage Conservation

The Western Australian Government has proclaimed 2004 as the Year of the Built



Environment. This Western Australian initiative has gained the support of the Federal Government to make the Year an Australia-wide event. While we are becoming more aware of our natural environment and our need to appreciate and protect it, it is easy to take for granted the buildings and structures within the built environment that have so much influence on our lifestyle and well-being.

The built environment means buildings, places and structures in which we live, work and play.

Concept Plan

- Our cultural heritage includes those places and events which define and sustain what it means to be Australian and provide a living and accessible record of our indigenous and non-indigenous cultural history. It may comprise places, objects, events, cultural practices, stories, records and other more intangible values. Tidy Towns committees may be involved in preserving our cultural heritage through protecting public, private and commercial buildings, bridges, wells, streetscapes, man-made landscapes, relics, World War II military installations, industrial or mine sites, cemeteries, statues, jetties and gardens.
- Come up with ideas for your community's involvement. Think about what your community wants to focus on in terms of such things as energy efficiency in domestic and public buildings, eco-tourism and heritage trails, safety standards, crime prevention, sporting and recreation facilities, building by-laws and find ways to focus on them during the year.
- Look for events and activities as they are organised, and take part, get involved. There will be:

- Conferences and seminars by industry, professional and academic institutions
- Design competitions
- Photographic competitions
- Community design workshops and other events to showcase the skills of industry and professions involved in creating the built environment
- Local government events to do with planning and design of precincts and streetscapes
- Built environment and heritage trails and tours
- Seminars, with expert national and international speakers
- Travelling displays
- Community reviews of their built environment
- Educational programs and activities.
- And many more – watch as they unfold!

More information and notices of events can be found on the Year of the Built Environment website <<http://www.builtenvironment2004.wa.gov.au/>>.

Local Government Involvement

- Make contact with your community development officer or council/shire to see how your committee can contribute to your local Townscape or Community Development Plan. This will ensure that ideas put forward will allow for the cultural attributes most valued by the community to be protected by future planning.
- Find out whether your local government has a Municipal Inventory for Heritage. This inventory lists all the sites within a town-site or shire that are, or might become, important sites of cultural heritage significance. If your council/shire doesn't have an inventory prepared, see if there is an opportunity to host a joint workshop for your town to identify areas that are of significance. To make sure that these areas are protected for prosperity, you will need to make sure they are included in relevant town planning schemes that are able to set guidelines for development applications and townscape projects. The Heritage Council provides an advisory service that can help your committee get started. Regional advisers are available in the Midwest, Goldfields, South



West, Great Southern, Wheatbelt and Peel regions through the Freecall number 1800 644 177.

- Encourage your local government to start a heritage award program to recognise community efforts in restoring heritage sites such as shop facades, old buildings, machinery collections, grain receival points, jetties, gardens, wells, statues or other important sites. Similarly, encourage your local government to maintain a strong commitment to the preservation and/or restoration of culturally significant buildings and sites. Again the Heritage Council of WA has a series of excellent practice notes that can be down loaded from <http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/e_pub_list.html> or you can contact them on 1800 644 177.
- Find out whether your local government has a Cultural Plan in place to help your community appreciate and conserve its cultural heritage. Cultural planning is a catalyst for social, environmental and economic development. It is about building vital, safe and prosperous communities and has the ability to create partnerships between community, local government and industry. It transforms dreams, ideas and initiatives into real outcomes by using a creative technique called 'cultural mapping' to grow community capacity and spirit. Through the process of cultural mapping, community members identify and document local cultural resources. Through



this research, cultural elements are recorded: the tangibles like galleries, craft industries, distinctive landmarks, local events and industries, as well as the intangibles like memories, personal histories, attitudes and values. The Community Arts Network can help you gain the necessary resources to help you plan for conserving cultural heritage in your community. Freecall 1800 681 021.

- Encourage your local government to investigate opportunities for hosting local celebrations, festivals or concerts that help attract visitors to the town and recognise culturally significant events or traditions in the community. It is always best to seek advice from those who have done it before and a quick phone call to another council/shire that has put on a similar event can give you great information. It would also be valuable to contact Country Arts WA on Freecall 1800 811 883 to find out what technical or financial assistance is available to help you with your endeavours.

Community Involvement

- Many rural people have a strong sense of place and there are some excellent efforts being undertaken to preserve old buildings and other built structures throughout the state. The formation of a historical society can help individuals to join together to undertake heritage surveys of the town and ultimately ensure the preservation and restoration of historic sites. Information on how to preserve sites can be gained from the National Trust by

phoning 9321 6088. The Heritage Council of WA has a series of excellent practice notes that can be down loaded from <http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/e_pub_list.html> or you can contact them on 1800 644 177.

- Australia's Aboriginal heritage is too often forgotten and Aboriginal traditions and tales are very easily lost. Therefore the passing on of this information, especially to our younger generations, should be encouraged. If you want to find out if there are any particular cultural sites in your area that can be conserved or recognised, please call Tania Butler at the Department of Indigenous Affairs on 9235 8052. Tania can do a site search and tell you what sites are listed in your local government area and provide a contact person who can inform you about their significance. Alternatively, you might want to contact your closest regional office: Midland 9274 4288, Bunbury 9791 8433, Albany 9842 3000, Northam 9621 2154, Geraldton 9921 7131, Kalgoorlie 9021 5666 or Broome 9192 2865.
- The local cemetery is an important source of cultural history that is often neglected. The ages and nationalities of people buried there are often interesting and this information should be preserved. If you have a number of unmarked graves or the cemetery could benefit from some attention, see if there is a local group which may be interested in researching the history of the area, restoring some of the headstones, beautifying or tidying up the area. The Battye Library or local council may be a good starting point to research past residents or settlers in the area. The J. S. Battye Library of Western Australian History (Battye Library) identifies, collects, organises, preserves and provides access to Western Australia's published documentary heritage as well as collections of original Western Australian historical records. Contact the library on 1800 198 107 or visit <<http://www.lis.wa.gov.au/battye.html>> to find out more.
- If your town has a museum or wants to create one, you may benefit from contacting the WA Museum Assistance Program. Staff from the WA Museum are available for field visits to

community based museums throughout the state to provide advisory and training services. They can give advice on how to create your own town museum, care for collections and provide referrals to other agencies that can provide further assistance. The program can be contacted on Freecall 1800 023 333. Your regional librarian can also provide a wealth of information and access to resources.

- Some towns have prepared oral histories or books to record the cultural or historical value of their town. If this is combined with photographs it can provide a valuable reference for how the town has progressed over the decades. See if there is a group in your town that is interested in undertaking this research – it may be a worthwhile school project that can be displayed at a suitable community event or gallery. The Battye Library may be an excellent source of reference materials. Contact the library on 1800 198 107 or visit <<http://www.liswa.wa.gov.au/battye.html>>.
- Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) undertakes many projects restoring cultural and natural heritage as part of their regional assistance program. If you require help to undertake projects such as cultural trails, restoration of old buildings, or construction of public facilities, you may wish to contact them on 9336 6911 or e-mail <perth@conservationvolunteers.com.au>. They can point you in the direction of a local work team or assist you to start a team of volunteers in your area.

Promotion of Values to Residents and Visitors

- Encourage your local newspaper to interview older residents in town and print stories that tell the community about the history of the area.
- There are many ways of celebrating a community's culture and there may be some creative people in your town that can help promote the importance of conserving cultural heritage through visual arts, theatre, dance, creative writing, music, multimedia or film. Country CAPS (Community Arts Program Scheme) is designed to assist community



organisations and groups in country areas to take an active role in the development of arts activity in their own community. Projects that offer opportunities for creative expression, skills development and broad community participation are eligible for a maximum of \$2000 funding. This funding is for community based, not-for-profit organisations and further information can be obtained by contacting Country Arts WA on Freecall 1800 811 883.

- Investigate whether there is an opportunity to display old photographs or stories of the region's early days in a local shop, community meeting place or during a festival to educate the community on the town's cultural heritage.
- See whether there is an opportunity to profile your community's cultural heritage as part of an entry statement welcoming visitors to town. Some towns have done this through the use of a slogan, old time farm machinery or sculpture.
- A heritage or interpretative trail may be an excellent way to help visitors appreciate the cultural significance of your town. Some excellent heritage trails have been set up around the state, following early stock or trading routes, watering points, early settlement sites, military sites, aboriginal sites, goals, churches, timber cutting or farming endeavors. See whether there is an opportunity to set a trail up in your town. For technical assistance and any funding opportunities you may wish to contact the Heritage Council of WA on 1800 644 177, or view their series of practice notes at <http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/e_pub_list.html>.
- Encourage local businesses to adopt signage or paint work on shop facades that are symbolic of the town's cultural heritage.

- Encourage a display of local artwork at the town gallery or other suitable meeting place that shows landscapes or activities indicative of the town's heritage.
- If your town is planning to paint a mural or create a mosaic, encourage them to incorporate a cultural heritage theme. You may also want to invite local indigenous artists to put their touch on it. Contact Country Arts WA on Freecall 1800 811 883 to find out what technical or financial assistance is available to help you with your project.

(D) Focus on Freshwater

Concept Plan

A long period of dry weather and the more recent drought that has affected large areas of Western Australia has demonstrated that we are vulnerable to climate change. There is now a need to become smarter in the way that we develop, use and reuse our water. Significant parts of WA's dry land areas are not connected to a scheme water supply and instead rely on small dams and ground water. This is of particular relevance to Tidy Towns participants who seek to beautify their towns with gardens, open space and parklands – all of which are potentially high water use activities if the 'Water Wise' message is not adhered to. You may wish to work with your local government, Department of Environment office or Water Corporation office to see how you can put a plan together for conserving water in your community.

Excellent Water Wise tips can be obtained from the WA Government's website 'Our Water Future' at <<http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/home.asp>>. You can find fact sheets on water wise garden designs, rebates available for water saving devices and a copy of the State Water Strategy.

Local Government Support

- Find out what your local government is doing to address the effects of salinity and rising water tables on regional town infrastructure. Many towns monitor water quality and levels in town as part of the Rural Towns Program.

The program helps communities with detailed investigations into groundwater conditions and the economic effects of town-site salinity and helps to identify suitable treatments for each town. You can find out more about the program by contacting the Department of Agriculture on 9368 3919.

- Suggest that your council/shire install automatic irrigation such as drip feed systems on public gardens and verges to save water, and that the systems are regularly monitored to keep water wastage to a minimum. This might be combined with mulching to reduce the amount of water used on gardens and reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Encourage your local government to provide rebates for, or promote the use of approved grey water treatment and reuse systems in resident's homes. Grey water is water that comes from the kitchen, bathroom and laundry, but does not include toilet wastes. It can be collected and used for watering the garden, thereby reducing pressure on scheme water supplies. At present householders in WA are permitted to use grey water by 'bucketing', but grey water systems are not permitted where they compromise public health or the environment. Encourage the local government to work with a local representative of the health department to see whether a grey water trial can be undertaken in your area. Further information on grey water use can be obtained from the Department of Health's publication 'Draft Guidelines for the Reuse of Grey water in Western Australia' which can be downloaded from <http://www.health.wa.gov.au/publications/> or obtained by contacting Waste Water Management on 9388 4999.
- Encourage your local government to liaise with local mineral, fishing, agricultural or horticultural industries to investigate ways of using reclaimed water to decrease pressure on scheme supplies.
- Many towns effectively use treated waste water to irrigate parklands, ovals and public gardens. However, in the winter months, the demand for water may be significantly lessened, and often the treated waste water is discharged

into a water course. Building a storage dam is an expensive proposition that is often unaffordable, but an alternative idea might be to create a wetland and use that for attracting wildlife and flora that is valuable to the community. When the water does discharge from the wetland it is better quality, especially if filtered through reeds.

- Encourage your local government to investigate water harvesting from areas such as CBH bins or large sealed or bituminised areas. Lots of towns have a combined system where stormwater is blended with treated effluent for use on ovals and parklands.
- Encourage your local government to undertake a water audit of all public and sporting facilities. Particular attention could be paid to: retrofitting dual flush toilets; installing AAA rated water efficient shower heads; fitting flow restrictors/aerators to tap spouts in internal sinks and basins; repairing any leaking taps; fitting bleed valves to air conditioners; checking and adjusting reticulation systems; installing tap timers; or making any outside taps tamper-proof to prevent wastage.
- Encourage your local government to provide rebates or other form of incentive for residents to reduce lawn and replace gardens with water wise plants. Council/shires could look at forming partnerships with local garden or landscaping services to provide water wise plants or mulch up to a nominal value.
- Encourage your local government to replace its gardens with a water wise demonstration garden to set a good example to residents. Hints and plans for establishing water wise gardens can be obtained from the 'Our Water Future' website <http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/waterwise/menu_garden.asp>.
- Enlist the support of local government to help encourage your community to stick to sprinkler bans or allocated watering days to help reduce water usage throughout the town. Additionally, you could encourage the use of rainwater tanks or other water harvesting measures.



Community Involvement

- When establishing a garden, local native plants are often not appreciated for what they can do and how they can look. If public areas are dedicated to using natives, it may be possible to change opinions so that natives are used more often elsewhere.
- Water wise gardens are gardens that use natives where possible, in preference to exotics that may require a lot of water. Smaller areas of lawn are also important, as lawns are where the majority of our garden water is used. Other ideas are to use compost or mulch to keep moisture in the soil, and once again reduce the need to water as often. Plans and tips for creating a water wise gardens can be obtained from <http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/waterwise/menu_garden.asp>.
- Encourage members of your community to undertake household water audits by using the 'Our Water Future' Water Wise Calculator available at <http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/waterwise/content_waterwise_calculator.asp>. This will help them work out how much water they use and options for reducing their consumption and their water bills too. You may want to encourage local businesses and industry to undertake a similar water audit. This may be a good project to suggest to schools.

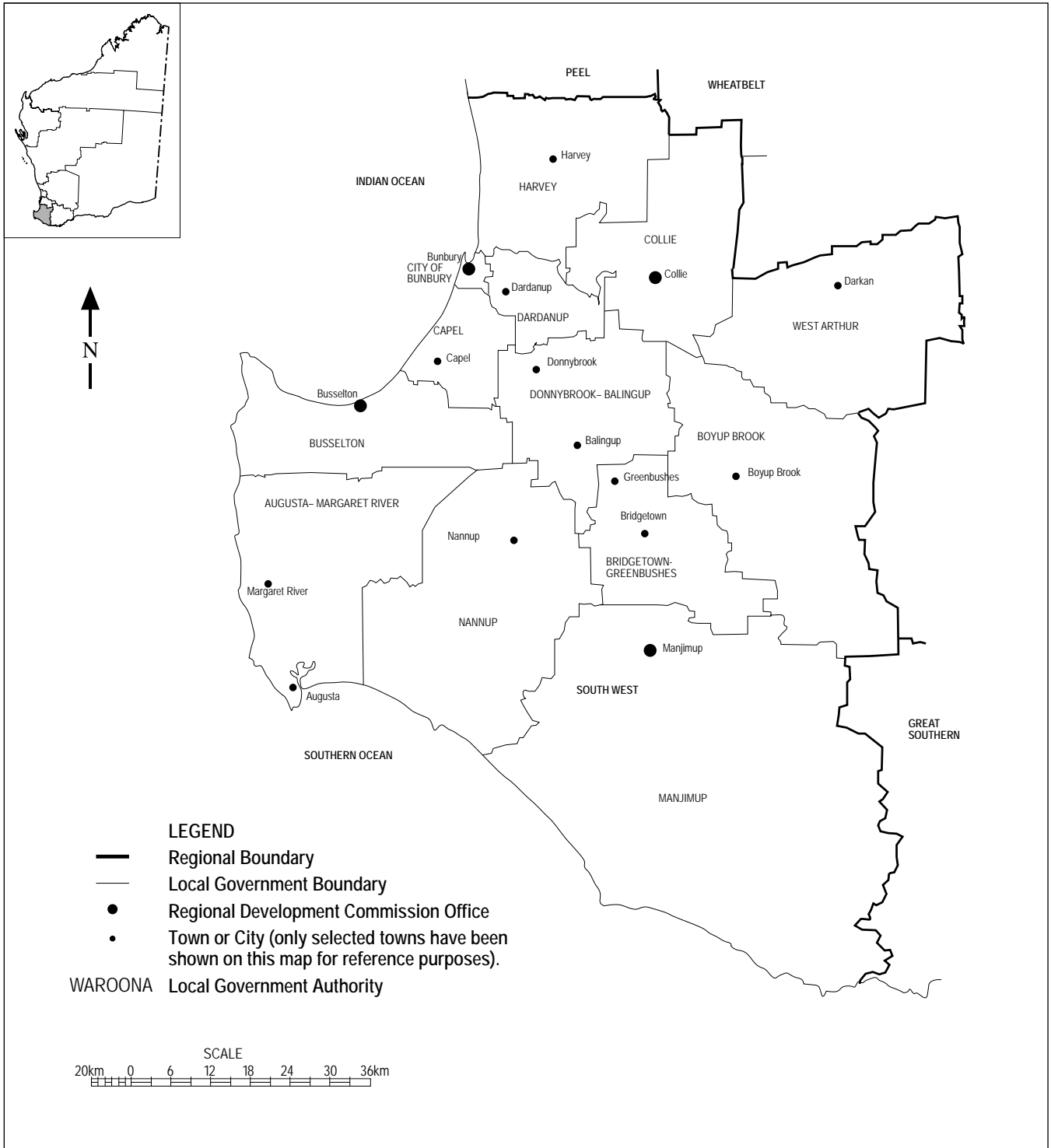
Innovative Methods

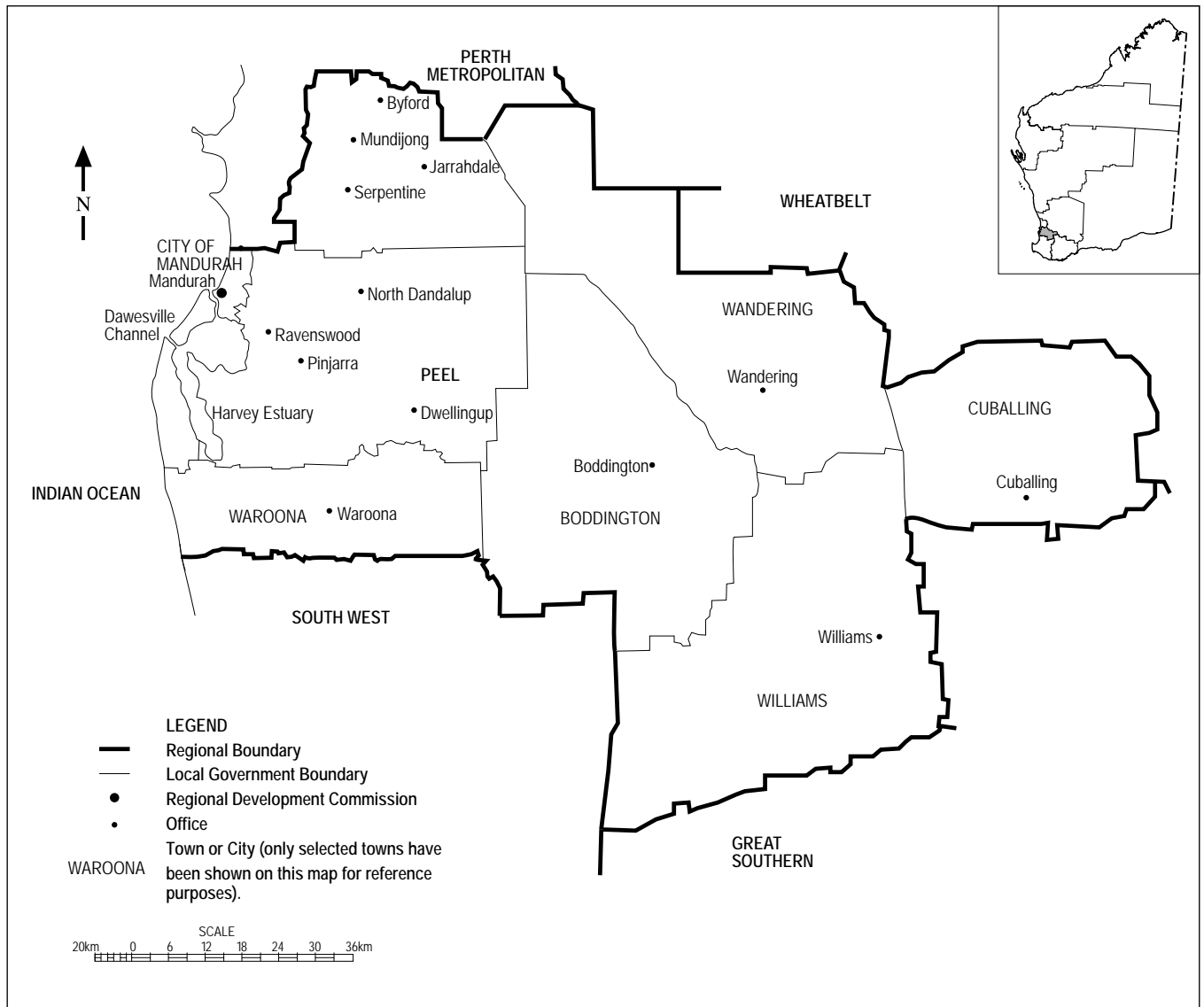
- Regional Western Australians have shown themselves to be leaders in conserving water and reuse about 40% of all municipal waste water. The WA Water Corporation reports that this is an extremely high level and compares more than favourably with similar areas elsewhere in Australia. If your community has an innovative means of reducing water consumption, recycling or reusing water, let us know about it. We would love to share your stories with the rest of the state.
- If you live in a particularly dry region and reticulation isn't a viable option due to birds, ants, or lack of water pressure, you may want to invent new ways of watering plants using drums with trickle systems or other innovative systems.
- If you do not have access to piped water in your community you may wish to look at ways of decreasing the loss of water from tanks or dams through evaporation. You could also investigate water harvesting options such as storm water runoff, roof runoff or catchment areas that can be used to collect water for gardens.
- If you live in a remote community, you may want to contact your local Aboriginal Environmental Health Worker or Environmental Health Officer to get some assistance with forming a plan for Water Conservation. These workers can be found at the Aboriginal Medical Services, Kimberley, Gascoyne and Pilbara Health Services or local shires. These officers have been trained in a wide variety of areas concerning water conservation including its safe collection, treatment for water borne diseases and the maintenance of water pipes, aerators and filters. They can also assist in helping to set up suitable sewerage systems or toilets that use less water such as composting or dual flush toilets. If you are using a lagoon or grey water system they can advise on this as well.



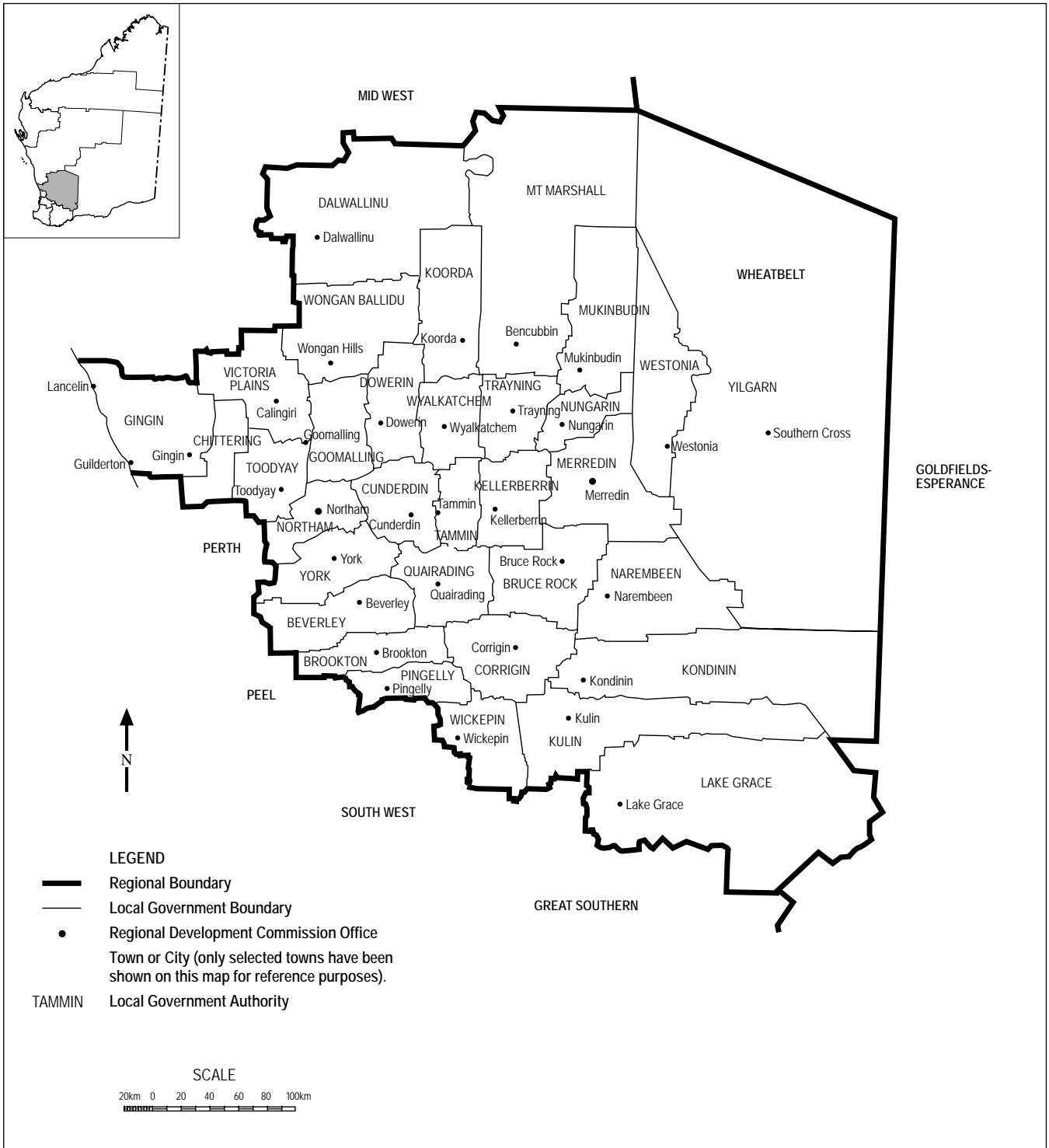
Appendix 1

Tidy Towns Regional Maps

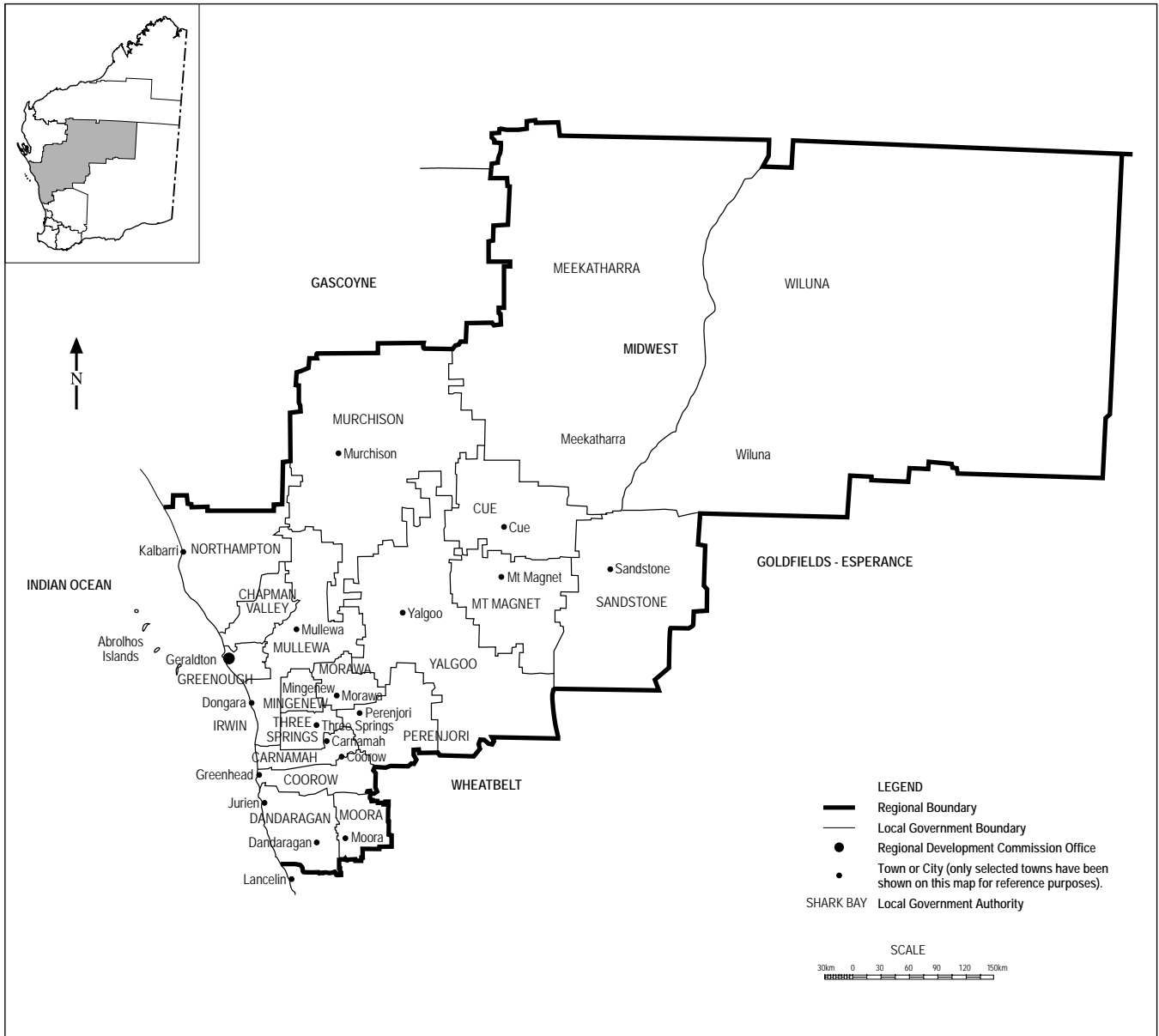




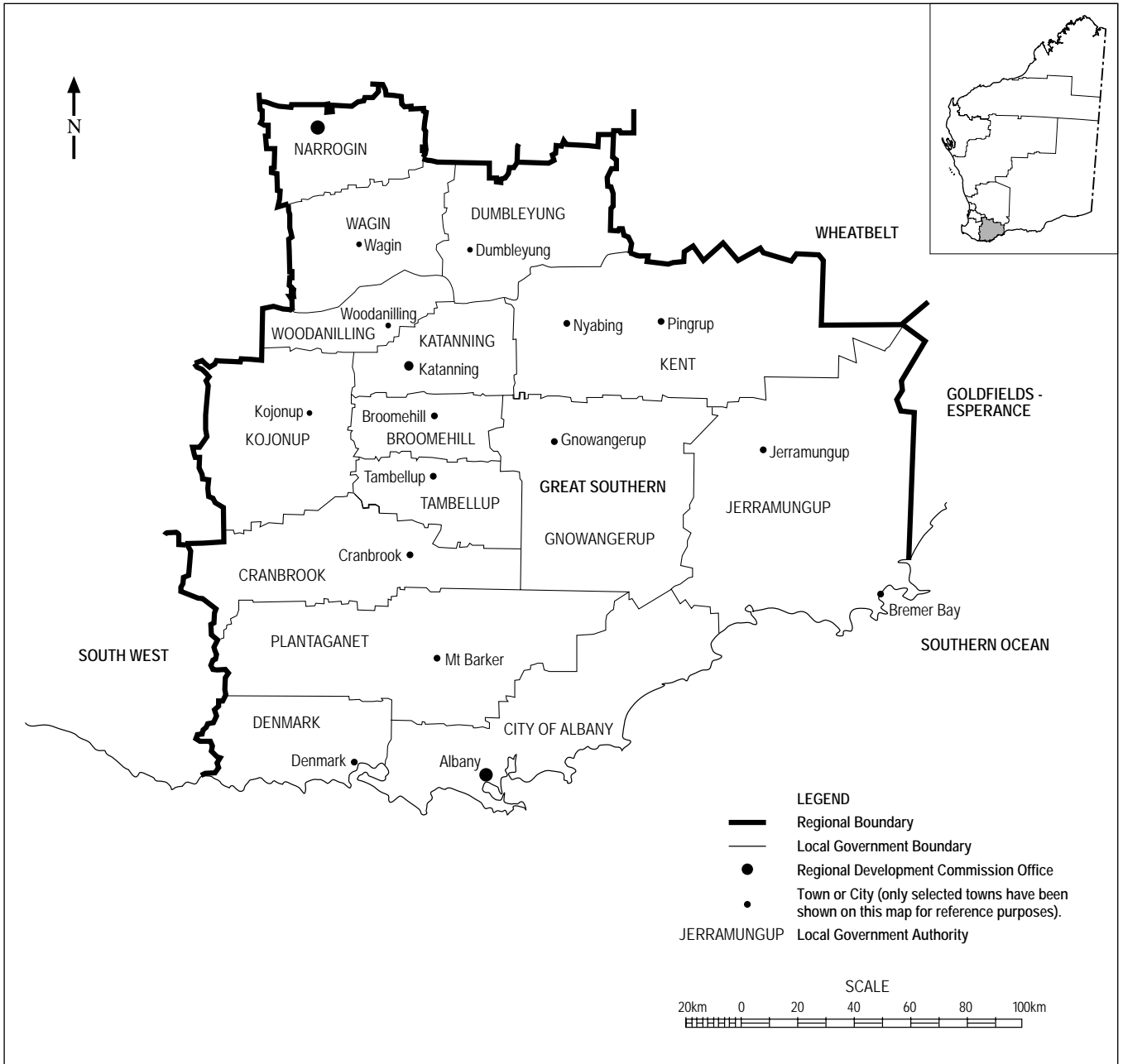
Peel



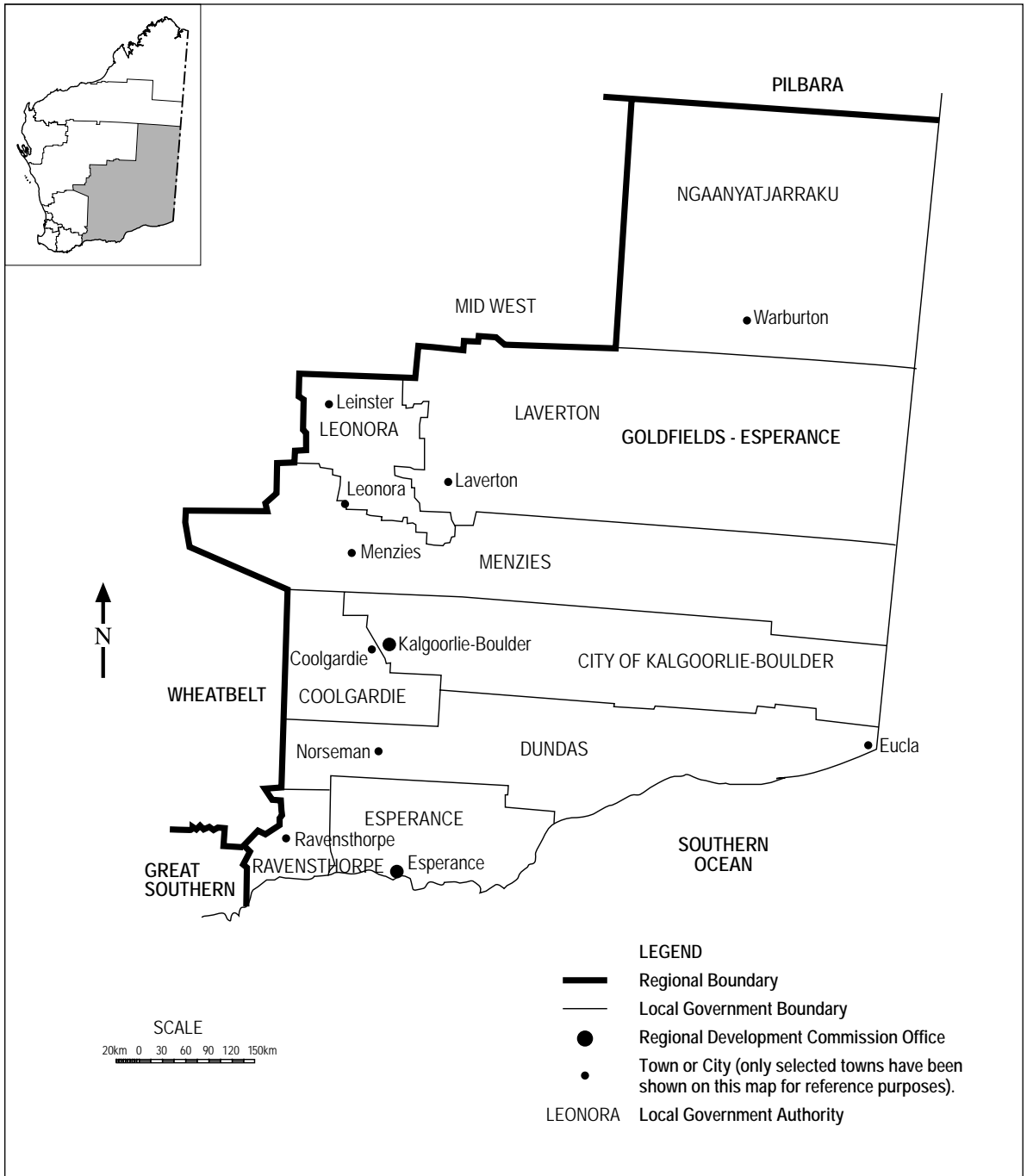
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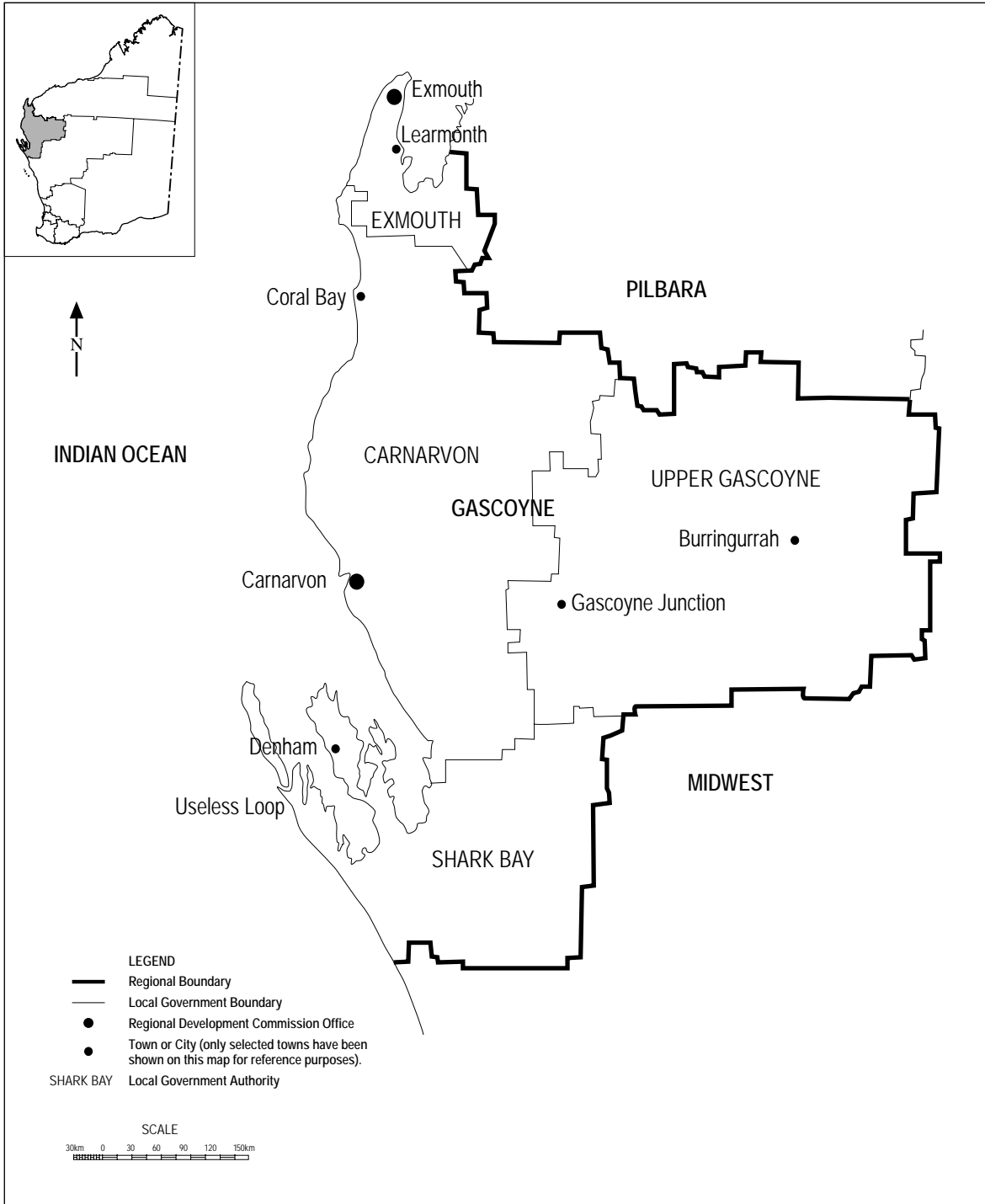
Midwest



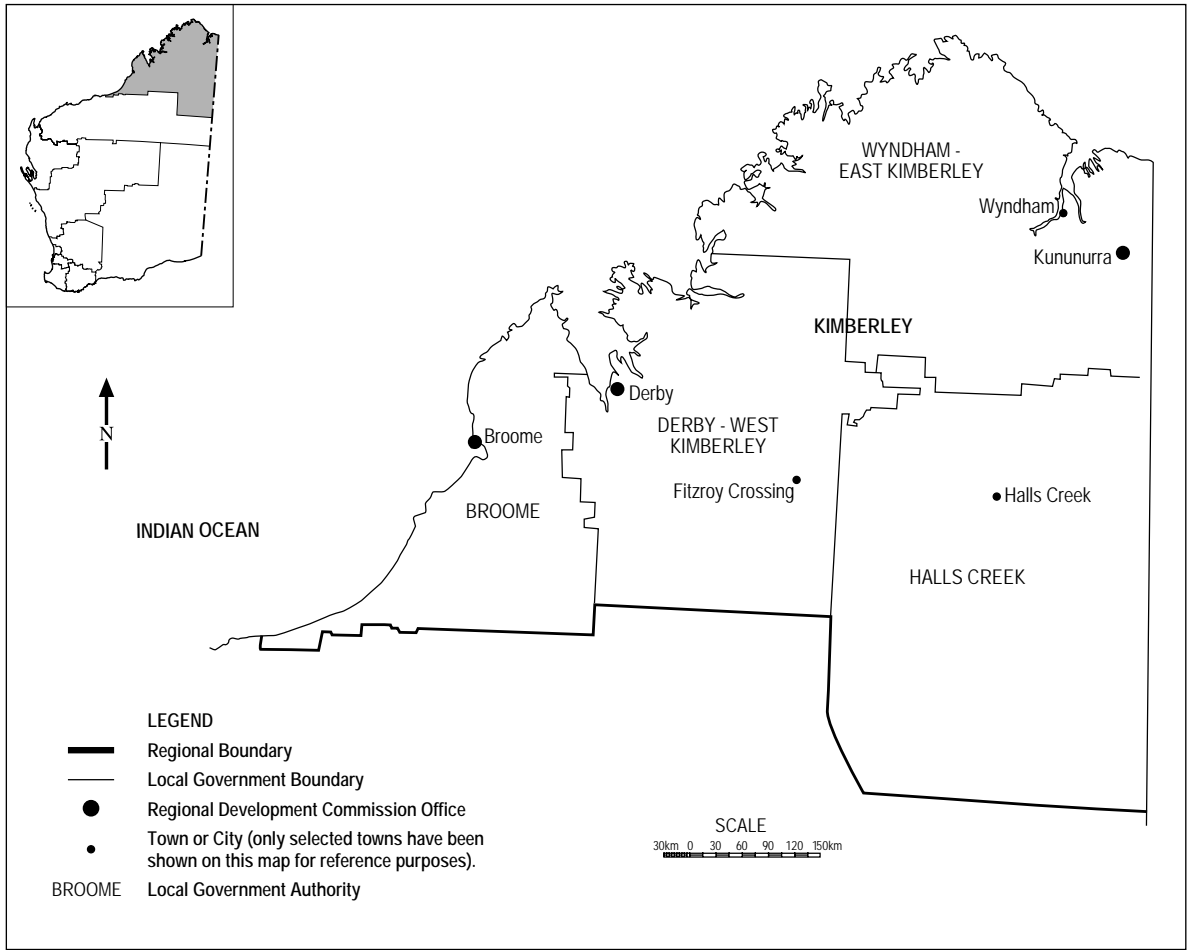
Great Southern



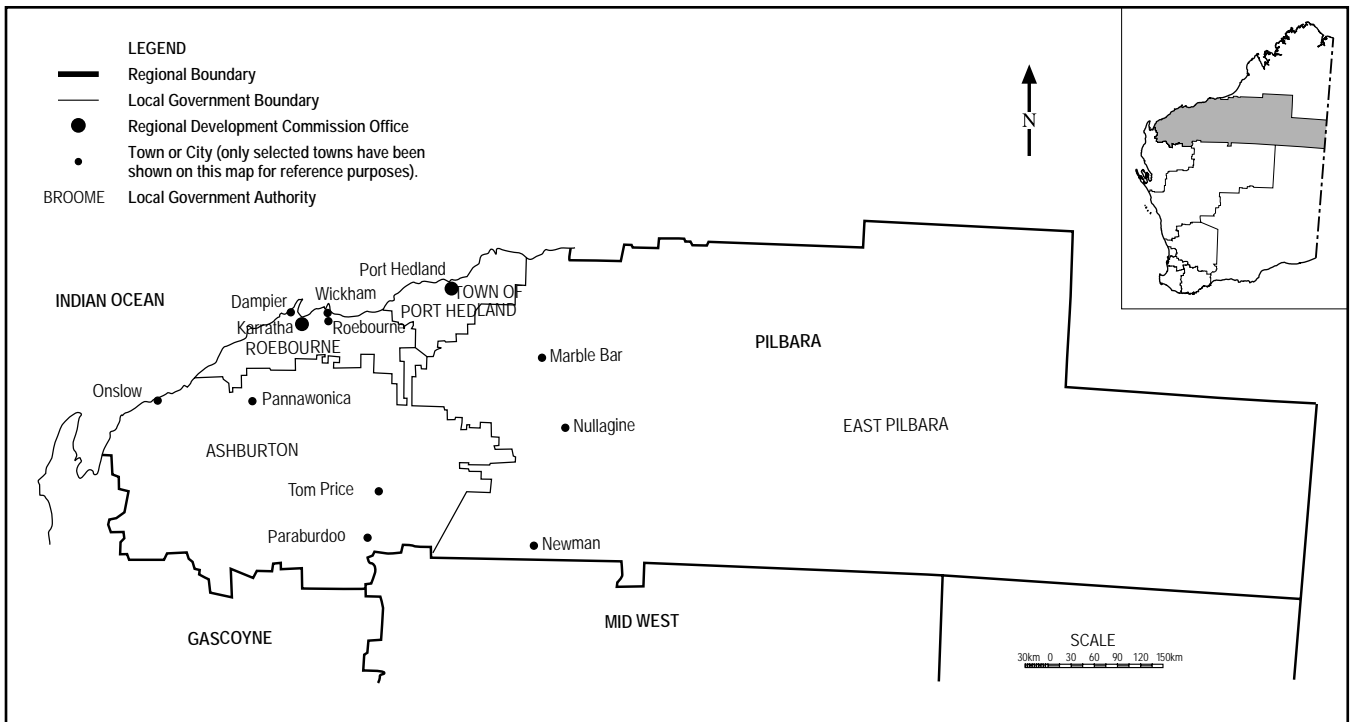
Goldfields – Esperance



Gascoyne



Kimberley



Pilbara