

Perenjori

Community Development Action Plan



September 2024

Foreword

Our beautiful town of Perenjori in WA's Midwest Region offers all a small country town could, wide open spaces, great opportunities, clean air, peace, tranquillity, and a sense of safety. We have a unique landscape of agriculture, mining and exquisite wildflower/nature reserves. Perenjori is a caring and inclusive community with a real sense of belonging. With several sporting groups which are forever welcoming, and a vibrant pub known throughout the district.

The Community Development Action Plan has come at a time when the community dynamics are ready to move forward into the future with fresh ideas, acknowledging past initiatives and creating opportunities for a more vibrant and prosperous future for our community.

Perenjori's climate sees us experience abundant seasons to adverse drought conditions showing the resilience of the people in the area.

Coming together to progress our community in a positive way, through working on creative and exciting opportunities will help our community to reconnect and achieve great things through collective efforts. The projects discussed during this process will inevitably encourage our youth to return and prosper in our Shire.

We are forever thankful to Rural Aid and staff for the opportunity to rejuvenate our town and to Peter Kenyon for his infectious enthusiasm to rebuild our community spirit, starting the invigorating conversation to progress and build pride in our town again.

Heartfelt thanks to all community members who joined the conversation with positive ideas to develop this worthwhile Development Action Plan to take into our town's future, complimenting and enhancing the Shires Strategic and Tourism Plans. This truly is a plan developed by the community for the community.

Acknowledgements



This Community Development Action Plan was initiated and coordinated by the Perenjori Community Builders Team (Jessica Cole, Robin Spencer and Tara Bradford) and funded by Rural Aid as part of their commitment to supporting the growth of Australia's small rural towns.



The formulation of the Plan was undertaken by Peter Kenyon from the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. with assistance from Jude Sutherland, Jen Curnow-Trotter, Paul Gravatt and Maria D'Souza. Special thanks to so many passionate community members who gave so generously of their time, wisdom and experiences. The financial contributions of the Mid West Development Commission during the early stages of the program are also greatly appreciated.



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We would also like to acknowledge the Badimia People as the traditional custodians of the country on which we live and work and their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

Our Story



Our thriving and friendly community of Perenjori is located approximately 350km north of Perth in the Mid-West region of Western Australia. Our community is one of the largest agricultural shires in Western Australia, but also has significant mining activities and a growing small business and tourism sector.

The traditional owners of the Perenjori area are the Badimia Aboriginal group. The name 'Perenjori' is believed to be derived from the Aboriginal word 'Perangery' meaning water hole and refers to a nearby water source. The name may have also been derived from the Peranj-jiddee bush which surrounded the waterhole.

Gold was discovered in the area in 1894 in Rothsay (now a ghost town) and this was the catalyst for initial settlement in the area. The first non-indigenous settler was Dan Woodall who managed Perangery Station in 1905. The railway arrived in 1915 and the town was gazetted in 1916 when the population was approximately 100 people. Today, our shire has a population of 630 persons.

Our community has enjoyed a long and successful history of agriculture and mining. Local farmers produce sheep/wool and grow a range of cereals and legumes. The town is a key receival point for Co-operative Bulk Handling (CBH), with four receival points located within the shire.. In 2003,

Perenjori entered the Guinness World Book of Records as the home of the 'World's first header muster'- 56 combine harvesters working in the same paddock simultaneously, cut a swath of 560 metres, harvested a 200ha wheat crop in 24 minutes and produced 495 tonnes of grain.

In 2011, Perenjori had become a major loading facility for iron ore being hauled from Mount Gibson. The mine is one of the few high purity grade magnetite deposits in the state and country currently. The iron ore was first transported to the nearby Geraldton port by rail. It is currently hauled through town by road trains with a hope to go to rail again in the near future.

More recently, Perenjori has become a popular tourist destination due to the district's abundance and diversity of native wildflowers and birds. Perenjori is the gateway to the unique and distinct wreath flower within WA's 'Wildflower Country' and part of the 'Wildflower Way Tourist Drive'. The appeal of wildflowers is also supplemented by heritage assets such as significant art deco buildings and a fine example of a Monsignor John Hawes Church (Church of St Joseph), and unique physical environmental assets. Most recently, our town has become a central focus for WA's growing prominence for Astrotourism with the installation of the Giant Planisphere star wheel in town and the Astrophotography hotspot at 'The Salmons'.

Our Vision

A Vision Statement is a vivid description of what our community aspires to become, without its current barriers, but tied to what we value as a community.

The statement below is our intended outcome:

Empowering our community to thrive through innovation, collaboration and inclusive growth.

Where our progressive spirit fosters economic growth in a family friendly environment, celebrating and supporting each other in a safe and welcoming community.

Our Goals

Community goals are broad statements of intent that direct our efforts towards accomplishing our vision in line with our guiding principles.

Below are the eight community goals which guide our community aspirations, namely -

- To retain families in the Shire by continually strengthening our livable rural lifestyle and local employment opportunities.
- To provide safe and enticing environments and infrastructure that are attractive to new and existing residents and businesses.
- To create an environment where our young people feel involved, supported and empowered, and will consider staying and/or returning to our community for work, business, family and lifestyle opportunities.
- To develop flourishing local economy, with businesses offering a suite of trades, goods and services, retail and hospitality offerings.
- To actively promote and showcase our community as a great place to stop, stay, experience, and reside, especially in a vibrant, colourful and welcoming town centre.
- To support, promote and celebrate active community participation and volunteerism.
- To retain strong sporting and cultural clubs, competitions, facilities, and traditions.
- To retain water security.



Our Guiding Values

Guiding values are the fundamental, moral, and ethical beliefs that we share as a community. They represent core principles and capture what our community considers important. They help foster trust, respect, collaboration, and unity.

The following eight guiding values and attitudes provide the context for our community's identified actions and initiatives, namely -

- **Resilience** - maintaining attitudes and behaviours to deal with adversity and change.
- **Rural small-town lifestyle** - retaining our unique sense of country way of life, neighbour connections and rural landscapes.
- **Community pride and connection** - ensuring all residents experience community connection, inclusion, and a sense of pride in our history, uniqueness, achievements, structures and future.
- **Respect for the environment** - valuing and protecting our beautiful natural environment and its diverse and prolific flora and fauna.
- **Respect for heritage** - appreciating our unique heritage, stories and traditions and their importance in community and economic development.
- **Embracing new opportunities** - building upon local assets, capacities and creativity; and facilitating opportunities that enable all residents to see and experience their community as a place of opportunity.
- **Safety** - maintaining high levels of community safety, low crime rate and wellbeing.
- **Positive mindset** - fostering community attitudes that embrace change, proactive 'can do' behaviours, optimism, and hopefulness.

Our Challenges

Like many small inland rural communities, our community needs to respond creatively to a series of demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges. These issues include:

- Prolonged drought period and Increased climate volatility
- Limited visitor infrastructure and attraction.
- Ageing population.
- Business loss and service gaps.
- Volunteer fatigue.
- Lack of a grocery store.
- Decline in numbers at community gatherings.
- Lack of rental accommodation and housing for families.
- Lack of short-term worker accommodation.
- Limited marketing of community assets and appeal.
- Declining school numbers.
- Limited services and allied health support.
- Limited aged care support services.
- Limited local employment opportunities.
- Transport costs and logistics.
- Uncertainty of community prices.
- Limited non-sporting youth recreation options.
- Attraction of teachers & childcare workers.
- Lack of days available for childcare and reliability.
- Tired signage.
- Constant power outages.
- Attraction of qualified staff for all business.
- Loss of community and service clubs e.g. St Johns, CWA.
- Poor internet and phone connectivity/service.
- Number of trucks and heavy haulage road trains in main street.
- Lack of water reliability on Arrino scheme.

Our Assets

People

- Outstanding Citizens - Past & Present
- Perenjori Expats
- Farming families
- Mining personnel
- Artists
- Business Owners
- Safe friendly community feeling
- Town residents

Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride

- Heritage sites- Camel Soak, John Forrest Lookout, Rabbit Proof Fence, Main Street Heritage Trail
- Perenjori Railway Station,
- Tourist Centre & Museum
- Churches - Monsignor Hawes Catholic Church; Anglican Church
- Old Railway Sidings - Bowgada, Caron, Bunjil, Maya
- Astrotourism - Golf Course Platform & Salmons
- Events - Australia Day, Anzac Day, Christmas Party
- 'Heart of Wildflower Country'
- Trails- Perenjori Heritage Walk, Rothsay Heritage Trail, Monsignor Hawes Heritage Trail, Caron Rail & Dam Trail, Wildflower Tourist Drives
- Badimia Culture and Heritage

Physical

- The Lodge
- RSL Hall
- Recreational facilities- bowling green, tennis courts, squash courts, ovals, golf course, swimming pool, town halls- Perenjori & Latham, Recreation Centre, Latham Community Centre, wellness centre, gym, skate park,
- Wildflowers, native trees, flora, birds, dark skies
- Dampewah Hills, Karara Rangelands, Orchid Ridge, Camel Soak, Caron Dam, Bunjil Rock
- Caron Hopper (coal), Five Gums
- Museum, Community Garden, Village Green, Main Street Heritage Trail, Trott Park
- Cemetery, airstrip
- Photographic sites - old farm ruins
- Heritage buildings, Rabbit Proof Fence,
 - Art Deco Town hall and Council Offices

Our Assets

Social Networks

- Perenjori Ag Society - Perenjori Show,
- Perenjori Progress Association
- School community P & C
- Playgroup/tumbletots
- Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group
- 360 Off Road Racing - car rally
- Sports Final Events
- Blue Light Events & Senior's weekly morning tea
- Arts & Crafts
- Shape Group
- Perenjori Sports Club
- Community Garden
- Sporting Groups - hockey, netball, football, golf, bowls, swimming, pistol
- Meals at the Perenjori Pub
- CWA

Institutions

- Perenjori Primary School,
- Early Childcare Centre - Day Care
- Community Resource Centre
- Post Office
- Shire of Perenjori/Library
- Tourist Bureau
- St Johns Ambulance
- Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade
- Police
- Medical Centre, Doctor, Physiotherapist, Speech Pathologist
- Aged Care Independent living housing

Economic

- Personal Services - Hairdresser, early childcare, physiotherapist, visiting accountant, TB Fitness
- Accommodation - Perenjori Hotel, J's Hardware B&B, Lindum Farm Stay, Caravan Park, Red Emu Motel.
- Retail Businesses - Daphne's Timeless Treats, PJ Collective, J's Hardware & Perenjori Roadhouse
- Trades - concreting, carpentry, civil & earthmoving, courier, tyre shop
- Agricultural Businesses - Independent Rural, JMH Group, Perenjori Seed Cleaners, CBH - Perenjori & Latham
- Home Businesses - Bush Folk Gift Co, Native Shack, Counting Sheep & Ellie Morris Photography
- Local mining operations - Saltbush, Extension Hill, Terra Mining, Fenix Resources, Accent Resources
- Perenjori Gypsum Pit
 - Farmers, Transport Contractors, Carbon/Tree Farms.
 - Free WiFi





Our Strategies & Actions

Theme One

Enhancing lifestyle & population attraction

ACTIONS

1

- 1. Support establishment of the new Local Supermarket** within the Town Centre.
 - a. Learn from other local communities who have experienced similar losses and acted.
 - b. Form key alliances.
 - c. Develop business plan in the event of a cooperative being needed.
 - d. Implement.

Timeframe: Immediate Short term

- 2. Consider a Shire-wide audit of local community facilities** for future opportunities and repurposing buildings.

Timeframe: Short Term to long term

- 3. Develop and implement a 'Population Attraction Campaign'** to attract new residents by building upon and promoting the community's rural lifestyle, strong community pride, friendliness and opportunities, including –
 - a. Regular internet and print media updates about community events and job opportunities.
 - b. Utilising radio opportunities.
 - c. Creating a Welcoming kit and special events.
 - d. Maintaining regular contact with former residents (especially young people) reminding them of their current lifestyle, work and business opportunities.
 - e. Promote a calendar of community events.

Timeframe: Ongoing

- 4. Create a Community Shed**

- a. Form a Community Shed Task team.
- b. Develop plan – research existing models and approaches, find location, find artists / fabricators, seek funding / donations of goods, seek approvals.
- c. Implement plan.
- d. Recruit members.
- e. Launch event and celebration.

Timeframe: Short to Medium term

- 5. Advocate volunteering and community engagement.**

- a. Continually invite and encourage community members to actively volunteer.
- b. Identify and welcome new residents and invite participation in an enjoyable setting.
- c. Examine ways to improve collaboration between existing community groups.
- d. Identify ways the Shire could reduce red tape burden.
- e. Introduce and invite young people to volunteer in community projects.
- f. Continue to celebrate community volunteers, through media exposure and an annual 'Volunteer Appreciation Event'.

Timeframe: Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Shire of Perenjori
Perenjori CRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

PPA
Perenjori community/
sporting groups
CBH Group
BCCM- Bunya Fund
BCCM
MWDC- RED Grants
RDAMWG
DLGSC
FRRR
Parks and Leisure Aust.
Men's Sheds of WA
Lotterywest

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Two

Strengthening Our Tourism Sector

ACTIONS



1. Develop a Tourism Strategy that incorporates:

- Liaise with Tourism Committee.
- Audit current tourism attractions, facilities, events, trails and initiatives including the Perenjori Ag Show and Wildflower Trail.
- Review regional tourism links, operator networking, activities and trails.
- Promote existing products and offerings through PJ Collective.
- Implement QR codes to enhance marketing, community storytelling and native and settler's heritage history.
- Educate local business to promote our tourist hotspots.

Timeframe: Ongoing

2. Implement the Tractor Trail (Carnamah to Perenjori)

- Visit and learn from the experiences of related trails- Empowered Highway (Gnowangerup), Tin Horse Highway (Kulin).
- Develop plan including potential locations, equipment, partners and funding opportunities.
- Liaise with local farmers along nominated trail.
- Implement plan.
- Launch event - celebrate and promote.

Timeframe: Immediate and Ongoing

3. Undertake Signage Audit and implement improvements, including roadside out of town advertising - business promotional signage approaching town, town entry statements and tourism signage.

- Liaise with Tourism committee and local businesses.
- Undertake audit.
- Review and determine recommendations for improvement.
- Share impressions and suggestions with SoP, Tourism committee and local businesses.

Timeframe: Medium Term

4. Continue Mainstreet Beautification.

- Liaise with Townscape Committee
- Follow existing Townscape plan.
- Create prioritised beautification options.
- Seek support / implement opportunities.
- Participate annually in the 'Tidy Towns Awards'.
- Continually celebrate achievements through social media and local publications.

Timeframe: Ongoing

5. Build upon the current astrotourism initiatives and infrastructure with a calendar of astrotourism events.

Timeframe: Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Perenjori Tourist Centre
& Museum Committee
Townscape Committee
Shire of Perenjori
PCRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Shire of Carnamah
AGORTO
Town Team Movement-
Streets Alive Program
Tourism WA
MWDC- RED Grants
NMP
RAC
KAB
Astrotourism WA
CBHIF
RDAMWG
Local farmers
Lotterywest
Camera Clubs - links to
trail and astro tourism
BOI

Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Three

Creating Opportunities for Our Young People

ACTIONS

1. **Identify and utilise a range of local, regional, state and national programs** to connect Perenjori young people with leadership development opportunities.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

2. **Utilise WA Youth Week** to grow awareness of youth contribution, leadership and instigate new local youth activities.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

3. **Undertake an audit of existing youth facilities** to determine the need and capacity to renew or upgrade to increase usage e.g. skate park, cricket nets, football oval.

- a. Explore the addition of equestrian and dance club activities.
- b. Explore creation of a pump track and motor cross track.

Timeframe: Medium Term

4. **Create more opportunities** to regularly hear our youth voices.

Timeframe: Short Term and Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

Shire of Perenjori - CDO
Perenjori Primary School
PJCRC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Blue Light
Perenjori sporting and cultural groups
DLGSC funding- CSRFF
Geraldton Motorcross Club
Midwest Pony Club
Move n Groove Dongara

Wheatbelt Dance Dalwallinu
DoC - youth grants
CBHIF
Lotterywest
Healthways
RA
Morawa Agricultural College



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Four

Developing a Housing & Accommodation Strategy

ACTIONS

1. Liaise with Shire council, CDO and PPA to undertake the following actions:

- Undertake audit of existing land (zoning) and housing availability including on farms.
- Undertake research into housing, land, property investment and subdivision development initiatives happening in other small rural communities.
- Explore resourcing options and possible state government funding.
- Develop and implement a Housing, Subdivision, Local Investment and Land Development Community-Driven Strategy that encompasses short term worker, family and aged housing options.

Timeframe: Medium to Long Term

LEAD GROUP

PPA
Shire of Perenjori CDO and Councillors

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

DoC
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
RDAMWD
MWDC
Wongan Hills Housing Action Group
GRO



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Five

Retaining & Expanding Our Business Base

ACTIONS

5

LEAD GROUP

Shire of Perenjori CDO
PPA
PJCRC

In collaboration with the Shire of Perenjori , CDO and PPA undertake the following actions-

1. **Utilising the BOI 'Business Expansion and Retention Program (B.E.A.R.)** set of tools undertake a structured set of conversations with local businesses to ascertain what helps and hinders doing business in Perenjori, and their ideas to improve the business environment.

Timeframe: Medium term

2. In collaboration with other towns in the North Midland, **form a North Midlands Business Network** to build mutual support, cross promotion and information sharing, and to advocate for local/regional business opportunities and challenges.

Timeframe: Short term

3. **Investigate opportunities to attract and retain industries** to Perenjori.
i.e:
Market Gardens,
Small-scale Abattoir,
Mining and Processing,
Utilising local loading and freight facilities.

Timeframe: Medium Term and ongoing

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

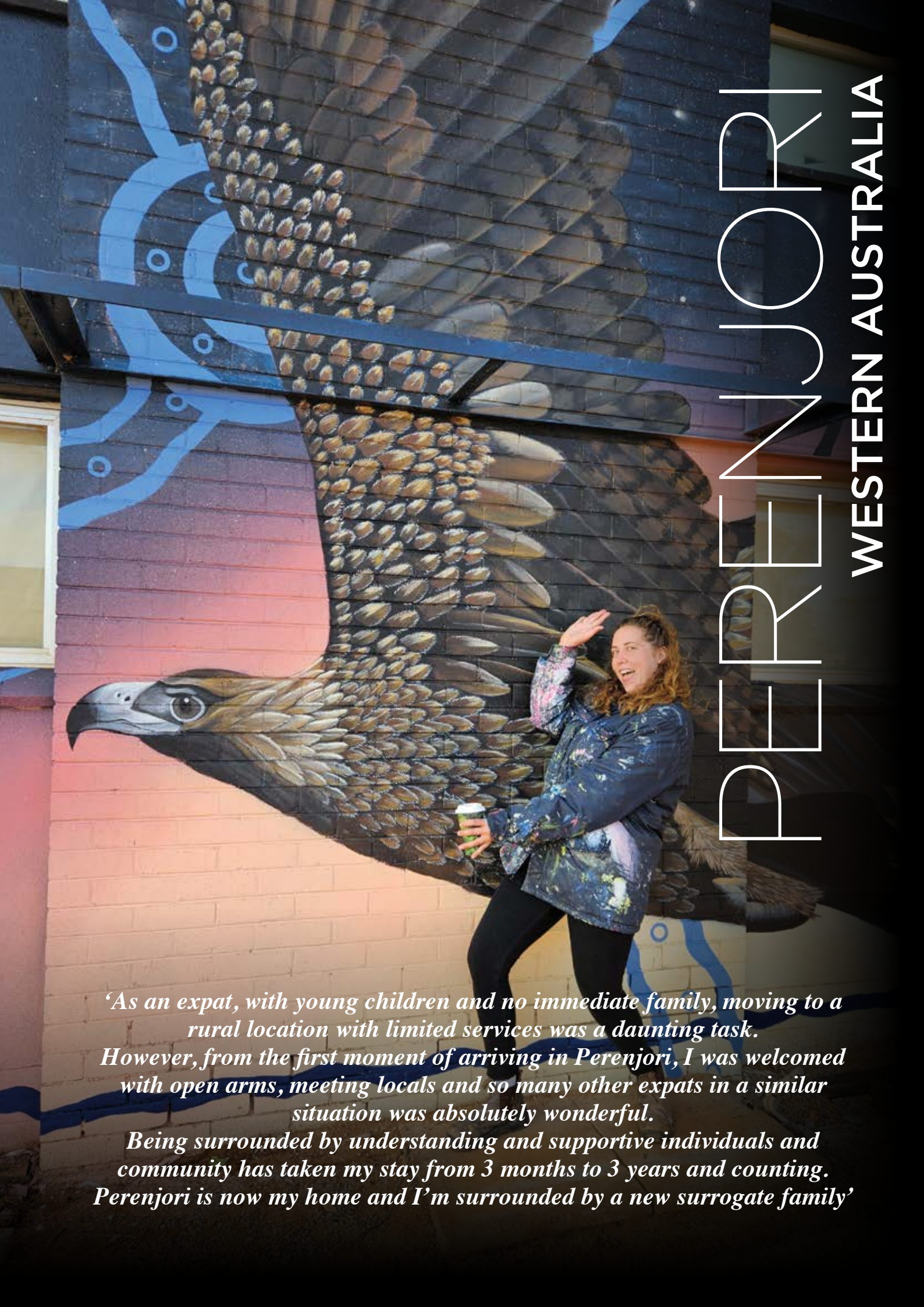
Local businesses
Local Shires in the North Midlands
MWDC- RED grants
MWCCI
RDAMWG
BOI



Acronyms

AGORTO	Australia's Golden Outback Regional Tourism Organisation
BCCM	Business council of Co-operatives and Mutuals
BOI	Bank of I.D.E.A.S.
CBHIF	Co-operative Bulk Handling Investment Fund
CSRFF	Community Sport and Recreation Facilities Fund of DLGSC
DLGSC	WA Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
DPHL	WA Department of Planning, Heritage and Lands
DoC	Department of Communities
FRRR	Foundation for Regional and Renewal Renewal
GROH	Government Regional Officer Housing
KAB	Keep Australia Beautiful WA
MWCCI	Mid West Chamber of Commerce
MWDC	Mid West Development Commission
NMP	North Midlands Project
PJCRC	Perenjori Community Resource Centre
PPA	Perenjori Progress Association
RA	Rural Aid
RAC	Royal Automobile Club
RDAMWG	Regional Development Australia – Mid West and Gascoyne
TTM	Town Teams Movement





PERENJORI WESTERN AUSTRALIA

‘As an expat, with young children and no immediate family, moving to a rural location with limited services was a daunting task. However, from the first moment of arriving in Perenjori, I was welcomed with open arms, meeting locals and so many other expats in a similar situation was absolutely wonderful.

Being surrounded by understanding and supportive individuals and community has taken my stay from 3 months to 3 years and counting. Perenjori is now my home and I’m surrounded by a new surrogate family’