



**Connecting people with  
information and services**

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**AUTUMN Newsletter 2024**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER...

In my first few months I have been overwhelmed by well wishes and have settled into my role with a positive outlook to the future due to the support of the board, my colleagues and the wonderful volunteers across our branches. I'm excited by the future opportunities and respectful of the purpose and legacy that is the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The first 6 months has seen significant personnel changes, we have recently said goodbye to Sarah our Volunteer & Client Services Coordinator as well as two wonderful lawyers in Gigi and Vivian. At the same time we have recruited 5 new talented and experienced lawyers. Our recruitment strategy has delivered the opportunity to increase the level of servicing to several branches however, there is more we want to do, in particular create more partnerships with visiting pro bono lawyers and justices of the peace. Demand is such that unlike ever before, many people in our communities are feeling isolated and uncertain of a way forward with the issues they are facing. The cost of living crisis has seen significant demand for information and advice which is why we are focused on becoming the lead referral agency in Western Australia to manage the increasing number of calls for help and advice.

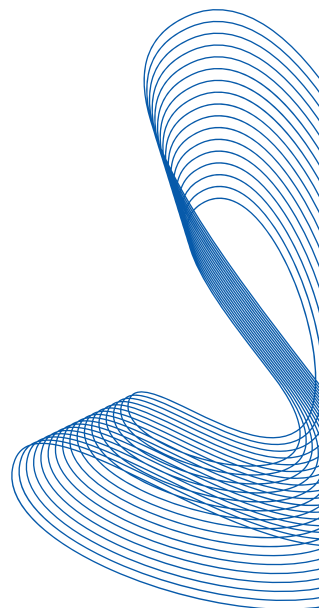
The Citizens Advice Bureau board has concluded the first stage of its strategic planning session and we now look to develop a working plan that identifies initiatives in support our "Vision" which is to be the first place people go to when they need information in an accessible, confidential and non-judgemental manner.

I am delighted to announce we have recently recruited Sarah Clifford as our new Volunteer & Client Services Coordinator, a person of exceptional skills and experience who I am sure will be a great asset to us as we look to improve our service, information and advice capabilities.

Finally, happy 20th birthday to the Armadale Branch, we are so proud of the work you do and the positive reputation for serving the local community that you have developed over these last two decades.



Citizens Advice Bureau Chief Executive  
Officer - Dion Dosualdo.





# VISITING THE SOUTHWEST: BUNBURY AND BUSSELTON BRANCHES

The Citizens Advice Bureau's two Southwest branches in Bunbury and Busselton are fortunate to host an array of long-standing and devoted volunteers. The branches currently specialise in providing clients with information and referral into the local community, but as CAB gears up and works strategically to reinvigorate our legal services, we are happy to announce that the Busselton branch will have a lawyer commencing to provide legal services starting the 24 May 2024.

CAB understands that the Southwest has an immense need to gain access to a multitude of services that are typically and most often offered in Perth, but with an aging population and limited resources, it is difficult for individuals to make the trip to Perth and therefore increases the urgency to organise and implement services in the Southwest.

CEO Dion Dosualdo and Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator Sarah Ghammachi spent two days in the Southwest with the Bunbury and Busselton branch. The goal was to assess the needs of the branches and what services would be most suited to be implemented. There are many positive changes that lie ahead for the Southwest branches, and CAB hopes to continue to grow and build on our already existing services which are currently: Legal Aid Virtual Office appointments, WA No Interest Loan Assistance, Tax Help during the months of July-October and CAB Virtual Family Law Appointments.



From left to right: Sarah Ghammachi, CAB Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator with Busselton branch volunteers and Citizens Advice Bureau CEO, Dion Dosualdo (centre).



From left to right: Citizens Advice Bureau CEO Dion Dosualdo visiting the Bunbury branch volunteers at the most recent visit to the Southwest.

# SERVICES OFFERED AT THE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

## JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

There are approximately 2,900 Justices of the Peace (JPs) of varied nationalities and cultural backgrounds, living in all parts of WA, who volunteer their services to provide an integral link in the judicial system.

JPs are appointed by the Governor who authorises them to carry out a wide range of official administrative and judicial duties in the community. As well as presiding in the Magistrates Court, JPs are regularly called upon by the WA Police to issue search warrants.

The administrative tasks include witnessing affidavits, statutory declarations and certifying documents.

CAB's Perth branch offers a free of charge JP service Monday-Friday from 9:30am-3:30pm. Other CAB branches offering JP services include the Fremantle, Armadale and Mandurah branch with the Kwinana branch commencing the offering of JP services on the 29 April 2024.



From left to right: Justice of the Peace Stephen Hale witnessing a statutory declaration for a client at the Perth CAB location.

## CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 2003 (the Act) provides for victims of a crime to be compensated for injuries and some associated losses for incidents which occurred in Western Australia.

The Citizens Advice Bureau work alongside the Office of Criminal Injuries Compensation by aiming to aid clients in the completion and submission of their applications.

CAB's Perth branch is offering this free of charge service on a weekly basis, and with an ever-increasing demand for assistance with applications, CAB's other branches will soon be offering the service. Stay tuned for more information!



The Office of Criminal Injuries Compensation recently held a training for Citizens Advice Bureau volunteers.



# BRANCH VISITS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Visiting our branches and involving ourselves with volunteers is of upmost importance to CEO Dion Dosualdo whom recently met with the Kwinana and Fremantle CAB teams.

The Kwinana CAB branch has recently brought on board a Justice of the Peace service which is available every Monday from 10:00am-12:00pm. No appointments are necessary and clients can utilise this service on a walk-in basis.

We look forward to implementing new services at the branches in the very near future, stay tuned for more information on what is to come!



CEO Dion Dosualdo with Kwinana CAB volunteers.



CEO Dion Dosualdo with Fremantle CAB volunteers.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



CAB CEO Dion Dosualdo and Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator Sarah Ghammachi attending the Curtin Student Law Society Opportunities Fair.

The Citizens Advice Bureau constantly engages with the community and exposes our services to individuals who may not only benefit from what we offer, but also to individuals whom may be able to contribute to our cause!

Most recently, CEO Dion Dosualdo paired with Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator Sarah Ghammachi to attend the Curtin University Annual Student Opportunities Fair.

This event aims to expose students to a diverse range of volunteering opportunities offered by a variety of organisations and Community Legal Centres in Western Australia.

As such, the purpose of the event is to encourage students to develop invaluable skills through real-life experiences, while also making a difference to the community.

CAB looks forward to working with more law students in the near future and is happy to nurture growth and experience.

# PERTH BRANCH: VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

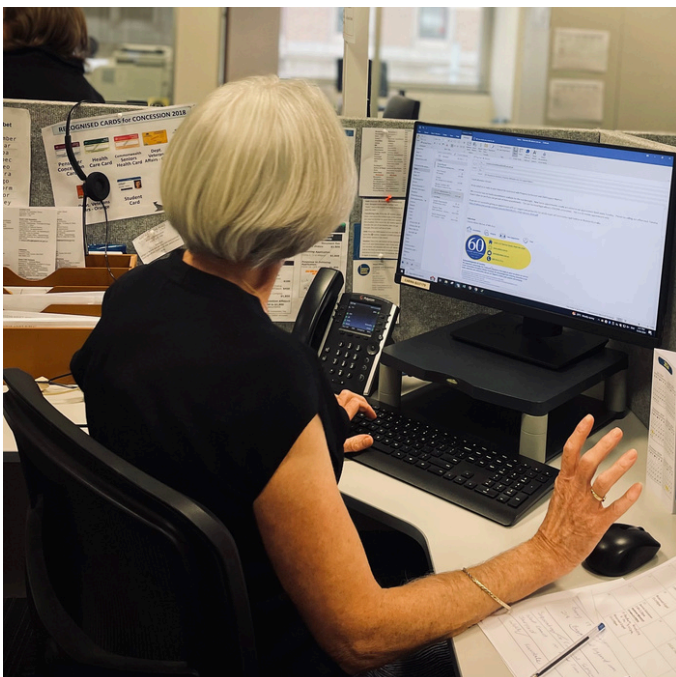
## DIXIE BURGESS

Dixie Burgess has been a volunteer at CAB for five whole years! She frequents the Perth branch on a Monday, when the phone lines at the branch are typically ringing off the hook and clients are starting off their week trying to manage any issues, concerns or find out where they should go within the community.

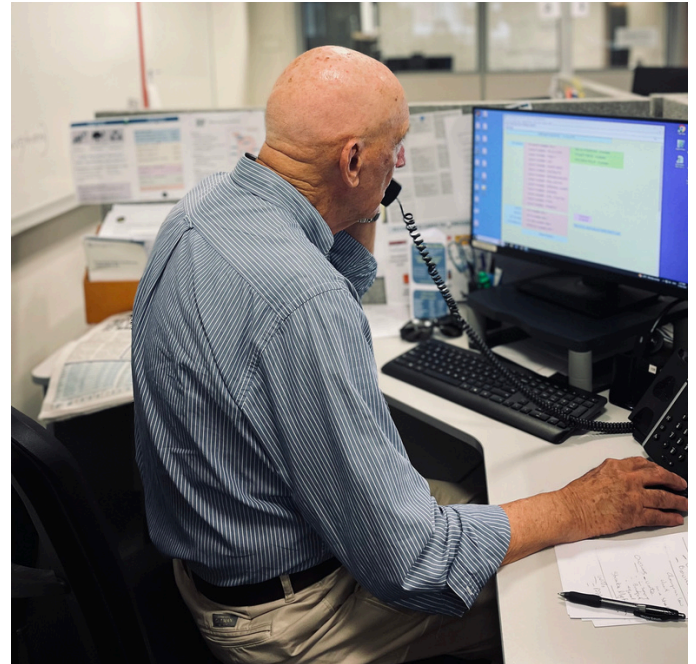
Having owned a family business in agriculture for many years with her husband, once Dixie retired, she thought it best to find ways in which to help the Western Australian community.

What better way to help the community than to volunteer for a not-for-profit organisation that assists people and connects them with information and referrals to the appropriate agencies, community legal centres and community-based resources? There entered CAB.

Some of Dixie's hobbies outside of volunteering include traveling, hiking, cycling and spending time with her close-knit family. Having Dixie be part of the CAB team is truly an absolute pleasure!



Dixie Burgess of the CAB Perth Branch.



Ted Anthony of the CAB Perth Branch.

Monday volunteer Ted Anthony is an extremely valuable asset to the team at Perth CAB. Having volunteered with the Citizens Advice Bureau since 2018, Ted has a wealth of knowledge and an array of information he can provide to the clients that phone in on our information line daily.

With a career spanning some 25 years working in the Department of Education in varying positions from English high school teacher to head of the English Department, Ted eventually took on the position of deputy principal.

Ted was also a member and part of the Executive team of the West Australian State School Teachers Union and from there he was approached to take on a secondment with the Office of Industrial Relations which later became the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS), with his final role being the Director of Policy and Legislation.

His current hobbies include volunteering, spending time with his family and friends, golfing and pottering in the garden on a sunny day.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: ARMADALE CAB

An opportunity for the Armadale Branch to promote its services was provided by the City of Armadale where over forty stalls were set up for volunteer and essential services.

Armadale CAB volunteers Laurel Gould and Edd Black set up the stall at 9:00am ready for the flow of visitors from 10:00am to 3:00pm, with back up support from long term volunteer Rae Wright during the day.

It was a great opportunity to provide information to visitors and to meet key local people including the Mayor of Armadale, the local member Minister Tony Buti and the local federal member of parliament Matt Keogh.

The event included guest presentations such as “Dealing with Centrelink” and “Money Mentors” and stall holders could get a free sausage sizzle, pancakes and coffee. A successful day of promoting CAB in Armadale!



Mayor of Armadale, CAB volunteer Laurel Gould, Tony Buti MLA, and CAB volunteer Edd Black.



City Armadale Community Services Coordinator with CAB Volunteers Rae Wright and Laurel Gould and Cr Butterfield, Mayor of the City of Armadale.



Armadale volunteer Laurel Gould with Matt Keogh, Federal Minister and MP for Burt.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND 20 YEARS FOR THE ARMADALE BRANCH

In May 2024, the CAB Armadale branch celebrated 20 years of service. We had the pleasure of getting together with volunteers both past and present to commemorate all of the positive work that has been done over the past two decades.

Dr Tony Buti MLA and Member for Armadale said it perfectly when he stated “this significant milestone marks two decades of unwavering dedication, commitment, and invaluable service to our local community. Thank you! Over the years, CAB has become an integral part of our community fabric, providing guidance and support to individuals and families on a wide range of issues with compassion and empathy.

I very much enjoyed my involvement with the organisation as Chairperson. As CAB reflects on the achievements of the past two decades, CAB should also look ahead with optimism and determination. The challenges facing our community may evolve, but I am confident that the Armadale Citizens Advice Bureau will continue to rise to the challenge”.

Needless to say, we are very much looking forward to being a part of the community for many years to come and hope to adapt, evolve and continually be equipped to deal with whatever challenges the Western Australian community is faced with.



From left to right: CAB Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator Sarah Ghammachi with CAB Armadale Volunteer Rae Wright cutting the Armadale 20 year anniversary cake.



From left to right: MP Matt Keogh with Armadale volunteers Rae Wright and Edd Black (right) with CAB CEO Dion Dosualdo.



Volunteers and CAB staff both past and present gather to celebrate Armadale's 20th year anniversary with special guest Cr Butterfield, Mayor of the City of Armadale.



# MEDIATION SERVICES: FAMILIES AND GRANDPARENTING

CAB's Mediation Unit has noticed a significant rise in the number of grandparents seeking support and mediation with their children concerning the care of their grandchildren and increased visitation rights. This is often seen in situations where grandparents have been the main caregivers for the grandchildren and the biological parents are now looking to take over full-time care or re-engage with their children. Our team offers mediation services to facilitate discussions among all parties, assisting them in reaching mutually beneficial solutions with the children's welfare in mind. This includes establishing plans for sharing time with the children and creating support arrangements for both parties during this transition.

To enhance our understanding and improve our practices, the CAB mediation team invited a representative from Wanslea Grandcare to provide training for our Mediators on the optimal approach to managing these circumstances.

During the meeting, the Wanslea representative discussed the various factors that may impact grandparents who assume the responsibility of becoming full-time caregivers. These factors include challenges related to parental issues such as: substance abuse or mental health problems, financial difficulties due to additional expenses, health issues associated with age or disabilities, emotional stress, legal obstacles in obtaining custody, isolation from social connections, implications on retirement plans, and varying levels of cultural and community support. ***Wanslea highlighted how the Citizens Advice Bureau can provide support and assistance in some of these areas.***

Grandparents who are providing care for their grandchildren require support and policies that prioritise the well-being of families. Mediation services can be instrumental in addressing the complexities and advantages of cross-generational care. At CAB, we are exploring avenues to enhance our support for Wanslea and grandparents seeking assistance and mediation.

If you require support with grandparenting, please contact Wanslea on [\(08\) 9245 2441](tel:0892452441) and for any inquiries about mediation services offered at The Citizens Advice Bureau, please contact us on [\(08\) 9325 4121](tel:0893254121).



From left to right: CAB Mediation Coordinators Monika Kraima and Kirsty Bowker.



# CAB IN THE COMMUNITY

40,448

PEOPLE  
HELPED



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT

- AGED CARE
- LIBRARIES
- SUPPORT GROUPS
- TALKBACK RADIO
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## OUR TOP 3 AREAS OF LAW BY APPOINTMENT

1. WILL/EPA/EPG
2. LETTERS OF  
ADMINISTRATION
3. PROBATE



CLIENTS FOUND CAB HELPFUL



97%

CLIENTS WERE HAPPY  
WITH OUR SERVICE

## CUSTOMER PERCEPTION SURVEY

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU  
MAY 2023



94%

CLIENTS WOULD  
RECOMMEND OUR  
SERVICES TO OTHERS



88%

CLIENTS RECEIVED  
USEFUL INFORMATION



A PANEL OF

13

ACCREDITED  
MEDIATORS

9



QUALIFIED FAMILY  
DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
PRACTITIONERS

5



LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH MEDIATION  
SERVICE



# CAB SNAPSHOT

**SERVING &  
INFORMING  
WA FOR  
60  
YEARS**



**OVER 200  
VOLUNTEERS**



## INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE

- PHONE LINE
- FACE-TO-FACE
- ONLINE



## LEGAL SERVICE

- WILL/EPA/EPG
- FAMILY LAW
- LOA
- PROBATE



## MEDIATION SERVICE

- DISPUTE
  - FAMILY
  - COMMUNITY
  - COMMERCIAL
- CONFIDENTIAL  
PROCESS

## WA FUNDING BODIES



## ADDITIONAL FREE SERVICES

- WA NILS
- CRIMINAL INJURIES  
COMPENSATION
- TAX HELP
- JUSTICE OF PEACE  
AND LEGAL AID WA  
(WITH OUR THANKS)

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION



## GOVERNANCE

COMPLIANT:  
REGULATORY  
REQUIREMENTS



## NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR CLC'S

- ✓ ACCREDITED
- ✓ CERTIFIED





# CAB's 3 Pillars



## INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Our role is to give accurate and current information and referral assistance to help the WA community navigate their challenges.

We answer queries via:



With regular Community Legal Education activities we go out to meet people in the community and represent CAB offsite.

### Additional Services:

- Tax Help
- WA NILS
- Criminal Injuries Compensation
- CAB Virtual Legal Appointments
- Justice of the Peace



## LEGAL

We provide a low-cost legal advice service on a range of issues and prepare various legal documents:

- **Family Law** - divorce, child and property matters
- **Civil Law** - Wills, Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship, Probate applications and Letters of Administration, Estate

### • Criminal Law

Probate kits can be purchased on our online shop and at our Perth office.



## MEDIATION

We offer dispute resolution services for the following matters, including:

- **Family Matters**
  - Parenting
  - Property
  - Grandparenting
- **Community Matters**
  - Dividing fences
  - Overhanging branches
- **Commercial Matters**
  - Workplace disputes
  - Small business and association disputes

### • Facilitation and Education.

Mediations are held in our Perth office or virtually.

## With thanks: Funding Partners and Visiting Lawyers

We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation towards our funding partners and supporters.

Your contributions and unwavering support enable us to continue to provide a quality service in diverse areas.

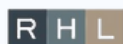


Government of Western Australia  
Department of Communities



The Law Society  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
The voice of the legal profession in Western Australia

Our funding partners



ROBERTSON HAYLES LAWYERS



JOHNSTONE  
CROUSE  
LAWYERS



West Coast Legal  
Family Lawyers



George Lawyers

Our visiting pro bono lawyers (above) assist our clients in family, estate and criminal law matters



**CABWA acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands in which we live and work, the Whadjuk Nyoongar people. We pay our respects to elders, past, present and emerging, acknowledging their special connection to land, waters and community.**

**CABWA recognises, respects and welcomes diversity in all its forms, in the belief that diversity is a source of strength and opportunity.**



## **CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Level 1/25 Barrack Street  
Perth WA 6000

Enquiries (08) 9221 5711

Admin (08) 9325 4217

Mediation (08) 9325 4121

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