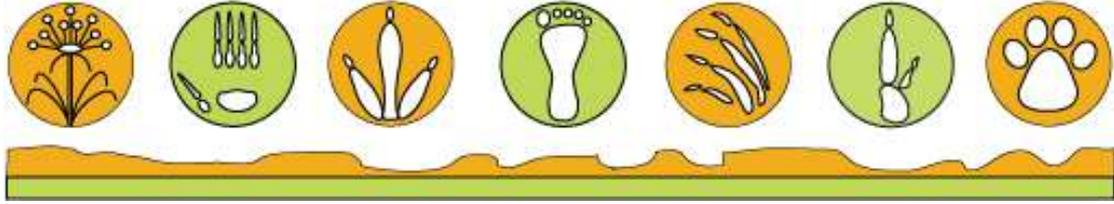


# BARKLY SHIRE COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REPORT

**2011/2012**



## **Vision**

**A strong, cohesive Barkly Shire working as one to champion regional development to provide sustainable economic growth and community capacity where people embrace cultural diversity and are treated equitably and with respect.**

## **Mission**

**Leading the Barkly Region to embrace and organisation that achieves excellence in its governance and operational responsibilities and with a community service ethic and is co-operative, innovative and efficient.**

### **Head Office**

41 Peko Road,  
Tennant Creek NT 0860

PO Box 810,  
Tennant Creek NT 0861

Ph. (08) 8962 0000

Fax (08) 8962 1801

ABN: 32 171 281 456

Web: [www.barkly.nt.gov.au](http://www.barkly.nt.gov.au)

Email: [reception@barkly.nt.gov.au](mailto:reception@barkly.nt.gov.au)



**President—Barb Shaw**



**Cr. Pat Braun**



**Cr. Noel Hayes**



**Cr. Jennifer Mahoney**



**Cr. Joyce Taylor**



**Cr. Narelle Bremner**



**Cr. Ray Aylett**



**Cr. Bob Bagnall**



**Cr. Tony Boulter**



**Cr. Eileen Bonney**



**Cr. Timothy Price**



**Cr. Lucy Jackson**



**Cr. Hal Ruger**

## **Shire President Comments**

It has been an extremely busy but rewarding time for me since the last general election when I was elected Shire President. As I stated prior to the election it was, and so remains, my intention to be a full time President. Consequently I have been most active in general Council matters and am constantly seeking ways in which the Barkly Shire can improve and excel. With this in mind, I am delighted that I have been elected to the Executive Board of the Local Government Association of the NT and the NT Regional Development Australia Committee, both key groups that can positively affect the Barkly Region. Since becoming President I have established the Finance and Audit Committee with Cr Bremner as the Chair and the Community and Municipal Services Committee chaired by Cr. Bagnall.

The new Council is a mix of new and old Elected Members. There remains the wisdom and experience of those previously elected who have stood along with new incoming members who bring with them fresh ideas and enthusiasm. I am looking forward to working with them over the next four years.

The Barkly Shire is quite young, yet I am proud of what it has achieved over the past four years. Late last year Council managed to assume legal ownership of the large Juno property outside Tennant Creek. Slowly but surely equipment and infrastructure is evolving or being replaced or upgraded. The Council's Animal Health Program has evolved over the last few years to a program which is regarded by neighbouring shires as an ideal model, especially in remote communities. Last August I was extremely proud to represent the shire in Canberra and accept a National Award on the shire's behalf. Other regional programs are developing in depth and ability for the betterment of the communities they serve.

I am very conscious of the need for regional economic and social development. Barkly Shire has a major role to play in this area and already we have embarked on a course of listening to local businesses and other interest groups to assess how the shire can best assist in their development.

I am determined to lift and improve the shire's public profile. The past few months have been extremely busy with many new events ranging from Animal Health Week, the commencement of the Australian tour of the Emirates Melbourne Cup in Tennant Creek, participating in the annual Desert Harmony Festival, Seniors Month, NAIDOC week and the visit of HMAS Warramunga crew.

In conclusion I pay tribute to the work done by the first Barkly Shire Council and its President, Rosalie Kunoth-Monks AM. I am also indebted to the Elected Members of the present Council for their support, enthusiasm and commitment.

Barb Shaw  
Shire President

## **1. Barkly Shire Council - Overview**

The Barkly Shire Council was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2008 based on the amalgamation of various small local government authorities which included:

- Aherrenge Association Inc. - Ampilatwatja
- Ali Curung Council Inc.
- Alpurrurulam Community Government Council
- Elliott District Community Government Council
- Tennant Creek Town Council

By agreement the Barkly Shire also took responsibility for local government functions of the Urapuntja Council Aboriginal Corporation and a large area of land previously not incorporated under the NT *Local Government Act* which covered the Barkly Tablelands, numerous land trusts and pastoral properties.

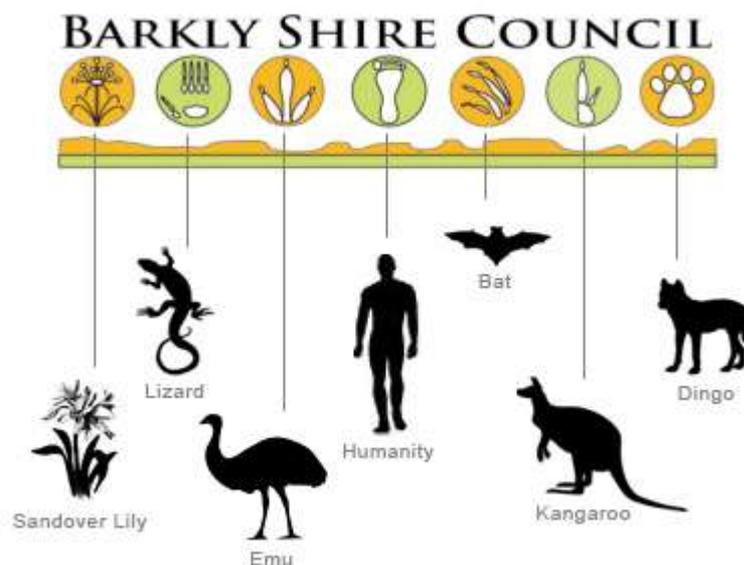
Area under incorporation is 323, 514 km<sup>2</sup> which has a resident population of 8,137. This includes Tennant Creek (est. population of 3,560 which includes also the Urban Living Areas of Kargaru, Tinkarli, Wuppa, Maria Maria, Village Camp and Munji-Marla, Ngalpa Ngalpa), Elliott and surrounds, and the major communities of Ali Curung, Ampilatwatja, Urapuntja, Wutunugurra and Alpurrurulam with their various outstations. In addition to these communities there are various smaller communities, forty nine pastoral properties, mining operations and commercial establishments.

In addition to the main centre of Tennant Creek, Shire Service Centres are to be found in Ali Curung, Arlparra, Alpurrurulam, Ampilatwatja, Wutunugurra and Elliott.

The boundaries of the Shire extend eastwards from Tennant Creek to the Queensland border incorporating much of the most important cattle grazing areas in the Northern Territory. Roughly the same size as the United Kingdom or New Zealand, the Shire consists largely of open grass plains and some of the world's largest cattle stations. It runs as far south as Barrow Creek and north above Elliott and westwards into the Tanami Desert.

The Barkly Shire is the second largest local government area in the world, being 42% larger than Victoria. While Victoria is considered the second most populous Australian state with a density of 2,431 persons per one hundred square kilometres,

the Barkly Shire contains just 2 persons within a similar area. The Shire stretches from the Queensland border over 620 kilometres to west of the Stuart Highway and from north of Elliott 570 kilometres southwards on each side of the Stuart Highway to Barrow Creek. The largest town in the shire is Tennant Creek located on the Stuart Highway almost one thousand kilometres south of Darwin and five hundred kilometres north of Alice Springs.



Our Shire Logo was created by Barbara Whippy. The logo is described by former President Rosalie Kunoth-Monks as *"a foot print has no colour and humanity has to be there. There were these visual tracks right across the Barkly Shire."*

The base line for the logo is the McDouall Ranges as named by the explorer, John McDouall Stuart on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1868.

Towards the latter part of 2012-2013, the shire adopted a new Strategic Plan, the principal strategies are:

**Regional Development** – To grow a dynamic and sustainable community with strong opportunities for people.

**Goal 1.1** To research and promote a sustainable economy through regional development opportunities across the Shire.

**Goal 1.2** To promote and provide advocacy support for those social initiatives by other enterprises and agencies which will strengthen community goals.

**Support community capacity building** – To develop communities which have the capacity to actively participate in, and add value to, their communities through their own endeavours.

**Goal 2** To respond to identified regional and local needs through funding support, training, quality, expertise and continued support, achieving successful outcomes.

**Services and assets** – To provide quality services and infrastructure necessary to make our communities safe and healthy.

**Goal 3** To have a cohesive organisation that strives to achieve best practice and standards in all operational matters.

**Community Engagement** – To actively listen to and inform our communities about the Barkly Shire and the activities of the Barkly Shire Council and to engage them in all aspects of community life in the Shire.

**Goal 4** To ensure community issues are identified and addressed by the Shire Council.

**Community well being** – To make all our citizens proud in a supportive, safe and healthy environment.

**Goal 5** To ensure that all Barkly Shire communities are safe and healthy.

**Governance** – To have strong, fair and effective representative and corporate governance.

**Goal 6** To ensure that Barkly Shire is an efficient and effective organisation that complies with all statutory, governance and community requirements.

## **2. Community Reports**

### **2.1 Ali Curung**

Ali Curung is a Territory Growth Town. Much work has been done in negotiating a Local Implementation Plan which is yet to be agreed to by all parties. The shire service centre also caters for Imangara. Largely through CDEP at Ali Curung, various projects such as coffin making, paver construction and painting have been tried with mixed. Emphasis has been given to community cleanliness with regular community drives on litter and general rubbish.

The Ali Curung Local Board has met regularly through the year and its recommendations have been followed up through Council. These include successful lobbying for speed restrictions on the Stuart Highway at Wycliffe Well and upgrade of the main community access road in the highway. From March 2013, this latter section of road is to be widened and shoulders reworked in the interests of road safety.

With assistance from the Commonwealth Government, the shire located a fire trailer at the community, provided fire training for local staff and assisted in provision of fire breaks and other measures to assist in fire mitigation measures for the community.

(a) Council assets.

Negotiations were commenced with Central Land Council to secure leases under S19 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*. Refurbishment was carried out on the shire service centre and depot.

(b) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health.

(c) Agency Services

Agency services such as postal agency and Centrelink have continued throughout the year, although problems have been experienced in regular operation of the crèche due to staff attendance and facility. With assistance of DEEWR, this service is now being improved.

(d) Night Patrol and Safe House

Night Patrol and Safe House operations have continued but need improvement with better staff attendance.

(e) Sports and recreation

Programs have continued throughout the year although a full time coordinator is required. Council is seeking funding for this to occur.

(f) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

Problems have been experienced with staff attendance at the child care centre. The centre, which was small and extremely basic, has been upgraded and re-equipped.

(g) Library

There are no library facilities at Ali Curung.

## **2.2 Alpurrurulam**

As a result of an electoral review carried out by Council, Alpurrurulam Ward was formed from March 2012 and a new Councillor, Jennifer Mahoney elected.

A Local Board has been established but this has met irregularly and further attention and support for the Board is required.

A new landfill has been constructed to be completed in 2012/13.

With assistance from the Commonwealth Government, the shire located a fire tanker at the community, provided fire training for local staff and assisted in provision of fire breaks and other measures to assist in fire mitigation measures for the community.

(a) Council assets.

Negotiations were commenced with Central Land Council to secure leases under S19 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*. Refurbishment was carried out on the shire service centre and depot.

(b) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health.

(c) Agency Services

Agency services such as postal agency and Centrelink have continued throughout the year.

(d) Night Patrol

Night Patrol operations have continued and on occasion have been commended by local Police for overall assistance and initiative.

(e) Sports and recreation

Programs have continued throughout the year with the assistance of CAYLUS. Vandalism has affected the usage of facilities in the community.

(f) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

Aged Care services have been improved with upgrades to the Aged Care Centre.

(g) Library

There are no library facilities at Alpurrurulam.

## 2.3 Ampilatwatja

Council has met on at least two occasions at Ampilatwatja. A new training centre is to located at the community through CDEP.

The shire, in partnership with the Northern Territory Government unsuccessfully submitted a bid under Round One of the Regional Development Australia Plan to upgrade the ever failing septic systems with a new sewerage system at an estimated cost of \$7.1M. However the Commonwealth Government has recognized ongoing problems and have indicated they will assist where possible with septic system upgrades. Upgrades are planned for the landfill and effluent disposal pits.

With assistance from the Commonwealth Government, the shire located a fire tanker at the community, provided fire training for local staff and assisted in provision of fire breaks and other measures to assist in fire mitigation measures for the community.

(a) Council assets

Negotiations were commenced with Central Land Council to secure leases under S19 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.

(b) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health.

(c) Agency Services

Agency services such as postal agency and Centrelink have continued throughout the year.

(d) Night Patrol

Services have continued throughout the year.

(e) Sports and recreation

With assistance from CAYLUS, programs have continued although their success is dependant on staff attendance and what support is available from the Community Services Branch in Tennant Creek.

(f) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

Successfully ongoing with assistance from local school students undertaking work experience programs. Training in this area has continued.

(g) Library

There are no library facilities at Ampilatwatja.

## 2.4 Arlparra

The Urapuntja Council Aboriginal Corporation has acted as a Local Board and closer relationships must be developed with that body.

With assistance from the Commonwealth Government, the shire located a fire trailer at the community, provided fire training for local staff and assisted in provision of fire breaks and other measures to assist in fire mitigation measures for the community.

This is a difficult area to maintain services due to the spread out nature of the various outstations and poor access roads especially following major storms. Water bores are beginning to fail at various outstations due to age and their repairs can be a major expense factor. Trade contractors for housing have to be brought from Alice Springs and jobs must be "stockpiled" where non life threatening, to achieve best economic efficiency.

A growing problem is the increasing number of wild horses that roam the area in mobs causing breakage to housing. This matter has been referred to the Central Land Council which organisation had received government funding to assist.

All roads leading to outstations in the Utopias region have received full maintenance grades during the year. The 4 kilometre access road to the Utopia Clinic received a major upgrade at a cost of \$370,000.

(a) Council assets

Negotiations were commenced with Central Land Council to secure leases under S19 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.

(b) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health. These have been with the support of AMRRIC and the Utopia Clinic. The shire has contributed veterinary and other services to support regular animal health clinics being conducted by veterinary staff from interstate.

(c) Agency Services

Postal and Centrelink agency services have continued.

(d) Night Patrol

Services have continued but there is an ongoing problem recruiting patrollers with personal driving licences.

(e) Sports and recreation

Continued with the support of CAYLUS and the Converted Jobs program which have assisted in upgrading the local community oval and basketball facilities.

(f) Aged Care and SNP

Services have continued throughout the year.

(g) Library

There are no library facilities at Arlparra.

## **2.5 Elliott**

Elliott is a Territory Growth Town. Much work has been done in negotiating a Local Implementation Plan which is yet to be agreed to by all parties. Emphasis has been given to community cleanliness with regular community drives on litter and general rubbish.

The Elliott Local Board has met regularly through the year and its recommendations have been followed up through Council.

A major problem with water reticulation to the outstation area of Marlinja has been overcome. Due to the high mineralization of local bore water, reticulation piping became completely blocked despite a major upgrade having been carried out only a few years prior. This program was delayed due to the high cost but has now been completed.

Elliott has operated successfully throughout the year with parks and gardens and roadside areas being regularly maintained. Shire staff have been undertaking fire mitigation training throughout the year under the auspices of the Tennant Creek Fire and Emergency Services. This has been of proven value with protection of the community against various bushfires in the area.

In May 2012, the shire launched a special history book on Elliott and the district titled "In the Middle of Everywhere". This was a project commenced by the former Elliott District Community Government Council and was researched and written by Darwin authors and historians, Peter and Sheila Forrest.

(a) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health.

(b) Agency Services

Centrelink services have been maintained by the shire throughout the year.

(c) Night Patrol and Safe House

Services have been maintained throughout the period.

(d) Sports and recreation

Services have been maintained throughout the period.

(e) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

Aged Care support services have been conducted successfully throughout the year. The Aged Care Centre provides SNP meals.

(f) Library

A library service has been operating throughout the period at Elliott. Support is provided through the local primary school.

## **2.6 Tennant Creek**

Tennant Creek has been provided with waste removal, animal health services and street sweeping facilities throughout the year. Council was commended on the attention provided to maintenance of street facilities on Paterson Street (aka Stuart Highway). The Tennant Creek landfill is nearing the end of its capacity and a future site needs to be urgently located. During the year, the shire purchased its own low loader and prime mover which has given it the capacity to respond quickly to the need to transport heavy machinery, such as dozers, graders etc throughout the shire.

Ownership of the 10km<sup>2</sup> freehold property at NT Portion 1918 known as Juno that was originally purchased by the former Tennant Creek Town Council has been transferred to the shire following legal negotiations with the nominated trustees. The shire is considering future usage of the land. As it is the only remaining large tract of freehold land in Tennant Creek, the current Council has ruled out any direct sale in order to preserve it for future generations.

The public swimming pool facilities have been upgraded with a new disabled toilet, an upgraded plant room and major refurbishments have been carried out at the Civic Centre. The perimeter fencing project has been continued around Purkiss Reserve and down Peko Road. Major upgrades to the town Dog Pound have been carried out with a new roof with insulating noise retardant materials.

The Tennant Creek Local Board meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month. Various issues and recommendations from the Board are referred directly to the Shire Council.

(a) Animal Health

Council has continued to support establishment of a local veterinary practice with assistance from an annual levy on ratepayers in Tennant Creek. Ranger services have continued throughout the year.

(b) Night Patrol and Safe House

Night Patrol and Safe House services are not provided in Tennant Creek.

(c) Sports and recreation

Within Tennant Creek, the Barkly Shire provides and maintains public facilities at Purkiss Reserve and the Swimming Pool facility. However with exception of the pool, sports and recreation facilities are provided through another agency with shire support.

(d) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

These services are not provided in Tennant Creek.

(e) Library

Full library services have been provided to the community throughout the year.

## **2.7 Wutunugurra (Epenarra)**

Council has met during the year at Wutunugurra. A new training centre is to located at the community through CDEP.

With assistance from the Commonwealth Government, the shire located a fire trailer at the community, provided fire training for local staff and assisted in provision of fire breaks and other measures to assist in fire mitigation measures for the community.

During the year a community perimeter fence, entrance grids and all weather access road into the community have been completed along with upgrade of the local landfill.

(a) Council assets

Negotiations were commenced with Central Land Council to secure leases under S19 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*.

(b) Animal Health

Regular visits have been undertaken throughout the year with a general improvement in overall animal health.

(c) Agency Services

Centrelink services have been maintained throughout the year.

(d) Night Patrol

While services have been maintained, there have been ongoing problems with recruitment of suitable local staff.

(e) Sports and recreation

These have been provided throughout the year.

(f) Childcare, Aged Care and SNP

While funding has been received for the operating SNP services, the shire has also provided an Aged Care support service.

## **2.8 Summary of services**

Overall the shire has continued to mature in its efficiency of services provided. Major steps forward have been achieved with establishment of a Grants Management office which is responsible not only for the application of funding submissions to appropriate bodies, but applies itself to the acquittals of funding received.

An Events Officer has also been recruited to directly co-ordinate events and promotions throughout the year. These include regular citizenship ceremonies, NAIDOC Week, Australia Day and various single events such as the Emirates Melbourne Cup Tour which commenced its three months' tour of Australasia from Tennant Creek following a successful submission by the shire.

Of particular note is the successful adoption of the annual audit for 2011/2012. Since its inception, the shire has struggled with producing auditable annual financial statements with the first three years being disclaimed. This was due to various technical difficulties associated with establishment of the shire, unspecific completion of accounting records from the smaller councils which were morphed into the new shire and adoption of alternate accounting software to that originally provided. For the 2010/11 accounting period, the Corporate Services Section of the Shire achieved a qualified audit and this year has further improved on this situation. However, there were unavoidable delays in achieving an audit outcome which the shire regrets. The shire recognizes the need to be able to produce audited financial statements within a legislated time frame and has taken steps to ensure this will be the case for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013.



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