



Town of Bassendean Arts and Cultural Plan 2019-2023



CONTENTS:

1.	Executive Summary	p.1
2.	Project Brief and Methodology	p.2
3.	Acknowledgments	p.11
3.	Cultural Outcome: STIMULATION	p.12
4.	Cultural Outcome: INSIGHT	p.13
5.	Cultural Outcome: ENRICHMENT	p.14
6.	Cultural Outcome: APPRECIATION	p.15
7.	Cultural Outcome: BELONGING/ SENSE OF PLACE	p.16

1. Executive Summary

Our Arts and Cultural Plan is based on our Communities' Vision:

A connected community, developing a vibrant and sustainable future built upon the foundations of our past.

What did you tell us?

Bassendean is a creative community!

Bassendean values and celebrates its history, its environment and its community!

Bassendean's unique culture comes from:

- Its history as a significant Aboriginal gathering place;
- Its position on the Swan River, the preserved natural environment, its green spaces, trees;
- Its history as one of the first colonial settlements;
- Its importance in transport: river, rail, road and this connection to industry in the region;
- Its wealth of creativity in its community;
- Its awesome events that connect the community and make it a welcoming place.

Bassendean values arts and culture because:

1. Arts is good for health and well-being;
2. All types of artistic and creative activities are really important;
3. We regularly draw, paint, make craft, design things, build stuff, perform, sing, play;
4. It is important for our children to learn art, dancing, music, and other creative things

Community consultation revealed a shared sense of Bassendean as a creative centre, with many artists living and working in the area. The community value highly the environmental beauty of the Town of Bassendean, its old trees, the Swan River, the open spaces and parklands. Feedback consistently highlighted the importance and joy of being able to enjoy social, cultural and recreational activities in the open air.

The community also love the unique cultural heritage of the area, its rich connection to its First Nations people, the original Aboriginal people, stories and significant sites along the river, its historic settler beginnings in the establishment of the Swan Colony, its Pensioner Guard pioneering community, its old families and rich beginnings in trade, its growth through the development and connections of transport links, through river, then road then rail. Bassendean is proud of its citizen's hard-working approach to life, the connections to the Railway Workshops in Midland, the manufacturing industries that grew up along the rail line. There is a passionate historical society, a rich archive of local historical information and stories, and valuable historical buildings that tell a unique story of the area.

Shared stories raised the nature of longevity of the resident population, that there are many long-term residents, who have lived and raised families in Bassendean for generations. There was a shared sense that generations can move away but more often return to live in the area to raise their own families.

On top of this is a growing modern population of young families, modern pioneers who strive to develop a future for themselves in this culturally rich area, through land sub-division and building renovation, through increased access to the world through digital markets and high-speed internet.

The community are aware of a growing population, a forward planning scheme that predicts growth for the Perth Metro population to 3.4 million by 2050, the need to open up over 4000 new residential opportunities around the transport hubs of Ashfield, Bassendean and Success Hill. Increased rail links to the airport and to communities in the Eastern region bring new industrial and economic development, focused redevelopment strategies have increased housing and amenities in surrounding areas.

The Bassendean community are excited by the opportunities ahead, and committed to retaining the "village community feel", preserving the historical significance, nurturing the natural beauty and the celebrating cultural lifestyle that makes Bassendean a great place to live, work and play.

The Arts and Cultural Plan captures the aspirations of artists, creative industries and the general community living in the Town of Bassendean and sets out a strategic framework for cultural development in line with the Town's Strategic Community Plan 2017-2026.

The Arts and Cultural Development Plan 2019 – 2023 is the result of the following research, consultation and development activities:

- Planning meetings with Arts and Cultural Plan Reference Group representative of local artists, arts managers, teachers and residents;
- Desktop reviews: Town's Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Plan, Bassendean Local Economic Profile, surrounding local government approaches to cultural planning and activities, key strategic plans with influence on the Cultural Plan: Department of Culture and Arts (now Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries), Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, East Metropolitan Regional Council;
- Face to face interviews: Town of Bassendean management to discuss key projects and issues;
- Alignment with key project steering groups and key reports with links to the Cultural Plan including the Australia Day Review Committee, Community Facilities Audit, Bassendean Cultural Advancement Group and the Reconciliation Action Plan;
- Meetings with Local Area History Coordinator, and the Bassendean Historical Society;
- Facilitated open community consultation sessions, in Ashfield, Eden Hill and Bassendean during March 2018;
- Consultation with Bassendean areas' primary school arts teachers and principals;
- Survey questionnaire on the Town's YourSay Engagement HQ throughout March-June 2018;
- Synthesis of information to identify issues and recommendations, presented to Council, Management and Council Committee: People Services;
- Public Comment period: feedback questionnaire survey on Yoursay Engagement HQ to all previous survey participants;
- Development of high-level strategies following public comment; submitted for Council endorsement;
- Development of internal implementation plan.

The project has been guided by the national Cultural Development Network' planning framework. The six principles that underpin the *Framework for Cultural Development Planning* are:

PRINCIPLE	DEFINITION
Based on values	What the community cares about, documented in the Council Plan
Directed towards goals	A goal represents a desired future. It is not necessarily attainable, but is aspirational. Goals should be the reference point from the Council Plan that cultural development objectives are directed towards.
Informed by evidence	Research, data and practice knowledge that helps us know more about issues we are facing. This includes baseline data about the community and its needs, and what others have done to address them (outcome studies).
Underpinned by a theory of change	The reason why we do what we do: based on what we are trying to achieve, and what we know about it, our reason for doing what we do. A clear articulation of the relationship between knowledge (research or practice knowledge), and the activities chosen in order to achieve a particular objective.
Focused on outcomes	These are milestones towards our goals. They are first stated as objectives, (what difference we are trying to make) which, as they are realised, become outcomes (what difference we have made). These should conform to SMART principles: ie. be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. They are not activities, but what are we trying to achieve through our activities.
Respondent to evaluation	Evaluation is used consistently, from the first stages of planning (what would our desired outcomes look like?), right through to the end (what difference have we made, and how would we know?). An evaluation plan includes establishment of measures: benchmarks chosen to assess whether objectives have been achieved. Evaluation should inform future decision-making.

The framework recommends a schema for measurable outcomes for cultural engagement; historically measurement has focused on outputs such as the number of arts products created, tickets sold, participants as metrics of success. Outcomes in a cultural policy domain are recommended to measure the desired end point as not the product or the participation, but the values of expression which contribute to a culturally rich and vibrant community.

This cultural planning project is based in the cultural outcomes that engagement in cultural activities brings:

- **Creativity stimulated:** The sparking of imagination, creativity or curiosity that leads to a desire for creative expression.
- **Aesthetic enrichment experienced:** An experience that comes through the senses that is special and outside the everyday. This might include being moved or challenged through feelings such as beauty, awe, discomfort, joy or wonder.
- **Knowledge, ideas and insights gained:** Intellectual stimulation, critical reflection, creative thinking and deeper personal understanding.
- **Cultural diversity appreciated:** Valuing the different ways people express themselves through the diverse cultural forms, reflecting their life experiences and interests.
- **Sense of belonging to a shared cultural heritage deepened:** How one's identity and values are rooted within a history and heritage that is shared with others.

Local Government and communities' long-term strategic planning in Western Australia focus on other key policy domains: Social, Built Environment, Natural Environment, Economic and Governance domains. Arts and Cultural policy outcomes can have significant impact on achieving the community's' ambitions in these policy areas, and the framework aligns measurable outcomes to these policy domains.

Using this approach our Arts and Cultural Plan is based on our Communities' Vision and values:

A connected community, developing a vibrant and sustainable future built upon the foundations of our past.

Our Values:

PEOPLE: Councillor, staff and volunteer contributions are vital in striving to meet our diverse community's aspirations and well-being. We will actively engage our community and seek their participation in planning their future.

EXCELLENCE: We strive to achieve the highest standards in local government and to consistently provide consultative, ethical and responsive services.

HERITAGE: Preserving and communicating our shared history and heritage increases our capacity to balance today's needs with the long-term interests of future.

PARTNERSHIPS: Collaborative partnerships and regional cooperation increase value to our community and the East Metropolitan region.

SENSE of PLACE: We recognise that maintaining our natural environment is crucial to sustaining our future. We acknowledge that our community requires Council to preserve and enhance our streetscapes, built and natural environment, and to protect the Swan River as our greatest natural asset.

What did you tell us?

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- Its importance in transport: river, rail, road and this connection to industry in the region;
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Bassendean values arts and culture because:

- Arts is good for health and well-being;
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Events:

92.8% of respondents felt they were very, or somewhat connected to the community in Bassendean. Attending local arts and cultural events was the most popular way of staying connected in the community. You told us the most valued arts and cultural activities were the Old Perth Road Monthly Markets, the RElax program of workshops, the Bassendean Visual Art Award Exhibition, Telethon Community Cinemas, the Australia Day, ANZAC and NAIDOC day celebrations.

You see arts and cultural events as an "invitation to connect". You are positive about the well-run events, you love the outdoor nature of a lot of events, the inclusivity, and cross-community interaction is valued highly. You strongly support the opportunities for employment, community interaction, sharing of practice through Bassendean Visual Arts Awards and RElax Program, and the Markets are very popular. You would like to see more community connection built into and around the events, opportunities for longer term projects which feed into the event, and/or more opportunities for young people to participate in events. You enjoy twilight events, and would love to see Old Perth road closed off to create piazza areas for locals to enjoy. You called for more recognition of Aboriginal culture and multicultural communities in the events.

Facilities:

The Bassendean Memorial Library is highly used and valued by the community, and its stats are very high in comparison to the size of population it is serving. Based on 2017/18 year: Opening hours: 53hrs per week; 1271 new memberships; 7295 total membership; 4776 resident memberships; 111,305 visits; 157,545 number of physical items on loan.

Alf Faulkner Hall is the next highest use community facility, with the Bassendean Senior Centre and the Community Hall also highly booked. There is a high percentage of regular users for each facility, with low casual hire rates. There is evidence the Community Hall could accommodate more cultural use. Other valued spaces include Cyril Jackson ArtsHouse, and 1 Surrey Street.

Calls for new facilities included:

- Multi-purpose performance and arts hub that offers opportunities for theatre and dance as well as active workshops, and exhibitions. (Old Fire Station)
- Art Gallery for exhibitions
- Studio and workshop spaces for collaborative creation;
- Pop-up spaces for activities
- Amphitheatre or stage in park (BIC and Sandy Beach referenced)
- New opportunities for facilities and hub in Eden Hill.

Population:

2016 Census data on Diversity reports Bassendean's population is:

- 65% born in Australia, 35% born overseas;
- Most common ancestries: 28.2% English, 23% Australian, 8.4% Irish, 7.2% Scottish, 4.2% Italian
- 9.3% speak only English at home, next most common languages are: Italian, Mandarin, Vietnamese, French and Cantonese.

Bassendean has a growing population of overseas born residents, 2016 data reveals of the 1857 identified 294 are from India, 163 Philippines, 132 Vietnam, 125 China, 93 Malaysia, 59 Myanmar, 58 Croatia, 50 Poland. Further countries are represented: Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Nepal, Sudan, Ethiopia, Zambia, and European countries such as Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta, France and Belgium.

Aboriginal culture

The 2016 census reports 383 Aboriginal persons are resident in Bassendean (2.5% of the population), however there is strong support to celebrate and recognise Aboriginal culture in Bassendean: 36.8% strongly support celebration of; 36.8%: understand some but like to know more; and 14.5% would like to see more acknowledgment.

Shared Heritage

Community consultation reveals a high value is placed on arts and culture in the area. The value placed upon the heritage and historic sites in Bassendean is very high, there is a strong civic pride that comes from the natural and built environment of the area.

You voiced a desire for telling the stories of the area publicly, whether through the protection and interpretation of important historical precincts and buildings, to the implementation of trails, investing in public installations of sculpture, performance and storytelling events.

The Pensioner Guard Cottage is a significant cultural and historical site worthy of protection, maintenance and interpretation for future generations. The re-design of the Surrey Street building and Pensioner Guard Cottage will include a Family and Children's Services Centre, and this should be optimised as an opportunity to bring the important stories of the buildings to a new generation.

You requested the Town "apply an arts lens" to all public developments, public assets, playground installations, and open space enhancements. You strongly support more public art across the suburbs: 97.6% of respondents, but want deeper engagement with local communities and local artists, as well as creative approaches to design and implementation. You want local families and children to be more engaged in these design processes, but this needs long term planning, schools are an ideal vehicle, but curriculum planning requires twelve month preparation.

Creatives at home

Creative respondents to the consultation work across a wide field of creative industries. The largest are visual artists, and/or arts managers and event coordinators. Other creative professionals are architects and interior designers, musicians, fashion designers, theatre performers, dancers and crafts practitioners. There is a growth in home-based businesses: since 2011, the number of people that reported as working from home has increased 19% from 187 to 222 (4% of population). Approximately 40% of those that work from home in Bassendean are based in Eden Hill.

A majority of employed persons who worked from home work in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Construction, and Manufacturing. Third highest is Arts and Recreation. Between 2011 and 2016, the most significant growth in people working from home was in Ashfield. This is attributed to growth in arts and recreation services activities, likely due to home studios.

Creative respondents reported their biggest needs are:

1. Group spaces where interaction with other creatives/organisations can happen;
2. Public presentation spaces: exhibition, performance etc ;
3. Self-belief and motivation;
4. Commitment and energy;
5. Solitary workspace for quiet design, writing, ideas development;
6. Opportunities for commercial activities: markets, demonstrations;
7. Hire spaces for development of performances, rehearsals, group sessions;
8. Opportunities for creative risk and to push my practice.

What were the major issues you raised?

1. Evidence shows that the events are mainly focused in Bassendean Town Centre, or Ashfield. Few events take place in the Eden Hill area. There is a strong call for more activities to be planned for Eden Hill residents in the open spaces of Mary Crescent or Jubilee Reserve.

2. The community love the events, and whilst some are more important to them than others, more activation is requested rather than less. With a small Council team, and a limited budget, how does the Council meet this demand?

3. What are the implications across the Town of Bassendean in terms of empowering the community and external providers to put on more events?

4. How do the current facilities meet the needs of the arts and cultural community more? With some low usage, and high regular user rates, how do we open these facilities to new community groups and members?

5. With a 60% population growth predicted in the next thirty years, how does this impact on the number of community facilities needed, and their accessibility to all aspects of community and cultural use?

6. Do we know our community? Population growth, and changing migration statistics, are we planning for a broader diversity of residents? By separately "valuing" people with disability and people from diverse backgrounds, do we achieve full inclusion?

7. Creating "Belonging" through a shared heritage experience must continue to recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal people's stories. People consulted want stories shared as reconciliation and respectful community inclusion activities.

8. The community values:

- The unique cultural heritage of the area, its rich connection to its First Nations people, the original Aboriginal people, stories and significant sites along the river,
- Its historic settler beginnings in the establishment of the Swan Colony, its Pensioner Guard pioneering community, its old families and rich beginnings in trade,
- Its growth through the development and connections of transport links, through river, then road then rail.
- Bassendean is proud of its citizen's hard working approach to life, the connections to the Railway Workshops in Midland, the manufacturing industries that grew up along the rail line.

There is a passionate historical society, a rich archive of local historical information and stories, and valuable historical buildings that tell a unique story of the area. How do we unite the community resources and groups around a shared community cultural development project?

9. How can the Percent for Art Policy achieve the aims of the Arts and Cultural Plan?

10. Artists can contribute to the character and identity of Bassendean as a creative place to live/work. The needs of artists in terms of operating home based businesses and activities need to be acknowledged and aligned with the Town's priorities. Employment of local artists in the Town's activities could be prioritised further.

11. Identifying shared space for collaboration, networking, exhibiting and performance, will assist develop the Town's growing reputation as a creative industries hub. The Town does not own many buildings and could review the use of its facilities to enable this activity to take place.

The Town could encourage future developments to cater for this cultural and creative use.

Context: East Metro Region:

Perth's Eastern Region constitutes around one-third of Perth's metropolitan area encompassing a land area of about 2,100 square kilometres. Strategically located, Perth's Eastern Region hosts Western Australia's major air, road and rail transport hub for movement of freight and passengers throughout Perth, intrastate, interstate and overseas. The major industrial areas of Malaga, Welshpool, Kewdale, Hazelmere, Forrestfield, Bayswater, Ashfield and Bassendean play key roles in transport, storage, manufacturing and logistics servicing the state's construction and resource sectors.

Perth's Eastern Region also includes extensive natural areas, agricultural land and the Swan River foreshore areas, national parks, state forests and water catchments. With a diverse regional economy, access to a skilled workforce and a range of leisure, lifestyle and living opportunities, Perth's Eastern Region is well positioned for continued strong growth and represents an attractive investment destination. The region which is home to approximately 325,065 is expected to grow to approximately 443,770 by 2026.

The East Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) is a local government entity established under the Local Government Act 1995 that works in partnership with its six-member Councils located in Perth's Eastern Region – Town of Bassendean, City of Bayswater, City of Belmont, Shire of Kalamunda, Shire of Mundaring and City of Swan.

Bassendean based on the 2016 Census: The Town of Bassendean has a residential population of 15,090. Since 2006, the population has grown by 12% from 13,458. The Town of Bassendean covers an area of 11 square kilometres, with 7 kms of Swan River foreshore. It is a small Local Government area within the Perth Eastern Region.

Its immediate Local Government neighbours have significantly larger geographic areas and populations: City of Bayswater is 33 sq km with 67,000 pop; City of Belmont is 39.8 sq kms with 39,500 pop and City of Swan is 1042 sq kms with 138,000 pop.

Town of Bassendean's Economic Profile identifies: The median age of residents in Bassendean is 39 years, 3 years older than the median age of Greater Perth and Western Australia

Acknowledgements

The Town of Bassendean Arts and Cultural Plan was written by Ricky Arnold and Associates.

Town of Bassendean – Recreation and Cultural Development Team:

Salvatore Siciliano	Manager, Recreation and Culture
Gabriella Filippi	Senior Cultural Development Officer
Misha Elliot	Events officer
Tim Dayman	Recreation Development Officer
Amanda Gaterell	Administration Assistant
Town of Bassendean Memorial Library Staff	

The Town of Bassendean Arts and Cultural Plan 2019-2023 was adopted at its Ordinary Council Meeting on March 26, 2019.

Town of Bassendean Cultural Plan – Community Reference Group

Purpose (Tasks & Outcomes):

The Community Reference Group has been established to support the development of a Cultural Plan for the Town of Bassendean based on the following scope:

- Cultural Plan recommendations will align with the Town of Bassendean's Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027;
- Cultural Plan recommendations will be based upon substantial community consultation through online surveys and focus groups;
- A draft Cultural Plan will be made available for public comment following Council approval for release;
- Final Cultural Plan will provide scope of activities, resources, partners and appropriate budget recommendations to council for implementation over 5 years
- Community Reference Group meetings will be held at key milestone activities in the Cultural Plan's development.
- Community reference group members will represent a broad range of cultural and arts practices, heritage concerns and community connections.

Project Community reference group appointed:

- Lucy Bromell: Designer/Maker/Lecturer/Ashfield CAN
- Peter Cook: Artist, designer, Master Craftsman - Scarab Studio Wood.
- Jacob Lehrer: Professional Arts Practitioner, Dance
- Anni Macbeth: President - Bassendean Arts Council
- Marie Molloy: Visual Art Teacher, ArtsHouse Coordinator - Cyril Jackson Senior Campus
- Liz Morrison: Artist – Morrisonart, President Printmakers Association
- Simon O'Leary: Artist Manager, WAMFest Co-ordinator, HyperFest
- Francois Sauzier: Sustainability, Independent Cinema
- Helen Shanahan: Arts Specialist teacher, Graphic designer
- Rebecca Sheardown: Culture and Arts (WA), Visual Artist
- Sean Walsh: Producer, Actor, MC
- Renee Zaffino-Little: Event Development Manager - Tourism WA

The Town of Bassendean would like to thank all those who participated in the focus groups and completed the survey for this project.