



Colin Barnett

Member for Cottesloe

LATE
2006

Newsletter

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Saving the flag

It is a rare event when an individual Member of Parliament has a law passed. I recently enjoyed this novel experience with the State Flag Act 2006.

Our well known flag, with its black swan, has been in use since the 1870s, but has never been formally established by law. It is now, and should any future government wish to change it, they can only do so by legislation. In this way, our state flag is both established and protected.

Apart from correcting an historical anomaly, there is a deeper purpose. The achievements of Western Australia are due to the hard work of the people of this state. The future of our state is best determined by them. Pride in our state flag is symbolic of what I hope is a renewed pride in Western Australia.

The full text of my speech to Parliament is available at: www.mp.wa.gov.au/colinbarnett



The Western Australian flag

Website

Go online to my website www.mp.wa.gov.au/colinbarnett

My latest comments on a range of important issues can be downloaded along with useful local information.

A note from Colin

In this edition of my newsletter I cover several important state issues as well as some purely local matters.

One major concern is taxation. There is no doubting it, we are being massively over taxed by the State Government. Land tax is particularly burdensome.

To parents, I draw your attention to the dangers of increased methamphetamine use, or 'ice' as it is known. You will find more information on my website, along with a detailed assessment of outcomes-based education, which I present from the perspective of a former education minister.

In Parliament there are two pieces of legislation attracting much attention. These are 'Living Wills', which relate to the right to refuse medical treatment, and the proposed freeing up of our outdated liquor laws.

Another significant issue, one that is attracting worldwide interest, is the rock art on the Burrup Peninsula. The preservation of these ancient carvings is one of Australia's most important heritage matters, which I have been pursuing through speeches and the media, including Channel Nine's '60 Minutes'.

For my views on all issues covered in the newsletter, please go to my website. I welcome your comments.

For residents in City Beach, Claremont, Cottesloe, Floreat, Karrakatta, Mosman Park, Mount Claremont, North Fremantle, Peppermint Grove, Shenton Park, Swanbourne.

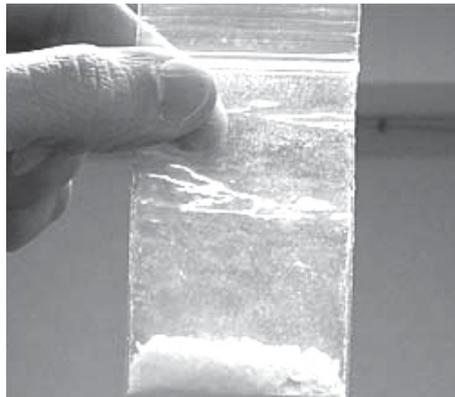
'Ice' -the new 'it' drug

Illicit drug use in Australia is more widespread than many of us think. Of real concern is the increase in the use of amphetamines. Commonly trivialised with the labels 'recreational' or 'party' drugs, amphetamines now represent the second most commonly used illicit drug in Australia, after cannabis.

Alarming, Western Australians are the highest users of amphetamines in the country. Recent usage among people 18-34 in WA was 13.3%.

Crystal methamphetamine, or 'ice', is chemically closely related to amphetamine and is now the 'it' drug among young people.

The physical and mental effects of 'ice' use are horrific. It keeps users awake for days and induces an hallucinogenic haze that often results in dangerous, psychotic and extremely



'Ice' - crystal methamphetamine

violent behaviour. Other effects include severe headaches, panic attacks, anxiety and paranoia. Research has shown that it can lead to brain damage that could be permanent.

'Ice' is readily available, cheap and can have users addicted from the very first try.

I urge you to find out more about this dangerous drug. Details are available on my website www.mp.wa.gov.au/colinbarnett

The burden of land tax

Western Australian families and businesses are being grossly over-taxed. We have gone from being a low tax state to a high tax state.

Taxes collected by the State Government have increased by 80% or some \$2303.4 million since 2001 – and it is not just the strong economy and the hot property market that are to blame. In its first three budgets, the Labor Government significantly raised rates on stamp duty, land tax and payroll tax.

The Government is receiving a tax windfall and we are all paying for it.

I have taken up the issue of land tax in particular, because it affects a large number of families in the electorate. Land tax applies to commercial land, investments in residential property and to holiday homes. The family home and rural land are exempt.

Land tax is especially insidious because it is a tax on 'wealth'. It must be paid every year regardless of whether the property is sold.

The amount of tax payable can rise for a variety of reasons, many of which are unpredictable and compounded by each other. It can be affected by property values, revaluations,

rezonings, grouping provisions and, as we have seen under this Government, increases in the rate of tax. With land tax, the rate rises progressively with the land value.

The following table illustrates the point:

Property Value	Annual Tax Amount
\$200 000	\$105
\$400 000	\$735
\$500 000	\$1 185
\$1 million	\$6 343
\$5 million	\$91 560

Although the land tax burden is far too high, I have been able to get some relief for constituents in cases where the family home is in a trust or company and in situations of rebuilding on an existing block.

While these appear to be small reforms, they have been important for those caught in the land tax trap.

My website has the transcript of a Parliamentary speech that I gave on land tax.

Leighton update

It is six years since the planning guidelines for the 17 hectare redevelopment of the Leighton Marshalling Yards were endorsed by the previous Government, signalling the go-ahead for the project.

Essentially four hectares are to be available for residential and commercial development and 13 hectares are to be set aside as coastal reserve.

Since coming to office in February 2001, Labor has been slow to advance the Leighton project. While there is work taking place on the commercial and residential lots, the public space area at the north of the site remains unchanged.

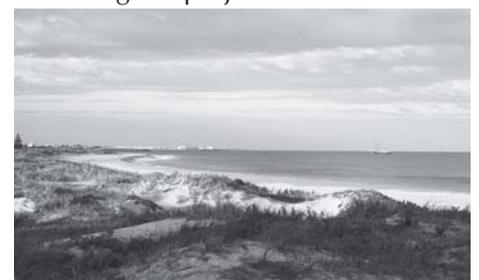
The chronology of Leighton over

recent years reveals a lot of public consultation, but not very much decision-making or action by the Government.

The coastal reserve master plan, known as Leighton Oceanside Parklands, closes for public comment on 13 November. I urge the State Government to implement the final draft without further delay.

For more information, visit

www.leightonproject.com.au



Leighton Beach

World famous beach?

Cottesloe Beach is well known around the world. Nearly 3 million people visit Perth each year and many of them go to Cottesloe.

And why wouldn't they? With the famous pine trees, crystal clear water and magnificent sunsets, it certainly is a memorable sight. It is also a very popular surf beach and the reef area is a good spot for snorkelling.

The natural attractions of Cottesloe Beach speak for themselves. My concern is with the services that support it. Both residents and visitors have

commented to me about how limited the beach precinct is.

Perhaps we could learn something from Manly Beach in Sydney where a broad mix of restaurants, cafés and shops appeal to all ages and interests, making it a more vibrant and inviting place for both locals and visitors.

What are your thoughts?



Colin at Cottesloe beach

Protection for vulnerable children

The tragic death of 11-month old Wade Scale and the subsequent review of the Department of Community Development's (DCD's) handling of the case have highlighted the need to protect, at all costs, the lives and welfare of children at risk.

Over the past five years, 214 children known to the DCD have died. This simply cannot be explained away.

The State Government's response to this scandalous situation has been to initiate toothless reviews and allocate an additional \$50 million to the DCD. Simply throwing money at the problem does not address the fundamental issue: the DCD's

ideological position of returning children at risk to their natural parents, which sometimes, sadly, is not the best place for them.

Why not give children whose future would be potentially unstable and institutionalised, the opportunity of experiencing a stable family environment?

My view is that we need to look at more effective, permanent solutions

for the increasing number of children in care whose parents cannot or will not provide adequate care for them and are unlikely to do so in the future. I propose that we provide more opportunities for these children to be adopted.

For more information, visit www.mp.wa.gov.au/colinbarnett

Preserving rock art

Some may find it surprising, and somewhat ironic, that I have taken up the issue of preserving the rock art on the Burrup Peninsula.

As Resources Development Minister in the former Coalition Government, I did not realise the enormous significance of these ancient carvings. I do now. The Burrup rock art is one of Australia's most important heritage sites and is attracting national and international recognition for its extraordinary anthropological, archaeological and heritage value.

With at least 300,000 carvings covering an area of about 88 square kilometres, the Burrup rock art is the largest concentration of ancient rock art in the world. It is estimated to be between 6,000 and 18,000 years old, although there is some evidence that it may date back more than 30,000 years. To put it in context, it is at least twice the age of the pyramids or Stonehenge. The carvings depict complex and animated figures that may be some of the earliest evidence of Australia's first inhabitants.

Of course, the Burrup Peninsula is also Australia's most important industrial site. Iron ore from the Pilbara is exported through the port of Dampier and the Burrup is home to the North West Shelf Natural Gas Project and associated gas processing. Regrettably, as a result of construction, some of the Burrup rock art has been destroyed.

I believe that we can have development and rock art if we manage the issue properly. Ignorance is no longer an excuse.

Earlier this year, I spoke in Parliament on the need to protect the rock art and since then I have pushed the issue publicly and through the media. For a copy of my speech, please go to my website.



Burrup rock art - 'Climbing Men'

Septic hazard

Septic tanks are a danger to public health and the environment, especially in coastal and wetland areas. Perth relies on below ground sources for around half of its drinking water.

In 1994 the ambitious Infill Sewerage Program was set up by the then Coalition Government. At the time, about 25% of Perth properties had septic tanks. The figure was 40% in country areas.

Since then, 80,000 properties have been provided with deep sewerage.

Regrettably however, cutbacks in recent years have caused the program to slow. Last year's budget was reduced from \$40 million to \$34.5 million and this year it has been cut back even more to \$30.6 million. The result is further

delays.

City Beach is a critical area - its coastal geography makes it particularly sensitive to environmental harm. To date, less than half of the properties in City Beach have been sewered with the remainder not scheduled for work until 2012 - 2014.

This is unacceptable to residents and to myself.

It may not be the most glamorous of government programs, but it is certainly one of the most important for our environment.

Council elections

One of the best features of Local Government in Western Australia is that Councils are largely free of party politics and vested interests. Not any more if the State Government gets its way.

Currently, voting in Local Government elections is voluntary and the candidate with the most votes in each ward wins.

Under an amendment to the Local Government Act, Labor wants to introduce a preferential system similar to that used in State and Federal elections. That means instead of choosing one candidate from the list, voters will have to rank each in order of their preference and hope that their first choice wins. But as is sometimes the case with preferential voting, the person who comes second or third actually wins because of the flow of preferences.

Preferential voting could allow elections to be manipulated by interest groups with the sole aim of dominating council. This would be against the spirit of Local Government.

People who take the time to vote in voluntary council elections like to make a judgement on the calibre of the candidate, not on the strength of the group or faction the person represents. That system has worked well so far and should continue.

I spoke recently in Parliament on this issue. If you would like a copy of my speech, go to my website, or contact my office.

Well done

Alf Snell - Recently retired Mayor of Mosman Park, for services to the community.

City Beach Primary School - celebrating 50 years.

Claremont Railway Heritage Celebration - for the 125th anniversary of the railway line, 120th anniversary of the railway station and 100th anniversary of the signal cabin.

Crackerjack's Comedy Club launch - an initiative of the North Fremantle Bowling Club, Community Association

and Precinct Committee.

Harler Place restoration, corner of Stirling Highway and Wellington Street Mosman Park. Congratulations to the Department of Housing and Works.

Mosman Park Primary School - celebrating its centenary.

North Fremantle Primary School - celebrating its 120th anniversary.

Ocean Gardens Retirement Village - celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Ask Nina . . .



Seniors' Card

If you've turned 60, you may be eligible for a Seniors' Card which offers a range of discounts on government and other services.

You will need to be a permanent resident of Western Australia and work 20 hours or less per week to be considered.

Call Nina for an application form.

Living Wills

A 'living will', or more correctly, an 'advance health care directive' is a tool for legally competent adults to specify in advance what sort of treatment they want in the event of incapacity.

This is a measure that may be used by terminally ill patients or accident victims to refuse life-sustaining treatment.

The State Government has brought in legislation designed to formalise 'living wills' so that people's wishes about medical treatment are properly respected.

The ongoing debate in Parliament has shown this to be a particularly complex issue.

Nina has more information.

Development Projects

There are a number of property development projects in the area. If you would like an update on any of the following, call Nina.

- Claremont North East Precinct
- Claremont Town Centre
- Lakeway Drive-In Site
- Perry Lakes and AK Reserve
- Sunset Hospital Site
- Swanbourne High School Site
- Swanbourne Primary School Site

Parliament House Visits

Every year I host a number of school visits to Parliament House. A complimentary tour is available to anyone in the electorate. If this is something you or your community group would be interested in, please contact Nina to make arrangements.