



Norfolk Island | Issue no. 24 | 16 May 2024

Administrator's update

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee members have a significant amount to work through over the next few weeks to come to a consensus on a new governance model to present to Government.

It is crucial to ensure the new governing body is in the best position financially to succeed from the beginning. The committee are meeting next week and then again at the start of June for a week-long workshop to build an agreed model to take to the Minister by early July.

We will continue to keep the community updated through both the Wednesday community engagement sessions, and regular communiques as this critical work progresses.

While we have a very tight timeline in providing a recommendation to the Minister, a new governance model will not be established before the end of Council administration. A key consideration in planning transitional arrangements will be employment security for current Council staff.



Minister McBain returns to Norfolk



It was great to have Minister for Territories, Kristy McBain MP, back on Norfolk Island earlier this month, to discuss governance matters in person.

During her visit, Minister McBain sat down with the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) to provide direction in respect of the new model of governance for the island, as well as reaffirming the necessity of a solid revenue base to fund and deliver local government services to Norfolk Island. All parties agree on the need to have the new governance body established as soon as possible.

The Minister also met with Council on current priorities and transitional arrangements in the lead-up to December this year.

Minister McBain made time to tour a range of key infrastructure projects funded by the Australian Government including the Kingston stage one sewer and roads, Cascade works, and Slaughter Bay seawall.

The Minister reinforced the Australian Government's ongoing investment in Norfolk Island's sustainable future.

It was invaluable that the Minister could make the visit and talk directly to the NIGC.

Happy birthday to new centenarian Ralph Weslake

On May 6, I had the honour of hosting Ralph Weslake and his extended family for an afternoon tea at Government House to celebrate Ralph's 100th birthday.

It was an opportunity to celebrate Ralph's life with all his family who had travelled from all over the world to make this truly significant birthday. Ralph's life is a story of the island life since the second World War.

Ralph was born in Brisbane, Australia and moved to New Zealand as a young boy. He joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force and was posted to Norfolk Island during the war. Here he met his late wife Enid Quintal and raised the family that continues to be an integral part of our community.



Ralph is the last remaining Norfolk Island World War II veteran.

He is also the first man in recent times on the island to make 100! Well done, Ralph.

Photo: Graham Weslake



Office of the Administrator

New Military Barracks, Kingston, Norfolk Island 2899

Raise the roof – Government House roof repairs almost complete

Last year, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts brought on Jordi Construction to undertake some essential roof works on Government House. These works are now nearing the finish line, all within the planned timelines.

Government House is one of Australia's greatest historical buildings, and an icon of Norfolk Island, which is why particular care has been taken to make sure the heritage value of the building, and the surrounding area, was not damaged during the works on the roof. Instead, the roof works enhance the beauty and history of the building, which will remain a bastion of our proud heritage for decades to come.

These works would not have been possible without the ongoing collaboration between the contractor and the local suppliers on island, a clear demonstration of what can be achieved when we work together to get things done.

The final materials will soon be delivered, and we are working towards finishing up both the internal and external refurbishment works.



Progressing the new residential aged care facility

The Department and its contractors are working on design and costings for the Norfolk Island Residential Aged Care (RAC) project.

The 16-bed RAC project is currently being designed to a 30% concept level, to inform development of a detailed cost estimate. The aged care home project will also include construction of a new ancillary support services building and mortuary for the Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service.

KPMG has been engaged to provide project management and contract administration services for the design phase, managing GHD which is undertaking engineering and design services. The 30% Concept Design and costings are scheduled to be finalised by mid-year. Following Departmental review of the costings, the project will be progressed through further design stages. Community consultations and public exhibitions will occur throughout this period. We will update the community on next steps and consultations timeframes as the project progresses.

Lest we forget – Commemorating Anzac Day 2024

It was an honour and a privilege to participate in such a solemn and important Anzac ceremony this year, my first as Administrator.

I acknowledge and thank the commitment of those involved in the Norfolk Island RSL – to President Warren Finch and members of the various committees who made the Anzac Day celebrations very special this year.

Anzac Day has been one of the most important dates on Australia and New Zealand's calendar since 1916. At first, it gave people a chance to honour the original ANZACs – the Australians and New Zealanders who fought at Gallipoli.

But through the years, Anzac Day has become an occasion to celebrate and honour all those who have given service since 1916 – through wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations – fighting valiantly to preserve and protect what makes our community and way of life so special.

