

**SENIORS WEEK**

*Statement by Minister for Seniors and Ageing*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Seniors and Ageing)** [9.18 am]: I am pleased to inform the house that this week is WA Seniors Week, which is held annually and runs from 12 to 19 November. More than 16 per cent of WA's population are aged over 65 years and WA Seniors Week is an opportunity to support the active participation of older people in all aspects of community life and promote positive ageing. When getting involved with Seniors Week activities, older people can find out about opportunities to connect with their local community, volunteer, build friendships, gain new skills and keep active. A total of 74 community organisations and local governments in metropolitan, regional and remote areas have shared in \$80 000 of the Cook government's Seniors Week community grants program funding.

A range of events and activities are being held statewide, and I encourage people of all ages to get involved in them. Highlights of the week so far include the WA Seniors Awards, which was held at Anzac House on Tuesday. These awards recognise that anyone can make a positive impact, from individuals, organisations and businesses to local governments. Congratulations to everyone who has nominated for Seniors Awards this year. I thank you for the contributions you have made to the community, and no doubt will continue to make, to improve the lives of older people in Western Australia. Another fantastic event I attended yesterday was the popular Have a Go Day, held at Burswood Park, which was run by the Seniors Recreation Council of WA. This is one of Perth's largest free annual events for over-55s, with this year's theme being "Age is no Barrier"; judging by the number of restored MGBs that were on display, it certainly is not!

The Cook government is committed to improving WA seniors' wellbeing and participation in the community. It launched the first *WA seniors strategy 2023-2033* and five-year action plan earlier this year. It is impressive to see so many seniors challenging ageism, helping others live a fulfilled life, combating loneliness, creating connections, and making their communities age-friendly places in which to live. Collectively, they are promoting an age-positive approach to life—one in which age is a strength and not a barrier to participating in and enjoying life.

The Cook government encourages all Western Australians to get involved in celebrating the priceless contributions of older people. For more information on WA Seniors Week and how to get involved, I recommend that people check WA Seniors Week events on the Department of Communities website.