



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## 2016 Local Government Awards for Excellence Winners Announced

Circular Head Council and Clarence City Council have been declared the winners of the 2016 Local Government Awards for Excellence.

Circular Head Council's novel initiative addressing literacy by encouraging children to read won the *Delivering Excellence - Smaller Councils (populations under 15,000)* Award.

A project by Clarence City Council that provides people with the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about death, grief and end-of-life planning took out the *Delivering Excellence - Larger Councils (populations over 15,000)* Award.

This year saw an extremely strong field of entries vying for the honours with projects ranging from recycling, bridges and community planning, to youth boat building, festivals and food security.

Circular Head Council won its award for a whole of community literacy project called *The Reading Bug Egg*. The project was initiated in response to research indicating major literacy issues in the Municipal Area and the concept was adapted from a similar project in rural NSW.

Central to the project is a 'rare egg' which needs to be read to in order to hatch. The Reading Bug Egg visited schools, community events, even a council meeting to be read to. In the nine months since the project started, nearly 3,000 books have been read throughout the Circular Head area. In addition to the children who participated in reading, friends, parents and caregivers were also exposed to and engaged with the program.

LGAT CEO, Dr Katrena Stephenson said the project is a great example of Local Government delivering excellence through collaboration and partnerships, partnership with the delivery of an innovative program addressing an identified community need.

Clarence City Council's *aWake Before Death* project was created to provide the opportunity for people of all ages to have meaningful conversations about death, grief and end-of-life planning in a safe and supportive environment. Research indicated, despite the sensitivity of the topic, increased promotion and education on end-of-life planning is beneficial if handled in a supportive, open way.

This initiative was a collaboration between Clarence Council's Positive Aging Network, non-government, government and private enterprise. The *aWake Before Death* initiative aimed to capture conversations about death and dying on film which were then turned into a portfolio of quality, flexible and sustainable educational and training resources for wider community benefit. Doing this through a community development process ensured discussion of death, dying, end of life care planning and bereavement helped build capacity and resilience by learning from others.

The project had wider benefit when the video created from the conversations was showcased at the MOFO Arts festival. The portfolio has been adapted and distributed widely as a valuable palliative care resource. The project also supports Clarence City Council's World Health Organisation status as Tasmania's first Age Friendly City and Community.

"There was no doubt this project could be applied in many jurisdictions across the nation to address an important lifecycle, family and community challenge," Dr Stephenson said.

Sponsored by MAV Insurance, the Local Government Awards for Excellence aim to promote outstanding achievement and to inspire leading management practice and continuous improvement among Tasmanian councils.

The awards were presented on 22 July at the annual Local Government Conference, held at the C3 Convention Centre in Hobart.

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**For media enquiries and photos,  
please contact Keryn Nylander, Nylander Consulting, on 0418 996 536**