



Shaping Perth's future, one tree at a time

The conversation around urban greening in Western Australia has progressed.

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How do we deliver meaningful canopy outcomes for our communities?

That was the focus of the Arboricultural Association of Western Australia's (ArbWest) annual seminar, From Seed to Strategy, presented in partnership with Vermeer Equipment of WA & NT at Perth's WACA Ground.

Delegates came together to tackle a challenge that will shape Perth's future – creating a greener, cooler, and more liveable city.

The right place

The event attracted a capacity crowd, reflecting the interest in the future of Perth's urban forest. Representatives from 17 local authorities and two State Government departments joined arborists, urban foresters, consultants, contractors, and industry leaders for

a day of discussion, collaboration and practical solutions.

Adding to the atmosphere, Craig Woodroffe from ArbWest's partner Ellenby Tree Farm supplied a beautiful collection of trees for the venue, creating a living reminder of why everyone had gathered: to secure a greener future for Western Australia.

Diversity

ArbWest President Dave Crispin said the strong turnout highlighted the growing momentum behind urban greening.

"This was an important day, and it was pleasing to see the number of people that turned up, from arborists, individuals, and local authority urban foresters to decision makers in State Government. Together we can spread the message and help reach the goal of 30 per cent canopy cover," he said.

As Perth continues to grow, the challenge of balancing development with the retention and expansion of tree canopy has become increasingly important. The seminar explored practical solutions, with speakers drawing on local and national experience.

Opening the seminar, environmental scientist and television presenter Dr Josh Byrne challenged delegates to shift their thinking from policy to implementation.

"Urban greening is no longer about awareness or policy ambition – the challenge is delivery. Trees must be treated as essential urban infrastructure from the beginning of development, not added later as landscaping," he said.

Building on that theme, Nicholas Dufty from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage outlined the State Government's pathway towards

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Environmental scientist and television presenter Dr Josh Byrne with Sarah Allchurch, Chair of Western Australian Tree Canopy Advocates (WATCA).
Images: ArbWest



Organisers and presenters, from left: Joe Carriera, Pia Finnigan, Zana Sheary, Nick Hayes, Sarah Allchurch, Dave Crispin, Freya Thomas and Nicholas Dufty

achieving 30 per cent canopy cover across Perth and Peel by 2040. He highlighted initiatives including the Let's Grow Grants program, climate-ready tree research, improved planning integration and stronger collaboration across government and industry.

"Urban greening only succeeds when policy is connected to practical action and long-term partnerships," Nicholas said.

The audience also had the opportunity to learn from a leading urban forestry program. Drawing on over a decade

of experience with Melbourne's Urban Forest Strategy, Dr Freya Thomas shared lessons about what it takes to create lasting change.

"Successful urban greening requires long-term planning, strong policy, good data, biodiversity outcomes and genuine community involvement," she said. "It's about more than simply planting trees."

Community

While government and industry have an important role to play, the seminar also recognised the contribution

of community advocacy. Sarah Allchurch, Chair of Western Australian Tree Canopy Advocates (WATCA), brought a community perspective to the discussion, highlighting the challenges facing Perth's urban canopy.

"Perth has the lowest canopy cover of any Australian capital, and despite our targets, we're still designing canopy loss into new suburbs. Community advocacy has an important role to play in changing that," she said.



Vermeer Equipment of WA & NT was represented by Sales Manager Sam Hayes. Image: Vermeer Equipment of WA & NT

Working together

ArbWest committee member and seminar organiser Nick Hayes said the event reinforced the importance of collaboration.

“Urban greening isn’t delivered by strategy alone. It takes planners, engineers, local government, industry, and arborists working together to deliver real outcomes on the ground,” he said.

ArbWest sees its role as helping to build those connections by bringing together the people responsible for planning, managing and caring for the state’s urban forest. Through training, education, advocacy, and industry events, the association continues to support better outcomes for trees and the communities that rely on them.

ArbWest Vice President Joe Carriera said bringing together such a diverse audience was one of the seminar’s greatest strengths.

“The conversations throughout the day showed there’s a real willingness across the sector to work together. By sharing knowledge and practical experience, we can build the capability needed to deliver lasting canopy outcomes for Western Australia.”

Industry support

Main sponsor Vermeer Equipment of WA & NT was proud to support the event and the wider industry.

Sales Manager Sam Hayes said, “We were happy to support the association and the event, and it was great to interact with members from the industry and discuss this important topic.”

From Seed to Strategy is part of ArbWest’s commitment to delivering an annual seminar that brings together local authorities, the arboricultural industry, State Government stakeholders and decision makers to tackle the biggest issues facing Western Australia’s urban forest.

The challenge now is to maintain the momentum and continue turning good ideas into real canopy outcomes for a greener, cooler and more liveable Perth. **AA**

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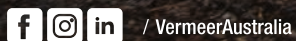
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