



Australian Institute of Architects

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Tasmanian President urges different view of architecture

The new State President of the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) is urging Tasmanians to take a fresh look at the world around them and learn the value of architecture in their built environment.

Mr Brad Wheeler began his term as President of the Tasmanian Chapter of the Institute on 18 March, taking over from Mr Andrew Williamson.

Mr Wheeler brings some unique qualities to the role, including his combined experience as an architect and public servant. He graduated from the University of Tasmania in 1995, with a Bachelor of Architecture with Honours. He then worked in architectural practice for several years before joining the Tasmanian public service, where he is currently the Manager of Infrastructure Investment with the Department of Health and Human Services.

Mr Wheeler says his first two months in the role have underlined a fundamental misconception in the community about what architects do.

'People often believe architects only design high-end houses for wealthy clients,' said Mr Wheeler.

'But they actually do a lot of unnoticed work that contributes a great deal to our state's wellbeing. It is this work benefits our communities, providing pleasant, affordable and efficiently planned schools for our children to learn in; nursing homes older members of the community live in; health centres people get well in; workplaces many of us work in and even the public spaces we gather in.

'These may be brand new buildings or older, possibly heritage buildings that have been modified for adaptive reuse. But, whatever their age, the involvement of an architect can add value, ensuring sustainability, energy efficiency, best use of water and land resources and, importantly, developments that cater to local community needs.

'I would urge people to take a break from the daily grind, look around and take in these buildings that are so vital to our lives and keep our community functioning smoothly, efficiently and productively.



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'Tasmanian architects have a fantastic record designing award-winning buildings and spaces. As a small island state that prides itself on its design ability, architecture is no exception and we take great pride in that. However, like any industry, we are also proud of the buildings that may not win awards, but do benefit the whole community.'

'As an Institute, we try to offer programs and events that highlight these benefits to the community. Through public events such as Architecture Week and, more recently, Open House Hobart, we offer people the opportunity to engage with their built environment. As an industry, architects have firsthand knowledge of the benefits of good design. We want to share these benefits with the wider community.'

Mr Wheeler's term as Tasmanian President runs for two years. Andrew Williamson will continue to work closely with Mr Wheeler and provide support in his role as Immediate Past President.

If you'd like to speak to Mr Wheeler about any issues related to architecture, please don't hesitate to contact me on 6214 1505 or at jennifer.nichols@architecture.com.au.

For media enquiries contact:

Jennifer Nichols

Manager, Tasmanian Chapter,

Australian Institute of Architects

P. + 61 (3) 6214 1505 | M. +61 (0) 0409 216 526

jennifer.nichols@architecture.com.au