

Cr-Tanya-Taylor

[Start of recorded material at 00:00:00]

Judy: Hello, my name is Judy Peters and I'm from the Willoughby District Historical Society and I'm with Mayor Councillor Tanya Taylor and we're in the mayor's office in Victor Street, Chatswood. So welcome.

Tanya: Thanks for having me. Thanks for being here.

Judy: Ah, thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed for our diversity project. Ah, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Tanya: Welcome, um, I was born in Maryborough in Victoria, in a sort of country – small country town. Um, my parents moved to Tasmania when I was just two years old, so we went across on the Able Tasman, um, moved the-the whole family. My dad got a job in a mine, Renison Bell, which is on the west coast of Tassie and we settled in a little town called Zeehan. Tiny town, 2,000 people.

Judy: [unintelligible 00:00:56]

Tanya: Um, people might know Zeehan because of the train museum that's there. It's a fantastic historical museum in Zeehan.

Judy: Mm.

[00:01:05]

Tanya: Um, also a metallurgical museum as well, so lots of stones and-and, um, minerals and things. So, um, yeah, we, ah, we moved to Tassie, um, because of my dad's work. My mum was also a nurse, so she became the nurse in the – in the town, so the – you know, the –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – the village nurse, I guess. Um, we bought a shop when I was about three years old. We, um, we bought a like takeaway store and-and had plans to-to renovate, well we started renovating it and had plans to expand it into more of a grocery store. Um, it was a takeaway slash general store. Um, ah, but that didn't happen. I'll-I'll explain why shortly.

Um, my dad and my mum got very involved in the local football club, Aussie rules. I didn't know rugby league really until I moved later on in life, um, at all. It was all Aussie rules and a little bit of rugby union on the west coast of Tassie. So, um, my dad and my mum got involved in the local football club and my dad was involved in, um, building the clubrooms for the local footy club.

But unfortunately, when I was four years old, my dad passed away. My

[00:02:18]

mum woke up beside him one day and he had passed in his sleep overnight.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So hence why the-the shop didn't get finished. Um, it was a really tumultuous time in our lives. I-I remember, you know, people coming and going and Mum not coping very well for-for some time. We moved away from the township of Zeehan for a little while but kept on coming back. So we-we spent some time in Devonport. Ah, my mum was working in the disability sector in Devonport, um, and also doing night shift as a nurse as well. She was coping with three –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – young children. I've got an older brother and sister. Um, so single parenting for up until the age of about eight and we'd gotten back to – gone back to Zeehan and she was nursing again and she met my, um, stepfather, [Steven Cunningham? 00:03:11]. And, um, the Cunningham family's a large family and well-known family on the west coast of Tasmania, seven children, um, and very involved in the football club as well.

[00:03:22]

So we got very entrenched in-in the community down there and really involved in lots of different things, um, until I went to university in, um, in 1990. Um, but before that, I was – I had to travel to high school, um, I went to primary school at Zeehan Primary School but high school was actually in Queenstown and it only went to Year 10 back then.

So for four years, I travelled 45 minutes on the bus back and forth every day. Um, I remember jumping in puddles that had ice over the top of them, um, when we were, you know, waiting for the buses. Freezing cold, two or three pairs of stockings because you had to wear – you had to wear a skirt.

Judy: [unintelligible 00:04:06].

Tanya: Um, and the stockings, freezing cold. Um, but some of the best years of my life and some of the, you know, closest friendships that I've made in my life and I'm still friends with those people now.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And we've spread out all over the world really, it's quite incredible, um, very few people left on the west coast. The west coast has undergone lots of transformations over time because of, you know, mine closures and reopens and all of that sort of stuff, but, um –

[00:04:31]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – yeah, when I was – when I was – I had to go to, um, boarding school for – to do Year 11 and 12, to finish my schooling years. Um, a lot of people finished at Year 10 and then went and got a trade, but I wanted to-to go to university. And so I had to go to boarding school on the north coast, so in a town called Burnie and, um, and I stayed in a – in a boarding house there for a couple of years before going down to Hobart to-to do university. Um, I wanted to become a teacher to begin with, um, a special needs teacher and I think that came from my mum's work in disability – in the disability sector –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – when we moved to Devonport. Um, and I-I-I was enjoying university life. Um, I stayed on campus down in Hobart but halfway through my degree my parents moved to Cairns because my dad got a redundancy from the mine and found another job in Papua New Guinea. So it was a big change for them.

[00:05:34]

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: So they moved-moved to Cairns and I went and visited and I – the degree I was doing was a Bachelor of Arts rather than a Bachelor of Education and it really felt a little bit nothing.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So when I went to Cairns, I was like, oh, this is a pretty nice place to live. I wasn't sure what to do. I ended up deciding to move up to Cairns as well. So unfortunately, didn't finish my degree, but ended up working up in Cairns and doing in the end two, um, traineeships. I did a traineeship in office management administration, I was working for a real estate agency.

And I also wanted to get into hospitality, so I started working for a couple of the big hotel groups and I ended up getting a traineeship in hospitality. So I worked at the Cairns Colonial Club Resort and I worked in all facets of the resort, from the kitchens, housekeeping, the gardens, reception, the conference centre, marketing, the whole bit. It was – it was a really great, um, sort of –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – holistic approach to-to sort of working, I guess. And then I ended up getting a job at the conference centre in events, um, where I spent the rest

[00:06:39]

of my career, basically, until I became the mayor. Um, in 1996–7, um, I decided to take a – sort of a gap year and do an overseas experience, um, working holiday trip.

Um, so went over to the UK and I used my experience at the conference centre at the Cairns Colonial Club to get a job working for Richard Branson at one of his venues in London. So, um, spent a couple of years there, um, worked at the Roof Gardens in London in Kensington High Street, which was great. Great experience. And, um, on one of – on a night out I met my husband, who was actually living in Scotland at the time. And so –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – we did a little bit of a long distance thing between London and Scotland and spent, um, some time in the Lakes District, meeting halfway type of thing and yeah, so that was for about a year and then he got a transfer – well, he got the opportunity to come out to Sydney to look at a company that he was selling equipment for, installing equipment for or actually they – they're the R and D company. And I came out to Sydney with him and he decided he'd take a job out here and so I applied for a job. And that's how we ended up in Sydney. I wouldn't have – we wouldn't have come here at all. It wasn't on the cards.

[00:08:03]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, but as soon as we, um, we arrived, we loved it. Absolutely loved it. And I ended up coming out earlier than he did because he had to go back and do some work and I-I just, ah, resigned from the Roof Gardens and I had to give a month's notice, so I came out here and lived with my sister-in-law's family down in, um, down in, um, Cronulla for about three months, commuting back and forth. And then, um, when Mark arrived, we were like, well where-where are we going to live now?

And I just asked one of the girls at work, "Where-where – you know, where are some good places to live?" And she said, "Oh, well we live in Wollstonecraft and that – we love it." So we ended up – we moved to Wollstonecraft to begin with, tried that for six months. Then we went out to where his work was, which was out at Rydalmere, so West Ryde for six months. We didn't – we didn't love it out there. It just wasn't vibrant enough for us. So we ended up back, um, over this side and we bought a unit in Naremburn.

Judy: OK.

Tanya: So that was in the year 2000.

[00:09:05]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And we've lived in Willoughby ever since.

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: So, um, we had our first daughter when we were living in that unit, so she was born in 2003, and then we moved to Glover Street in Willoughby. Um, we rented, we-we sold the unit so that Mark can start his own business and unfortunately never got back into the – to market, so we've been renting ever since.

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: So we've moved around quite a lot.

Judy: Mm.

[00:09:31]

Tanya: And I think that has helped me in my role as the mayor as well because we've lived – we've lived in Glover Street in Willoughby, we then moved to Holland Street in Chatswood. Um, then we moved to Eastern Valley Way, Robert Street, and now we're in Lucknow Street, um, in Willoughby South. So we've moved around a little bit. The kids have always been at the same school, Willoughby Public School. Um, Daniel was born when we were living in Holland Street.

Um, Daniel, um, so we've got Ava, who's, um, now 20 and Bligh, who's 18, and Daniel, who's 15. Um, all three kids went to Willoughby Public School. Daniel, when he was born, um, we realised there was something not quite right. He wasn't focusing, um, vision wise on objects and so we went and-and had the six week checkup at the paediatrician. He wasn't really satisfied with his vision either, so went and did some tests.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And, um, went back and forth through, you know, different tests at Westmead and then the ophthalmologist and then finally we had an MRI. They didn't want to do an MRI until he was six months old and that's when we found out he had a major brain malformation, um, which was – came as a really big shock.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, he was the boy that, you know, we were – we loved the fact that we'd had two girls and then we had the-the boy finally and I really wanted a boy –

[00:10:58]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – for my husband and, um, yeah, to not – to-to know that he wasn't going to potentially live a normal life, um, was a real shock. So various tests and, um, lots of early intervention, um, he got diagnosed with cerebral palsy when he was about 12 months old.

Judy: Mm-hmm.

Tanya: But between six months and, um, five, he had a lot of vision therapy and his vision is really good now. But the cerebral palsy is the thing that sort of holds him back. Um, so yeah, that's been – that's been a challenge but it's also been such a gift to us.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And it feels in a way that my life has kind of – at that time came full circle because I – obviously I wanted to be a special education teacher and then, you know, have a – have a child with a disability, you kind of have to be in a way. So –

Judy: Mm.

[00:11:50]

Tanya: – um, it has been challenging but it's also been, you know, great and we always say that he-he makes everybody else around him a better person for the person that he is.

Judy: Wonderful. Mm.

Tanya: Yeah. So, um, yeah, through-through the kids' school, got involved in a lot of, um, activities and, um, community, um, gatherings and, you know, bringing the school together. Um, with my events background, I was able to help with some of the events that the P and C put on and then the school principal asked me if I'd be the convenor for the 150th celebration, so pulled all of the events together, including a beautiful book, a history book of, um, Willoughby Public School. And, um, a history exhibition, we did a massive fair, we did a big dinner, um –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – and then I joined the P and C in full and became the president, um, with my friend, Jenny Brown, for a few years. Um, and also I guess I got involved in the community through scouts as well, so my three children have all done scouts. Um, Ava started when she was seven, so we've been involved for 13 years with 1st Sailors Bay Sea Scouts.

[00:13:04]

Judy: Mm-hmm.

Tanya: So have helped to grow that group, um, quite significantly as well. We started off with about 80-80 kids and now we've got about 150. So –

Judy: Mm, that's great.

Tanya: – um, been able to-to get a lot of kids off the wait list, grow the leadership in the – in the group and able to get kids out on the water and yeah, it's-it's been a fabulous thing for my family as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Something that Daniel could do too, which was – which was great.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So yeah, in 2020, 2021, I was awarded the Citizen of the Year for just the work that I've been doing in the community through scouts and the P and C and a few charity things for the Cerebral Palsy Alliance and, um, I hosted Girls' Night in for Cancer for 10 years and raised lots of money for the Cancer Council. Um, Cerebral Palsy Alliance STEPtember events and getting all the-the kids at Willoughby Public School involved in doing that charity event.

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So it was a – it was a – it was a shock but it was also obviously an honour to be recognised for that work. Um, and then I – you know, I always have to take it to the next level and go, "OK, well what can I do now?" I knew that the kids were going to finish at Willoughby Public School. My time there had – was coming to a close, so I thought, well, I'll run for council.

And so, um, I'd been working at the City of Sydney in local government for about six years, um, I had a bit of time off when Daniel was first was born and first diagnosed. I had – I had been running my own business, um, recruitment for events for the events history but I had to sort of close the doors on that just because –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – of the needs that Daniel had an in terms of –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – you know, early intervention therapies and that sort of thing. But, um, I, um, I wanted to get back into – to work, so I started just doing a couple of days a week at the City of Sydney. And, um, sort of had an indication of

[00:14:56]

what local government was all about and –

Judy: Mm-hmm.

Tanya: – thought, well, this is something I could get involved in. So that's why I decided to run for council and was not intending to-to run for mayor but then obviously Gladys Berejiklian, um, resigned, Gail Giles-Gidney, who was the current mayor at the time, decided to run for the state seat of Willoughby.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And she said to me, "Well, you're running for council, why don't you run for mayor?"

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So I-I said to my husband, "Gail's got this weird idea that I should run for mayor. What do you think?" And he goes, "Well, what do you think? You could do it. I know you could do it." And I said, "Well, you know, I want to get involved – more involved in the community, so yeah, I suppose so. But I might ask the girls first. I'll see what they say."

Judy: Mm. Mm.

[00:15:42]

Tanya: Um, and their response sort of confirmed it for me, they said, "Hell yeah" when I asked them. And I thought, well, you know what, if anything, I'm doing it for them, I'm doing it for the – for their generation, for the future generation.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: Um, and if I can represent them, then, you know, that's obviously a good thing. So I decided to run. It was a bit of a leap of faith, did not think I would necessarily get elected but was, um, was elected and, um, yeah, it's been – it's been fabulous. It's been challenging because –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – I hadn't been on council previously.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, so learning the tools of the trade was-was difficult, I guess.

Judy: Mm.

[00:16:26]

Tanya: Um, [unintelligible 00:16:27].

Judy: So it-it was your first, um, time as a councillor and you're mayor as well at the same time?

Tanya: Yeah. Yeah.

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: Yeah.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So it was – it was – it was quite challenging. Because we're popularly elected here in-in Willoughby, which I think is a great thing because the community gets who they want to represent them, um, but it does come with challenges if that person hasn't been, um, on council previously.

Judy: Mm.

[00:16:51]

Tanya: But I feel like I've, you know, I've done the role justice. Um, I hope I have. Um, and I'm really looking forward to continuing on as well and, um, you know, representing the community to the best of my ability.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, I-I look at the whole community, I don't just look at pockets of the community. I try and make decisions on behalf of the entire, you know, LGA rather than, um, just small pockets. Um, that's hard to do sometimes because often the people with the loudest voices are the ones that are heard, um, which is great. I mean, advocacy, you need that, you absolutely need that, but you need to delve deeper as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: And-and that's what I try to do.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: Yeah.

Judy: Fantastic. So going back a bit further in your family history, I understand you had someone on the First Fleet?

Tanya: Yes. Um, Henry Ball was the captain of one of Captain Cook's supply ships for the First Fleet.

[00:17:50]

Judy: Mm-hmm.

Tanya: He didn't necessarily stay here. Um, the history is a little bit, um, sort of hazy, I guess. Um, we believe he went back to-to-to England, um, but then some of his descendants were convicts.

Judy: Ah.

Tanya: So then that's-that's where my family – so I-I guess I'm, you know, one of the first, you know, white people to, you know, my descendants were one of the first white people to actually, you know, inhabit Australia as well.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: Um, so their-their families, so that side of the family is English. My great-grandmother came out in around 1920. She was a Naismith and she's from Scotland, the Naismith family are from Scotland and that side of the family has some interesting history. Agnes Naismith was a witch that was burned at the stake, I believe. She was either burnt at the stake or in hot oil. Either or, I don't like it. [laughs].

[00:18:52]

Judy: Not nice.

Tanya: Don't like the-the-the thought of it. But when, um, when Mark and I were visiting, ah, when I was visiting Mark in Scotland one-one time, um, my mum said, "Go down and have a look at this property that was once in our family." Um, there's-there's a property called Dawyck House. It's in – just outside of a-a town called Peebles and there's some gardens there.

So I looked it up. This was pre-internet days pretty much as well or almost pre-internet days. I looked it up and yes, there was a property called Dawyck House. It's – it was in, um, the Dawyck Botanic Gardens, which were part of the Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh. So Mark and I went for a drive down there and it's an amazing property. I walked in, you had to pay an entrance fee and Mum said that there was a chapel on property as well, which had some plaques and things of the Naismith family.

And I said, um, to the people on the front desk, "Oh, is there any chance I can have a look at the chapel? I'm a descendant of the Naismiths." And basically they rolled out the red carpet for me, gave me the keys to the chapel. Um, also incidentally, when I was younger, like when I was five or six, apparently I wouldn't go by any other name except Daffodil. I wanted everybody to call me Daffodil.

Speaker: [laughs] Why?

[00:20:10]

Tanya: I-I don't know. I-I obviously loved daffodils. But the interesting thing is when we walked up towards this chapel, it was surrounded with daffodils.

Judy: Oh.

Tanya: So it was like, you know, goosebumps. It was amazing. Amazing. These sort of things – these sort of little connection things happen to me all the time but that was – that was quite incredible. But yeah, we opened the doors to the chapel and there was all these Naismith's names.

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: I mean, that was in the days where you had, you know, one roll on your camera type of thing, so I don't have a lot of photos from then. Um, I wish we'd – you know, I would like to go back there one day and have another look.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

[00:20:46]

Tanya: But, um, it's an amazing property and an amazing legacy and the Naismiths actually went over to Canada as well as coming to Australia.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: So that's that side of the family. And then on my dad's side of the family, um, and this is a little bit hazier because I – you know, I – Dad obviously died when I was four. Um, but his side, he's got English heritage on his dad's side, um, Howden is their-their name and then on my grandmother's side, she was a Fox, but she was also from the [Solimano? 00:21:24] family, so we've got Italian heritage on that side.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, and also on Mum's side, there's Danish too, so we come from Vikings and witches [laughs] um, and the Danish – on the Danish side, there was apparently, um, a descendent who'd jumped ship from the Germans. They-they were getting the Danish, um, farmers to help in a war or something and he jumped the ship and ended up –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – coming to Australia on a different ship.

Judy: Oh, wow.

Tanya: So yeah, bit of an accidental, um –

[00:22:00]

Judy: So a bit of a mix in there.

Tanya: Bit of a mix. Yeah, bit of a mix.

Judy: Mm. Mm. Mm.

Tanya: So Italian, English, Scottish, Danish, yeah.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: And that's it, yeah. And then my husband's from New Zealand.

Judy: Oh, OK.

Tanya: Mm. Mm.

Judy: Wow.

Tanya: So my kids are a bit of a mixer too.

Judy: There you go.

Tanya: Yeah. Yeah.

[00:22:18]

Judy: I was going to ask you a little bit more, you told us about your community involvement, is there anything – I suppose as mayor you're seeing a lot of different community groups and it's broadening out your knowledge of Willoughby and what's here –

Tanya: Absolutely.

Judy: – um, in lots of ways. Um, is there anything else you're particularly involved in at the moment or you just generally –

Tanya: I'm still involved in scouts.

Judy: Right.

Tanya: Um, I'm-I'm the group leader for 1st Sailors Bay Sea Scouts or the assistant group leader.

Judy: Fantastic.

Tanya: Um, so I'm still very involved in scouting. Um, I don't – I don't get too – I don't get too involved in the sort of – the day to day stuff.

[00:22:58]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: It's more, you know, managing, trying to get leaders and onboarding leaders and managing the back end of things. But, um –

Judy: OK.

Tanya: – still very, very involved in scouts. Um, and I've got a very tightknit mothers group. So my mothers group is from my eldest daughter, Ava. She's 20. So a lot of the mothers group live in Willoughby as well and there's 10 of us. So we do a lot of things together.

Judy: Lovely.

Tanya: Um, I mean that's-that's my own little community, I guess.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, I'm also still on the committee of Willoughby Community Preschool Special Needs Committee –

Judy: Mm-hmm.

[00:23:34]

Tanya: – because that's where Daniel went to school, went to preschool. Sorry, that's very loud. We are renovating the offices here but that does – don't know what that was. Um, yeah, so Daniel went to Willoughby Community Preschool because they had a special needs teacher there.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So, um, I got involved in that preschool when he was there and I haven't left and he's 15. [laughs]

Judy: Wow. So you're still involved in that? Wow.

Tanya: Yeah, yeah. No, it's a – and it's a great community preschool as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, but yeah, I mean I – I'm-I'm the patron for a number of organisation as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So I like to go to as many of, um, their events as I can. Um, but yeah, it doesn't leave much time for anything else. One thing I am also doing and

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this is because I didn't finish my degree, I'm doing a-a Bachelor of Community Development at the moment as well and I've got the last subject, community wellbeing, I've just started. So I should finish by mid this year.

Judy: Wow. Fantastic.

Tanya: Mm. Mm.

Judy: So tell us what your hopes are for the future of Willoughby.

Tanya: I hope that what we're planning for now will mean that the community stays as closeknit as it possibly can, so for community cohesion to still be there. Um, it – it's difficult thinking of – I mean, I'm looking out now at the skyline of, you know, along the railway line and knowing that there's so much more development to come and it's difficult to-to think of that in terms of community as well.

[00:25:11]

So I – when I think of community, I think of people coming together for the common good, for a reason to be together. And I hope that that continue for our community, um, despite where you're from or where you live or, you know, whether it's in a high rise building or a duplex or a, you know, a house on one of the peninsulas.

Um, so that is really – I mean, I know that's kind of very broad but that is really my hope for the future, that we can continue to be a cohesive community, even though we are a city of diversity and that is the tagline for Willoughby City Council.

Judy: Yep.

Tanya: Is city of diversity, we can be united in that diversity as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, I hope that we can continue to deliver services for the community that help the community as well and those services might differ from generation to generation. You know, um, with –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – you know, there may be the need for more youth services in the future or more aged care services, we – you know, just because we do something, doesn't mean we have to always do it. We can come and go and where the needs arise, we can fill those gaps.

[00:26:28]

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So I hope we can continue to do that too.

Judy: So it's about getting the balance right –

Tanya: That's right. Yep.

Judy: – for the people that are here at that time?

Tanya: Mm. Absolutely.

Judy: And that changes over time.

Tanya: It-it can change over time.

Judy: Yeah.

Tanya: Yeah. Yeah.

Judy: [unintelligible 00:26:41].

[00:26:41]

Tanya: And we need to move the – move with those changes as well and just –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: – be-be ready for those changes, I guess. Be resilient to change too.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, especially when it comes to the environment, um, climate change. I mean, we need – we all need to be prepared. So I mean, I don't –

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: That's interesting that I say that because I come from a scouting background as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So there you go, that's – it all ties in together, doesn't it?

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Tanya: And Baden-Powell always said, "Leave this world a better place."

[00:27:14]

Judy: Than how you found it.

Tanya: Than how you found it.

Judy: Yeah.

Tanya: And that's – I live my life through that.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: Um, I always think as well, do unto others as you would be done by.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: That is one of the mantras that I live by as well.

Judy: Mm.

Tanya: So yeah, I think, um, yeah, I think it's important. I-I don't – I'm not setting out to leave a legacy necessarily but as a mayor, you-you are going to leave a legacy and I hope that legacy is a good legacy.

[00:27:45]

Judy: Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

Tanya: Yep.

Judy: Well, thank you for talking to us today.

Tanya: My pleasure.

Judy: Mm.

Speaker: Can I just ask something?

Judy: [unintelligible 00:27:55].

Speaker: I just wondered, is there much interaction with the other councils around about, ah, because I think that's quite important to interact with the other people [unintelligible 00:28:11].

Tanya: Absolutely. Well, we have an organisation called the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils.

Speaker: Yes.

Tanya: And that's seven councils, um, on this north shore area.

[00:28:21]

Speaker: They do actually –

Tanya: Yeah, we come together on once ever two-two months.

Speaker: [unintelligible 00:28:25].

Tanya: Yeah, so we have – I missed out on the meeting last week, but we-we do meet regularly, um, and to discuss, you know, local issues, um, and –

Speaker: Yes. [unintelligible 00:28:35] often help each other, can't we?

Tanya: Absolutely. And not only do the mayors all meet or-or representatives from the council meet, um, staff meet, officers meet at the officer level as well. So they come together and they – there's the General Managers Advisory Committee, GMAC, so they're the general managers that come together, they come together more regularly than-than –

Speaker: Yes.

[00:28:55]

Tanya: – than the mayors come together. Um, and then there's, you know, people at the community level come together and planners, so they all talk to each other, which is – which is great. And then the NSROCs or the ROCs talk to each other as well. So each chairperson and the vice – vice chairs of the NSROCs will go and meet with other ROCs as well.

Speaker: [unintelligible 00:29:18]

Tanya: There's various community forums that different councils do. So I'll-I'll often go to a City of Sydney. There was a affordable housing summit last week, um, and then there's conferences as well. So Local Government New South Wales is the overarching body for local government in New South Wales and actually every single council is-is a member of Local Government New South Wales now. You don't – you-you opt in for membership.

Speaker: Yeah.

Tanya: They've actually managed to get every single council on board, which is great.

Speaker: Yes, that's really good.

Tanya: And there's a – there's a meeting, a conference every, um, year for that where we-we actually provide motions to that conference that get passed by the whole of the conference and then Local Government New South Wales goes and advocates to state and federal government those motions.

[00:30:07]

And the same for the Australian Local Government Association. There's a conference very year.

All the – all the councils from around Australia come together and that's really fascinating actually because I mean – New South Wales is really diverse in terms of the councils but once you get to the-the, um, national level, you know, you've got the council – the Kimberley Council, for example, is so different to Willoughby.

Judy: Wow. Mm.

Tanya: We all – we each have very similar challenges.

Speaker: Yes.

Tanya: But we also have such different challenges.

Judy: Mm.

[00:30:42]

Tanya: And we've all, at the end of the day, we're working towards what's best for our community.

Judy: Mm. Mm.

Speaker: That's good.

Tanya: Yeah.

Judy: [unintelligible 00:30:49]. Mm. Thank you.

[End of recorded material at 00:30:55]