The past few months have been very busy for the Board of Bayswater Community Financial Services. With our final dividend of 9.4 cents per share, our shareholders have again been rewarded with a great return.

Our good for community, good for business approach has also held our company in a sound financial position during the past year with many customers getting the message that we are serious about making our suburbs better places to live by providing community grants and sponsorships to many organisations.

Our Community Bank® Board has begun its investigation into a major community project over the next few years following a very successful community forum. While this is a major project the Board is still committed to providing for smaller scale projects each year. All these things are made possible by the loyalty of our customers. Our story continues to grow.

With the festive season fast approaching, our Community Bank® branches are looking forward to again conducting our Christmas decorations contest in Bayswater Village. Santa and the reindeers will again be on top of the King William Street branch, bigger and brighter than before. Finally, on behalf of all our staff and the Board, I would like to wish you all a very happy and prosperous Christmas and a very happy New Year. I know our Board is excited about the year ahead.

Barry McKenna
Chairman
Retirement living, easy - retirement finances, not so easy.

There is a broadly accepted financial path through much of our lives. At 20, we expect to start with a low income, low assets and high potential. Over time, we can hope to earn an income that exceeds our spending demands, so that we can build substantial financial assets, such as a home and superannuation. Unfortunately, the path after retirement isn’t so clear, and even small decisions we make early on can have a profound impact down the track.

During retirement, many of us will manage multiple sources of income; superannuation, other investments and the age pension. However, if we don’t plan our finances before retiring, we may be unable to maximise our eligibility for government support. For instance, our access to the age pension depends on a range of factors including superannuation balance, investments and home owner status.

The big unknown is how long we will spend in our golden years; we can only estimate how long our retirement savings must last. Even financial experts find it difficult to agree how much the average person will need to comfortably retire.

Many of us plan for at least 20 years in retirement. This is a substantial time period and our savings may not be large enough for us to keep all our money in low-risk investments while we are working and then maintain our lifestyle in retirement.

While most of us hope to lead an active lifestyle in retirement, it is reasonable to expect we will require medical and age-related care at some point. To cover our medical expenses and adapt to our changing needs, our families might be called on to make large financial decisions on our behalf, such as selling the family home. It is important to be aware that these decisions can impact our eligibility for government support in addition to the cost of care we receive, as well as impacting the estate left to the next generation.

You deserve a comfortable, long, and active retirement. But building your assets before retirement and managing investments during retirement isn’t for those without a long term plan and good financial advice.

Sheena McLeod is a Financial Planner and representative of Bendigo Financial Planning, a part of the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Group.

Bendigo Financial Planning is offering a complimentary appointment for you to discuss your financial situation. To benefit, simply contact your local branch.

Financial advice is provided by Bendigo Financial Planning Limited, ABN 81 087 585 073 AFSL 237898, a division of the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Group. This information is general and is not intended to provide advice or take account of your personal circumstances. Please consider your situation before making any decision.

U can find our branches at...

**Bayswater** - 14 King William Street, Bayswater WA 6053
Phone: 9370 3899     Website: www.bendigobank.com.au/bayswater

**Noranda** - Shops 13 & 14 Noranda Shopping Village, Benara Road, Noranda WA 6062
Phone: 9375 2494     Website: www.bendigobank.com.au/noranda
Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm and Saturday mornings 9.00am – 12 noon.