

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT
FEBRUARY – JULY 2022



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GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Dear Councillors

The General Manager's Report is a regular summary of operational highlights and other achievements for your information and interest.

This issue covers the period from February to July 2022.

During this reporting period Ku-ring-gai was again affected by adverse weather conditions resulting in damage to infrastructure such as roads. This has necessitated numerous staff working outside normal hours to repair the damage. The weather has also led to unavoidable delays to some capital works projects.

Nonetheless there have been several achievements of note.

Highlights include:

- ◆ The award of a \$500,000 state government grant for streetscape improvements.
- ◆ The start of consultation on Ku-ring-gai's Recreation Needs Study and the return of the Ku-ring-gai Sports Forum.
- ◆ Playground upgrades completed and consultation on designs for other playgrounds commenced.
- ◆ Community consultation on designs for the new park in St Ives was underway and on the future of The Glade in Wahroonga.
- ◆ A free drop off service for unwanted clothing and linen was successfully coordinated on behalf of NSROC. A trial for unwanted clothing in unit buildings commenced.
- ◆ Work was well advanced on converting St Johns Avenue Gordon into a pedestrianised outdoor dining precinct.
- ◆ The Council will transition to 100% renewable energy for operational use from July 2022, under a deal agreed with Zen Energy.
- ◆ The state government approved the planning proposal for the Lindfield Village Hub, locking in community facilities as part of the development.

- ◆ Council voted to increase future budgets for new footpaths to \$1.25 million, until every street in Ku-ring-gai has at least one footpath.
- ◆ Several community events were held, including the inaugural Ku-ring-gai Arts & Culture Festival.
- ◆ The plans for Ku-ring-gai's future – a revised 10-year Community Strategic Plan and supporting Resourcing Strategy, four-year Delivery Program and Operational Plan – were adopted after a public exhibition.

Details of these highlights and other items of interest during the period are contained within.

I hope you enjoy reading the report; if you have any questions please get in touch with me or the Directors.

John McKee
General Manager, Ku-ring-gai Council





THEME 1 COMMUNITY, PEOPLE AND CULTURE

A healthy, safe, and diverse community that respects our history and celebrates our differences in a vibrant culture of learning



Children

Vacation Care centres were almost fully booked for the April and July school holidays at the St Ives, Pymble and West Lindfield centres. The centres offer children aged 5 to 14 a wide variety of arts, crafts, games, sports during school holidays. Excursions and out-of-centre activities were reinstated during this period after they had been suspended due to COVID-19.

Activities included tasting bush tucker, throwing a boomerang and face painting with traditional ochre clay; a visit to a Chinese garden and tasting dumplings, learning Bollywood and Japanese dances. In recognition of the Gai-mariagal Festival of indigenous culture, children created indigenous maps for the areas surrounding vacation centres. Children also lead the Acknowledgement of Country each morning.

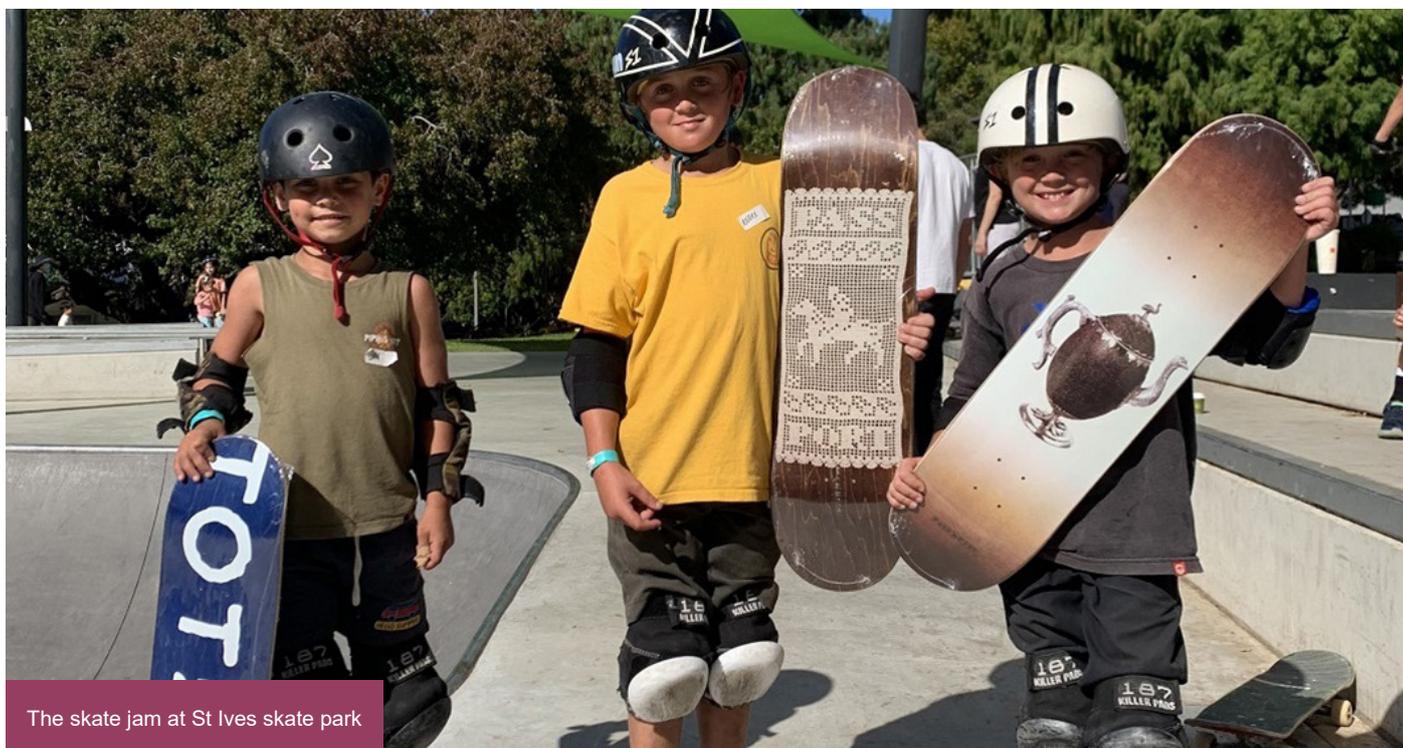
Family Day Care carers recognised Lunar New Year during this period with stories, dragon dress ups and calligraphy drawing. Educators shared special events with children and their families for Mother's Day.

Thomas Carlyle Children's Centre retained close to 100% occupancy during the period. The centre celebrated Reconciliation Week with activities and artwork in the car park, plus indigenous recipes shared by the Centre's cook with families. On World Environment Day families contributed sustainable craft items to the centre. A Mothers Day event was also held which included grandmothers and aunts of children attending.

Youth

The new skate park at St Ives which opened in February 2022 has been received well by the community. During the April school holidays the Council partnered with Totem Collective to offer free skating workshops with prizes and music. St Ives Rotary provided a BBQ at the workshops.

More skate sessions and an ideas workshop to design the rules and etiquette of the skate park were held in June. Four sessions were held on Friday afternoons, followed by a short workshop on how to design a safe and inclusive skate park. Skate and



The skate jam at St Ives skate park

scooter prizes were given to the most engaged young people at the final workshop on 1 July.

Work continued on the St Ives youth precinct during this period. Other features to be completed in coming months include a performance space for community events; terraced areas overlooking the skate park; pathways linking the skate park with other areas of the Village Green and new seating and picnicking areas. A new children's playground is also being built near the skate park.

The bike track at Soldiers Memorial Park in Tryon Road Lindfield is being redesigned following consultation with riders. It will be a shorter track than Jubes at Wahroonga, aimed at intermediate and advanced mountain bike riders.

Northern Sydney councils are hosting the ShoreShocked music festival on Saturday 6 August after a two year absence. Free for all ages, the drug and alcohol-free event is a day full of live music, community stalls, youth engagement and fun activities.

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Youth Network (HKYN) continued to meet monthly during this period. The network is made up of youth and community services that work with and provide services to young people in the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai local government areas.

Seniors

The Seniors Festival was held between March and April 2022. The Festival highlight was an open day at Turramurra Seniors Centre, to give older residents and their families an overview of local activities and services.

Around 40 community organisations, clubs and groups were at the open day to offer information, advice and 'come-and-try' activities such as yoga and dancing, as well as morning tea and lunch.



Lunar New Year Festival

During this period several workshops and events were held for residents aged 55 plus. These included:

- ◆ a safe driving workshop including advice on taking the older driver test
- ◆ functional fitness and yoga classes
- ◆ three information sessions on understanding aged care costs. A further session was scheduled for late July due to popular demand
- ◆ a workshop on how to use the library's e-resources
- ◆ excursions to the Blue Mountains and city venues such as the Maritime Museum.

Events

A COVID-safe festival of food and entertainment took place in February 2022 to celebrate the Lunar New Year. This included market stalls, food trucks, lion dancers and live music. Other Lunar New Year events included calligraphy demonstrations, storytelling, dancing and an art exhibition at Gordon Library. The Lunar New Year events were supported by a Multicultural NSW Stronger Together grant of \$15,000.



The Warakirri Dining Experience at the Wildflower Garden's Caley's Pavilion

The Ku-ring-gai Heritage Festival was held between 18 April and 19 May with walks, talks, tours and other events designed to bring local history to life. Highlights included:

- ◆ A guided tour of the classic Rose Seidler House in Wahroonga, the most talked about home in Ku-ring-gai during the 1950s.
- ◆ A guided walk through the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden exploring Ku-ring-gai's connections to its indigenous heritage.
- ◆ A special Mother's Day afternoon tea amid the gardens of one of the most beautiful stately homes, Eryldene at Gordon.
- ◆ An exhibition of 1950s fashion by the Calvacade of History and Fashion, plus a presentation of 1920s evening gowns.
- ◆ A guided tour of the 100 year old Wahroonga Park, which celebrated its centenary last year.
- ◆ A drawing workshop with artist Eliza Gosse, whose own work explores mid-century modern settings through sleek and stylised paintings.

In April 2022 several community-based ceremonies were held to commemorate ANZAC Day. Services and ceremonies were held at Roseville, Wahroonga, St Ives, Turrumurra and West Pymble. The dawn service at Roseville Memorial Park was attended by Mayor Jeff Pettett and other Councillors representing the Ku-ring-gai community.

Ku-ring-gai's celebration of indigenous culture began on Sorry Day Wednesday 26 May and concluded at the end of NAIDOC Week on 10 July. The Gai-mariagal Festival was founded 22 years ago and aims to raise awareness of First Nations people living in the northern Sydney region.

The Warakirri Dining Experience at the Wildflower Garden's Caley's Pavilion was a festival highlight, immersing guests in traditional food and cultural rituals. Other Gai-mariagal Festival events included art workshops at the Ku-ring-gai Art Centre in Roseville with indigenous artist Jude Jarrett plus a message stick weaving workshop for children.

The new Ku-ring-gai Arts & Cultural Festival took place between June and July 2022 featuring exhibitions, children's theatre performances, art and photography workshops and film screenings. Highlights included:

- ◆ Performances by the Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra and Ku-ring-gai Youth Orchestra.
- ◆ Social commentator and media personality Jane Caro discussing her book *The Mother*.
- ◆ Two nature photography workshops with acclaimed Sydney Morning Herald photographer Wolter Peeters.
- ◆ Performances of the Chinese-Australian play *The Red Dust* by Marian Street Theatre for Young People.
- ◆ An exhibition of contemporary works looking at Australia's landscapes at the KAB Gallery in Pymble.

The events team was successful in gaining additional grant funding from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment of \$15000 from their Summer Night Fund. The grant is to deliver free activations or events that enliven public spaces in the evening or at night. The funds were to have been used to deliver two events in Turrumurra on Friday 18 March and Friday 8 April at Lindfield Village Green. However bad weather prevented both these events from taking place.

Ku-ring-gai Arts Centre

The Art Centre worked in partnership with the Council's events team to deliver activities for the Gai-mariagal Festival and Ku-ring-gai Arts & Culture Festival.

Gai-mariagal Festival events included art workshops at the Ku-ring-gai Art Centre in Roseville with indigenous artists Jude Jarrett, Haley Pigrim and Maddison Gibbs, plus a message stick weaving workshop for children. The Centre hosted an exhibition called *The Arrangement* as part of the Ku-ring-gai Arts & Culture Festival.

During April and July the Centre offered a variety of classes to children as part of its school holiday program, including pottery, jewellery making, painting, drawing and guitar classes.

Libraries

Library staff carried out a major systems upgrade to streamline processing times during this period. Ku-ring-gai libraries hosted a series of craft and zine making workshops as well as coding workshops, puzzles and challenges for young readers as part of its April and July school holiday programs. During the Ku-ring-gai Arts & Culture Festival held between June and July, the library hosted social commentator and author Jane Caro discussing her latest book called *The Mother*, as well as a cryptic crosswords workshop with puzzle specialist Liam Runnells. Other events hosted by the library as part of the Festival include a free screening of the indigenous coming-of-age movie *In My Blood It Runs*, as well as a talk about the Indian art form of metal casting

called dokra. The final library event for the Festival is an author talk with international crime writer Michael Robotham.

Recreation

Consultation began in June 2022 on the Recreation Needs Study. The study will help the Council assess the community's recreational needs over the next decade and how to manage future demand.

The Recreation Needs Study will look at both structured and unstructured recreation. 'Structured' recreation includes team based and organised sports or leisure activities, with 'unstructured' recreation including activities such as walking, running and mountain biking. Ku-ring-gai has one of the largest areas of recreational space in northern Sydney, with around 300 hectares devoted to sporting spaces such as ovals, playgrounds, golf courses and tennis courts. A further 1100 hectares is identified as bushland and open space for recreational activities such as bushwalking.

Consultation began with an online survey between June and July. Other consultation activities in coming months include:

- ◆ Over 160 stakeholder surveys to schools club/associations, personal trainers, tennis coaches, casual hirers and permanent hirers of Council facilities.
- ◆ An independent telephone survey with randomly selected Ku-ring-gai households which includes questions about children and young people under 18 within households
- ◆ Research into membership and participation trends for all sporting codes and recreational activities



A special Natureplay program at the Wildflower Garden as part of the Gai-Mariagal Festival

- ◆ Demographic analysis using newly released 2021 Census data and population forecasts
- ◆ An audit and mapping of all public open spaces, recreational and sporting facilities within and adjoining Ku-ring-gai
- ◆ Benchmarking needs against industry standards and participation trends
- ◆ Interviews with recreational and sporting associations and community groups
- ◆ Focus groups with residents drawn from a broad demographic in Ku-ring-gai.

Samuel King Oval at Bobbin Head Road Turramurra is undergoing extensive renovations, with wet weather delaying the anticipated completion date. The oval will be regraded and returfed with the addition of a new synthetic cricket wicket. The oval will also have new irrigation and drainage systems installed, allowing recycled water harvested from the drainage system to be used. A new amenities building will replace the former brick building. Work is expected to finish before the start of the 2022 cricket season.

The Active Ku-ring-gai winter program opened for bookings during this period. Active Ku-ring-gai offers residents low-cost physical activities suitable for all ages and fitness levels. Activities and sports on offer range from yoga and Tai Chi to tennis, junior golf and outdoor fitness classes.

The Ku-ring-gai Sports Forum returned in June 2022 after a two year break during the pandemic. The forum's aim is for Ku-ring-gai's sporting groups and associations to meet Council staff and get updates on major projects and other sporting matters.

Around 50 sports representatives attended on behalf of the

four football codes, netball, cricket, baseball, basketball, Oztag, archery and school sports. A guest speaker from the NSW Office of Sport discussed the state government's grant program for sporting groups, as well as other initiatives. Council staff presented information on the new booking system, sportsfield upgrades and policies affecting sports that are under review.

The installation of an all-weather surface for Norman Griffiths Oval was approved to go ahead by Council at its February 2022 meeting. A concept plan for the works has been finalised which incorporates all elements of the project. The detailed design of the project has also been finalised with the aim to start construction later this year.



School holiday Junior Golf Clinic

THEME 2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Working together as a community to protect and enhance our natural environment and resources



Ku-ring-gai aims to reach net zero by 2040

Environmental Levy

In April Ku-ring-gai Council offered \$50,000 in grants for environmental and sustainability projects in the local area. The grants are a key part of supporting community-based projects in local neighbourhoods and are funded by Ku-ring-gai's environmental levy.

Grants of up to \$5000 are offered for eligible projects that strengthen community engagement with the natural environment, improve the condition of bushland, conserve native wildlife and plants or target waste reuse and recycling.

Projects may be ongoing or be new initiatives that require funding to get off the ground. The environmental grants will be awarded by August 2022 and must be expended by June 2023.

Climate change

Work continued on engaging Ku-ring-gai to become a Net Zero Community and reduce community greenhouse gas emissions to zero by the year 2040.

The action plan introduces community-wide targets and for the Council, increased efforts to reduce emissions through fleet vehicles, street lights and buildings with the following targets:

- ◆ Net zero emissions by 2040, or earlier and a 50% reduction by 2030.
- ◆ Achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030 or earlier.
- ◆ A 100% reduction in fleet vehicle emissions by 2040.

As part of its net zero commitment, Ku-ring-gai signed an agreement with Zen Energy in February 2022 to have its electricity needs met by 100% renewable energy starting in July.



Mayor Jeff Pettett and the students of Lindfield East Public School

Participating councils in the agreement are Bayside, Burwood, Campbelltown, Canada Bay, Canterbury-Bankstown, Fairfield, Georges River, Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Inner West, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Liverpool, Mosman, North Sydney, Parramatta, Port Stephens, Randwick, Ryde, Singleton, Sutherland, Tamworth, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra.

Electricity for the participating councils will include generation by the Moree, Hillston and Nevertire solar farms in regional NSW.

Around 100 local residents have signed up to become 'Net Zero Champions', spreading the word in the community about ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions at home. Two webinars were held during this period to further engage residents on the local net zero campaign.

Water

The Environmental Levy continued to provide funds during this period for residents to claim up to \$1000 for new rainwater tanks, rain gardens and green roofs. The rebates also apply to permeable surfaces (for driveways, patios and pool decks) and plumbing connections for rainwater tanks.

The draft Water Sensitive City Policy and Strategy was adopted by Council following community consultation. The policy and strategy were developed to respond to the likely impacts on local waterways from increasing urban density, stormwater pollution, flooding and changes in climate.

In May community consultation was undertaken on the draft Middle Harbour - Southern Catchments Flood Study. The draft study was on public exhibition and community information sessions were held with Council staff. The study is expected to be finalised later in 2022.

Community education

Four local schools – Holy Family Catholic, West Pymble Public, Lindfield East Public and Sir Eric Woodward School - installed new solar power systems through the Solar My School program during this period.

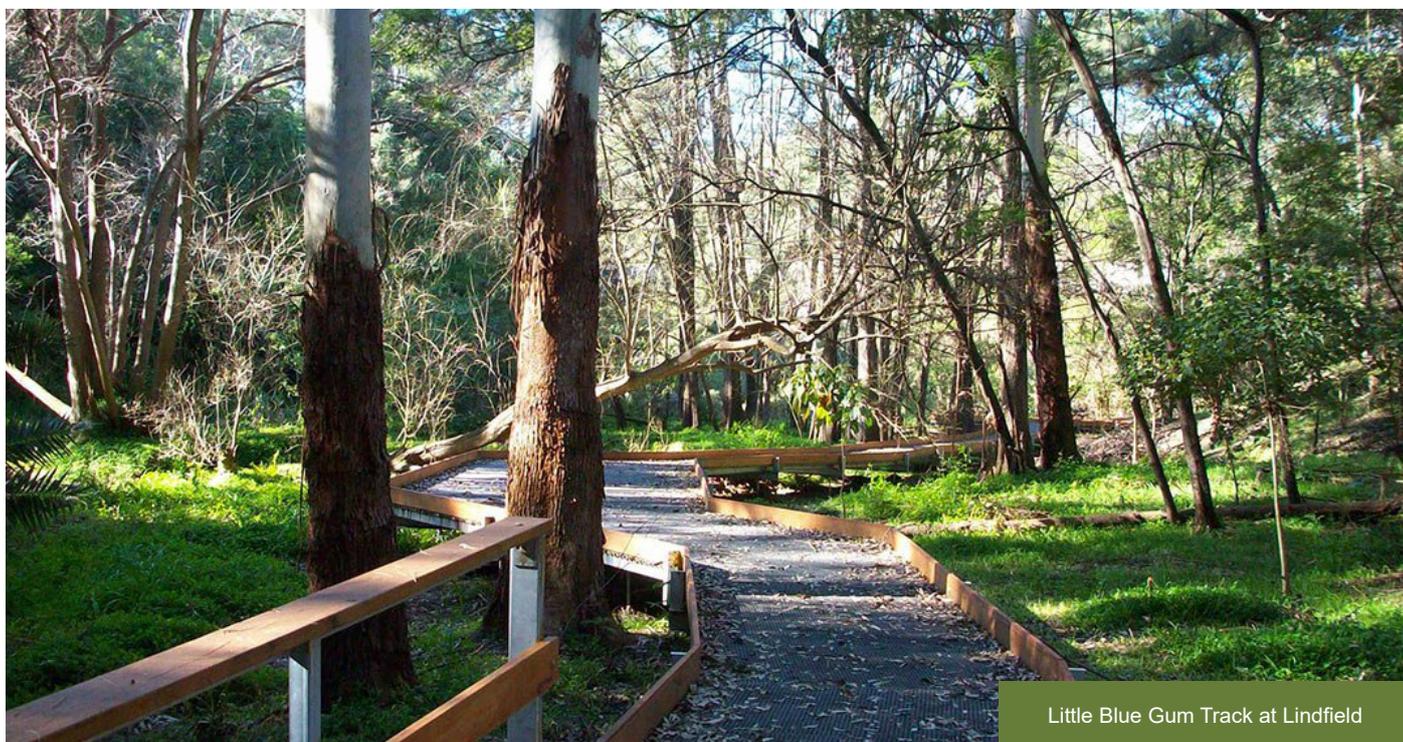
Solar My School is a Council-run initiative helping local schools reduce energy bills and cut emissions with solar power. The Solar My School program was founded in 2016 by Waverley, Woollahra and Randwick Councils and is now licensed to other councils and organisations to support solar in schools.

With an average payback of less than a year, the schools solar power systems will deliver total annual savings of over \$33,000 as well as lowering their greenhouse gas emissions.

The *Love Your Trees* photo competition ran for four weeks between June and July 2022. *Love Your Trees* aimed to raise awareness of Ku-ring-gai's 'urban forest' and the importance of retaining mature native trees. The photo competition coincided with the public exhibition of the Council's draft Urban Forest Strategy.

The *Love Your Trees* competition had two age categories, for photographers aged 6 to 15 years and for those aged 15 years and older. One winner from each age group was randomly drawn and can choose either a \$200 native plant voucher for the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden Nursery or a \$200 voucher for the Treetops high ropes adventure at St Ives Showground.

Council is encouraging residents to turn nature strips into verge gardens to attract bees and native animals. The Urban Forest Policy was adopted last year which provides an action plan to protect the tree canopy and promote biodiversity in the local area.



Little Blue Gum Track at Lindfield

Guidelines were produced during this period for local residents on how to create verge gardens on public land such as nature strips. The guidelines recommend a mix of native trees, shrubs, grasses and groundcovers well suited to local conditions and reaching a height of below 1 metre.

The Council actively promoted Plastic Free July in 2022 through a series of free webinars aimed at educating residents on reducing plastic waste and promoting the policy of eliminating single use plastics from community events.

During this period the Council also engaged a new provider for the recycling of mobile phones to increase potential uptake by residents.

Waste

More local schools have joined the Council's initiative Worn Up to reduce clothing waste by recycling unwanted school uniforms into usable products. The Council joined the Worn Up project in response to the results of a waste audit carried out in Ku-ring-gai last year.

Worn Up works by installing a 'pod' at each participating school for unwanted uniform items. When the pod becomes full uniforms are collected and either recycled for further wear or turned into products including dog beds and even school desks.

The Council actively promoted this year's Clean Up Australia Day held in early March.

Expressions of interest were sought from unit dwellers to assess the viability of composting food waste in apartment buildings. During the trial composting bins or worm farms will be installed in up to 20 unit buildings. Outcomes from the three-month trial will be assessed to see whether the trial can

be expanded.

A free drop off collection service for unwanted clothing and linen was held in May at St Ives Showground on behalf of NSROC councils. Nearly 30 tonnes of unwanted clothing and linen was collected for recycling and around 750 residents from across northern Sydney took part.

St Vincent De Paul received around 15 tonnes of unwanted clothing, most of which will be sold through its chain of op shops. The remainder will be converted into cleaning products sold by the charity. The textile recovery business BlockTexx collected around 14 tonnes of clothing and linen to recycle in packaging and building materials.

The clothing and linen drop off was funded by the Environmental Protection Authority's Waste Less Recycle More program. It was coordinated by Ku-ring-gai Council on behalf of the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC).

Another trial being launched in July is for the collection of unwanted clothing and linen from selected apartment buildings.

During adverse weather conditions in March, some delays to waste collections were experienced in a few locations due to fallen powerlines and trees. Customers were advised via the website and social media.

Trees

During the reporting period a community-wide education campaign on the value of Ku-ring-gai's trees continued.

The campaign is being progressively rolled out and includes:

- ◆ Advice on how to manage trees on private property in the Ku-ring-gai Update newsletter issued in the July rates notice

- ◆ A leaflet letter boxed to elderly residents warning of the dangers of using unlicensed tree loppers
- ◆ Translated information on the Council's website about trees on private land
- ◆ A video by the Mayor on the Council's social media sites and a second video on the Envirotube site discussing the value of trees.

The draft Urban Forest Strategy was adopted by Council during this period. The term urban forest is used to describe the ecosystem containing trees and plants in an urban environment, Urban forest also includes the soil, water and native animals that sustain this ecosystem, as well as vegetation in public and private ownership.

During this period the Council was awarded a \$50,000 grant to improve its knowledge and management of local trees. The grant was announced last month as part of a \$1.65 million package of funding given to 28 NSW councils under the Greener Neighbourhoods grant program. The program aims to create cooler and shadier neighbourhoods to combat the effects of high temperatures caused by climate change.

Ku-ring-gai Council will use the \$50,000 grant to help create a comprehensive inventory of local trees on public land in priority areas. Aerial photography and field assessments will provide data for location mapping of existing trees. The grant is the first step towards the creation of tree inventory on Council managed land across Ku-ring-gai, excluding bushland.



THEME 3 PLACES, SPACES & INFRASTRUCTURE



A range of well planned, clean and safe neighbourhoods and public spaces designed with a strong sense of identity and place



Artist's impression of Lindfield Village Hub

Lindfield Village Hub

A Request for Detailed Proposals (RFDP), which seeks firm commercial offers and building designs from the market, was issued during this period. Shortlisted bidders from the previous round of bids were invited to submit proposals, which are due in July 2022.

Once proposals have been submitted and evaluated, Council expects to be in a position to either enter into a contract or identify a party with which to undertake exclusive negotiations before entering into a contract.

The NSW Government approved the planning proposal for the Hub project, locking in community facilities as part of the development. The planning proposal was given the green light by the NSW Department of Planning & Environment on 28 March 2022 as an amendment to the Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

It means that the community facilities proposed by the Council are now confirmed as part of any Hub development.

Lindfield Village Green

The Lindfield Village Green was officially opened on 14 February 2022. Car parking in both the commuter and the general parking area is currently available free of charge while boom gates and charging infrastructure are being installed.

The café and outdoor dining facilities opened in May 2022. Two Enliven Ku-ring-gai events due to be held at the Green during this period have had to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

Council is consulting the local community about planned upgrades to Lindfield Avenue and Tryon Road to complement the Village Green.

The aim is to make Lindfield Avenue and Tryon Road more attractive and friendly to pedestrians. This could be achieved through a series of pedestrian crossings and wider paved footpaths. New seating and streetlights are planned, as well as undergrounding powerlines and creating parking bays along both streets, including one near St Albans Church.

A new intersection with traffic lights could be installed at Tryon Road and Lindfield Avenue, to slow down vehicles and make travel safer in the area for motorists and pedestrians. Bus stops will be relocated to accommodate the new intersection.



The fresh produce market at St Ives Showground

Consultation was conducted throughout June, including a community information session held on site.

Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden

The Wildflower Garden has fully reopened with a program of April and July school holiday activities, plus regular educational programs for young children and primary age students.

Environmental education programs include Nature Play, school visits, Junior Rangers and Wild Birthdays.

To celebrate Seniors Week in March, the Garden hosted walks and talks for older residents. As part of the Ku-ring-gai Arts & Culture Festival, two nature photography workshops with acclaimed Sydney Morning Herald photographer Wolter Peeters were held at the Garden in June.

The Garden also held a special nature play session delivered by Aunty Susan & Aunty Caroline, the co chairs of the Gai-mariagal Festival. Indigenous group Stones & Bones hosted a stone axe making workshop for children aged 8-12 years and a guided bushwalk with Karen Smith from the Aboriginal Heritage Office was also held.

In June and July the Council sought expressions of interest to create murals at the Wildflower Garden and St Ives Showground as part of its new public art program.

Two artists are sought to create the murals between August and September 2022, to celebrate the Showground and Wildflower Garden's connection with the natural environment.

A design concept showing connections to the natural environment for both sites will form part of applications, with commissions awarded by a panel of judges after submissions closed in mid July.

The murals will be painted on an amenities block near the Senses Track at the Wildflower Garden and on two amenities blocks located at the eastern side of St Ives Showground. The winning artists will be paid \$6000 for the Wildflower Garden mural and \$9000 for the Showground murals.

St Ives Showground

Since June 2022, a farmers market is at the Showground every Saturday between 8am and 2pm. The Organic Food Markets organisation is aiming to create an open-air marketplace supplying certified organic food and artisan gourmet produce, as well as fresh fruit and vegetables, freshly baked bread and patisserie goods, seasonal produce from farmers, salami, cheeses, smoked salmon and other hard-to-find delicacies such as Australian truffles. The market will also offer a choice of fashion, homewares, plants and sustainable and healthy products, including those from fair trade suppliers.

The COVID drive-in PCR clinic at the Showground has provided revenue for Council during this period, with testing ongoing.

Planning is in the final stages for the new Cultural and Environmental Education Centre at the Showground. The Centre building and surrounds will facilitate community workshops, seminars, functions and events for the community. It will also connect with the range of programs currently on offer at the neighbouring Wildflower Garden.

Planning

In April Council considered the budget and Delivery Program for 2022-2023. These outlined a wide-ranging program of improvements and capital works set to start from July 2022.

The report highlighted the need to consider asset sales as a means of financing some larger projects such as the Marian Street Theatre upgrade. The budget also included \$22 million in loan funding for the Marian Street Theatre upgrade to bridge the gap until assets are sold.

The revised 10-year Community Strategic Plan for Ku-ring-gai was adopted at the June Council meeting following extensive consultation with the community. Council also adopted a Long Term Financial Strategy, four-year Delivery Program and Operational Plan for 2022/23. These detail the services, projects and programs that we will deliver towards the



objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

Revitalising local centres and ensuring facilities meet the needs of Ku-ring-gai's growing and changing population will be a focus for 2022-2023, with the following projects planned:

- ◆ completing detailed design and tender documentation for the renewal of Marian Street Theatre
- ◆ finalising the procurement process with prospective development partners for the Lindfield Village Hub
- ◆ reviewing the masterplan for the Turramurra Hub project
- ◆ completing the new youth precinct at St Ives Village Green
- ◆ improving Robert Pymble Park and surrounding streetscapes
- ◆ preparing designs for improvements of Roseville and St Ives local centres
- ◆ preparing a masterplan for the St Ives Showground precinct
- ◆ completing improvements at Gordon local centre
- ◆ preparing designs for improved streetscaping at Lindfield local centre

During this period Councillors voted to adopt a recommendation that all future budgets for new footpaths be increased to \$1.25 million, until every street in Ku-ring-gai has at least one footpath. Funding for the new footpaths will come from the overall footpath budget.

In July 2022 the draft St Ives Public Domain Plan went on public exhibition. The plan proposes upgrades to streets in central St Ives to help improve pedestrian safety, recreation for local residents and opportunities for local businesses and shoppers. The Plan is on public exhibition until mid August.

Heritage

In April 2022 the Council voted to place Interim Heritage Orders on 64 Rosebery Rd, Killara and 64 St Johns Avenue Gordon. These were approved by the NSW Government at the end of April.

The Ku-ring-gai Heritage Festival took place between April and May with walks, talks, tours and other events designed to bring local history to life.

The Festival aims to provide local residents with a deeper understanding of Ku-ring-gai's history, from its connection with indigenous culture and the first European settlers in the area

through to the architecture and fashions of the 20th century.

Supported by community organisations and businesses, the Ku-ring-gai Heritage Festival coincides with the Australian Heritage Festival hosted by The National Trust.

This year's Festival included photo exhibitions, open homes, historical talks, walking tours, fashion exhibitions and an architectural drawing workshop.

Also between April and May, applications for grants of between \$1000 and \$5000 were open to owners of heritage properties in Ku-ring-gai.

The grants were for heritage property projects to be carried out in the 2022-2023 financial year. Grants are allocated on a dollar for dollar basis with a minimum of \$1000 and up to a maximum of \$5000. This means that if the maximum funding were granted, Council would contribute \$5000 and the applicant \$5000.

Examples of projects that could qualify for funding include:

- ◆ Repair or replacement of original roof slates or tiles.
- ◆ Repointing of brickwork or masonry.
- ◆ Repairing decorative ceilings or pressed metal work.
- ◆ Conservation of original fireplaces.
- ◆ Conserving or repairing original timber detailing.

Public spaces

The Council received funding through the NSW Government's Greater Sydney Sports Facility Fund to upgrade the existing amenities building at Turramurra Memorial Park. Work was completed in March 2022 and the pavilion officially opened by Mayor Jeff Pettett on 26 March.

The new building has accessible male/female change-rooms, showers and toilets, a covered outdoor space, storage areas and a kitchen/BBQ space.

The popular Fox Valley Road shopping strip in Wahroonga is being upgraded to make the shopping centre more pedestrian friendly. During this period tenders were called for the upgrade to the shopping centre, which will be achieved through widened footpaths, new street furniture and landscaping. Other work proposed includes new paving and bike parking, while parking will be reconfigured to allow for outdoor dining



outside the front of cafes and shops.

Work began in May on converting St Johns Avenue and the Henry Street area in Gordon into a pedestrianised area with a focus on outdoor dining. Features include wider footpaths, outdoor dining, new pavements, street furniture and tree planting. Heritage Square is being made more accessible and better integrated into the St Johns Avenue area.

Consultation took place on streetscaping improvements to the Pacific Highway/ Fitzsimons Lane/ Merriwa Street/ Ridge Street area of Gordon. Residents and business owners were asked their opinion of a concept plan for the area.

During this period the Council was successful in gaining a \$500,000 grant through the NSW Government's Shares Spaces program. Initially the grant was to be used for activating the Hill Street area in Roseville. However due to significant opposition from local businesses, Turramurra has been identified instead as a potential location for streetscape improvements. Ideas for activating central Turramurra have been submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and are awaiting approval.

Parks

In April 2022 the community were asked their views on the future use of The Glade in Wahroonga. Located close to Abbotsleigh senior campus, The Glade contains a sportsfield with a turf cricket wicket, practice nets, tennis courts and a half basketball court. It also has a play area bordered by bushland.

The first step for the upgrade is to develop a landscape masterplan using community feedback. Landscape masterplans guide improvements to and the use of parks and are prepared with community consultation from the initial design through to the completed plan.

The plan will be adopted by Council to implement when funding becomes available. Masterplans usually prioritise improvements over a 10 to 15 year period.

The public were invited to complete a survey asking about the positive and negative aspects of the park and ideas for improvements. A draft masterplan will be prepared for further public comment later in 2022.

Concept plans for a new park in Stanley Street St Ives were made public in March, including two potential designs for the new park. The current Bedes Forest will increase in size from 5000m² to 8000m². It follows a period of consultation last year, when the community gave their ideas on what they would like to see in the new park.

The Stanley Street area to the east of St Ives centre has been identified as a high priority area, due to the growth in young families living there. Due to its heavily wooded nature Bedes Forest's use as a park for recreation by families is limited. The Council has found the solution by combining Bedes Forest with a new park area created through the acquisition of three private properties in Stanley Street.

Playgrounds

New playgrounds were planned during this period and community consultation conducted on proposed designs.

Lorraine Taylor Reserve in St Ives is set to get a new playground after consultation on the design between June and July. Earlier this year the former Athena Avenue Reserve gained a new name in honour of a much loved local volunteer. Lorraine Taylor Reserve is classed as a local playground and will be designed to attract residents who live within walking distance.

A concept design for the Eldinhope Green playground was on public exhibition for feedback between May and June. Eldinhope Green is located in Morris Avenue Wahroonga.

Nature play elements and accessibility have been incorporated into the design and play equipment will be for all abilities and ages. Features include a balance beam, tower with slide and a spinning net; picnic settings, accessible seating and a bike rack; new drainage; an accessible path from Morris Avenue and an extra large parking space.



Bedes Forest will be expanded to provide more open space in St Ives

Work began on upgrades to the Nar-rang Reserve playground in Gordon. Improvements include a new picnic shelter and seating; a cubby house and a nature play area which will be completed later this year.

During this period work continued on an upgrade to Warrimoo Oval at St Ives. New features include repurposing the existing court for netball and basketball; a new picnic shelter and sandstone seating; outdoor fitness equipment; improvements to the existing toilet block to make them accessible; a new climbing frame and other play equipment. Work is expected to finish by September, weather permitting.



The water feature at Lindfield Village Green

THEME 4 ACCESS, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT



Access and connection to, from and within Ku-ring-gai provides safe, reliable and affordable public and private travel, transport and infrastructure



Roads

During this period Bobbin Head Road at Turramurra was upgraded between Hartley Close and Curagul Road. This will improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians using Bobbin Head Road at North Turramurra.

The project included the following work:

- ◆ Road widening for a separated parking lane along the western side, a separated bicycle lane in both directions, parking bays along the eastern side, formalised bus bays and improved line marking and signage.
- ◆ Installation of kerb and gutter along both sides of this section of road.
- ◆ New drainage as required.
- ◆ A pedestrian refuge and footpath connecting to the North Turramurra Recreation Area.
- ◆ Reconstruction of the road surface.

Parking

The underground car park at the Village Green opened in February 2022 with a total of 241 parking spaces located on three levels under the Green. 105 spaces are dedicated to commuter parking and 136 spaces are for the general public. The entrance to the car park is in Milray Street.

Once the installation of signage and boom gates is completed, two hour car parking in the general parking area is available free of charge. After two hours charges will apply based on

a meter system. Commuter parking is charged to customers Opal cards.

There are electric vehicle charging stations on Level 2 and Level 3 of the car park, with Level 3 charging stations reserved for commuters.

Funding for the commuter car parking was supplied by Transport for NSW under an agreement reached between the Council and the NSW Government.

A formalised car parking area was completed at Comenarra Reserve Turramurra during this period. The car park now accommodates around 30 vehicles through the inclusion of line marking and spacers, taking the pressure off on street parking in surrounding streets.

Pedestrians

Works are progressing along Wade Lane up to Park Avenue and over to Werona Avenue in Gordon. This will make the Gordon station precinct more pedestrian-friendly, safer and attractive. Improvements include widened footpaths for terraced outdoor dining with landscaping in the terraced areas.

Landings, handrails and seating will assist those with reduced mobility. The work also includes raised pedestrian crossings at Clipsham Lane, Henry Street and Wade Lane and improvements to the park, lighting and kiss and ride areas.

In its 2022-2023 budget, the Council had originally earmarked \$537,000 to be spent on building new footpaths starting in July 2022. An overall maintenance budget for footpaths was set at \$5.2 million.



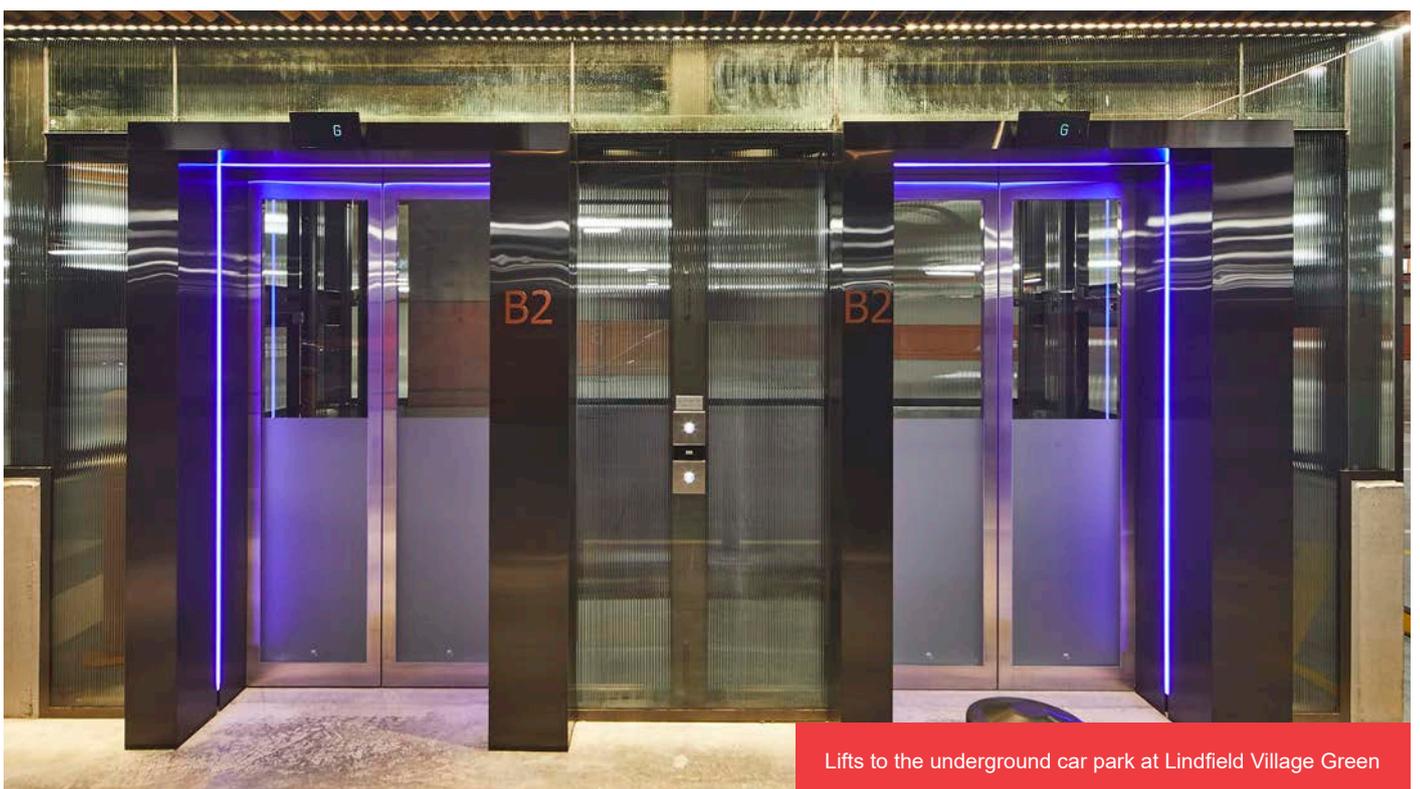
The Council voted to adopt a recommendation that all future budgets for new footpaths be increased to \$1.25 million, until every street in Ku-ring-gai has at least one footpath. Funding for the new footpaths will come from the overall footpath budget.

Some station closures are taking place on weekends to allow work to take place, as well as at night.

Council staff are liaising with TfNSW to ensure the public are kept informed on the progress of upgrades and any closures affecting stations.

Public transport

TfNSW are continuing a large scale program of improvements to various railway stations in Ku-ring-gai with the goal of increasing accessibility. Stations where work is taking place include Wahroonga, Roseville, Pymble and Warrawee.



THEME 5 LOCAL ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT



Creating economic employment opportunities through vital, attractive centres, business innovation and technology



Business

A four hour workshop on digital marketing was held in March 2022 coordinated by Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby Councils and the Hornsby Chamber of Commerce. The workshop was part of a coordinated push to help small business recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Around 300 business owners attended.

Ku-ring-gai Council was the first council in Sydney to get behind this year's national campaign to support local businesses during COVID-19 called Go Local First. The partnership with the Council for Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) ran until June 2022. The Go Local First campaign gives free promotional assistance to small businesses and encourages residents to preference local businesses when purchasing goods and services.

A drop-in advice service for local small businesses is being offered every month at the Council Chambers, starting on Tuesday 12 July. The free advisory service is being hosted by Ku-ring-gai Council in partnership with Service NSW.

On the second Tuesday of every month a Service NSW representative will be at the Council Chambers between 10am and 2pm to meet with local business owners.

Called the Business Concierge service, the aim is to provide face-to-face support for small business owners. The service will cover a range of topics including:

- ◆ starting a business and getting help to grow it;
- ◆ applying for funding such as grants;
- ◆ help with getting licences;
- ◆ working with councils and understanding local regulations;
- ◆ connecting to other business - related advisory services;
- ◆ support for business through the Service NSW Business Connect program.

The service is free and no appointment is needed. Business owners wishing to use the service should come to the Council's Customer Service Centre at 818 Pacific Highway Gordon between 10am and 2pm on the second Tuesday of each month.

The Council assisted the NSW Government in promoting the public exhibition of changes to planning laws to create employment zones.

The changes mean streamlining existing business and industrial zones in local planning schemes by incorporating them into the new employment zones. The exhibition was held on the Department's planning portal and closed on 12 July 2022.

Technology

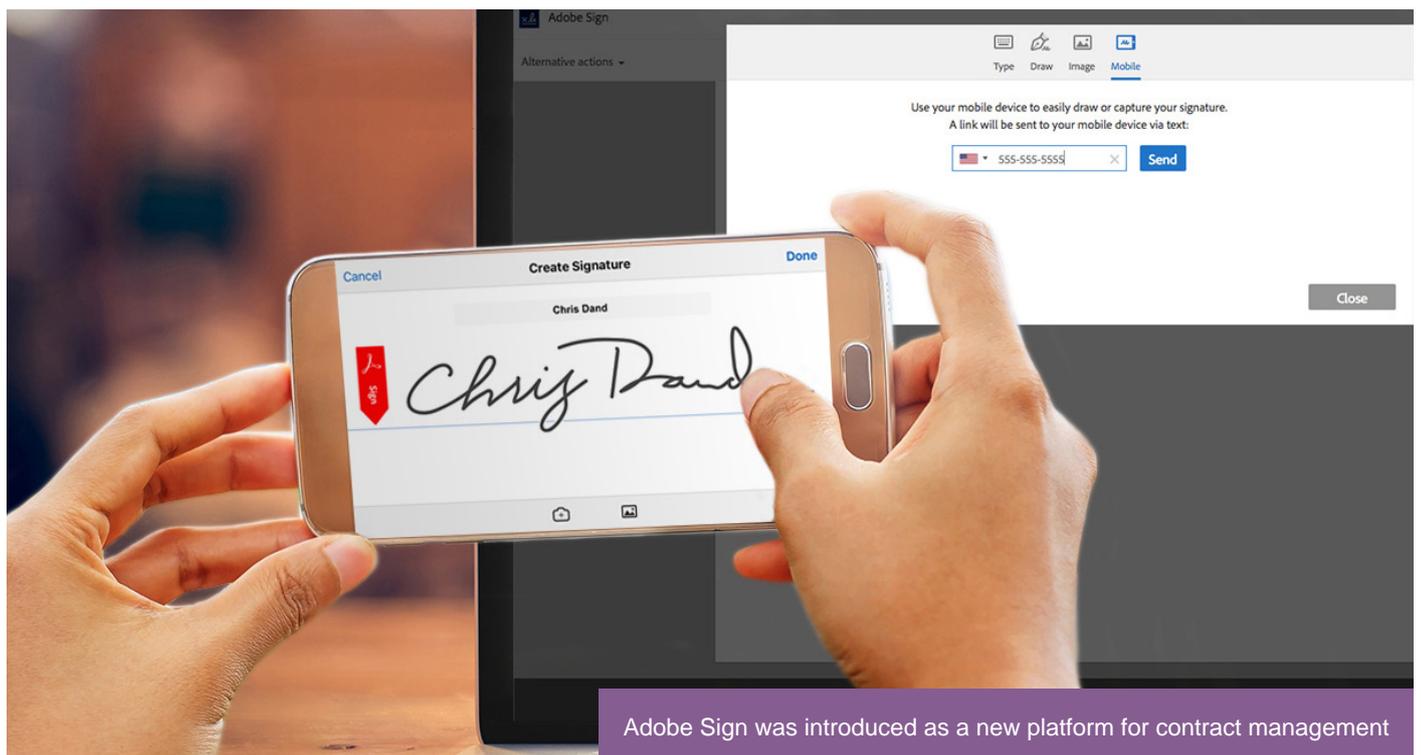
During this period some significant upgrades to the Council's systems were planned and implemented.

Technology One – the corporate reporting, purchasing, rating and financial system for the Council - was moved to a cloud hosted platform. In addition, the Council's Remote Desktop Services platform was upgraded. This upgrade eliminates the need to log in to separate servers and will improve connectivity and load balancing for remote working.

Software upgrades for Office 365 and the Teams online meeting platform were initiated. Adobe Sign was introduced as a new platform for contract management, allowing the use of electronic signatures and providing a method of tracking any changes or variations to agreements and contracts.

To improve the security of Council systems the firewall was upgraded and multi-factor authentication was introduced for all staff when logging into Council systems from devices such as phones and laptops.

A new online booking system called Bookable was implemented to improve the customer experience when booking events and facilities such as tennis courts and community halls.



Adobe Sign was introduced as a new platform for contract management

THEME 6 LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Ku-ring-gai is well led, managed and supported by ethical organisations which deliver projects and services to the community by listening, advocating and responding to their needs



Council staff clean up damage after the July floods

Emergency management

Monthly Public Forums were reinstated in the Council Chambers in March 2022 following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions by the NSW Government.

NSW Health continued its COVID-19 testing clinic at St Ives Showground during this period. Council has assisted in the promotion of this service through electronic signage and regular e-news.

Ku-ring-gai experienced two significant adverse weather events in late March and early April and again in July, leading to widespread damage and flooding.

During the weather events Council's Operations staff worked around the clock along with SES volunteers to manage fallen trees on public and private property, repair potholes and manage minor landslips.

As a result, some capital works projects scheduled to finish earlier in 2022 have been delayed until later in the year.

The public golf courses at Gordon and Turramurra were particularly hard hit by these weather events and were forced to close for extended periods of time.

The Council voted unanimously at its March meeting to donate \$5000 to three charities; GIVIT, the Salvation Army and the Australian Red Cross. The Council voted to donate \$3000 to the charity GIVIT, which is recommended by the NSW Government as it does not charge administrative fees. The

Australian Red Cross will receive \$1000 and the Salvation Army will also receive \$1000.

The Council's Crisis Management Team continued to meet regularly to oversee emergency management matters and manage the ongoing risks posed by COVID-19. Free flu and COVID-19 booster shots were administered to Council staff during this period to minimise the risks of absenteeism through illness.

Community

In February 2022 the Council voted to approve the assistance package to organisations helping the Ku-ring-gai community. This year's community grants were awarded in three categories: small equipment, community development programs and arts & cultural programs, with 44 applications recommended for funding.

A total of \$98,514 was distributed before June, with funding for residents with a disability and support for young people considered at risk, as well as camping equipment for scouts and guides and IT equipment for volunteer groups. Ku-ring-gai's Jewish community will receive funds for outreach work and the Support Marian Street Theatre group also benefits from this year's grant funding.

Several church groups and pre-schools have been beneficiaries of grants this year to purchase much needed resources and in recognition of their constraints in raising funds during the pandemic.

In July the Council promoted the Shared Our Space scheme on behalf of the NSW Government. A number of schools in Ku-ring-gai are participating in the Share Our Space program during the school holidays. The program provides an opportunity for community members to use the school's outdoor facilities during holidays for sports and recreation to cultural events and celebrations.

The NSW Government also sought Council's assistance to promote the Sydney North Health Network grant scheme. The scheme is awarding grants up to \$10,000 to community groups that are willing to provide grassroots activities between August 2022 and June 2023 to support recovery through social connectedness, wellbeing and healing. The grants are aimed at communities that have been affected by recent weather events in 2022.

In May 2022 community representatives were sought for an inaugural Status of Women committee, which will advise the Council on issues affecting women in the local area.

The Committee's primary role will be to provide advice, advocate and raise awareness of issues that affect women in Ku-ring-gai. It will also identify and participate in projects promoting inclusiveness for local women and advise the Council on opportunities and policies affecting women in the community.



Community engagement

During this period the Council increased the frequency of the Ku-ring-gai e-news from monthly to fortnightly and issued 53 media releases.

Over 15,000 residents now subscribe to the Ku-ring-gai e-news, a 6.4% increase in the last 12 months. This is in addition to the numbers of subscribers to the following e-news:

Sustainability	4865
Art Centre	2898
Vacation Care	1734
Business connections	1630
Activate Lindfield	1618
Activate Turramurra	1085
Youth	770
Your Say	603
Volunteer for nature	561

The Council's numerous social media sites followers continued steadily growing during this period. Ku-ring-gai Council's Facebook page currently has over 14,500 followers which is a 14.7% increase in the last 12 months.

Ku-ring-gai Council Facebook	14,563
Ku-ring-gai Council Twitter	3452
Ku-ring-gai Council Instagram	3643
Ku-ring-gai Council Nextdoor	9772
Ku-ring-gai Council LinkedIn	3050
Mayor Facebook	237
Loving Living Facebook	5346
Art Centre Facebook	1835
Ku-ring-gai Library Facebook	1678
Wildflower Garden Facebook	5940
St Ives Showground Facebook	2383
Ku-ring-gai Youth	893
Loving Living Twitter	715
Wildflower Garden Instagram	684
Ku-ring-gai Art Centre Instagram	78

During this period the following consultation projects were undertaken:

- ◆ Development of Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan - two phases of community engagement which included CALD/youth workshops, community workshops, an online information session, surveys and public exhibition of documents between February and June.
- ◆ Development of The Glade Landscape Masterplan – two phases of community engagement consisting of collecting community feedback about use and opinions on the site (March/April) and placing the draft masterplan on public exhibition in July.
- ◆ North Gordon Streetscape upgrades – exhibition of concept plan during May.
- ◆ Lindfield Avenue and Tryon Road Streetscape upgrades – exhibition of the concept plans including online feedback survey, submission forms, business meetings and a community information event on the site during May.
- ◆ Urban Forest Strategy – public exhibition of the draft Strategy took place in June.
- ◆ Concept designs for playground upgrades at Eldinhope Green in May and Lorraine Taylor Reserve in June.
- ◆ Bedes Forest – the second of three phases of community engagement took place between April and May seeking community feedback on concept options.

An independent benchmarking review was undertaken during this period on Council's customer service function. Ku-ring-gai was benchmarked against five other similar sized councils and was ranked as the best performing. A further customer satisfaction survey will be undertaken later this year.

