



A large gum on the Warrimoo Track at Bobbin Head by Johanna Sierraalta



A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT
DECEMBER 2017 – MAY 2018



A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Dear Councillors

Every six months we publish the General Manager's Report. This is a regular snapshot of operational milestones and other projects for your information and interest. This issue covers the period from December 2017 to May 2018.

Highlights of this period include:

- Ku-ring-gai's planning for areas of high bushfire evacuation risk received the tick of approval from the NSW Department of Planning & Environment.
- Council's compliance team discovered a major flaw in the latch system on popular swimming pool gates potentially affecting around 90,000 property owners in Australia, and leading to a voluntary recall by the Australia Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC).
- An independent staff survey reported heightened levels of satisfaction, particularly with the Council's organisational values and leadership.
- The Council oversaw the implementation and coordination of the new Ku-ring-gai Independent Hearing & Assessment Panel, with two meetings held so far.
- The successful prosecution of developer David Baynie for damaging a heritage property at Warrawee. Mr Baynie was fined \$70,000 and ordered to pay Council's costs.
- In-depth consultation continued with residents on refreshing the Community Strategic Plan, including information for Chinese and Korean speaking residents.
- The Council was awarded a \$1.36 million grant for works to improve driver safety on Lady Game Drive.

- Community membership of the Lindfield Village Hub Committee was decided.
- A new 6.25 hectare BioBanking site spanning several suburbs was placed on public exhibition for comment. BioBanking offsets the environmental impacts of new development by investing in other land for biodiversity conservation.
- The Council entered a three month trial with Ausgrid to change the way tree trimming under powerlines is administered. If the arrangement becomes permanent it will lead to hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings.
- The Litter Free Ku-ring-gai program was extended through a \$50,000 grant obtained from the NSW Government.
- In the wake of a NSROC report warning of a looming sports field shortage, consultation commenced on transforming three public tennis courts into multipurpose sports courts.

Details of these highlights and other items of interest during December to May 2018 are contained within.

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

John McKee
General Manager, Ku-ring-gai Council



A staff survey found heightened satisfaction with organisational values and leadership



Ku-ring-gai Council staff spearheaded a major investigation into an unsafe swimming pool gate latch, leading to a nationwide voluntary recall

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

During this period children and educators at the Thomas Carlyle Children's Centre celebrated Ku-ring-gai's increasingly diverse community with events and activities for Chinese New Year, Japanese Girls Day, Harmony Day, Australia Day and World Poetry Day.

Kitchen experiments, a tabletop war game and the movie *Treasure Planet* were just some of the activities on offer between 17 and 27 April. Local libraries at Lindfield, St Ives, Gordon and Turramurra threw open their doors to 5 to 12 year olds for some entertainment during the April school holidays. To celebrate Easter the annual Mayor's Easter egg hunt was held at Gordon Library's Secret Garden for children aged 4 to 8 years.

On Sunday 6 May the Council's annual free event aimed at families with young children will be held. Around 15,000 people are expected to enjoy this year's theme of *HeroFest*. Superheroes will roam St Ives Village Green throughout the day as well Nickelodeon's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles performing a live show on the main stage! Young comic fans get the

chance to dress up as their favourite character for a day, meet with heroes including Superman, Wonder Woman, Spiderman and Batman. Other entertainment included Music and dance performances, live shows and amusement rides.

The Ku-ring-gai Art Centre at Roseville is continuing its exciting and stimulating program of weekend and after-school classes for creative children aged 5-12 years. Classes included creative writing, pottery, guitar, drawing and painting.

Youth

A photo competition aimed at bringing the generations together was held during March and April to coincide with the Seniors Festival. The competition asked entrants to take a photo portrait of an older person in the community that describes 'a moment in their life'.

Entrants or their subjects had to be residents of Ku-ring-gai and photographers aged between 12 and 21 years, with eleven entries received.



A selection of photographs was exhibited at St Ives Shopping Village between 9 and 20 April and winners announced at the exhibition launch on 11 April. A 'People's Choice' award was also announced after the exhibition.

A low-cost course was held in February for 12-24 year olds wanting to learn the basics of music production. The four week introduction to recording and producing taught young residents how to record music in a professional recording studio at St Ives. Workshops were taught by a professional sound engineer.

The four week course includes a guide to how a recording studio works, how to make a backing track, overlaying different sounds and compiling a music mix.

A 'spooky' themed dance party for young people with special needs was held on Friday 13 April at St Ives Community Hall, with around 30 young people and their families and carers attending.

Seniors

The annual Seniors Festival was run over several weeks during March and April. More than 40 events were run in partnership between Council and local community groups. The Festival kicked off with the annual senior's morning tea concert at Turramurra Uniting Church. At this concert the Mayor presented awards to older residents to acknowledge their contribution to our community.

For a second year library staff invited local residents over the age of 60 to share their memories of their lives as part of the oral history project 'Tell Your Story'. The Tell Your Story project is designed to preserve 20th century history, highlight changes in our community and to give a lasting snapshot of these changes for future generations. Initial recording sessions took place during March and will be compiled later this year.

The Council's aged services team introduced Qi Gong classes for seniors in January. The classes, specially tailored for the over 60s, will be held at Gordon Library with tutor Kang Ja Lee who will focus attendees on gentle flowing movements and breathing techniques.





Events

Australia Day celebrations held at Bicentennial Park West Pymble on the morning of 26 January, followed by a pool party hosted by the YMCA at the Ku-ring-gai Fitness & Aquatic Centre. Around 4000 people attended the morning's event, beginning with a special presentation of Ku-ring-gai's Local Citizen of the Year Awards, which recognised some of the most outstanding local heroes.

Following the citizenship ceremony residents enjoyed live stage performances and an Australian reptile show. Other activities included face painting, thong throwing, sheep shearing, amusement rides and Australian-themed art and craft.

The Council's free Moonlight Movie was held in February at Turramurra Memorial Park featuring the family comedy *Boss Baby*. The park opened in the early evening so people could enjoy pizzas, ice cream and popcorn on sale at the venue. Others brought along their own picnics for a fun, thrifty outing.

Around 20,000 people are expected at St Ives Village Green in early May for this year's Festival on the Green, which has a super hero theme.

Free activities include temporary tattoos, mini train rides, and a futuristic 9D cinema. There will be an alleyway of market stalls with local artisans, community groups, children's activities and health and fitness booths. The Council will have an information stall there as well as two stalls from the sustainability area, including a demonstration 'green' house.

Two new events were successfully trialled at the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden during March. A twilight performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* was held outdoors in early March for over 300 people, performed by the Essential Theatre Company. Three free concerts were also on offer during the Sunday Sound Garden series in March, featuring country, soul and Latin American music. These were well attended with around 100 people enjoying music outdoors and food and drinks provided via Caley's Function Centre at the Wildflower Garden.



Art Centre

During the April school holidays Ku-ring-gai Art Centre hosted a full program of activities and classes for school-aged children, including pottery workshops, printmaking, jewellery making, sewing, drama, writing, and gardening.

Several exhibitions were held during the period including *Animalia* – an exhibition devoted to representations of animals – during February. Other exhibitions included *Gardens and the Senses*; a children's exhibition and the upcoming *Human Form* exhibition devoted to life drawing and other representations of the human body.

Libraries

Ku-ring-gai Library's four branches are more than just a place to borrow books. Library activities include a recipe swapping club, a multimedia review club, mah jong games, knitting groups, cryptic crossword sessions and Scrabble meet-ups.

The libraries regularly host authors for intimate audiences with readers, with recent guests including high profile journalist Jamelle Wells, young Sydney Writers Festival writer Melanie Cheng and well-known historical author Kate Forsyth.

Gordon Library continued its oral history project called Tell Your Story and will also extend the project to feature genealogy, to be known as Find Your Story.

Libraries continued their free Tech Savvy Seniors info sessions for Chinese speaking residents. These assist seniors from Mandarin speaking backgrounds who have limited or no previous experience in using technology to learn new skills for the future.

The libraries' new initiative Creator Clubs for primary school aged children continue to grow in popularity and include Lego building, K'nex, 3D printing and more.

Starting in March, each month residents can drop into the 'hot desk' in the Gordon Library foyer to get free advice and find out what community services are on offer. The community hot desk is open between 10am and 12 noon every third Friday.

The next hot desk hosts will be the Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre on Friday 18 May, whose staff will be on hand to provide advice and information on the in-home and out-of-home care the Centre provides.

Recreation

The Active Ku-ring-gai Program encourages people of all ages and fitness levels to participate in enjoyable physical activity. The range of activities and sports on offer stretches from Pilates and Tai Chi to tennis and outdoor fitness classes. Stepping On has been added to the Active Ku-ring-gai program as a falls prevention session promoting better balance, mobility, stability and flexibility.

Council will host its annual get together with sporting groups later in May. The Sports Forum is for Ku-ring-gai's sporting groups and associations to meet Council staff, raise issues and get updates on major projects. This year's Forum will be held between 6pm and 9pm at Warrimoo Clubhouse, 161 Warrimoo Avenue St Ives.

Guest speaker is David Cushway from the NSW Office of Sport to discuss the government's Active Kids program, designed to get young children more active and engaged with sport. Through the Active Kids program parents, guardians and carers can apply for a \$100 voucher each calendar year for every student enrolled in school since January 2018.

In the wake of a NSROC report warning of a looming sports field shortage, the community are being asked their views until mid-May on transforming three public tennis courts into multipurpose sports courts. The courts are located at Kent Road Turramurra, Bradfield Road Lindfield and Koora Avenue Wahroonga.

If approved by the Council, the courts could be turned into training facilities for basketball and netball in addition to tennis by the middle of this year.

Between December 2017 and February 2018 the amended Canoon Road plan of management was placed on public exhibition. The amended plan focusses on how the courts will operate during weekday evenings and at weekends during winter. The amended plan states:

- That training operating under lights be allowed on Mondays Tuesdays and Wednesdays on up to 9 courts (courts 1 – 4, 20, 22 – 25) between 4.30pm and 8pm during the winter season.
- That competition games or training under lights be allowed on Thursdays on up to 9 courts (courts 1 – 4, 20, 22 – 25) between 4.30pm and 8pm during the winter season.
- That the Under 9 age group games be moved from Saturdays to Thursdays to reduce Saturday use.
- No fixtures or training under lights should take place on Fridays.

The Council will consider the results of the public exhibition in May.





A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

THEME 2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Working together as a community to protect and enhance our natural environment and reduce our resource use



Climate change

Climate Wise Communities is a community engagement program designed to assist residents to plan for bushfire, storms, floods and heatwaves at a personal, property and neighbourhood level.

During this period Council staff continued developing the Climate Wise Communities online platform, which will guide residents through a step-by-step process to determine their specific vulnerabilities to severe weather events and provide tailored advice to plan for potential weather extremes.

Water

Construction is about to commence on a gross pollutant trap (GPT) at the corner of McIntosh and Arthur Street Gordon, treating stormwater runoff from Gordon town centre and nearby school and residential areas. The GPT will ultimately improve water quality in Rocky Creek which flows into Middle Harbour.

A biofilter system has been installed at Turramurra and construction is about to commence for a biofilter system at Wahroonga, again to treat stormwater runoff. The biofilter systems will improve water quality in downstream bushland.

In late April, a tour of sewer mining, stormwater and water reclamation sites was well attended by residents.

The Blackbutt Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan and the Lovers Jump Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan will be presented to the Council for endorsement later this year following a period of public exhibition. These studies and plans will help develop an appropriate mix of management actions to deal with different types of flood risk in the two catchments.

Water Smart rebates are being offered exclusively for Ku-ring-gai residents to make improvements to reduce their water bills and improve the local environment. Each household is eligible to claim up to \$1000 for installing green roofs, rainwater tanks, raingardens and permeable surfaces around their home.



The Council is rolling out its anti-littering campaign in Gordon from April

The rebates are funded by the Environmental Levy.

Energy

Changes to the management of the Council Chambers air conditioning system has led to significant improvements in building temperatures and a 15% reduction in energy consumption over the summer months. Other measures implemented and expected to result in significant energy savings include upgrades to the car park lighting at Suakin Street Depot and the installation of indoor pool blankets and a 100kW solar PV system at the Ku-ring-gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre. Building controls at the Centre are also being improved to conserve energy.

The overall aim of these improvements is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 to those comparable with the year 2000. Reductions are steadily being achieved through changes the Council's vehicle fleet, street lighting and public buildings.

Energy Smart rebates of up to \$2000 are being offered exclusively to Ku-ring-gai residents on a range of home energy solutions, including installing solar panels and installing energy efficient pool pumps.

The rebates are funded by Ku-ring-gai's Environmental Levy.

Community



The Council continued to deliver its 'Greenstyle' home sustainability and garden advice service, to assist residents to improve the efficiency and comfort of their home and reduce utility costs. Council's Greenstyle Advisors provide a personalised report of recommended actions as well as links to further information. Each Greenstyle assessment covers energy and water efficiency advice; waste reduction advice; tips on solar panels; analysis of utility bills and potential opportunities for savings.

Through the Council's Loving Living Ku-ring-gai program numerous community workshops and events were delivered during this period. These included sessions on solar power and battery storage for homes, weeds and native plants, raingarden design and construction, , composting in the home; a welcome bus tour; an Earth Hour event and an Aboriginal Discovery walk.

Around 620 Bushcare, Streetcare and Parkcare volunteers at over 150 sites contributed over 6,000 volunteer hours over the past 6 months to bush regeneration activities that improve our natural environment.

Waste

Ku-ring-gai Council's campaign to prevent littering in its major shopping centres has received a boost through a \$50,000 grant from the NSW Government.

The grant means that the Council will spend an additional \$100,000 this year on litter prevention in the centres, targeting public car parks from April.

The anti-litter program began in 2014 in the Wahroonga, Turramurra and St Ives centres and since then has been expanded to include Gordon, Lindfield and Roseville.

The Litter Free Ku-ring-gai program includes the installation of new bins, upgrading of street furniture such as seating, graffiti removal and street cleaning and consultation with Chambers of Commerce and local businesses on strategies to keep centres tidy and litter-free.

Local businesses are now partnering with the Council to promote the 'Litter Free Gordon' campaign to help improve tidiness in Gordon's main shopping area.



In April the Council offered older residents a tour of the Woodlawn eco-precinct at Tarago which showcases innovative ideas on sustainability including a bioreactor; aquaculture, agriculture and horticulture areas; a mechanical and biological treatment facility and a windfarm.

A chemical waste collection and a composting service were also offered to residents at St Ives Showground in May. The free chemical waste collection allows residents to drop off paint tins, household chemicals such as fertilisers and pesticides free of charge for safe disposal.

The Council is supporting the NSW Government's Return and

Earn container recycling scheme. From December consumers can return eligible containers to collection points and receive a 10c payment for each container deposited. As of early December Ku-ring-gai has over-the-counter collection points at City Golf – Pacific Highway Gordon and the IGA St Ives.

Along with other councils, Ku-ring-gai is facing uncertainty over the future of kerbside waste recycling due to the virtual collapse of overseas markets for recyclables. The Council is awaiting application guidelines for emergency funding to be offered by the NSW Government as an interim measure to maintain kerbside recycling services.

Bushfire

Ku-ring-gai's planning for areas of high bushfire evacuation risk was approved by the NSW Department of Planning & Environment in January, with the controls coming into effect from early February.

Thirteen areas considered to be of high bushfire evacuation risk are now covered by planning controls in the Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2015, including large areas of North and South Turrumurra, Killara, Wahroonga and St Ives.

The areas were identified during preparation of the Council's 2015 LEP, but were deferred from being included in the plan because of their risk profile and the need for further consultation with residents and other stakeholders such as the RFS and NSW Police.

Ku-ring-gai Council adopted the plan in May 2017 but it required state government approval before it could come into effect. Under the approved plan, development in the thirteen areas will be managed through updated zoning, permitted land uses and development standards. Aged care homes and childcare centres will be prohibited from being built in these high risk areas as they would increase the evacuation risks in the event of major bushfires.

Where possible the bushland team has been carrying out hazard reduction burns in cooler weather in known hazard areas such as St Ives Showground, North and South Turramurra.

Fauna

The Ku-ring-gai Flying-Fox Reserve 10 year Site Management and Roost Habitat Plan was completed in January, in conjunction with a Technical Advisory Group. This is a long term management plan that guides flying-fox conservation and habitat restoration efforts in the reserve, with a particular focus on habitat restoration works in areas away from residential properties.

Ku-ring-gai Council is encouraging residents to get involved with a nationwide project that monitors the roaming habits of domestic cats. Cat Tracker includes two main phases - a survey and cat tracking through free GPS tracking devices, through which owners are shown how to track their own cats.

The GPS equipment is then sent back to the research team and results are shared with participants online. It is anticipated that over 1000 pet cats will be tracked around Australia.

A free talk explaining the Cat Tracker project was held in March for local residents. Another free talk was also held in March on local frogs, including how to recognise different species and how to build habitat in the garden to attract them.

Ku-ring-gai residents are being urged to look out for sightings of an exotic species of lizard called the Indo-Pacific gecko. This gecko is native to Southeast Asia and India and has been introduced to many tropical areas worldwide. The species is considered invasive and listed as prohibited under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015.

BioBanking

Currently around 100 hectares of bush owned by Ku-ring-gai Council are covered by a biobanking agreement, in bushland reserves between Turramurra and West Pymble in the area known as Sheldon Forest, Rofe Park at South Turramurra and Comenarra Creek Reserve, also in South Turramurra.

Under the agreement, a biobanking trust fund for these sites provides permanent annual management payments of between \$100,000 and \$130,000 for the first 20 years of the agreement, and about \$40,000 each year after that. The funding is used for a variety of land management practices, such as weed control, revegetation and removing feral animals.

The second proposed 6.25 hectare BioBanking site comprises Blackbutt Park, Clive Evatt Reserve, The Glade Reserve and Sir David Martin Reserve, straddling the suburbs of Pymble,



South Turramurra and Wahroonga.

In the case of the proposed second site, the biodiversity credits created will be sold to offset impacts on biodiversity by development in the local area.

Nearby residents were notified of the proposed new site and the public were invited to comment on the proposal until the end February. A report will be prepared for Council for a final decision on the second BioBanking site.





A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

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



Urban spaces

Following a three month selection process seven community representatives from around 20 applicants were selected by the Council in April for the Lindfield Village Hub Reference Committee. The Committee will provide advice to the Council on community related development outcomes, such as place-making, environmental sustainability, social procurement and service delivery.

The committee is composed of the community representatives, the Mayor and Councillors Ngai, Citer and Kelly, one representative from Roads & Maritime Services and one from Transport for NSW. The seven community representatives are Nathan McMullen; Sarah Davis (Support Lindfield); Nadia Lacono; Lilian Wong; Julian Ledger (416 Group); Linda McDonald (Support Lindfield) and Nigel Hendy.

The first meeting of the Committee will be held once the Council has confirmation of the RMS and Transport NSW representatives.

In December the Council held a community meeting attended by over 100 residents to discuss the Lindfield Village Hub and funding models for the \$170 million project.

Council has a current planning proposal to reclassify 9, 15 & 17 Dumaresq Street from Community Land to Operational Land. An Operational Land reclassification will provide flexibility for a future Gordon Civic Hub Masterplan.

If approved, the reclassification will not change the current zoning, development standards or the permitted land uses on the three sites. The proposal was publicly exhibited between 24 November 2017 and 2 February 2018 with a public hearing was held on 22 March. The independent chair of the public hearing has recommended that the reclassification proceeds.

The Council voted in April to convene a Gordon Realm Committee to consider all matters pertaining to the Gordon Civic Hub and the Marian Street Theatre. The terms of reference and composition of the Committee are to be decided by Council.

Heritage

The Council achieved a significant victory in the Land & Environment Court in December with fines imposed on property developer David Baynie for wilfully destroying a heritage property at 3 Bangalla Street Warrawee without development consent.

Damage to the interior of the heritage listed six bedroomed

house included the removal of original architraves and picture rails, demolition of walls and ceilings and destruction of cornices and skirting.

Built in 1909, the Bangalla Street house was heritage listed by the Council in its Local Environmental Plan as being an example of the designs by well-known architect Howard Joseland.

Justice Pain of the Land & Environment Court found in favour of the Council, ordering the defendant to pay a total of \$77,000 in fines in addition to the Council's costs.

Planning

From 1 March 2018 independent hearing and assessment panels (IHAPs) became mandatory for all councils in the Greater Sydney Region, including Ku-ring-gai.

IHAPs are panels of independent experts that determine development applications on behalf of a Council and provide other advice on planning matters.

The establishment of a Ku-ring-gai IHAP means that development applications will be determined by either the Panel, Council staff or the Sydney North Planning Panel. Ku-ring-gai Councillors will no longer determine development applications in the local area.

The Ku-ring-gai IHAP is made up of four members of our community and nine experts with a range of skills in planning related matters. The Chair is Justice Angus Talbot and the community members are Frank Ko, Peter Thornton, Elaine Malicki and Suzanne Jolly.

IHAP meetings are held monthly at the Council Chambers and members of the public can address IHAP meetings with a time limit of three minutes speaking time.

Playgrounds

Several concept designs and plans for new and upgraded playgrounds were prepared during this period. Gordon Recreational Ground and Robert Pymble Park are next on Council's list for major upgrades and residents were invited to give their ideas by 1 March.

Gordon Recreational Ground is located in Werona Street Gordon and residents were surveyed in 2016 on what they would like to see included as part of the proposed upgrade. Following this consultation the Council's landscape architects prepared a draft masterplan for the park for public exhibition.

Elements proposed in the draft masterplan include an upgraded pathway with additional lighting to improve safety and accessibility; an expanded playground area; additional picnic tables and seating areas and fully accessible toilet facilities. New lighting and line-marking for the tennis courts to allow sports such as basketball and netball to be played on them are included as part of the proposed masterplan.

Residents were also asked to comment on what they would like to see in a proposed upgrade of Robert Pymble Park in Alma Street Pymble and Putarri Reserve St Ives.

Putarri Reserve runs alongside Putarri Avenue and nearby Rosedale Road in St Ives. The Reserve has been prioritised for an upgrade due to the area's high influx of young families.

The Council talked to local residents in the vicinity of Putarri Reserve last year about what they would like to see as part of any upgrade, and received over 100 submissions.

Based on some of the ideas submitted, the Council's landscape architects prepared a design for the upgrade and sought community feedback until Friday 27 April. The draft design contains community suggestions such as new fencing, landscaping and a range of playground equipment such as a slide, swings, climbing frame and an accessible carousel. Permanent shade sails are proposed for the toddler playground area as well as a picnic shelter and an accessible car parking space.

Two other playgrounds identified as needing an upgrade – Morona Avenue playground at Wahroonga and Lindfield Soldiers Memorial Park playground – also had concept designs prepared and placed on public exhibition for comment by the end of April.





A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

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



Cycling

The Council again supported the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic. This is an annual cycling event with rides to suit all levels of ability.

Organised by Rotary, the Classic raises money to support Lifeline's suicide prevention services, as well as a number of other charities. The event is organised and run by Rotary volunteers as well as family, friends and supporters.

Road Safety

From January free 'Slow Down in my Street' bin stickers were made available on request to all Ku-ring-gai residents. The stickers can be ordered online via the Council's website and are aimed at slowing vehicles in residential streets.

The Slow Down in Our Street bin stickers are jointly funded by NSW Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) and Ku-ring-gai Council.

Reflective at night, the stickers can be placed on wheelie bins, sending a clear and direct message to drivers to slow down.

Already two reprints have been ordered for the stickers due to their popularity.



The Council received over \$1.3 million to improve safety on Lady Game Drive

Capital works

The Council was successful in gaining a \$1.36 million grant to ameliorate safety issues on a notorious section of Lady Game Drive. Work began in April on installing a hard shoulder and safety barrier, as well as improvements to the roadway slope along Lady Game Drive between the Blackbutt Creek and De Burgh Road.

It follows a road safety audit of Lady Game Drive and numerous accidents in the past two years during wet weather.

Work will largely be conducted between 10pm and 5am at night and between 10am and 3pm during the day to ensure traffic along the busy thoroughfare is impeded as little as possible. The work is expected to last for several months.

The work involves removing trees to allow space for a 345 metre safety barrier between Blackbutt Creek and De Burgh Road on the northern side. The road will also be resurfaced along this section and a hard shoulder created. Other work involves installing additional drainage pits and pipelines to divert runoff during wet weather.



The two timber pedestrian bridges at Bicentennial Park West Pymble are being progressively replaced with wider versions to improve accessibility. The major bridge connecting the Lofberg Rugby Oval to the Golden Grove playground will be replaced. The bridge will be closed from Wednesday 7 February until the end of May. During this time, residents can use the bridge at the bottom of the adjacent path to cross the creek. An upgraded toilet block with a new roof, improved lighting and layout will also form part of the upgrade.

Transport

Council is continuing to liaise with Transport for NSW to secure further additional commuter parking, associated infrastructure and bus interchange upgrades at the key local centres of Gordon, Lindfield and Turramurra, as part of the Activate Ku-ring-gai local centres program.

The Council is also entering into preliminary discussions with TransportfNSW concerning accessibility improvements at Wahroonga railway station and further implementation of the NSW Government's Sydney Clearways Strategy.



Slow Down in my Street stickers are popular with residents.



A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

THEME 5 LOCAL ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

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



Local businesses are continuing to benefit from the Council's free program of workshops, seminars and networking events

Business

A report to councillors regarding Business Engagement activities was provided in February. The report provided updated information about past and future business engagement events (including participant feedback), outcomes of research undertaken by Western Sydney University as well as key statistics from the Australian Business Register regarding businesses in Ku-ring-gai.

Several events and workshops have been held as part of the Council's small business outreach program during the last few months:

- **Cost Savings**
20 February 2018 – 19 attendees
- **Online Accounting**
27 March – 21 attendees
- **Commercial Contracts**
4 May – approx. 20 expected

- **Digital Tools for businesses serious about growth**
15 March – 40 attendees
- **Workshop 1 on digital marketing**
22 February – 16 attendees
- **Workshop 2 on digital marketing**
1 March – 20 attendees
- **Workshop 3 on digital marketing**
8 March – 14 attendees

There are now nearly 850 subscribers to the Council's business e-news.

Following meetings with the NSW Small Business Commissioner as well as representatives from Service NSW a report will be presented to council in May seeking support to join the NSW Easy to do Business program. This program has been developed to support business by removing barriers to make it faster and easier to start, grow and run a small business.

A new website portal has been set up to make the process of tendering for work with Ku-ring-gai Council easier to understand.

The Council also ran an advertising campaign in December to seek new suppliers through a registration process.

The new web portal allows businesses to pre-register for tenders and quotations, find out what probity requirements they need to follow and the difference between a tender and quotation.

To find out more visit kmc.nsw.gov.au/doingbusiness

Technology

Rates can be emailed to ratepayers by a simple sign-on process via the Council's website. Ratepayers can also use BPAY View to send rate notices straight to the same online bank used to pay them.

The Council has introduced the new online distribution methods to cut down on paper use and mailing costs, and to respond to customer requests for paperless rates notices.

Residents can have a story read to them over the internet by actors, authors, comedians and other famous people.

'Story Box' is an online library full of videos of Australian authors, comedians, actors, musicians and illustrators reading Australian stories aloud.

Library patrons can access the free service using their library card number. To access the service, simply visit storyboxlibrary.com.au and log in via the Public Library option.



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.



The Council and Ausgrid are trialling a new process to manage tree trimming under powerlines, which potentially could save ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars

Public safety

The Council's compliance team discovered a major flaw in the latch system on popular swimming pool gates potentially affecting around 90,000 property owners in Australia.

The Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) and the NSW Ministry of Small Business & Fair Trading are administering a voluntary recall of 80,700 swimming pool gates that have been sold across Australia.

The product – manufactured by SafeTech Hardware and on the market for more than four years – can potentially stop gates from latching, meaning that unsupervised children can gain access to backyard swimming pools even when a pool gate is apparently locked. The types of gate latch manufactured by SafeTech Hardware are largely sold and distributed nationally through Bunnings.

The Council's compliance staff first identified the design flaw during a regular monitoring program of local backyard swimming pools.

Once staff established without doubt that these gate latches posed a major risk to public safety, they alerted the manufacturer, the NSW Department of Local Government and the NSW Department of Small Business & Fair Trading. The voluntary recall was announced on 29 March; more information can be found on the ACCC website at [productsafety.gov.au/recall](https://www.productsafety.gov.au/recall)

Ausgrid

During March a three month trial got underway between the Council and Ausgrid on tree trimming in safety 'no-go zones' under power lines. One other council – Sutherland Shire – is participating in this trial.

Before the trial was announced, Council staff were unable to respond to public requests for trees on public land to be trimmed or removed if parts of the trees were within the no go zone. All these requests previously had to be referred to Ausgrid and their contractors, and a fee paid to Ausgrid to perform this service before Council could complete the tree pruning or removal.



The new trial arrangement means that Council staff will now be able to respond directly to requests concerning trees on some public land under powerlines, subject to certain conditions. If the trial is successful and becomes a permanent arrangement, it will lead to savings for ratepayers of many hundreds of thousands of dollars and reduced turnaround times for tree works.

Staff

In December last year, staff were invited to participate in an Employee Opinion Survey conducted by an independent consultant.

The survey was an overall 'work climate' assessment, which provided management with an opportunity to understand staff's views on the strengths of Ku-ring-gai Council and where improvements could be made.

Key findings from the survey were that there was general satisfaction with the quality of leadership provided by management and a belief in the Council's core values. A lower satisfaction level was recorded with the Council's administration building at Gordon and some aspects of technology in the workplace.



Community Strategic Plan

Following the election of the new Council, the Community Strategic Plan is now being refreshed with community input.

The Plan guides local decision-making by the Council. It also helps shape annual spending by the Council and what priorities the community wants us to focus on.

The Plan is based upon six key themes; Community, People and Culture; Natural Environment; Places, Spaces and Infrastructure; Access, Traffic and Transport; Local Economy and Employment; Leadership and Governance.

As a first step, the Council held a series of community planning sessions late last year across Ku-ring-gai. The community's views were also sought via a 'Have Your Say' web page, through live discussion forums, questions and answers and an online submission form. Chinese and Korean speaking residents have been sent a leaflet in their language also explaining how to have their say.

