

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT
JUNE – DECEMBER 2018



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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 June to December 2018.

Highlights of this period include:

- ◆ The Expression of Interest for the Lindfield Village Hub was released to the public in October, as a precursor to a full tender in 2019.
- ◆ The Council appointed a team of experts in finance, governance and commercial property development for the newly constituted Major Projects Advisory Committee.
- ◆ The Lindfield Village Hub Community Reference Committee was convened and held two meetings. Community consultation on public facilities in the Hub also commenced.
- ◆ An Expression of Interest process was undertaken for membership of the Marian Street Community Reference Committee, with an overwhelming response and a high calibre of applicants.
- ◆ In depth consultation with ratepayers got underway seeking their views on a permanent continuation of the 5% Environmental Levy.
- ◆ A draft Community Facilities Strategy was prepared and placed on public exhibition.
- ◆ Works worth \$1.3 million to improve safety on Lady Game Drive were completed.
- ◆ A draft Parking Strategy was placed on public exhibition between November and December.
- ◆ Council entered into agreements to deliver 30% of its power needs through solar energy and to install over 3500 LED lamps in streetlights.
- ◆ The Thomas Carlyle Children's Centre achieved an 'Exceeding the National Quality Standards' in national rankings for childcare, placing it in the top 20% of childcare in Australia.

- ◆ The Council was recognised for professional excellence through a number of awards.
- ◆ The development application process and tracking system was streamlined, eliminating the need for printed copies of documentation such as maps to accompany most DAs.

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

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

I also take this opportunity to wish you and your families all the best for the festive season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

John McKee
General Manager, Ku-ring-gai Council



Cover image: East Lindfield near Two Creeks Path by Gerard Hosier



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

Council's long day care centre at East Lindfield has been rated as 'Exceeding the National Quality Standards'. Thomas Carlyle Children's Centre was visited by a senior assessor earlier this year, as part of the nationwide assessment process which examines seven key accreditation areas.

The Centre provides child care for up to 55 children during weekdays between 7.30am and 6pm and is currently running at 93% occupancy rate.

The assessment report stated that 'the teaching staff of Thomas Carlyle Children's Centre is committed to providing quality care, particularly in the areas of planning and collaboration with families and other community organisations to enhance children's learning and wellbeing'.

During this period the Centre hosted a number of celebrations including an afternoon tea to mark NSW Grandparents Day. Grandparents who attended were characteristic of the cultural diversity at Thomas Carlyle, with 11 languages represented.

The 2018 spring Vacation Care parents survey indicated an overall satisfaction rating of over 95%. The top three reasons for families choosing our Vacation Care included activities, high quality staff and location.

The Council is held a free child restraint checking day on 29 November with the assistance of an RMS licensed fitter.

In the July school holidays our Ku-ring-gai Library branches held a variety of activities for children aged 5-12 year. Gordon Library hosted a workshop on 3D printing for children aged 10 years and over. Children learnt how to create basic designs and print them using the Tinkercad software. Lindfield and Turramurra libraries invited children aged 5-7 to learn basic computer programming through the Scratch Junior program. Turramurra, Lindfield and Gordon libraries all hosted a Harry Potter Wizards Tournament involving table top games to test strategy and leadership skills. Lindfield, St Ives and Turramurra libraries were the venue for Lego workshops with a magical theme and Turramurra Library also introduced children aged 9 years plus to the thrill of animation in a special one-off workshop.



Turtle enclosure at Wildflower Garden

The Wildflower Garden has introduced new child-friendly features to broaden children's understanding of the natural environment, particularly native animals. Specially constructed enclosures for turtles and blue-tongued lizards have been installed in the Garden's educational area. The Bluetongue Lizard enclosure was constructed almost entirely from recycled materials to house lizards comfortably outdoors during the warmer months. It allows children to meet the lizards up close in their comfortable new enclosure. The Garden's turtles now have a large outdoor pond refurbished with fresh landscaping and a sturdy fence. The pond was planted with aquatic plants, reeds and water lilies for habitat and also to boost food items such as tadpoles and insects. The Council's Family Day Care carers celebrated National Children's Week with an excursion to the Wildflower Garden.



Youth

Ku-ring-gai Council's youth services team and young residents worked together to host an event in June to recognise the contribution made to Australia by refugees. The event was held at St Ives Community Hall and included a pop-up craft bazaar, food stalls, workshops, live performances, music, refugee stories and a banquet. Proceeds from ticket sales were donated to the House of Welcome Women's Creative Hub.

The Council's drop-in youth centres at St Ives and Gordon continued to offer after-school activities during this period, including free BBQs, games, live music, movies and milkshakes. During the HSC period in October the AWOL centre at Gordon offered extended study space, stress relief techniques and free food for Year 12 students.

A free introduction to yoga class was held in September for 12 to 18 year olds and a free workshop for supervisors of learner drivers on 22 November.

Seniors

The Council's services for older residents of Asian background are expanding, with a number of workshops and courses being held in October and November with a Mandarin interpreter. Topics included preventing dementia, an introduction to smartphones and learning to use other new technology.

Between August and November a Ballet for Better Balance series of classes were introduced. Ballet for Better Balance is a registered program with the NSW Government Active and Healthy Program and aims to improve balance, stability and coordination in older adults aged 55 plus and challenge them to learn a new skill.

The Council's Seniors in Action program successfully delivered a number of events for older residents, many of them free or at low-cost. These included excursions to places of interest, soccer and netball played at walking pace, Qi Gong and Functional Fitness classes.



All Ability

Ku-ring-gai Council, the YMCA and Uniting Ability Links have joined forces to provide custom-built change facilities at the Ku-ring-gai Fitness & Aquatic Centre in West Pymble. The shower trolley gives swimmers in a wheelchair the ability to change clothes following a swim with the assistance of a carer.

The \$7000 trolley was purchased using money raised from the 2017 YMCA Swimathon, which saw the local community generously support fundraising activities at the Ku-ring-gai Fitness & Aquatic Centre.

An overhead tracking hoist donated by Ability Links NSW was installed by the Council and can be used to transfer patrons to and from their wheelchairs and into the new shower trolley. The hoist can be moved to different locations to suit varying needs.

Ku-ring-gai Council has partnered with Northside Riding Club and the NSW Government to deliver new facilities for riders with a disability at St Ives Showground. The new facilities – built at a cost of \$185,000 – are located at the Princess Anne Arena in the Showground on Mona Vale Road St Ives. The project was jointly funded by the Council, Northside Riding Club and a grant from the NSW Office of Sport.

The facilities include a raised structure to assist riders mount and dismount safely from a wheelchair or seated position, plus accessible toilets and an accessible pathway from the Arena to the remainder of the Showground. Previously, accessible toilets were located 300 metres away from the Arena.

In addition to being used by members of Riding for the Disabled and Northside Riding Club, the new facilities mean that the Showground is capable of hosting equestrian training for the 2020 Paralympic Games.

In partnership with the Ku-ring-gai Neighbour Aid and Ability Links, funding was secured to acquire a sensory tent to use

at Council events and for community groups to hire. Sensory tents are designed to promote social inclusion at community events by providing a safe space for people to retreat to if they are experiencing sensory overload. The tent was launched at the St Ives Medieval Faire and across the two day event 81 people visited the tent.

During this period Council supported Lindfield Football Club with a \$2500 grant to introduce a new soccer program for young children with a disability.

The Football4All program started off earlier this year, coordinated by specially trained volunteers at Lindfield Football Club. Football4All is a program for children with a disability aged 5 to 12 years, using short, fun game-based activities to introduce the sport of football in an inclusive way. The program also has the underlying goal of learning new skills, hand-eye coordination and gross motor skills.

A pampering day for local carers was held at Gordon Library in mid-October. Carers were invited to have free massages, manicures and facials at the library while their loved ones were looked after.

The free pampering day was coordinated by the Council, Ku-ring-gai Neighbour Aid and Ability Links. The three organisations joined forces to offer some much-needed support and pampering and give carers a brief break from their responsibilities.

Council recently established a support group for people with a disability or people who care for a person with a disability from Mandarin and Cantonese speaking backgrounds. The aim of the group is for the participants to establish connections with people in similar situations.



Events

The free monthly Sunday Sound Garden concerts returned to the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden in June as a lunchtime performance between 12 noon and 3pm. It follows the success of the concert series last summer, which regularly attracted around 300 people to see live music and enjoy a picnic style lunch in the Garden. Children were kept entertained with a live native animal show between sets.

The Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden also held its annual spring festival in August, with the Garden now in its 50th year. The 2018 Festival featured plant sales, walks and talks, market stalls and live entertainment.

Other highlights of this year's Festival include wildflower displays, a sculpture walk, food and drink stalls, a trackless train, pond dip netting, music and dance, children's craft workshops and an Australian wildlife display.

The Council's premier event at the St Ives Showground, the St Ives Medieval Faire, was held on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 September. Around 20,000 visitors attended the Faire, which featured over 350 historical reenactors and jousters from overseas and across Australia coming to the Showground to create a completely authentic event focused on the Middle Ages. New features for the fifth annual Faire included guided walking tours and a VIP experience which included access to the exclusive Royal Court marquee, meeting jousters, a private bar and grazing table, plus a horse-drawn carriage transfer to and from the arena.

The Council's annual Twilight Concert went ahead in October at Wahroonga Park but unfortunately had to be cancelled after just a few songs due to violent thunderstorms sweeping the local area.

Art Centre

During the July and October 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.

Art Centre weekend workshops for adults were popular in this period. Kevin McKay's 'Oil Painting Made Easy' introduced beginner painters to traditional methods of oil painting, whilst new tutor Richard Byrnes ran the 'Sandcast Bronze Sculpture' workshop. This was a new course for the Art Centre and engaged and excited students as they came away with their very own sculpture cast in bronze.

Several exhibitions were held during the period including Warm Colours and Our Land, displaying tutors and students work. A sculpture workshop was held in early November with acclaimed sculptor Helen Leete and with sculptor Richard Gray in September with a focus on portraiture. The annual Tutors Show in August again proved to be highly popular and during this period the Art Centre also installed its own street library.

Marian Street Theatre

In June the Council voted unanimously to develop a fully costed funding model to upgrade the community-based theatre in Killara.

A business case prepared by the Save Marian Street Theatre Committee estimates capital costs for the proposed refurbishment to be \$9.8 million, with multiple performance spaces, a theatrical rigging system, new studios, offices and reception areas and an additional lift for access to the car park.

The Save Marian Street Theatre Committee was formed two years ago by a dedicated group of community members to support reopening the theatre.

In August/September Council sought four community-based members for a project steering committee to provide advice and feedback on the theatre's design and management model and assist the Council in understanding community expectations for the project. The committee members were formally appointed in September.





Mayor Anderson with Arielle Lee and her street library

Libraries

During this period Ku-ring-gai Library's four branches offered a recipe swapping club, a multimedia review club, mah jong games, knitting groups, cryptic crossword sessions and Scrabble meet-ups, to name just a few activities.

The libraries' Author Encounters continued to attract interesting and high profile authors, including ABC Radio personality Richard Glover, artist Michael Rubbo, children's author Debra Tidball, life coach Linda Duong, thriller writer Tony Park and crime novelists Candace Fox and Michael Robotham.

Fans of the Foxtel program *Selling Houses Australia* may recognise a local property at 5 Orinoco Street Pymble on an upcoming program. Images and information were supplied to the program by the Library's Local Studies section.

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.

In June Gordon Library hosted a travelling exhibition from the State Library featuring the work of World War I cartoonist Hal Eyre. The exhibition featured reproductions of 20 of his most eye-catching cartoons, depicting the landings at Gallipoli, the recruitment of soldiers and Australians triumphing over their enemies, among others.

Continuing the wartime theme, Gordon Library also hosted the "Camera on Gallipoli" display for the last time in October-November. This photographic resource was created by the Australian War Memorial and made available for Australian public libraries from 2014-18 as part of the commemoration of the centenary of World War I. Individual stories are highlighted under the theme of Their spirit, our pride 2014-18.

During August the four libraries conducted market research on the services offered as part of an organisational review. The Council also supported LGNSW's campaign for more State Government funding of libraries in NSW.

Gordon Library was temporarily closed between 19 July and 29 July for installation of a new air-conditioning system. The new air-conditioning unit will improve library users comfort and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 30%.

A sophisticated control system means that the system will monitor outside air conditions, CO2 levels, start up times and any public holiday scheduling and adjust temperatures inside the library accordingly. There will also be improved climate control in storage areas where many fragile and historic items from the library's local studies collection are kept.

Between 1 and 14 December fines were waived at all branches of Ku-ring-gai Library for users who returned their overdue items during the two week amnesty period. The fine waiver only applied to overdue items, not those that were lost or damaged.

With the assistance of a \$200 mayoral donation, the first official Council street library was set up in September in Warrimoo Avenue at the Warrimoo Reserve playground by local resident nine-year-old Averie Sun.

Recreation

The Active Ku-ring-gai Program encourages residents of all ages and fitness levels to participate in free or low-cost physical activity. The range of activities and sports on offer stretches from Yoga and Tai Chi to tennis and outdoor fitness classes. The program continues to grow and in September three new activities were trialled, including a Mums and Bubs class, laughter yoga and teen yoga. The Mums and Bubs class has been added to the program and classes are fully booked. 185 residents registered in the Term 3 Active Ku-ring-gai program, and 180 people were enrolled in four walking groups.

The Ku-ring-gai Fitness Aquatic Centre run by YMCA celebrated its fourth birthday on Sunday 27 October with a Free Family Fun Day. There were 15,314 (494 per day) attendances in July, 17,188 in August (552 per day) and 16,652 in September (552 per day). Attendances have been very consistent through the winter months and this upcoming summer should see a large increase in visitation as the weather warms up.

The Swim School program has an 82% occupancy rate, with 1769 people enrolled. This is 134 more than this time last year and represents a 7.5% annual growth. Group fitness classes in the gym continue to increase, with an average of 16 participants per class compared with 12 participants per class this time last year (a 25% increase). There has also been a large increase in personal training sessions with a total of 133 sessions conducted, compared with 2017 which had 83 sessions.

In the wake of a NSROC report warning of a looming sports field shortage, the community were asked their views on transforming three public tennis courts into multipurpose sports courts. After a consultation period and review, the two courts at The Glade Wahroonga have been approved by Council to be multipurpose with the addition of floodlights.

The amended Canoon Road Plan of Management was approved by Council to have 9 courts floodlit (courts 1 – 4, 20, 22 – 25) between 4.30pm and 8pm during for weekly training

as well as competition on Thursday nights. Work is currently underway to source a suitable contractor for both these sites and works are expected to be completed in early 2019.

A free family open day was held at the North Turramurra Recreation Area in June, to showcase the championship 18 golf course overlooking spectacular national park at Bobbin Head Road North Turramurra. Attendees were offered a BBQ lunch, free golf games and clinics and tours of the facilities.

The Council is developing a new strategy to better manage and support recreation in natural areas. The Recreation in Natural Areas Strategy aims to help manage the way people use natural areas for activities including walking, trail running, rock climbing, abseiling, bouldering, mountain biking, orienteering and trekking. It will also outline ways natural areas can be protected from the impacts of these activities.

The Council ran workshops with individuals and groups between July and October. A community meeting, online forum and public exhibition of the draft strategy will provide further opportunities for residents to give feedback and contribute to the strategy.



Mayor Anderson with the winners of the Skellern Cup





A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

THEME 2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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



Environmental Levy

Between July and November an extensive community consultation program was undertaken to determine community support for the permanent continuation of the Environmental Levy at the current 5%, and which programs and works the Levy should fund if it continues.

The community consultation results, presented to Council on 27 November 2018, indicate strong community support for the Levy's permanent continuation at the current rate and as a result Council will be preparing an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for its continuation, due on 11 February 2019.

Climate change adaptation

Council expanded its Climate Wise Communities program with the launch of the Climate Wise Communities digital platform in June at climatewisecommunities.com.au to complement the program's face to face workshops. The online tool enables residents to assess their vulnerability and develop action plans to strengthen resilience to extreme weather events such as bushfire, floods, storms and heatwaves. Since it launched there have been 3,176 unique page views and 770 users.

The secure website invites residents to enter data about their property, individual circumstances and location which in turn generates a personalised report card on their preparedness for an extreme weather event. Each report assesses the likely impacts of a range of natural hazards including bushfire, severe storms, flooding and heatwaves.



The website was put together with the assistance of the Rural Fire Service, SES and local police. Residents can also ask emergency service providers questions via the website.

Council also held two free bushfire readiness workshops in July and November to discuss how residents can prepare themselves for the bushfire season.

Water

Creek restoration works were undertaken at Vista Street Reserve Pymble to reduce erosion and prevent further sedimentation and movement of nutrients into High Ridge Creek.

The final Blackbutt Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan was adopted by Council after a public exhibition period. This Plan will guide management actions to deal with different types of flood risk in the Blackbutt Creek catchment.

Water Smart rebates continue to be offered to residents to make improvements which reduce their water bills and improve the local environment. Rebates of up to \$1000 are available for installing green roofs, rainwater tanks, rainwater gardens and permeable surfaces around their home. The rebates program is funded by the Environmental Levy.

Energy

Council has expanded its Energy Smart rebates to include a broader range of energy management solutions for the home. Rebates of up to \$2000 are now available for solar panels and batteries, solar hot water, insulation and window retrofits. The rebate program is funded by the Environmental Levy.

There are now solar panels installed at 10 Council facilities with a total capacity of 443kW (double that of last year). Our solar projects, coupled with our energy efficiency program,

Solar panels at the Council Depot in Pymble



have contributed to a 13% reduction in annual energy use across all of Council's buildings and facilities and a reduction in annual electricity costs of \$150,000, compared to their peak in 2015/16.

Council has entered into a contract to purchase power generated by the Moree Solar Farm. The new agreement means approximately 30% of Council's electricity needs will be met by renewable energy. The innovative approach to purchasing renewable energy from the grid was made possible through a group purchasing strategy with 17 other Councils and the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC).

Ku-ring-gai Council has signed an agreement with Ausgrid to install over 3500 LED lamps into streetlights from January next year. Ku-ring-gai is one of the first northern Sydney councils to enter into the project, which will ultimately see thousands of streetlights upgraded to more efficient LED lighting across the upper North Shore.



Pymble Soldiers Memorial Park

It is part of a wider program in which Ausgrid has offered 33 councils the option to accelerate the replacement of 100,000 older residential streetlights across the network. Ausgrid maintains 250,000 streetlights on behalf of councils in parts of Sydney, the Central Coast and the Hunter.

From January 2019, 3,526 streetlights in the Ku-ring-gai Council area will be switched to LED lamps.

The new LEDs are more energy efficient, easier to maintain and last up to 20 years. The project will lower Council's carbon emissions by 1,055 tonnes a year and also provide an annual energy saving of 996 MWh.

Community

Through the Council's Loving Living Ku-ring-gai program, a range of community workshops and events were delivered during this period. These included sessions on winter warming for the home, native plant propagation, spiders and bugs, small space productive gardening, creating fauna habitat, sustainable building design, solar and battery storage, aquaponics, weed awareness and rainwater tanks. In addition, Council co-hosted a Meet a Bat night, where residents were able to learn about the conservation management of the vulnerable Grey-headed Flying-fox species.

National Tree Day in July attracted over 200 participants, with over 1,000 trees planted at Primula Oval, Lindfield.

Council staff and volunteers undertook native bee hive splitting between September and November in preparation for the next native bee hive distribution program. Splitting is when a healthy hive has expanded inside its original hive and can be split open and made into two hives without harming the bees.



A total of 100 native bee hives will be distributed to Ku-ring-gai residents and a further 150 sold to help boost the local bee population and pollination of local plants.

Around 650 Bushcare, Streetcare and Parkcare volunteers at 150 sites contributed over 6,400 volunteer hours to bush regeneration activities.

The Environmental Levy grants program opened in July to community groups, schools and individuals for environmental projects in Ku-ring-gai. The maximum funding for each project was \$5000, with a total of \$47,000 in funding on offer.

Typically, grants are awarded for projects including native bee hives, bush regeneration and interpretive trails, school education projects, wildlife surveys and recycling initiatives. This year's grant recipients were presented with their cheques in late November.

Supported by Ku-ring-gai Council, the Better Business Awards recognised the sustainability achievements of North Shore businesses who are members of the BBP program. Eight of the 11 award categories were won by Ku-ring-gai businesses at the 2018 awards held earlier in the year.

Waste

During October and November a waste audit was conducted across Ku-ring-gai to establish the level of recycling among residents. The results will be reported to Council in due course.

A chemical waste collection was offered to residents at St Ives Showground in November. 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. Composting and worm farm workshops were also offered to residents during this period.

The Plastic Free July campaign provided a platform for the community to understand what they can do in their homes and in the community to reduce single plastic use. Council also worked with the Better Business Partnership to grow the Responsible Cafes program in Ku-ring-gai, which brings local businesses on board to give a discount to customers who bring reusable cups.

Biodiversity

Council continues to restore vegetation in 38 of its highest priority bushland reserves, covering 60 hectares. Three ecological burns were recently conducted in Sheldon Forest, Bicentennial Park and the Ku-ring-gai Flying-fox Reserve, covering 2 hectares.

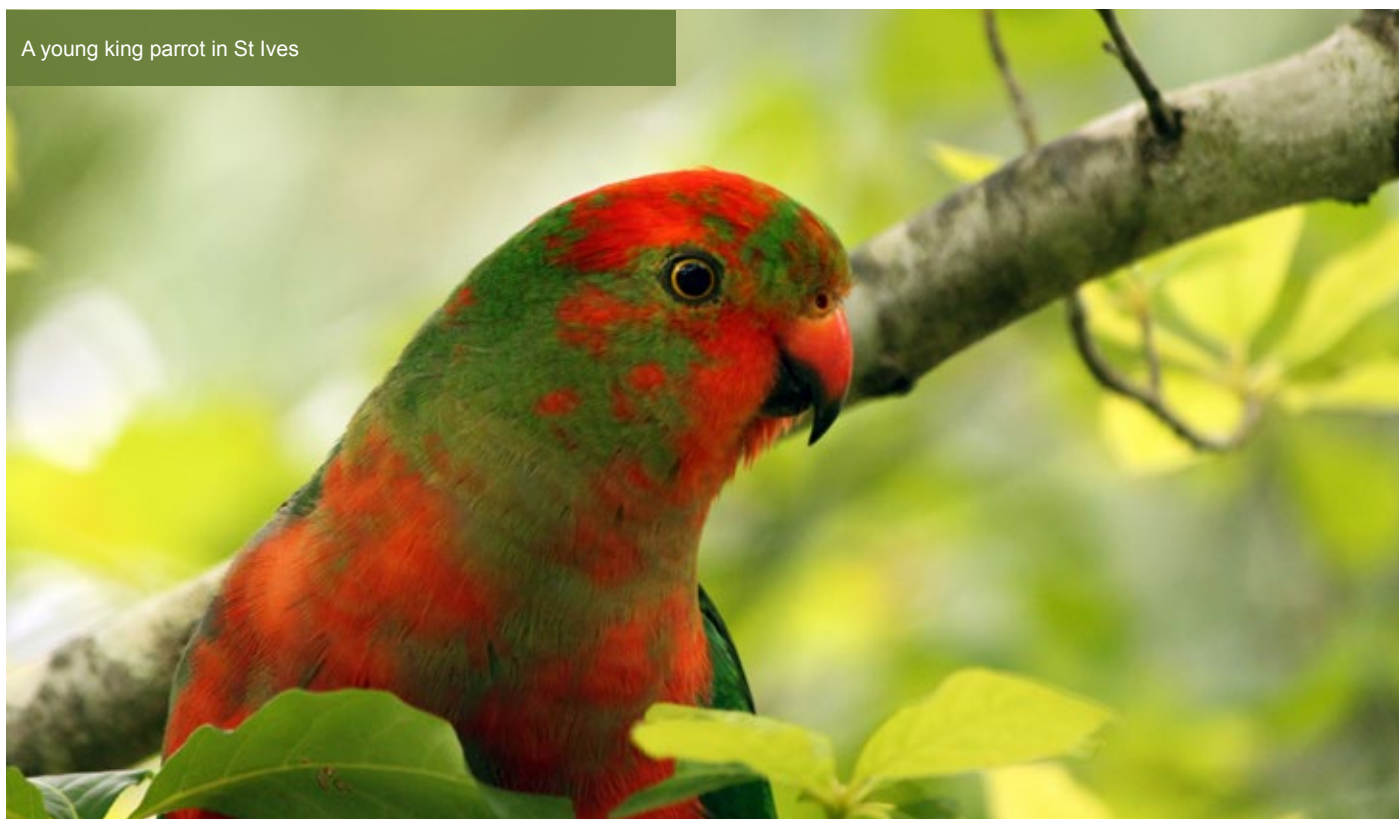
Grey-headed Flying-fox numbers are being monitored and roosting locations mapped in the Ku-ring-gai Flying-fox Reserve. Council staff and residents are also working together to monitor local pygmy possum populations.

Council is participating in the national frog identification week coordinated by the Australian Museum, which will focus on frog activity in Ku-ring-gai's Pool to Pond monitoring sites.

The site management plan for the 99 hectare BioBanking site at Sheldon Forest, Comenarra Creek Reserve and Rofe Park is being reviewed since the site's creation five years ago.

This will align the site management plan with the new Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Annual monitoring is also being conducted to evaluate improvements to biodiversity values.

A young king parrot in St Ives





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.



Lindfield Village Hub

The Expression of Interest (EOI) for delivery of the Hub was publicly launched in early October through a national advertising process, resulting in around 20 submissions. This is in preparation for the formal tender process to be conducted next year.

Community consultation on the public spaces and other aspects of the project including building height was conducted between August and November. This took the form of an online survey, seven recruited and opt-in workshops, a discussion forum for young residents and a workshop specifically for library users.

Over 400 people responded to a survey in October gauging the community's interests in what public spaces and facilities they would like to see in the Village Hub. Respondents were

asked to rank activities such as eating and drinking, socialising and relaxing and attending events such as markets, among others. Nearly 40% of respondents nominated eating and drinking as their favourite thing to do, followed by attending markets and socialising.

The Lindfield Village Hub Reference Committee met twice during this period. 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 Council also appointed a team of experts in finance, governance and commercial property development for the newly constituted Major Projects Advisory Committee, which will include Lindfield Village Hub.



An artist's impression of Lindfield Village Green



Lindfield Village Green

Development approval for the amended DA for the site was granted during this period.

The amended DA has been modified from the original DA approved in October 2017 to include a further level of underground parking and two lifts. This additional level of parking will mean that the project delivers the same number of short stay car parking spaces as is on site currently (136). In addition, the development will accommodate a further 105 commuter car parking spaces funded by Transport for NSW.

A construction start date is subject to the conclusion of negotiations with Transport for NSW regarding funding for the commuter parking component of the project.

Heritage

During this period heritage conservation areas in Pymble and Turramurra were recommended for listing.

The areas recommended are:

- ♦ Hillview (Turramurra) including some properties on the Pacific Highway, Kissing Point Road and Boyd Street;
- ♦ Telegraph Road (Pymble);
- ♦ Mona Vale Road (a section in Pymble);
- ♦ Athol (Some properties on Alma Street and Station Street Pymble);
- ♦ Pymble Heights (some properties in Station Street, King Edward Street, Grandview Street, Wellesley Road and Mocatta Avenue)

The majority of the draft West Pymble Conservation Area was excluded, with the exception of an extension to the Pymble Avenue Conservation area (including several properties on Pymble Avenue, Pymble).

The five proposed heritage conservation areas Council opted not to proceed with are:

- ♦ Mahratta (Wahroonga), some houses on Fox Valley Road;
- ♦ Gilroy Road (Turramurra);
- ♦ Lanosa Estate (Pymble), including some properties in Mona Vale Road, Church Street, Orana Avenue and Kywong Avenue;
- ♦ Fernwalk (Pymble), around the pedestrian walkway between Mona Vale Road and Fern Street;
- ♦ Orinoco Street (Pymble).

The new heritage conservation areas will be included in a draft final planning proposal, with a final decision to be made by NSW Planning and Environment.

During this period the Council dispensed over \$30,000 in grants to local heritage property-owners. Council's heritage grants program funds a range of projects such as repairing original roofs, repairing architraves and window frames and restoring gates and verandahs to their original condition.

Applications for this year's heritage grants program were highly competitive, with a total of 20 applications received for \$85,000 worth of funding. The applications were reviewed by Council's Heritage Reference Committee and 12 projects were funded as a result.

Homeowners in Lindfield, Killara, Gordon, Pymble and Wahroonga were successful in obtaining grants. The grant recipients will be required to carry out project work before 30 June 2019 to satisfy the terms and conditions for funding.

Planning

During August Council consulted the community on a draft Voluntary Planning Agreement for the dedication of land along the rear frontage to Havilah Lane of 51, 55 and 55A Lindfield Avenue Lindfield. This will allow the future widening Havilah Lane and support the delivery of the Lindfield Village Hub.

During October and November residents were asked their views on a draft Community Facilities Strategy developed to guide the planning and design of community centres and libraries across Ku-ring-gai over the next 20-30 years.

Ku-ring-gai's growing population is expected to reach over 130,000 by 2031, up from its current 123,000, meaning existing community centres and halls are often operating at capacity.

The Council currently owns and operates 14 halls and centres available for hire by the community, four libraries, an arts centre and three youth centres.

With many community buildings now over 50 years old, replacement or major renovations are needed. The strategy proposes options to address ageing public facilities and the shortage of space for hire by taking a regional approach to community buildings.

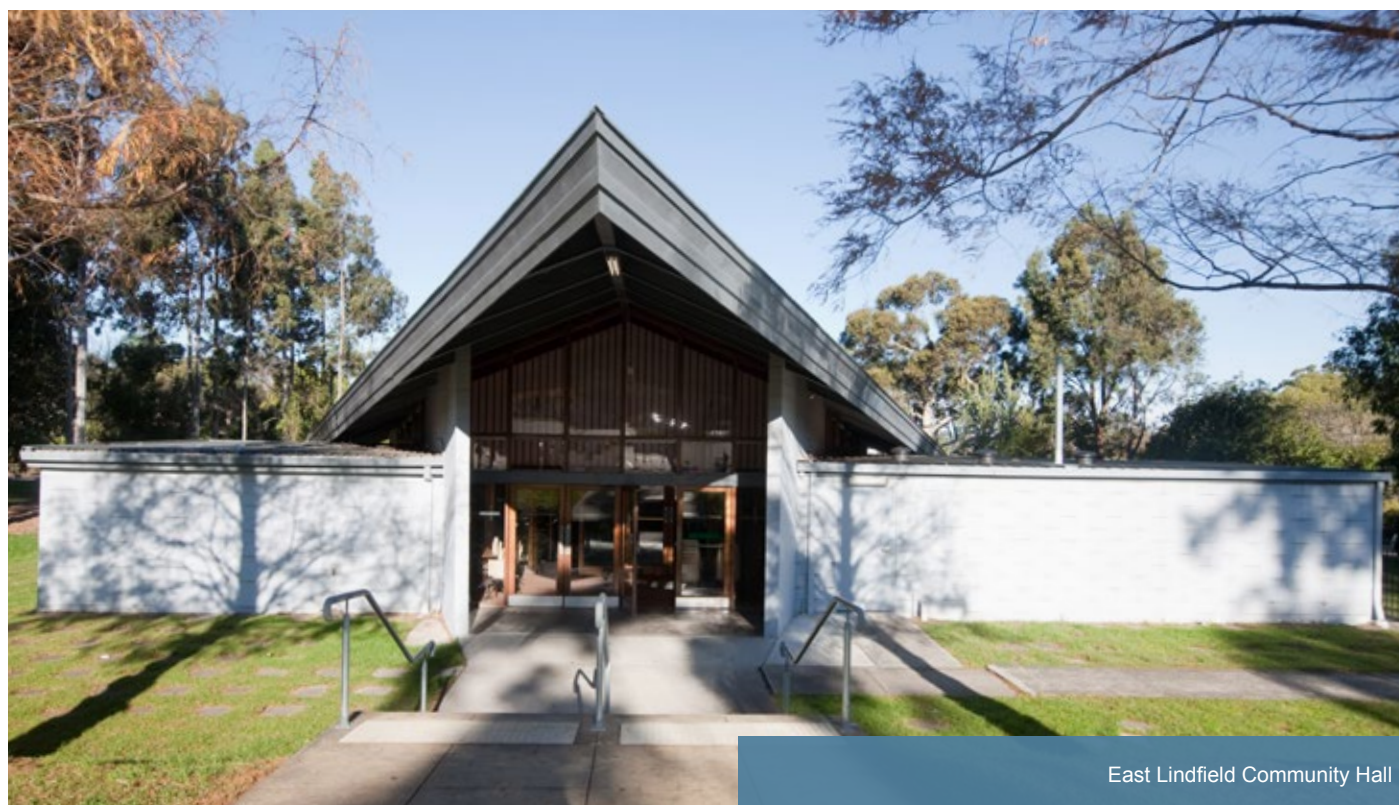
Among its recommendations are:

- ◆ A sub-regional cultural facility in Gordon, co-located with Gordon Library, the Council Administration and Chambers. This supports the Council's vision to develop a new civic/cultural precinct in Gordon
- ◆ A performing arts hub in Killara centred around the redeveloped Marian Street Theatre
- ◆ Three new district community hubs in Turramurra, St Ives and Lindfield, ideally co-locating branch libraries with flexible multi-use public spaces
- ◆ Amalgamating a number of existing facilities into the new district hubs
- ◆ Upgrading several smaller local facilities.

The strategy also outlines the recreational potential of St Ives Showground Precinct which could include community events, entertainment and education spaces.

The development application process was streamlined during this period, with most DAs no longer needing printed copies of plans and supporting documentation.

The exceptions for now are large-scale developments such as residential flat buildings, multi dwelling developments, or any application relying on A2, A1 or A0 sized plans which still require five printed copies.



East Lindfield Community Hall



St Ives Village Green

The Council also introduced a simplified system for calculating the cost of works for a development application during this period.

An upgrade to the DA tracking system was completed, allowing residents to search on streets, suburbs and application types. The system can now display all recently applied for and approved DAs, complying development certificates and construction certificates.

Consultation on the future of East Lindfield Community Hall was undertaken between October and November, following a Council decision to investigate options for modernising the hall. The community is being asked whether the East Lindfield centre should be progressively restored and upgraded or closed for 12 months and demolished and rebuilt.

The scope of the upgrade will take into consideration results of the community consultation and the Council's Community Facilities Strategy. Option 1 – to restore and upgrade the hall – will cost around \$3 million depending on the scope of work. The upgrade would include an expanded hall, new roof, toilets and kitchen and access improvements. Option 2 – to demolish and rebuild a new hall - would cost between \$5 million and \$6 million. The 12-month construction process would be preceded by an 18 month design and development application, including independent assessment of the DA and consultation with the community on the design.

Public spaces

During this period extensive consultation was conducted with residents and user groups on the Council's Recreation in Natural Areas Strategy, which is currently being reviewed.

Residents were invited to a series of workshops discussing recreation activities in bushland and how they should be managed.

Due to be completed in early 2019, the Strategy aims to support a range of recreation activities in natural areas in a way that protects and enhances the local environment.



Consultation took place with specific groups involved in orienteering, trail running, mountain biking and rock climbing among others, as well as individuals and groups with a strong interest in the Strategy from an environmental perspective.

Following the consultation sessions, the draft Strategy will be presented to a community forum in early 2019. It will also be placed on public exhibition, offering another chance for the community to provide feedback before the Council considers adopting it.

The Council was successful in obtaining a NSW Government CBP2018 grant of \$56,100 towards an upgrade of the St Ives Youth and Community Centre at St Ives Village Green. The upgrade will improve the overall condition, accessibility and functionality of the centre. Construction is planned in the first half of 2019.

Located adjacent to the Gordon bus rail interchange, the Annie Forsyth Watt park was upgraded and reopened to the public. Improvements include new paths, seats and bubbler, new plantings and fencing.

The park is named after the founder of the National Trust of Australia and former Gordon resident Annie Forsyth Wyatt.



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

A study was completed during this period on the Browns Waterhole Track to improve access at the popular walking and cycling track in South Turramurra.

A \$20,000 grant was awarded to Council under the NSW Government's Metropolitan Greenspace Program to investigate ways to counteract flooding at the Track, which crosses the Lane Cove River and Terry's Creek. Brown's Waterhole Track connects to the Great North Walk which links Sydney to Newcastle and other Ku-ring-gai, Ryde and Hornsby Council tracks and trails.

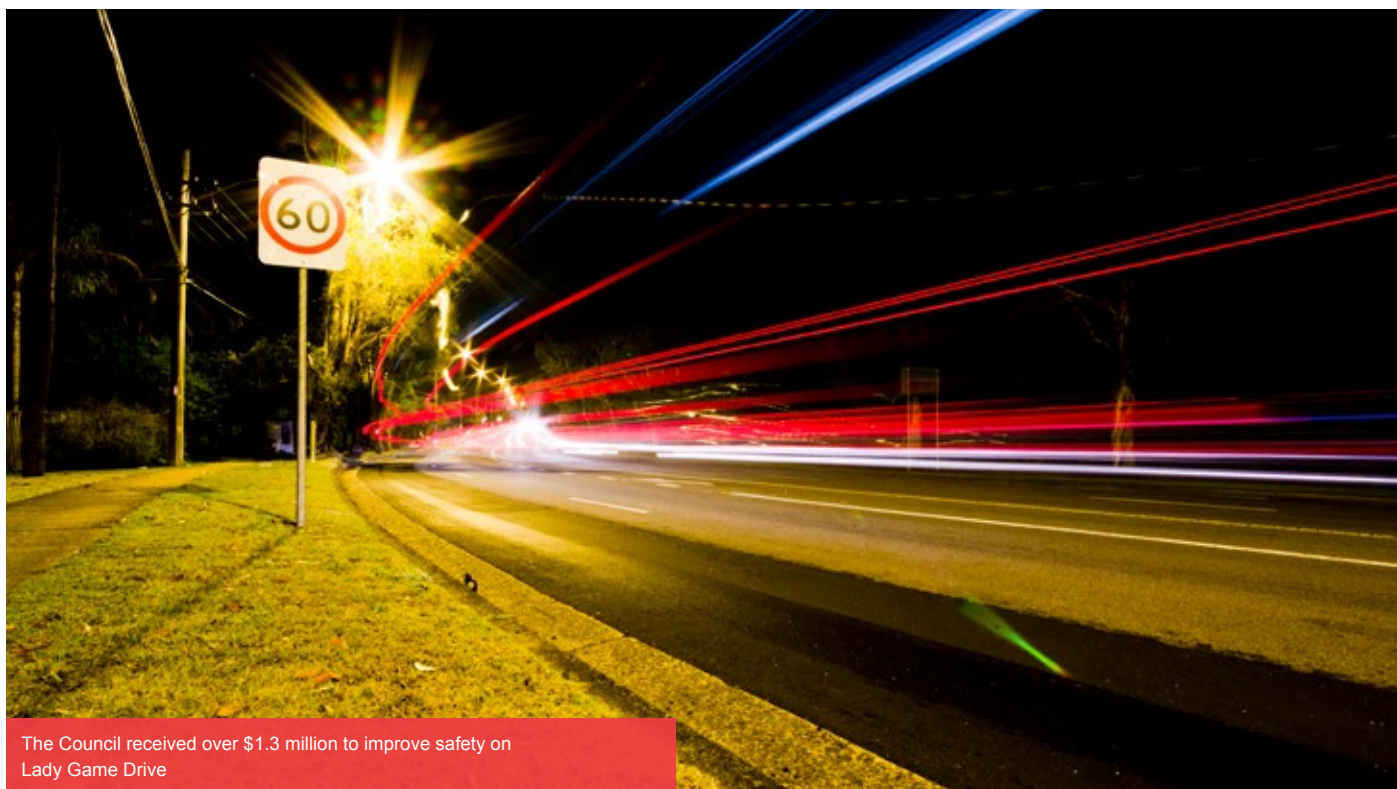
Browns Waterhole Track also forms part of the regional cycleway connecting the upper North Shore with the rest of northern Sydney. Cycling along the one-way 1.3 kilometre concrete track allows cyclists to avoid the heavily congested Pennant Hills and Ryde Road, making it a popular choice to access Macquarie Park or Macquarie University. However

the track is prone to flooding even after light rainfall, making it impassable in heavy or moderate rainfall.

The study examined ways to prevent flooding of the Track, with a pedestrian bridge favoured as the best outcome.

A meeting was held in October with Ryde Council, Lane Cove National Park, Roads & Maritime Services, Sydney Water and the Greater Sydney Commission on funding the proposed solution. Community consultation will be undertaken at the commencement of the design process.

Around 150 cyclists participated in the annual Ride2Work event held in October at Gordon Recreation Reserve in Rosedale Road Gordon. Cycling commuters on the way to Chatswood or the city enjoyed free bacon & egg rolls and juice, bike maintenance check-ups and giveaways such as tyre patch kits, energy bars and tyre inflator cartridges.



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

Roads

The 2019 free Road Safety Calendar produced by Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Northern Beaches and City of Ryde Councils was on offer to residents from late November. First produced in 2001, the calendar was originally created for senior drivers aged 60 and over, but has been expanded to appeal to road users of all ages.

Each month features messages relating to road safety such as general courtesy, pedestrian awareness, driver distraction, heavy vehicles, motorcycle awareness and more.

In November the calendar won a 2018 Engineering Excellence Award in the Local Government Excellence in Road Safety category, submitted by Ku-ring-gai Council. The Awards are hosted by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia.

During this period work was completed on a notorious section of Lady Game Drive. The work included 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. The road was resurfaced along this section and additional drainage pits and pipelines to divert runoff during wet weather were installed.

At the request of Roads & Maritime Services the Council promoted their proposal to create clearways in both directions along Pacific Highway from Turramurra to Wahroonga. Community consultation closed in early October.

Parking

Council engaged a traffic specialist to prepare a strategy on managing parking in high use areas.

The Strategy is a response to increasing parking congestion across Ku-ring-gai's six local centres. The centres are Lindfield, Turramurra, St Ives, Roseville, Gordon and Pymble. The strategy also takes account of the new community hubs to be built in Lindfield and Turramurra over the next few years.

Detailed parking surveys and audits in the six centres revealed over stayers in time-restricted car parks in Ku-ring-gai were between 15% and 25%, decreasing turnover and availability of car parking spaces for shoppers and business visitors.

The strategy explores ways to free up parking spaces in the six local centres to increase turnover of short to medium stay parking to greater benefit retailers and other businesses.

Outlined in the draft strategy are ways of enforcing short stay parking through the possible staged introduction of paid parking in selective areas.

The draft strategy was on public exhibition for comment between Thursday 15 November and Thursday 13 December 2018.





A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

THEME 5 LOCAL ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

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



Business

The past six months have been busy with eight business events being held, a total of 584 local business people registering and 395 attending. These events have been run by Council and in partnership with other agencies to minimise costs.

| | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| Recruitment and staff retention | 8 June | 15 attendees |
| 7 Ways to Promote your Business that Cost Nothing* | 20 June | 21 attendees |
| Pricing for profit | 25 July | 12 attendees |
| Video production workshop | 2 August | 13 attendees |
| The art of selling without selling | 16 August | 73 attendees |
| Entrepreneurs - be great not just good | 24 August | |
| Work Life Balance | 20 September | 62 attendees |
| Free forum Upskilling your business for the future | 17 October | 181 attendees |

*In partnership with Realise Business who deliver the NSW Business Connect program in Northern Sydney

KU-RING-GAI BUSINESS CONNECTIONS E-NEWS
An initiative of Ku-ring-gai Council

SOCIAL MEDIA

Business breakfast event - Making Facebook and Instagram work for your business

Create a social media advertising funnel to get leads and sales!

Join expert Heather Porter at this practical seminar and find out how to reach your customers through Facebook and Instagram.

Heather is a fantastic speaker and leading authority on social media marketing. She has run a website and online marketing agency since 2010, co-hosts a podcast with fans in more than 150 countries, presents That Social Media Show on the Buzzrity App and is an Amazon bestseller and co-author of four business books.

Heather presented at a Ku-ring-gai business workshop two years ago and her session was so good, people are still talking about the indispensable advice she gave.



Ku-ring-gai Council, the City of Ryde and the CSIRO hosted a free forum funded by the NSW Government on Future-proofing Local Businesses, as part of Small Business Month in October.

The forum's aim was to make local business people aware of assistance available to them, including help with business ideas, new technology and start-ups.

The event involved presentations from government agencies and the private sector to help businesses access expertise, skills, staff and education. The forum also included a session where attendees could discuss their business with representatives who could provide free or low cost advice and assistance.

Gordon Library hosted a free session on tax returns in July. Among the topics covered was an explanation of the new tax rules that came into effect this year; a list of what documents need to be submitted as part of a tax return and guidance on how to lodge a return online. There was also a question and answer segment covering issues such as income and deductions and whether individuals need to submit a return.

Council continues to distribute the monthly Business E-news. In August a subscriber recruitment drive was undertaken using contact data from the Australian Business Register. This process achieved a 34% increase in subscribers from 850 to 1,140. This has broadened the reach of our communications and attracted more diverse businesses to events.

Council joined the Service NSW Easy to do Business Program in August. 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. The program is currently assisting restaurants, cafes and small bars to establish and will be expanded to include the housing construction sector.

Council staff have been working with state agencies to maximise support for local business from the state government. This has included senior staff from the Office of the Small Business Commissioner, Jobs for NSW and TAFE NSW supporting Council's business engagement events.



In addition Council staff are supporting new policy and programs to support local business which include membership on the Office of the Small Business Commissioner's Home-Based Business Reference Group.

Turramurra Fresh Produce and Gourmet from Ku-ring-gai was named the Better Business of the Year at the 2018 Better Business Awards held in June.

The Better Business Awards celebrate and showcase the sustainability achievements of North Shore businesses who are members of the Better Business Partnership (BBP) - a joint council project designed to improve the sustainability of more than 700 businesses in the Ku-ring-gai, North Sydney and Willoughby council areas.

Turramurra Fresh Produce and Gourmet (formerly known as That Great Market), is also a fundamental support to many other local small businesses some of whom also won awards such as Two Creeks Honey from Lindfield which won the Retail Better Business of the Year category, the judges acknowledging the importance that pollinating bees played in the role of sustaining our ecosystem.

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

Eight candidates contested the St Ives by-election on 27 October, which was called following the resignation of former Councillor David Citer earlier in the year.

Councillor Christine Kay was declared the winning candidate by the NSW Electoral Commission on Tuesday 30 October, elected on a count of 4289 votes.

Cr Jeff Pettett was elected by Councillors as Deputy Mayor on Tuesday 25 September.

Under changes to the Local Government Act, no election was required for the mayoral position, which is elected for two years instead of the previous one. Cr Jennifer Anderson will continue as Mayor until September 2019, when Councillors will meet again to choose their preferred candidate for the position.

Cr Jeff Pettett represents the Comenarra Ward and was first elected to Council in 2012. He will take up the mantle of Deputy Mayor until September 2019.

In November the Mayor's Christmas Appeal was launched, inviting the public to donate presents and food for people in need living in the Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby areas. The Mayor's Christmas Appeal is on behalf of Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury and taking donations until 14 December. Hampers made up from donated goods will be distributed by Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury to people in need across the local area. In previous years Lifeline has distributed around 130 hampers every Christmas to local families.

Council staff

At the last Council election in September 2017, it was determined a review of the current organisational structure was required by September 2018. The NSW Local Government Act mandates all councils review their organisational structures within 12 months of Council elections.



The senior management team undertook a comprehensive review and proposed a new structure based on service delivery excellence, maximising resource efficiency and streamlining services.

Following an extensive consultation process, a final structure was established and presented to all staff, unions, and the Joint Consultative Committee. Implementation of the new structure has now commenced following Council's adoption of the new structure in August.

Over the last twelve months Council has undertaken an extensive review and validation of risk management practices across the organisation. This review has resulted in a more targeted Risk Register.

During this period Council staff were invited to sit on expanded WHS committees, including an overarching strategic committee reporting to senior management on work health and safety issues.

Also during this period, all staff were invited to participate in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People program. The program is based on the work of Dr Stephen Covey and provides a structured range of skills, knowledge and attitudes to promote an increased level of emotional intelligence. The program has also been integrated into Council's induction program for new staff.

Community Strategic Plan

During this period community consultation on the Community Strategic Plan was concluded. The Plan – Our Ku-ring-gai 2038 - was refreshed with community input and adopted by Council in June.

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.

Awards

Council's North Turramurra Recreation Area and its Wild Things urban biodiversity program were recognised at this year's NSW Local Government Professionals Awards.

The annual awards recognise excellence in the local government sector in NSW and significant achievements by NSW councils over the past year.

The \$29 million North Turramurra Recreation Area was the winner in the Asset Management and Infrastructure Initiatives category. The project transformed the existing public golf course into an 18 hole championship standard course overlooking Garigal National Park, complete with walking trails, picnic areas and artificial wetlands.

With sections built on a former landfill site, the Recreation Area also has four new sportsfields, an irrigation system that recycles stormwater run-off and an extended car park.

Council's Wild Things urban biodiversity program was also awarded a high commendation in the Environmental Leadership and Sustainability category.

Since 2008 the Wild Things programs has been boosting Ku-ring-gai's biodiversity by providing native bee hives to residents and teaching them how to convert unwanted backyard swimming pools into ponds filled with native marine life. The program also hosts a You Tube channel called EnviroTube which promotes ways residents can boost biodiversity in their gardens and live a more sustainable lifestyle.

In November a Ku-ring-gai Council submission won the annual free road safety calendar an award from the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia in the Local Government Excellence in Road Safety category. The 2018 Road Safety Calendar is a collaboration between seven local councils across the northern Sydney region – Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, City of Ryde and Willoughby.

During this period Council received a commendation award in the Public Play Spaces Category (under \$500,000) for the recent Golden Grove Playground upgrade at Bicentennial Park. The award recognised the quality of the upgrade and also its features specifically designed to make the playground inclusive for all children, regardless of ability.



The Council's native bee program won an award

