



State of the Inner West  
October 2021



Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West Local Government Area is situated.

We celebrate the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, beliefs and their relationship with the land and water. We acknowledge the continuing importance of this relationship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living today, despite the devastating impacts of European invasion. We express our sorrow for past injustices and support the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to self-determination.



#### LGA Wards

- Balmain Ward – Baludarri (Leather Jacket)
- Leichhardt Ward – Gulgadya (Grass Tree)
- Ashfield Ward – Djarrawunang (Magpie)
- Stanmore Ward – Damun (Port Jackson Fig)
- Marrickville Ward – Midjuburi (Lillypilly)





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## Mayor's Message

Thank you to staff and Councillors for your work and commitment to the community of the inner west over the last 4 years.

We have all worked hard to deliver on the commitments made by council in the first Community Strategic Plan – *Our Inner West 2036*.

The Community Strategic Plan guiding principle in all things is that we *work together in a way that is creative, caring and just*.

Our five strategic directions are:

- An ecologically sustainable Inner West
- Unique, liveable, networked neighbourhoods
- Creative communities and a strong economy
- Caring, happy, healthy communities
- Progressive local leadership

We have become one of the greenest councils in New South Wales, well on our way to fulfilling our pledge to become 100% renewable and carbon neutral by 2025. We rolled out food organics recycling to all apartments in the Inner West. And we achieved our target to be 100% divested from fossil fuels.

We are spending more on footpaths, town centres and of course creating that wonderful 5.8km environmental and active travel corridor, The GreenWay.

Fostering our arts community and supporting them as much as we can is a hallmark of Inner West Council. And our commitment to vulnerable communities, families and local NGOs has never wavered, particularly during the pandemic, which was so tough on all of us.

My fellow Councillors and I have also been advocating for our local community throughout this term to ensure that Inner West remains a wonderful place to live and



that we preserve our local heritage, our amenity and protect our open space in the face of changes that present an inner city local government area such as ours. It is important that your council stands up for the issues and the concerns which are important to you and to our community.

Together, we have worked hard to fulfil your vision that are you articulated in our first Community Strategic Plan.

The achievements of this Council are a tribute to the foresight, hard work and dedication of our Councillors and staff. I would like to thank staff and acknowledge all 15 Councillors who have all worked hard to make the Inner West an even better place to live.

I am pleased to present to you this End of Term Report.

Rochelle Porteous  
Inner West Mayor

## General Manager's Message

Inner West Council has worked hard over its first five years and had some remarkable achievements whilst also going through a significant period of transformational change. Together – our community, the Councillors and staff – can look back over this term with satisfaction at what has been achieved.

We have delivered some once in a generation projects such as the spectacular new Marrickville Library which is a great public space that has been recognised with awards for architecture, interior design and heritage – and even the world would take notice by nominating Marrickville Library for World Public Library of the Year.

We also completed the \$45M upgrade of the Ashfield Aquatic Centre which has seen this much improved facility delivered for the local community. In addition, we completed the heritage restoration of Dawn Fraser Baths, and another wonderful new community library in Haberfield.

We achieved year-on-year record infrastructure spends on roads, footpaths, stormwater, cycleways and town centres and since 2016, the value of capital works delivered by Inner West Council has been consistently and significantly greater than that able to be delivered by the legacy Councils.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic Council has allocated in 2020 and again in 2021 \$250,000 to 10 local organisations to provide direct assistance to vulnerable people during the current COVID crisis. We provided extra funding to support businesses, created arts resilience grants to assist the most ravaged of sectors, are right now pulling together guidelines to help hospitality get back on its feet – and all the while dealing with the hit to our own finances caused by the pandemic.

We have continued to improve and harmonise services, our development assessment times are at their lowest ever, we have found \$18 million in efficiency savings and have adopted a new Real Estate Investment Strategy to invest \$80M to ensure Council's long term financial sustainability.



In our most recent Community Satisfaction Survey, 92% of our residents said they are at least somewhat satisfied with our performance. The mean satisfaction rating was 3.58 (out of 5), which was the same as 2018 and significantly higher than 3.49 in 2017. This rating is on par with the benchmark for Sydney metropolitan councils and not surprisingly our libraries and aquatics centres had the highest satisfaction.

The achievements over this term of Council have been significant and it's all happened whilst the merger transformation carried on in the background. We have restructured, implemented new IT systems, transitioned more customer services online and made it easier and faster for residents to register and track requests. We have met all the financial performance indicators as set by the Office of Local Government but there is more to do to ensure we can deliver better services to the community. That's why we are embarking on a program of continuous improvement and we will measure our progress in accordance with the Australian Business Excellence Framework

I would like to thank the Councillors and staff for their hard work and dedication during a period of significant change and I know we will now to start to realise the benefits of all the hard work undertaken over the past four years.

Peter Gainsford  
General Manager, Inner West Council

# Your Councillors

Balmatin Ward  
Baludarrri (Leather jacket)



Mayor  
Rochelle Porteous (GRN)



Councillor  
John Stamolis (IND)



Councillor  
Darcy Byrne (LAB)

Marrickville Ward  
Midjuburi (Jillypilly)



Councillor  
Sam Iskandar (LAB)



Councillor  
Colin Hesse (GRN)



Councillor  
Victor Macri (IND)

Leichhardt Ward  
Gulgadya (Grass Tree)



Councillor  
Lucille McKenna OAM (LAB)



Councillor  
Vittoria Raciti (LIB)



Councillor  
Marghanita Da Cruz (GRN)

Stanmore Ward  
Dammun (Port Jackson Fig)



Deputy Mayor  
Pauline Lockie (IND)



Councillor  
Louise Steer (GRN)



Councillor  
Anna York (LAB)

Ashfield Ward  
Djarrarwanang (Mogpie)



Councillor  
Mark Drury (LAB)



Councillor  
Tom Kiat (GRN)



Councillor  
Julie Passas (LIB)



# Vision Statement

We are Inner West, land of the Gadigal and Wangal peoples, whose rich cultures, heritage and history we acknowledge and respect. We are defined by our diversity of people, places and ideas. We are an inclusive, vibrant, caring and progressive community where everyone is welcome, people and nature live in harmony, and creativity is a way of life.



## Our strategic directions

Each direction describes where we want to be in 2036.



We are a community of diverse voices that are listened to and respected. We have trust in our leaders and feel empowered to become leaders ourselves. All of us have the information, support and opportunities to show leadership and effect change.

We are innovative and creative in our approaches to tackling big issues. We stand up for what we believe in and collectively shape and own our future.



We have a strong sense of social justice. We see our diversity as an asset. Everyone is valued and accepted for who they are, and supported to participate in community life. We are resilient in the face of adversity and change. We keep each other and ourselves safe. We collaborate with each other and create meaningful partnerships.

We are active and healthy people with access to the services and spaces we need for recreation for our mental and physical wellbeing.

Our public places and spaces facilitate our enjoyment of urban living and community cultural expression.



Inner West is the creative and cultural engine room of Sydney – bringing a wealth of experience and employment to the city.

We are home to artists, musicians, writers, studios, galleries, creative industries, artstrun initiatives, academics, theatres and festivals. We are an incubator for new ideas, at the forefront of using new technologies to support and grow a diverse and thriving local economy.

Our residents, workers and visitors enjoy food, music, the arts, recreation, diverse shopping experiences and interesting places that are vibrant, inspiring and pleasurable.



An ecologically sustainable Inner West

Inner West is a zero emissions community. We generate our own clean and 100% renewable energy. We are zero waste with a vibrant share economy. We are water sensitive and rich with biodiversity. Our waterways are clean, swimmable and brimming with wildlife.

We show energetic leadership in collectively addressing climate change. People live sustainably because it's easy to do. We work together on complex urban environmental issues and develop creative solutions through collaboration, partnerships and education.

We enjoy the benefits that our healthy ecosystems provide the human environment – like trees, fresh, clean air, water and food.



Unique, liveable, networked neighbourhoods

Inner West is the most liveable place in Greater Sydney. Most services and needs can be accessed within 15 minutes. Moving around our network of neighbourhoods is cool, quick, convenient and enjoyable.

Each of our neighbourhoods has a unique inner city urban vibe. Our heritage and culture – a mix of old and new – is visible and valued. Inner West is affordable for all.

People connect through ideas, technology, transport and the places they call home – enjoying a diversity of people, places, housing and experiences.

# Snapshot of council successes 2018-21



New award-winning \$45 million Marrickville Library and Pavilion



First Council in NSW to be 100% divested from fossil fuels and aiming for 100% renewable and carbon neutral by 2025



\$46.4 million redevelopment of Ashfield Aquatic Centre



Record \$65 million spend on parks, sporting fields and recreation facilities, including Camperdown Park, Cooks River Parklands, Petersham Park grandstand and Henson Park upgrades



EDGE Inner West \$1.5 million arts program



Perfect Match partners artists with businesses and residents to create dynamic street art



\$5.2 million for two new childcare centres - Leichhardt Park Children's Centre and Yirran Gumal Early Learning Centre in Steel Park



Extension of pensioner rebate for waste and stormwater



\$500,000 new park in Croydon, Bell Reserve



Established the Inner West Music Library

\$22.5 million for Parramatta Road Urban Amenity Improvement Program

Food organics recycling to all apartment and verge mowing expansion

New customer service technology

Supported the community to deliver their environment, community, history, multicultural and arts initiatives via over \$1.5 million in grants



\$7.8 million Ashfield Town Centre upgrade

Extensive community support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic



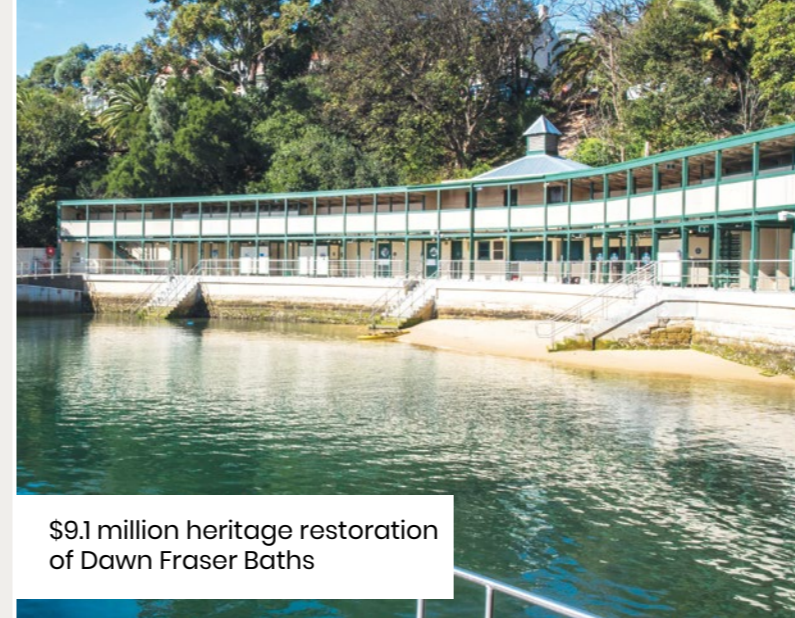
Record \$56.3 million infrastructure spend on roads, footpaths, stormwater drains and the GreenWay pedestrian, cycle and biodiversity corridor

Live music and venues initiatives, including planning liaison, launching free gig guide and introducing live performance and exhibition under "exempt development"

# Snapshot of council successes 2018-21

Established key strategic plans that will guide our future work including:

- Local Housing Strategy
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Employment and Retail Lands Strategy
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Recreation Needs Strategy
- Climate and Renewables Strategy
- Towards Zero Waste Strategy
- Companion Animals Strategy
- Recreation Needs Study
- Community Assets Needs Study
- Traffic and Transport Needs Study
- Draft Healthy Ageing Strategy
- Draft Cultural Strategy
- Gender Equity Strategy



\$9.1 million heritage restoration of Dawn Fraser Baths



\$4.5 million upgrade and expansion of Haberfield Centre and Library



\$1.6 million skate space in Sydenham Green



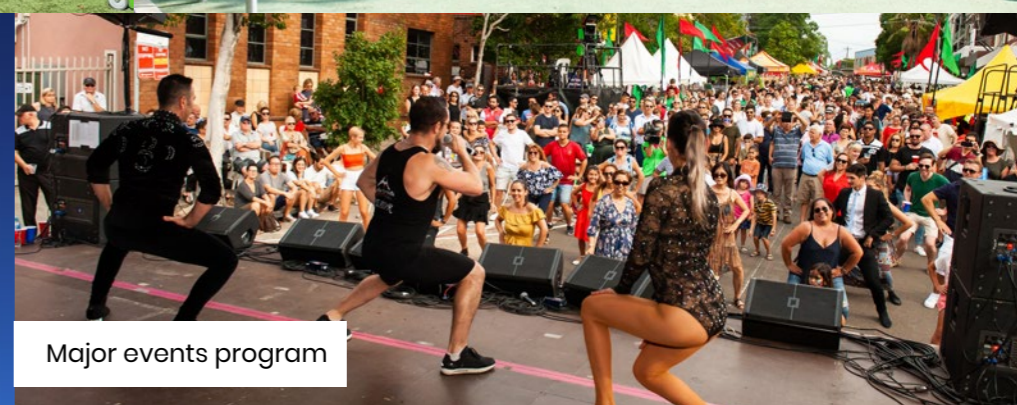
\$3.67 million upgrade of Camperdown Park and Oval



Solar initiatives



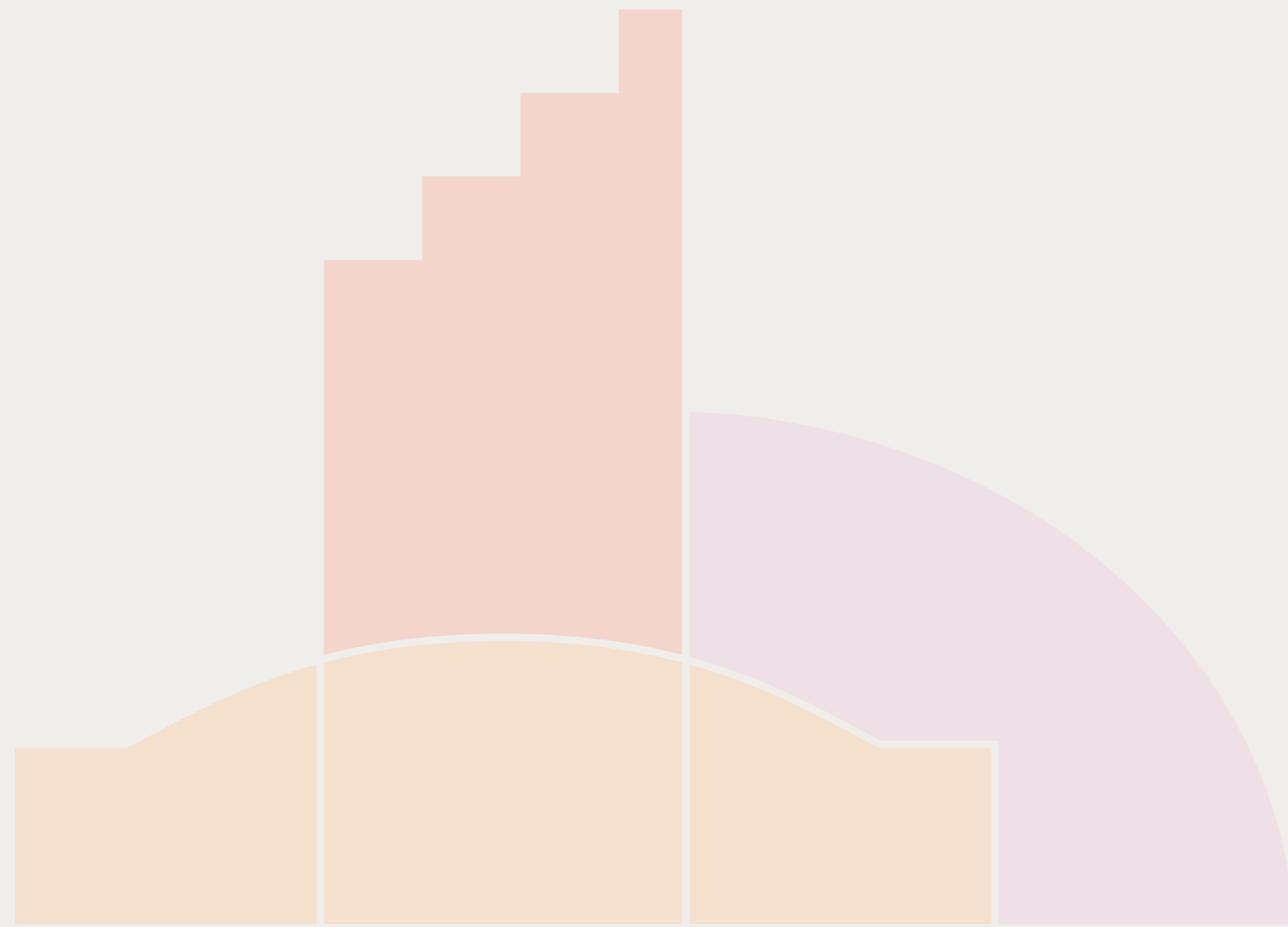
\$1.8 million Balmain Telstra Exchange public space



Major events program



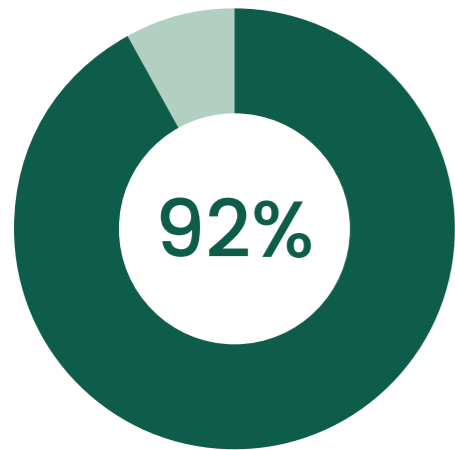
Richard Murden Reserve path and lighting upgrades



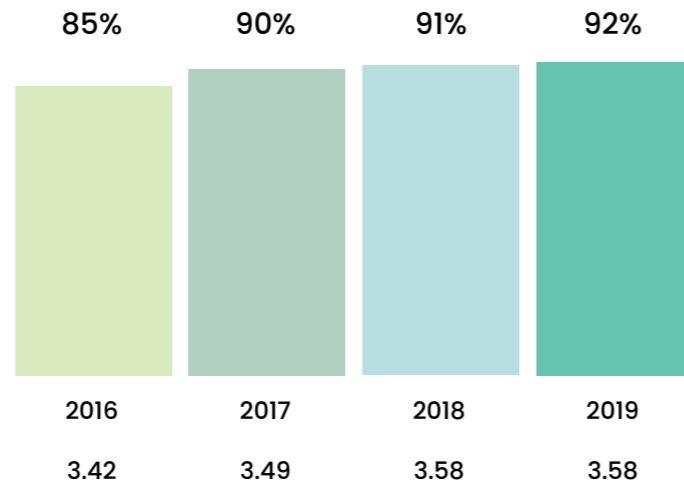


# Snapshot of community satisfaction highlights

All satisfaction ratings are mean scores out of a possible 5



92% of residents are satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months



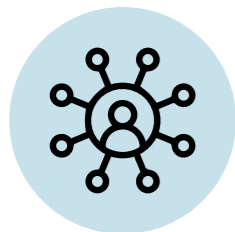
## Residents' priorities for Council in the future

In 2016 residents expressed concern about the amount of development occurring in the LGA, the flow-on effects of traffic congestion, population growth, public transport, parking, lack of green spaces, and environmental issues

In 2018 like nearly all Sydney LGAs, development, population growth and congestion were viewed as the primary challenges

In 2021 managing the challenge of population growth and prioritisation of further protections for our local environment were the key concerns

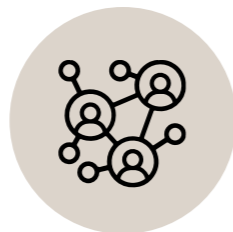
## The four key drivers of satisfaction are:



Council's integrity and decision making



Community's ability to influence Council decision making



Long term planning for the area

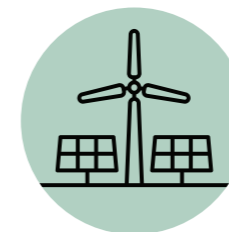


Provision of Council information to the community

## Top challenges facing Inner West Council area over the next 10 years



Managing development/adequate planning/overdevelopment (38%)



Environmental protection/managing pollution/climate change/provision of green open spaces (31%)



Traffic management/congestion (27%)



Availability of/access to/improving public transport (15%)



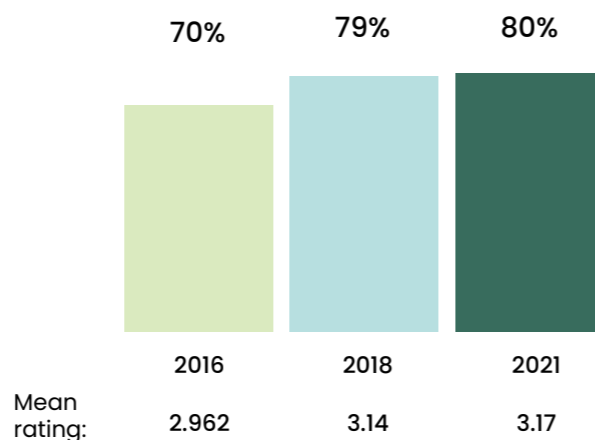
Housing affordability/availability (13%)

## How would you describe Council's community engagement?

	2016	2017	2018	2021
Excellent/very good	17%	18%	19%	22%
Good	41%	40%	42%	38%
Fair	23%	29%	28%	30%
Poor/very poor	19%	13%	11%	10%
Mean rating:	3.25	3.61	3.72	3.75

## Satisfaction with Council's integrity and decision making

Satisfaction with Council's integrity and decision-making has significantly increased



## Top 5 importance and satisfaction areas

Top 5 importance	Top 5 satisfaction
Access to public transport	Library services
Household garbage collection	Swimming pools and aquatic centres
Encouraging recycling	Maintenance of local parks, playgrounds and sporting fields
Safe public spaces	Community centres and facilities
Protecting the natural environment	Household garbage collection

# Five strategic directions for Inner West's future

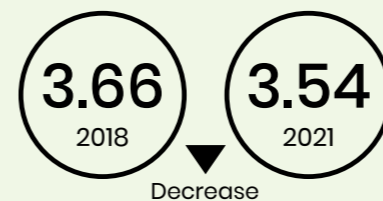
Our Inner West 2036 identifies five strategic directions for Council and its partners to focus on to achieve the community's vision.

Council's progress against each strategic direction is highlighted in this section.

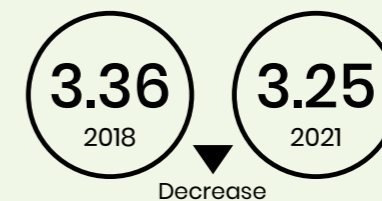


## Strategic Direction 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West

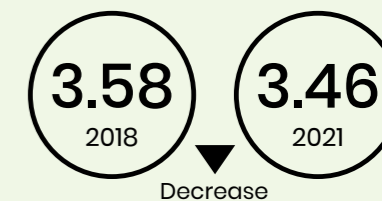
**Satisfaction with encouraging recycling**  
Mean ratings



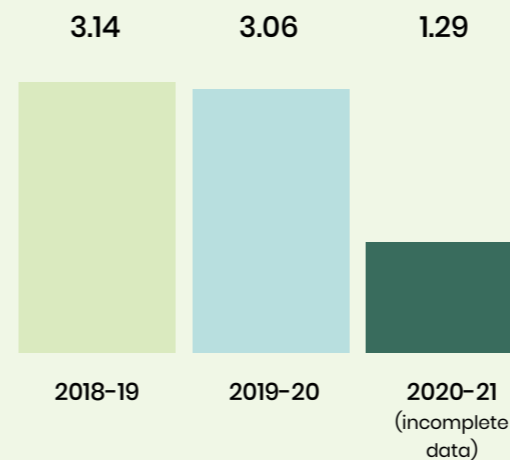
**Satisfaction with environmental education programs and initiatives**  
Mean ratings



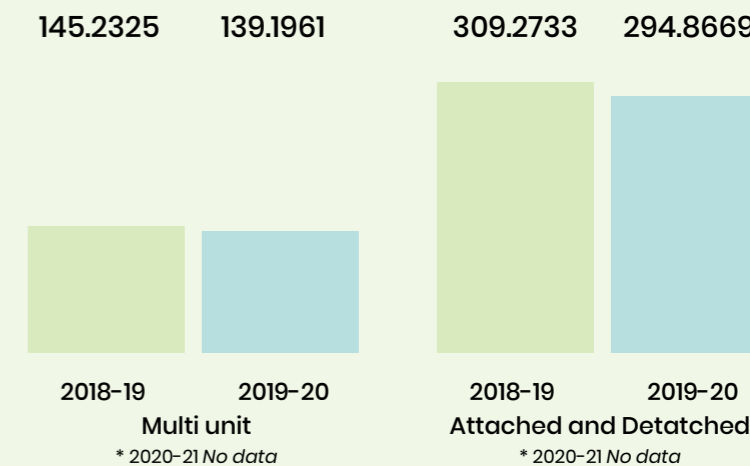
**Satisfaction with protection of the natural environment**  
Mean ratings

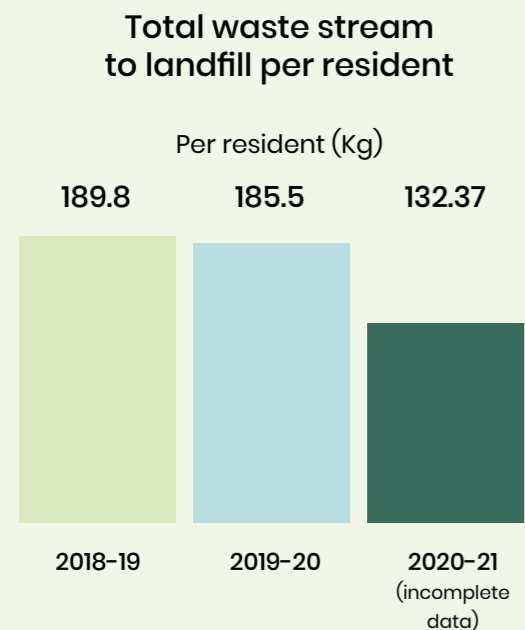


**Residential energy consumption**  
Energy use per capita (MWh)



**The amount of mains water per household**  
Residential potable water (kL/dwellings)





**21ha**  
of natural areas Council is protecting and restoring across the LGA, from Birchgrove to the Cooks River and along the Greenway corridor

**20ha**  
of vegetated water sensitive treatment systems and catchment raingardens installed by Council including the Steel Park catchment treated in vegetated swale drains and a vegetated bioretention basin, the Warren Park catchment treated in a vegetated bioretention basin and the Henson Park WSUD project

**Council’s achievements**

**Objective: Inner West is a zero emissions community that generates and owns clean energy**

**Action: Acting on climate change**

Council adopted the Climate and Renewables Strategy in 2019 to address the climate emergency. The strategy is a blueprint for becoming a ‘Carbon Neutral Council’ by December 2025 and a ‘Net Zero Emissions Community’ by 2050.

Council reduced its reliance on fossil fuels by opting to power its major assets with solar energy. For example, Council has reduced gas consumption by more than 9,500,000 megajoules per annum at the redeveloped Ashfield Aquatic Centre by switching to solar power.

In June 2019, we launched the Inner West Solar my School program which enables Council to provide direct brokerage and logistical assistance to Inner West schools to install solar on their buildings with the aim of powering every local school in the LGA with solar energy.



Council also established a free solar advice service and a new online solar mapping tool, making it easier than ever for residents and businesses in the LGA to harness solar energy.

Council engaged 789 community members on the feasibility of switching to solar through free workshops and provided free advice on home solar to 426 residents through a partnership with the Australian Energy Foundation, leading to 68 installations.

We collaborated with Pingala, Community Power Agency, and Komo Energy to allow residents to become “solar gardeners” through the Haystacks Solar Garden’s one megawatt solar farm, which assists tenants and apartment residents to easily access solar power.

We established an Office of Renewable Energy Innovation, which will continue to support renewable energy for residents, schools and businesses throughout the Inner West.

Council was the first local government area in NSW to fully remove its investments from fossil fuel companies, and is now “100 per cent divested”. Council also joined the first NSW local government bulk-buying group for renewable power, and is now supplied with over 4 million kilowatt-hours each year from Moree solar farm. This amount covers almost all of Council’s daytime electricity use. Council’s carbon emissions are now 28 per cent less than in 2016/17.

Other works include solar installations at Petersham Town Hall, Fanny Durack Aquatic Centre, Merv Fletcher Community Centre, Tillman Park Early Learning Centre, Haberfield Library and Seaview Street Community Hall.

Council has also included solar photovoltaic technologies in planning controls in the new Inner West Development Plan, and Council’s website has been updated with clear information on planning pathways for solar in residential, commercial and industrial, including in heritage conservation areas and for heritage items.

**Objective: Inner West is a zero-waste community with an active share economy**

**Action: Launching a war on waste**

In 2018, Inner West Council launched a regional ‘war on food waste’ advocating for a Sydney Metropolitan plan for food and garden organics (FOGO) addressing processing and infrastructure shortfalls.

In 2020, a Food Organics (FOO) recycling service was introduced to all apartments buildings in the Inner West LGA. The service collects between 12 and 15 tonnes of food waste per week. In 2021, the ‘resident champion program’ commenced with 101 residents in apartments supporting and promoting FOO services in their buildings.

Council also harmonised services in the operational areas of Resource Recovery and Fleet, Parks and Streetscapes and Civil Maintenance and introduced a new clean-up service and booking system across Inner West Council.

In July 2019, Council launched its innovative swap-and-go coffee cup scheme in partnership with Green Caffein. Thirty-two cafes in the Inner West immediately signed up for the program, which has saved around 60,000 disposable cups from being dumped in landfill to date.

Council supports at-home composting by providing up to four free workshops to residents each year. We also subsidise compost bins and worm farms for residents through Compost Revolution, which is Australia’s largest community of composters and worm farmers.

**Action: Encouraging reuse, repair and recycling.**

Council engaged The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre in Marrickville to accept donations of furniture, bric-a-brac, electrical and other goods from 5,526 households across the Inner West. This is equivalent to more than 2,226 tonnes of materials being diverted from landfill since mid-2017.

Council opened its second Community Recycling Centre in St Peters in June 2019, offering Inner West residents more opportunities for disposing of problem waste such as paints, oils, gas bottles, e-waste and batteries for free. Around 120 tonnes of chemicals are collected annually through drop-offs at community recycling centres and 'CleanOut' drop-off days.

In 2020, Council entered a new clean-up processing contract with a facility that recovers approximately 75 per cent of material processed through the site.

In 2021, the booked clean-up service was introduced to all households across the Inner West, and we introduced a free mattress collection service for residents.

Work has also commenced on turning Summer Hill Depot into a major community reuse centre that will eventually house Reverse Garbage and The Bower as well as Inner West Council's Green Living Centre.

At the strategic level, Council lodged an extensive submission to the 20-Year Waste Strategy for NSW discussion paper, which included a call to extend e-waste product stewardship beyond the existing scheme for TVs and computers, and to introduce mandatory product stewardship for problem wastes for a range of materials including mattresses, fridges and polystyrene.

We took a multi-faceted approach to illegal dumping with the hugely successful pop-up tree and public artwork at Roberts Street in St Peters. The former illegal dump site is now a contemporary art installation and community garden with locals contributing numerous pot plants to the industrial site at the end of their street.

The installation of a new garden and artwork has reduced incidences of illegal dumping from weekly reports to zero in the area. The waste avoidance (illegal dumps) achieved by this project are estimated at seven to 10 tonnes per year.

We continue to focus on avoiding waste and encouraging reuse, repair and recycling through the

Zero Waste Strategy and Action Plan, adopted by Council in August 2021.

### **Objective: Inner West has a diverse and increasing urban forest that supports connected habitats for flora and fauna**

#### **Action: Supporting biodiversity and our tree canopy**

Council completed the Urban Canopy mapping and tree asset audit, which included a condition audit and species identification undertaken on all public trees within the Inner West.

We adopted a harmonised Inner West Tree Development Control Plan and heat maps were undertaken for the Inner West to assist in the prioritisation of the tree planting program.

Council's regular annual tree planting program continued with 1,294 trees planted in 2017/18, 1,065 trees in 2018/19, 1,017 trees in 2019/20 and 1,260 trees in 2020/21. A further 3,000 public trees are scheduled to be planted across the Inner West between 2021/22, which is the biggest investment in green infrastructure in the history of the Inner West.

To date, 1,993 trees have been provided free of charge to residents and schools, and 915 applications for private tree removal or pruning have been assessed per year.

Council maintains 21 hectares of natural areas and is working with 100 registered bushcare and Council nursery volunteers to support local groups to deliver microbat monitoring, nest box program, and Citizen Science (Greenway Birdos, Tempe Birdos, FrogID, Backyard Bird Count, Mort Bay Park and Microbat Monitors). We also engage residents through podcasts, the Water Sensitive Urban Design webinar and Nature for Backyards web workshop series, as well as the rainwater tank rebate scheme.



Council protected and restored 21 hectares of natural areas, including the Cooks River and the Greenway biodiversity corridor.

We provided advice and resourcing for Friends of Whites Valley Park for a food forest of 70 fruit and nut trees and grapes on public land, and funded 14 community-led projects through Environment Grants - 50 per cent of which were food-growing initiatives.

#### **Action: Working for the environment.**

Council has supported the important work of environmental volunteers, which helps to build a sense of community and increases the overall wellbeing of residents.

Council also runs two community native plant nurseries for ecological restoration projects, which have gained great support from the community. Volunteers at the Marrickville and Rozelle Bay community nurseries worked 2,345 hours at 223 volunteer working bees, propagating

20,624 plants, including 15,261 plants that were provided for planting in the LGA, as well as plants for Council-maintained natural areas.

More than 280 supervised volunteer working bees consisting of 1,359 volunteers were also held to control weeds and restore native vegetation at multiple sites across the Inner West.

And Council's Sustainable Streets program proved increasingly popular, with the number of residents maintaining gardens on Council verges increasing to 306 sites.



**Objective: The community is water sensitive, with clean, swimmable waterways**

Action: A water sensitive approach.

Council's Urban Ecology team provided technical and legislative advice on projects including Marrickville Parklands, the Greenway and Dibble Avenue Waterhole to ensure natural assets were protected and opportunities for better biodiversity outcomes were identified.

Twelve community workshops to create a water-sensitive community were held, and Council partnered with nearby Councils and other stakeholders in Paramatta, Cooks River and Sydney coastal catchment groups to deliver water-sensitive cities projects. A litter prevention strategy, which aims to significantly improve water quality in the Cooks and Parramatta Rivers, is currently underway.

**Objective: The people and infrastructure of Inner West contribute positively to the environment and tackling climate change**

Action: Protecting the Environment.

The GreenWay is a 5.8km environmental and active travel corridor from Cooks River at Earlwood to the Parramatta River at Iron Cove Bay.

The Greater Sydney Commission has identified the GreenWay as the number one priority 'green grid' project in the Eastern Sydney District Plan released in March 2018.

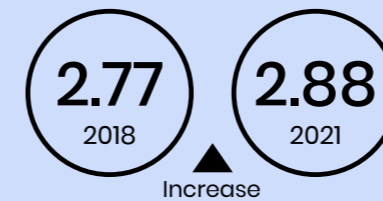
Over this term, Council's GreenWay Program won the Planning Institute of Australia 2018 'Hard Won Victory' Commendation Award; the 2019 Australian Institute of Landscape Architecture (AILA) National Landscape Architecture Award for Urban Design; and the 2019 AILA Award of Excellence for Urban Design (NSW Chapter).

These achievements were a great outcome after more than 10 years of campaigning by the Inner West community and Council, which resulted in \$25.7 million in State and Local Government funding to complete the southern section of the GreenWay from Parramatta Road through Lewisham West and Dulwich Hill to the Cooks River. ■



**Strategic Direction 2: Unique liveable, networked neighbourhoods**

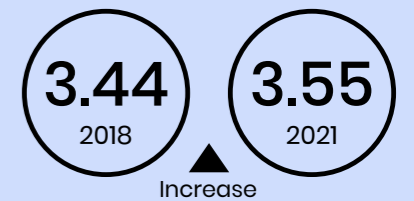
**Community satisfaction with managing development in the area**  
Mean ratings



**Community satisfaction with long term planning for council area**  
Mean ratings



**Community satisfaction with protection of heritage buildings and items**  
Mean ratings



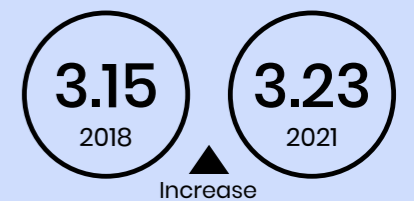
**Community satisfaction with maintenance and cleaning of town centres**  
Mean ratings



**Satisfaction with safety of public spaces**  
Mean ratings

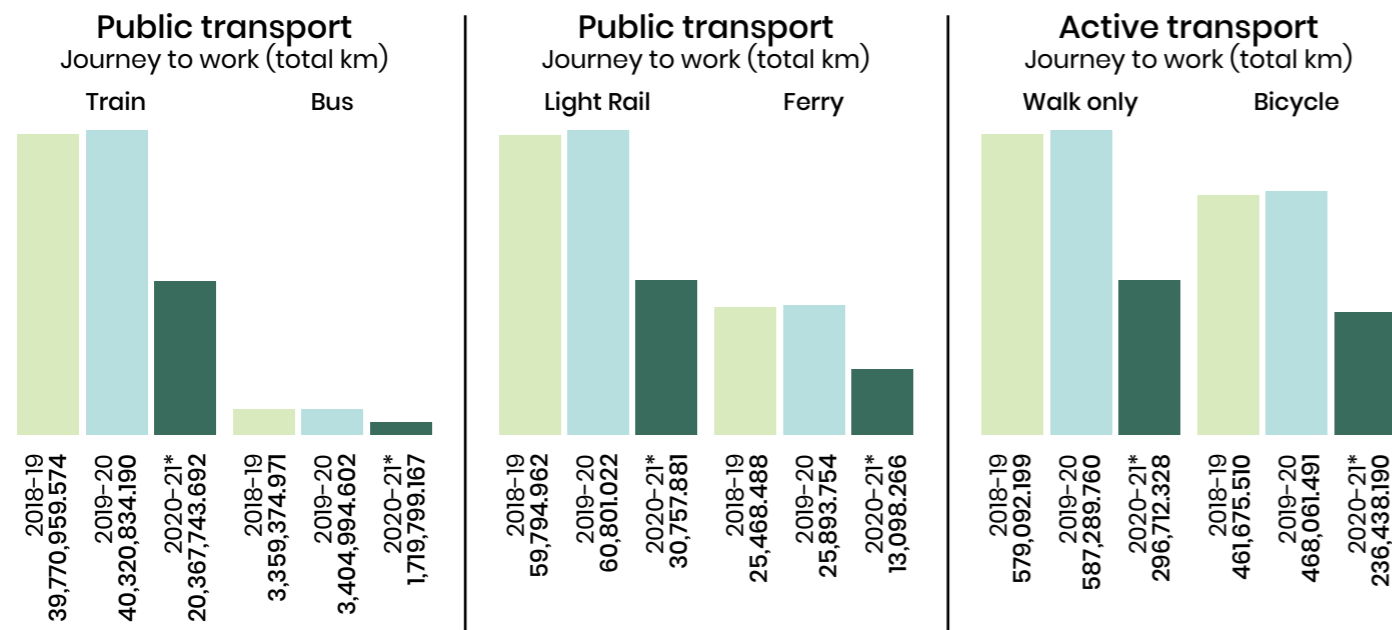


**Satisfaction with the protection of low rise residential areas**  
Mean ratings



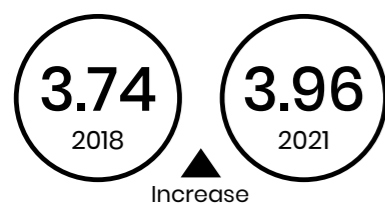
### People who travel to work by public and active transport

\*2020-2021 data is incomplete



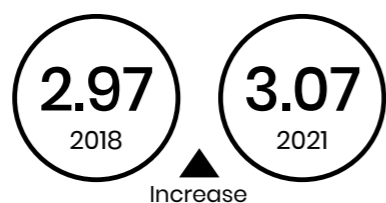
#### Satisfaction with access to public transport

Mean ratings



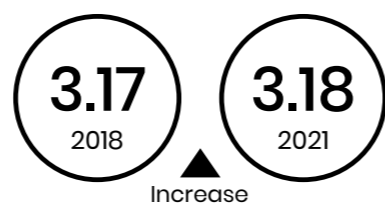
#### Satisfaction with cycleways

Mean ratings



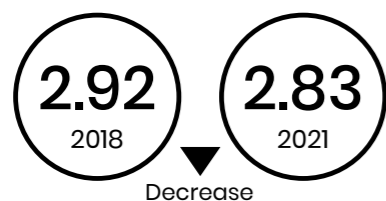
#### Satisfaction with maintaining footpaths

Mean ratings



#### Satisfaction with management of parking

Mean ratings



**12.9m<sup>2</sup>**  
 is the measurement of open space per capita which is higher than the 2017 benchmark of 11.5 m<sup>2</sup> per person despite an increase in population from 192,030 to 201,880 in 2021.

## Council's achievements

### Objective: Development is designed for sustainability and makes life better

Action: Council's continues to invest in and advocate for the community

During this term of Council, capital works included:

- Aquatic centre works worth over \$58m
- Parks and sporting ground capital works worth over \$37m
- Roads, traffic, kerb & gutter upgrade and renewal worth over \$29m
- Footpath upgrades and renewal worth over \$13m
- Library works worth over \$9m
- Stormwater upgrades worth over \$8m
- Town centre upgrades worth over \$6m
- Town hall and community venue works worth over \$5m
- Cycleway upgrades worth over \$4m
- Seawall upgrade and renewals worth over \$1m

Council has completed a number of ground-breaking projects during this term including:

- Marrickville Library – more than \$40m
- Ashfield Aquatic Centre upgrade - \$45m
- Dawn Fraser Baths upgrade - \$9.1m
- Haberfield Library upgrade - \$4.5m
- Henson Park upgrade - \$2.4m
- New Telstra Plaza in Balmain - \$1.8m
- New Steel Park childcare facility - \$3.7m
- Sydenham Green skate park - \$1.6m
- Ongoing delivery of the \$27m Greenway project, including Richard Murden Reserve pathway and lighting, on road works and Dobroyd Parade seawall. Adoption of the Greenway Masterplan

- Weston Street Balmain, Fenwick Building adaptive reuse - \$2m
- Ongoing delivery of the Parramatta Road \$21m urban amenity improvement program
- Installation of 25 new shade sails at playgrounds and aquatic centres
- Bike path upgrades including regional route Lewisham to Newtown, Bay Run improvements
- Ashfield Town Centre upgrades
- Construction of the Blackmore Oval Wetlands
- A new park Bell Reserve in Ashfield
- Callan Park Waterfront Drive sporting ground and lighting upgrade
- New toilet facilities including Wicks Park and Ashfield Town Centre. Toilet renewal works in Pioneer Park, War Memorial Park, Punch Park, Lambert Park and Bridgewater Park
- Richard Murden Reserve multi-purpose courts
- New Leichhardt Child Care Centre.
- Upgrades to Children and Family Services facilities, including Enmore CC, Leichhardt CCC and Balmain Occasional Care, May Murray
- Camperdown Park seating terraces, picnic, play area, footpaths and basketball court upgrade
- Participation in Ausgrid's program to accelerate the conversion of residential streetlights to LED, which is creating energy savings
- Completion of the Inner West Synthetic Strategy to support the increase in usage of Council's sporting grounds
- Playground upgrades including Bain Park, Crammond Park, Hammond Park, Sutherland Reserve, Steel Park, Simpson Park, Elizabeth Street, Cohen Park and Thornton Park

Council has developed and harmonised the following policies and strategies to make the community more connected:

- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Car Share Policy
- Public Domain Parking Strategy
- Local Area Traffic Management Area studies, including Rozelle North, Balmain Precinct, Tempe South (draft) and Newtown shared zones
- Carshare and Light Rail integration pilot program
- Precinct Parking Studies including Balmain East, Rozelle North, Lilyfield, Leichhardt West, WestConnex Rozelle Interchange and Croydon
- Pedestrian access and mobility plan (draft)
- Public Domain Parking Policy
- Road Safety Action Plan

Council has made submissions, liaised with and advocated for the community with the State and Federal Governments on a number of major infrastructure projects, including:

- WestConnex (3 stages)
- WestConnex Local Area Traffic Changes
- Western Harbour Tunnel
- Sydney Gateway
- Sydney Metro West – successful removal of the ventilation stacks proposed to be located near Leichhardt Park Aquatic Centre
- Future Transport 2056
- Sydney Airport Master Plan and Major Development Plan
- Sydney Airport Flightpath Principles Review
- Sydney Airport Demand Management Review

### **Objective: Public spaces are high-quality, welcoming and enjoyable places, seamlessly connected with their surroundings**

**Action: Enhancing public places through public art**

Aboriginal artists have also completed new public artworks for each of the five Council Wards that celebrate the continuing cultural connections of Aboriginal people to this land.

Inner West Council received State Government funding in 2016 to commission five art installations, one for each ward of the Inner West Council local government area. A critical investigation into the Gadigal Wangal landscape of the Inner West was also commissioned and artists were invited to respond to this site-specific research, choosing to reveal an element of the rich and unique Gadigal and Wangal Aboriginal culture of the Inner West.

To date, the Gadigal Wangal Wayfinding Project has resulted in the installation of four distinct public artworks with final commission currently underway. The project aims to describe components of Aboriginal history using visual means, and through these beautiful artworks we celebrate the continuing presence of Aboriginal people within the Inner West.

The GreenWay Missing Links program includes funding 13 new public art commissions at key sites along the corridor. Thirty-two artists have been selected for Stage Two design development for the installation of artworks in alignment with the works program of 2022/23.

An integrated artwork and green wall now enlivens the old telephone exchange in Balmain as part of a new public square, Balmain Plaza, which opened in mid-2021. Plus, three new art works have been funded by Create NSW as part of the Parramatta Road Urban Improvement Amenity Program.

In Ashfield, commissioned artists have engaged local communities in the design of lantern artworks for Foxes



Lane. A major partnership with Marrickville Metro has resulted in the commissioning of 14 magnificent artworks for this iconic gathering place as well as design input for pedestrian areas to function as future event sites.

Meanwhile, Council's Perfect Match program continues to deliver 20 new street art works each year and works with property owners, artists, communities and Council to transform our streets and laneways.

### **Objective: The unique character and heritage of neighbourhoods is retained and enhanced**

**Action: Strategic planning for the future of Inner West with a clear vision**

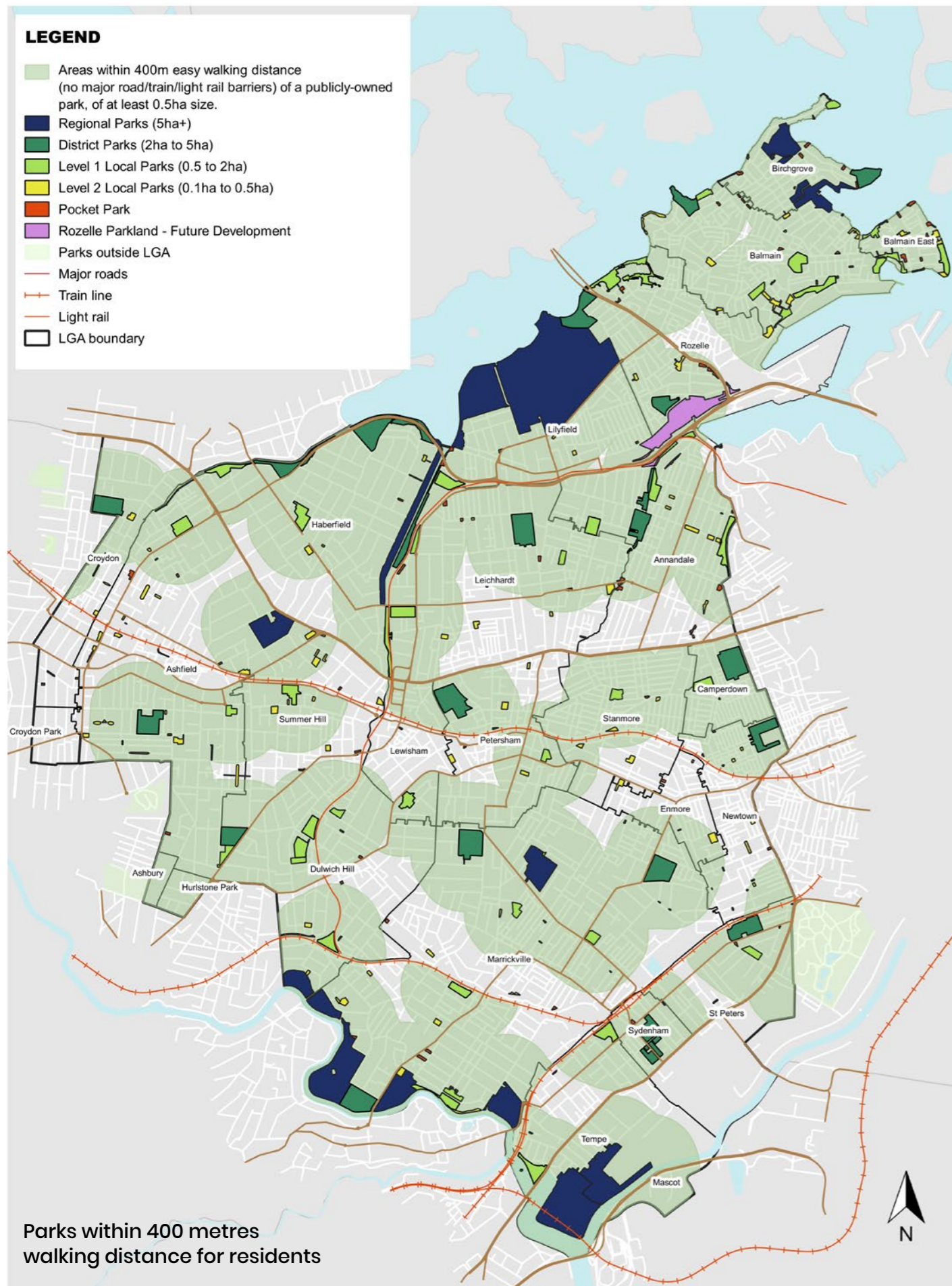
Council has committed significant time developing strategies, which have overarching impacts on the livelihood of Inner West residents for the future.

These include:

- The Integrated Transport Strategy, adopted in March 2020, and provided to the Department of Planning Industry and Environment and Transport for NSW for endorsement

- The implementation of the Active Transport Plan, Parking Strategy, Road Safety Action Plan, and Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan
- The Housing Strategy was adopted by Council in March 2020 to devise a clear plan for projected housing in Inner West to 2036. It discusses the challenges that the Inner West faces in housing and where, when, what type of housing is likely to be delivered and how it will be managed in the future.

On the 25 February 2020, Council endorsed the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) for submission to the Greater Sydney Commission. The LSPS sets out the 20-year vision for the local government area, demonstrating how change will be managed and identifies local priorities for updating Local Environmental Plans (LEP). It marks a milestone in the delivery of planning reforms that place greater emphasis on upfront strategic planning.



**Objective: People can walk, cycle and move around Inner West with ease**

**Action: Delivering connections to residents.**

Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to public infrastructure through major streetscape improvements including Ashfield Town Centre and along Darling Street, Balmain.

The list of completed works include three regional road resurfacing projects in addition to more than 45 local road resurfacing projects; 25 footpath renewals and more than 20 traffic and pedestrian facilities projects to improve safety and amenity for road users.

Completed projects include:

- Local Route 18 Cycleway
- Marrickville to Dulwich Hill Station mobility plan
- Feasibility study for Wolli Creek pedestrian/cycleway bridge
- Design for Livingstone Rd Cycleway
- Design for Longport Street to Eliza Street Regional Cycleway
- Marrickville Valley Flood Risk Management Plan
- Leichhardt Flood Risk Management Plan
- Hawthorne Canal and Dobroyd Flood Risk Management Plan

**Action: The importance of having walkable open space within 400 metres of all residents**

Council is reviewing Inner West's open space and recreational infrastructure needs to 2036, and data will be updated following the completion of the review in Council's strategic policies.

The map shows parks within 400 metres walking distance for residents.

**Action: Making Council more reactive to residents' needs**

Council provides a prioritised list of future stormwater upgrades for 70 per cent of the Inner West LGA for inclusion on forward works plans. Service standards

have been harmonised for flood information access so all residents can now obtain a Flood Certificate from Council for their property.

Other improvements have been the development and implementation of online application systems for all Road Access approval permits. Since its inception in March 2020 there have been over 2,300 applications lodged. Council has adopted harmonised standard drawings for roadworks, for use by developers and utility companies as well as the preparation of an Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans for the various asset classes.

**Objective: Everyone has a roof over their head and a suitable place to call home**

**Action: Caring for everyone**

Council is part of a homelessness outreach program, which is a collaboration with a range of not-for-profit services and State Government agencies to ensure that all Inner West residents have a place to call home. This program has permanently housed 27 people over the period from January 2019 until June 2020, including many long-term rough sleepers.

As a result of this work, Council was awarded the Local Government Excellence Award in the category of Community Partnerships and Collaboration (population over 60,000) for the program 'Reaching Out: Inner West Homelessness Outreach' in June 2019.

Council also adopted a Homelessness Policy and has developed a unique awareness and training program for both staff and the community. The interactive short course for the community provides an introduction to the issue of homelessness, provides guidance to residents who want to know how to help, and informs them on how Council can connect people who are sleeping rough to the appropriate assistance for their situation. ■

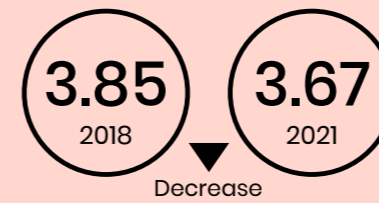




**Strategic Direction 3:**  
Creative communities and a strong economy

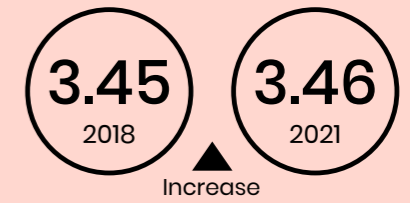
**Satisfaction with festival and events programs**

Mean ratings



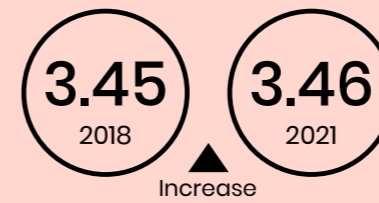
**Satisfaction with supporting local artists and creative industries**

Mean ratings



**Satisfaction with Council support of local jobs and businesses**

Mean ratings



**Satisfaction with appearance of your local area**

Mean ratings



## Council's achievements

### Objective: Creativity and culture are valued and celebrated

#### Action: Planning and delivering cultural enlivenment

The cultural economy in the Inner West is worth \$1.4 billion per annum and employs more than 6,500 people.

Council has worked to strengthen and grow the arts and culture sector including:

- Collaborating with the NSW Government and City of Sydney on sector mapping and capacity building including shared design of grant programs and multiple COVID relief packages
- Creating a Cultural Strategy as a roadmap for cultural enlivenment for everyone over the four years to 2025
- Creating an art in public places policy to ensure high-quality public art continues to contribute to cultural enlivenment, including continuing investment in Perfect Match
- Creating a Chamber of Commerce for arts and culture, the Inner West Creative Network, and providing pilot funding to build sector capacity
- Investing \$1.2 million in arts and culture grants, including \$445,000 for Covid recovery grants for the arts and culture sector, benefitting more than 500 artists and organisations
- Investing \$1.5 million in EDGE activations across the Inner West, employing more than 2,500 creatives and creating participation for more than 100,000 people
- Investment in residencies for artists
- Documenting every art and culture asset and facility across the Inner West, and to create a contributions plan for new cultural investment and facilities
- Researching the effect the changing economics of property prices are having on availability of affordable



space for creative and making uses, and using this analysis for advice on planning proposals and development applications

Council established the EDGE Inner West program that funds local artists, creative spaces and businesses to present new festivals and creative precincts across five distinct areas at different times during the year: Sydenham, Ashfield, Newtown, Balmain/Rozelle and the Greenway.

Each EDGE festival has a distinct theme and location with a signature site specific activation, plus a range of other events in artist's studios, music venues, on the streets and in community spaces.

EDGE spotlights the Inner West as the cultural engine of global Sydney. EDGE employs local creatives to develop

new artworks and content unique to our area. EDGE invest in creative programs that connect communities to each other, local businesses and neighbourhoods to build belonging and resilience.

In 2020 and again in 2021 the Sydney arts and events sector had to shut down due to Covid lockdowns and restrictions. Therefore, EDGE Inner West pivoted to resource the creative sector and profile its role in economic recovery and community resilience in the face of the pandemic.

In April/May 2021 EDGE Art Camp on the Greenway offered a Covid-safe activation with 20 arts residencies and partnered with local business Cafe Bones and Leichhardt Wanderers rugby league club along the iconic GreenWay. Forty-five creatives connected participants to the environment through diverse and engaging activations over 25 days.

Council continued to deliver high-quality large-scale events for the community, with over 20 events each year delivered as part of its program. These events focused on showcasing local community and businesses, with a granular focus on engaging stakeholders and activating new participants.

Businesses were engaged to highlight the economic benefit of events and placemaking models of activation and co-design were introduced to ensure high levels of community participation.

New programs through Council's Inner West Fest program were piloted in response to Covid-19, which through co-design principles, which increased participation and allowed new events emerge responding to demand.



### Objective: Inner West is the home of creative industries and services

#### Action: Fostering creative industries.

EDGE profiles local creative spaces and arts precincts through Council's Creative Trails, which allows residents to discover where art is worked on and made. More than 70 art studios and artist run initiatives delivered workshops, exhibitions and artist talks.

Canal Road Film Centre regularly host an exhibition of their skilled trades with over 3000 visitors to this creative industry hub of more than 71 distinct businesses.

Newtown Art Seat showcases five new artists each year and Chrissie Cotter Gallery continues to host exhibitions in-situ and online.

The Performing Arts program offers Arts Xchange to facilitate much needed rehearsal space in available Council buildings and supports Survival Guide as a mental health and professional development program for emerging artists.

Meanwhile, major arts organisations and creative industries who produce films, festivals, events and public programs are networked and supported through the Living Arts Programs.



**Objective: The local economy is thriving, employment is diverse and accessible, and urban hubs and main streets are distinct and enjoyable places to shop, eat, socialise and be entertained**

**Action: Supporting the economy**

Council has proven to be a leader in advocating for local venues and performers, with the NSW Parliamentary Night-Time Economy Report recommending adoption of a host of Council's initiatives and policies in October 2019.

Council's Good Neighbour policy also received the Night-Time Economy Report's tick of approval, as did its push to allow small scale arts and music to operate in shops and cafes, and its new legislation making it easier for small bars to gain licencing and approval.

Ground-breaking research from Western Sydney University was commissioned by Council to develop a greater understanding of the nature and extent of the future needs of creative industries in the LGA. This research confirmed that the Council's initiatives in promoting and nurturing creative and cultural industries will benefit the Inner West both economically and socially.

**Action: Augmenting technology to better serve the community**

Council adopted an innovative approach to improve service efficiency and quality through a range of new technology solutions. Since 2019, Council has implemented e-services for payments, customer requests, and Development Applications.

Parking permits, Compliance, Rates information and associated payments are all available online for registered users and Customer Requests can also be lodged online by all users.

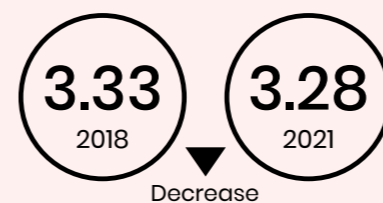
Digital technology has been deployed to better preserve the Inner West history. In 2018, the annually completed digitisation register converted 25,000 pages of vertical files of clippings and themed historic information from the Marrickville Collection into digital format.

In 2019, Council completed the digitisation of the Haberfield Conservation Plan Block 1-68 (2000 pages). This collection will assist strategic planners, heritage consultants and history staff in delivering history services pertaining to the houses of Haberfield. ▶

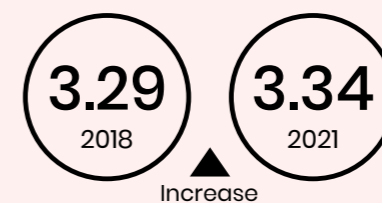


**Strategic Direction 4: Caring, happy, healthy communities**

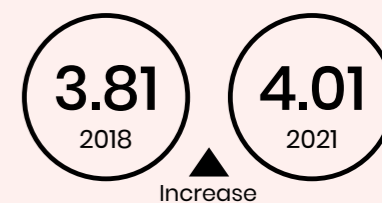
**Satisfaction with programs and support for newly arrived and migrant communities**  
Mean ratings



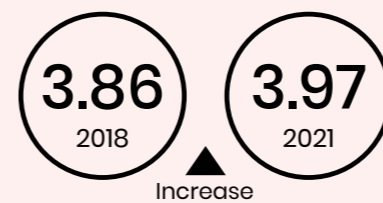
**Satisfaction with support for people with a disability**  
Mean ratings



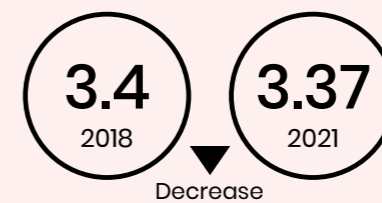
**Satisfaction with aquatic and recreation centres**  
Mean ratings



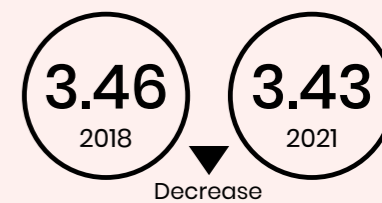
**Satisfaction with the availability of sporting ovals, grounds and facilities**  
Mean ratings



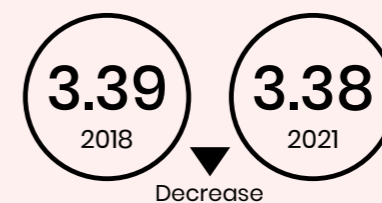
**Satisfaction with provision of services for older residents**  
Mean ratings



**Satisfaction with community education programs**  
Mean ratings



**Satisfaction with youth programs and activities**  
Mean ratings



## Council's achievements

### Objective: Everyone feels welcome and connected to the community

#### Action: Promoting wellbeing and participation

Council programs created opportunities for residents to participate in their communities, to build their relationships with others, and to create social inclusion. The Inner West is diverse – 65,000 people speak a language other than English at home. Council has created policy and strategy to build inclusion in many different contexts, to meet this diverse need:

- Annual improvement of Council's grant program guidelines to build new social inclusion opportunities across arts, environment, history and heritage, multicultural, recreation, and wellbeing to guide distribution of \$440,000 in annual funds
- Covid-support funding for food distribution and other emergency support
- Cultural Strategy accompanied by program and grant funding
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan with more than 200 actions
- Gender equity strategy and action plan
- Grants and Fee Scale Policy to ensure equitable subsidised access to 43 community facilities and venues for thousands of user groups, and leading practice grant administration
- Healthy Ageing Strategy accompanied by program and grant funding
- Master planning for redesign of high streets, town centres and council infrastructure
- Multicultural policy and grant program
- Public Domain Guidelines
- Public Toilet Strategy

#### Action: Fostering an inclusive community

Following a detailed process of engagement and consultation with local Aboriginal people and Indigenous language experts, Council voted in 2018 to rename all five wards within the Local Government Area to include the following Aboriginal names

- Ashfield – Djarrawunang (Magpie) Ward
- Balmain – Baludarri (Leather Jacket) Ward
- Leichhardt – Gulgadya (Grass Tree) Ward
- Marrickville – Midjuburi (Lillypilly) Ward
- Stanmore – Damun (Port Jackson Fig) Ward

In 2017, Council opened The Community Refugee Welcome Centre (CRWC) which is the only refugee welcome centre of its kind in Sydney. The CRWC provides a place for connection between the local community and refugees, and people seeking asylum through a range of programs and initiatives in a safe and supportive space.

Council is an official participant in ACON's Welcome Here project, which supports businesses and organisations to be inclusive of LGBTIQ communities. All of Council's facilities which include service centres, childcare centres, community venues and centres, aquatic facilities and libraries proudly display the Welcome Here sticker and charter at each site to make the Inner West more inclusive. More than 300 sites in the Inner West have signed up to this project including cafes, retail stores, charities, community organisations, and businesses.

In 2018, Council unveiled seven rainbow Pride Seats, which recognised Council's unwavering support for the LGBTIQ community. Each Pride Seat contains a unique plaque dedicated to an Inner West person or an organisation who has campaigned for or contributed to LGBTIQ rights over the years.

Council has hosted an annual 'Feel the Love' Mardi Gras reception and flag raising event each year. In 2020 Council in partnership with the LGBTIQ Working



Group produced 'Get to Know Your Neighbour' short film focusing on the friendships people form despite differences in sexuality, age, race and gender.

#### Action: Celebrating cultural diversity

Council adopted a Multicultural Policy and employed a Multicultural Officer, a newly created role with a focus on addressing key issues impacting upon multicultural communities in 2019.

The policy included the establishment of a new multicultural advisory committee to give the diverse local multicultural communities a renewed and engaged voice at Council and the development of an annual multicultural grants program to assist and support communities to celebrate their cultures and National days.

Other activities include Council becoming a signatory to the "Racism, It Stops With Me" and "#RacismNotWelcome" campaigns. The locally led #RacismNotWelcome campaign resulted in the installation of 40 streets signs across the LGA.

The Melody of Humanity is a cross-cultural and multilingual music video project that was unveiled on Human Rights Day in 2020. The video features 22 artist, newly arrived refugees, Aboriginal community members and local inner west musicians.

My Plate, Your Plate is an ongoing community arts partnership between The Community Refugee Welcome Centre, Settlement Services International and the University of Technology Sydney, which engaged 15 refugee women in designing a mobile cart to share cultural recipes and stories at festivals and events.

The Tapestry Friendship Project took place at the Community Refugee Welcome Centre in 2019, with local residents and asylum seekers working together to create a large tapestry to make a two-seater sofa.

The Refugee Art Project and New Moon collective worked directly with refugees and communities of colour to express their stories and artworks to the broader community.

Council also hosted 13 artists in residence at Thirning Villa in Ashfield, who connected with local communities exploring environmental and social issues.

Council has continued to acknowledge and celebrate all cultures in the Inner West including formally adopting Little Portugal in Petersham 2019, Little Italy in the Leichhardt Ward in 2020 and undertaking community engagement to establish a Greek Precinct and a Vietnamese Precinct in the Marrickville Ward in 2021.

### Objective: The Aboriginal community is flourishing, and its culture and heritage continues to strengthen and enrich the Inner West

#### Action: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history are celebrated

Council has resolved to create an Aboriginal Survival Memorial. This positive recognition of the impact of colonisation and Aboriginal survival in the face of the subsequent challenges is a defining policy approach. This is reflected in Council developing a Reconciliation Action Plan, and establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, as one of Council's principal local democracy groups.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Group has provided advice to Council officers developing strategy and programs which serve Aboriginal people. The group is providing ongoing advice on how to balance respect for Aboriginal culture while celebrating it through adopting Aboriginal ward and street names. Council's Cultural Strategy ensures Indigenous people and their culture are at the centre of our Council's plan for cultural development across the Inner West.

Council continues to acknowledge and celebrate NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week annually through a range of initiatives including showcasing Aboriginal movies, Koori kids disco, hosted talks, support for family fun days and Aboriginal Cultural Walking Tours.

We provide cultural training and awareness sessions to childcare educators across the Inner West to help assist with embedding Reconciliation in our early learning services. Projections were showcased on town halls in Baludarra and Gulgadya wards depicting and sharing some of the stories, history, dance, songs and images of the Aboriginal people and history of the Gadigal Wangal nations.

Council's Gadigal Wangal Wayfinding project has delivered five art installations, across the Inner West that celebrate the connection of Aboriginal people with local places.

### Objective: The community is healthy, and people have a sense of wellbeing

#### Action: Delivering wellbeing and community enlivenment

More than 1000 local residents participated in developing the Healthy Ageing and Cultural Strategies. These action plans will guide Council's work with communities to create wellbeing and enlivenment through cultural engagement and new participation opportunities.

Aboriginal culture and people are at the heart of our approach. So too are people from diverse backgrounds as we celebrate our multicultural communities. Younger people are being supported with new recreation and cultural participation opportunities.

The use of Council's parks and green spaces during the Covid pandemic is an indicator of the important place our investment is protecting and developing these spaces is to wellbeing.

Council has extensive relationships with the Local Health District, and extensive input into local preventative health program design to ensure the best possible healthy eating, healthy lifestyle and health prevention is available to our residents.

Council works closing with sporting clubs in the Inner West and implemented an online management of sporting grounds lighting system, providing improved services to the Clubs.

Council harmonised verge mowing and street cleaning services across the Inner West, including the introduction of verge mowing in the former Ashfield area. Quarterly high-pressure main street cleaning services were rolled out as well as steam weed management near sensitive areas (e.g. playgrounds, waterways) across the Inner West Council area.



#### Action: Improving social infrastructure for the community well-being

The magnificent Marrickville Library has won the prestigious David Oppenheim Award for Sustainable Architecture and was joint winner of the Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Architecture in 2020. It was also nominated for the International Public Library of the Year Award 2021 by the International Federation of Library Associations.

Council has spent nearly \$4 million on upgrading the Haberfield Centre, St Peters Library, and refurbishing the Mervyn Fletcher Hall.

Other major social infrastructure projects include:

- Delivering the upgraded irrigation and drainage to Darrell Jackson Gardens, Summer Hill
- Upgrading Ashfield Park lighting
- Carrying out the construction of Cooks River Parklands Master Plan by upgrading work from Steel Park to Kendrick Park that commenced in November 2018.

- Completing the concept designs for Master Plan upgrades at HJ Mahoney Reserve followed by detailed design in the 2019-2020 financial year
- Completing the construction of landscape interpretation of the former Coptic Church in Sydenham Green
- Installing new netball courts at Richard Murden Reserve
- Continuing the construction phase of Ashfield Aquatic Centre Refurbishment Project
- Completing the Draft Plans of Management and Master Plans for the Dulwich Hill Parklands, Tempe Reserve Lands, Leichhardt Park, while work has also commenced on the development of a Plan of Management for Henson Park and King George Park
- Adopting the Inner West Recreation Strategy and Policy in June 2021



**Objective: People have access to the services and facilities they need at all stages of life**

**Action: Supporting people as they age**

Over the 10 years to 2036, the number of people over 50 years of age is expected to increase from 25 per cent to one in three residents. Overwhelmingly, local residents and professionals tell us that the key opportunity for supporting people as they age is to ensure Council infrastructure is fit for purpose.

Our design for parks, bus stops, and main street upgrades ensures seats are comfortable, shaded and have arm rests. Our network of public toilets is growing, and our designs are accessible. Our aquatic centres have accessible pools and changerooms. Footpaths are maintained and the network grown to ensure people can safely access their neighbourhood. Street lighting and passive surveillance ensure people are safer than ever when they leave home.

**Action: Community support**

In January 2020, Council convened a meeting of 15 Sydney metropolitan councils to marshal resources and help fire-ravaged communities in rural and regional NSW. Inner West staff provided direct support to Bega and Eurobodalla Councils with tree management, strategic planning, development assessment, business development research and events.

Council provided \$250,000 in 2020 to 10 non-government organisations as Covid-19 quick response grants to further support the work of these agencies providing invaluable services and responding to the global pandemic. Council signed a five-year agreement with the Department of Communities and Justice at \$160,000 per annum specifically for targeted early intervention work to be undertaken with children, families and young people.

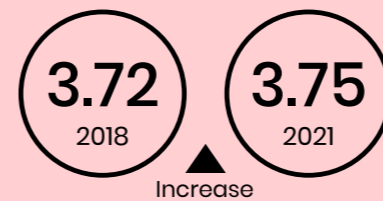
The Magic Yellow Bus service continued to be a free mobile playgroup service delivered across seven parks during school terms for children aged 0 to 6 years and their families. Council's continued operation of early and middle childhood education and care services saw service provision to approximately 1750 children aged 0 to 12 years across 17 services of long day care, before and after school care, family day care, preschool, occasional care and vacation care.

Services were successful in securing State Government funding grants to enhance the outdoor learning environments and educational programs. These included grants for Council's Aboriginal Programs staff and the Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators Group to roll out Aboriginal language and cultural awareness programs in Council's childcare centres.

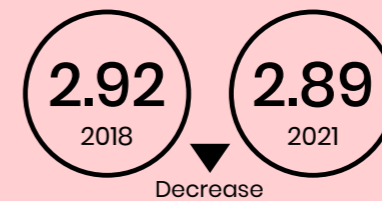


**Strategic Direction 5: Progressive local leadership**

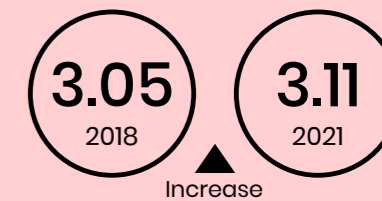
**Satisfaction with Council's community engagement**  
Mean ratings



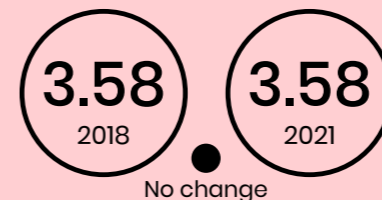
**Satisfaction with the community's ability to influence Council's decision making**  
Mean ratings



**Community satisfaction with long term planning for council area**  
Mean ratings



**Overall satisfaction with Council's performance**  
Mean ratings



**92%**

of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council, satisfaction has remained consistent with 2018 data and Micromex's Metro Benchmark

## Objective: People are well informed and actively engaged in local decision making and problem solving

**Action:** Keeping open communication with our community

Council continued to communicate frequently with the community, including publishing Council's quarterly newsletter, which is delivered to letterboxes in the local government area; sending out Council's eNews to its subscription base; publishing media releases and managing Council's website and social media channels.

In 2019, Council introduced the new Inner West Council brand and visual identity across the local government area. A 'Brand Panel' of Councillors, staff and community members guided the commissioning of a brand agency and the development of the new visual identity.

The new brand and visual identity were rolled out in a phased approach across a range of assets and channels including website, social and digital, print publications, advertising templates, vehicle signage, infrastructure signage and uniforms.

**Action:** Understanding community priorities

Community Satisfaction Surveys have been commissioned periodically to better understand key issues, community needs, priorities and to determine levels of importance of, and satisfaction with, the services and facilities provided by Council.

Accordingly, Micromex Research, an independent research organisation, was commissioned to conduct community satisfaction surveys in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2021. The results can be found at [www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/contribute/community-engagement/community-satisfaction-research](http://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/contribute/community-engagement/community-satisfaction-research)



**Action:** Using community input to shape the Inner West

Major engagements projects since 2018 have included the following:

- GreenWay Master Planning and subsequent design and construction stages
- Ashfield Aquatic Centre refurbishment, Dawn Fraser Baths upgrade, LPAC Master Plan
- Marrickville Parklands Plan of Management
- Making rates fairer across the Inner West
- Tree Management Development Control Plan
- Our Inner West 2036 Community Strategic Plan

Council has tailored engagement to meet the needs of the whole community, engaging in person at shopping centres, park drop-ins, focus groups, forums, workshops, in community centres and pop-up stalls at festivals on major projects including: Park Plans of Management - Leichhardt Park, Tempe Lands, Pratten Park, Marrickville Parklands, King George Park, Petersham Park and Ashfield Park. Council supported communities whose first language is not English through interpreters, translated material and call back services in community languages such as when engaging on the new Portuguese, Italian, Greek and Vietnamese Cultural Precincts.

Community members on Council's nine Advisory Committees and five Working Groups provided expertise and insights into strategy development including;

- Cultural Strategy
- Healthy Ageing Strategy
- Zero Waste Strategy
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Climate and Renewables Strategy

Council provided opportunities to engage online through the engagement hub [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au](http://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au) with 115,800 people visiting the site in 2018-19, 104,900 in 2019-20 and 94,326 in 2020-21. The number of people providing feedback or input through the site rose steadily from 6,200 to 7,448 between 2018 and 2021 while the numbers of engagement projects published on the site has increased from 57 in 2018-19 to 71 in 2020-21.

## Objective: Government makes responsible decisions to manage finite resources in the best interest of current and future communities

**Action:** Leveraging the power of digital technology

Council has continued the digitisation of Council information assets with 90 per cent of Development Consents for former Ashfield Council, and Town Planning files for the former Marrickville Council between 1980-1986 having been digitised.

Work began on digitising Building Certificates and Town Planning Consents for former the Leichhardt Council in 2020, in addition to routine digitisation of physical files retrieved from commercial storage premises throughout the years.

Onsite physical records collections have been consolidated from 11 separate repositories into six in 2020. The implementation of a cloud-based document management solution will provide a single, central repository to capture all types of physical and born-digital documents, including those currently located in legacy document management systems.

As part of the Asset Management Improvement Plan, the Systems and Data Competency (Practice Area) for Asset Management has seen a notable achievement: integrating the three former Council asset registers into a single register within the new Technology One System.

Other Asset Management related improvements include implementing the Strategic Asset Management system, import of mobility transactions for Labour and Plant resources and ongoing review and cleansing of asset register data. ▶



## Financial Performance

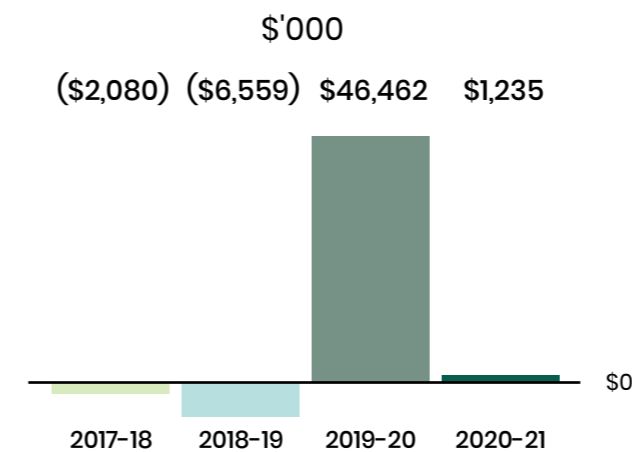
### Objective

Council's overall guiding principle is to maintain a strong and sustainable financial position, underpinned by a sound income base and commitment to financial control to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure required by the community.

### Expenditure and income

Council manages circa \$2.6 billion of assets that include investments, infrastructure including parks, roads, bridges, community and recreation facilities, drains, property, plant and equipment. Income is received from rates on property, government operating grants, interest on investments and user fees and charges. Expenditure includes wages, construction, maintenance, materials, grants provided to community groups, and other services to the community such as Council libraries and aquatic centres.

### Operating results before capital grants and contributions



2017-18 Operating deficit of \$2.1 million included the creation of a talent pool for those staff who had five year employment protection granted by the State Government to those staff who did not secure a permanent position with Inner West Council from the date the amalgamation occurred, as well as costs associated with the amalgamation such as moving staff between locations, redundancies and aligning services across the LGA from legacy councils.

2018-19 Operating deficit of \$6.6 million included the net loss from disposal of assets, implementing the resource recovery compactor replacement program since amalgamation \$8.3 million, increase in materials and contracts \$3 million, increase in expenses for advertising \$300,000, agency temps to cover child care positions \$3 million, consultants \$3 million, provision for bad and doubtful debts \$1 million. These were all associated with the amalgamation and the impact of council's new electricity supply agreement (via SSROC) of \$1 million.

2019-20 Operating surplus of \$46.5 million which included the sale of investment land (Tempe) to Transport for NSW \$49.4 million, impacts of COVID-19 \$13.8 million and Council's efficiency savings of \$18.3 million resulting from improvements to Council processes post amalgamation.

2020/21 Draft Operating surplus of \$1.2m. The draft results have been audited by the Audit Office of NSW. They still are required to be presented at the upcoming ARIC and Council Meeting for adoption.

Looking forward the consolidation and harmonisation work already completed and still in progress will further improve Council's position unless other unforeseen events outside its direct control occur again.



## Achieved performance measures and benchmarks

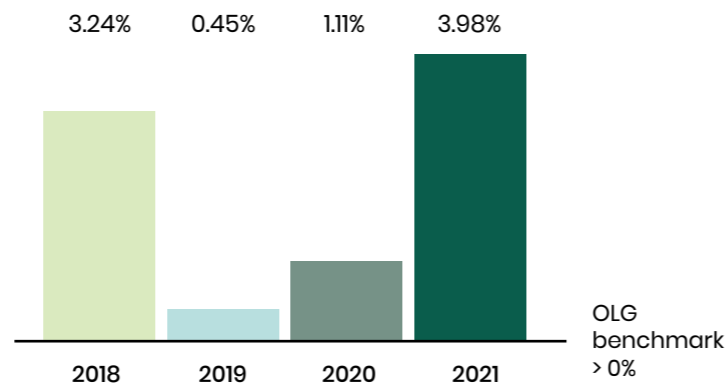
Council achieved all of its performance measures and benchmarks between 2018–2021 with the exception of the benchmark for outstanding rates and charges which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has affected the capacity of some ratepayers to meet instalment payments.

The following section provides an overview of Council's performance against the performance measures and performance benchmarks set by the Office of Local Government (OLG) within the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

### 1. Operating performance ratio

Council met the OLG benchmark.

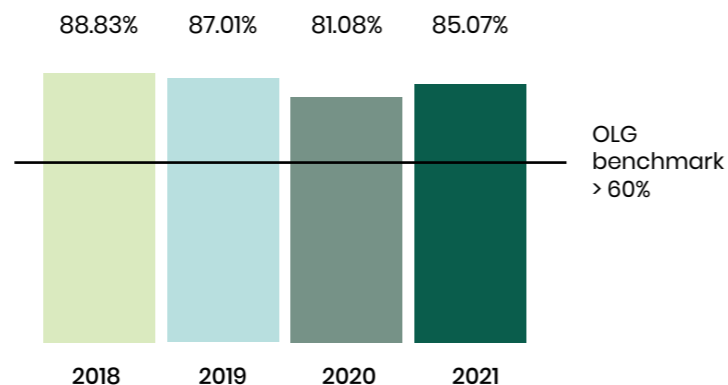
The 'operating performance ratio' measures how well council contained operating expenditure within operating revenue (excluding capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments, and reversal of revaluation decrements). The benchmark set by OLG is greater than zero per cent.



### 2. Own source operating revenue ratio

Council's own source operating revenue ratio has remained steady, and continues to meet the OLG benchmark.

The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent.

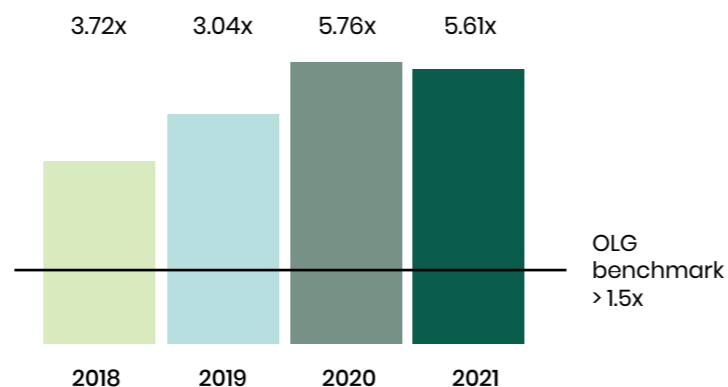


### 3. Unrestricted current ratio

Council met the OLG benchmark.

The 'unrestricted current ratio' is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 1.5 times.

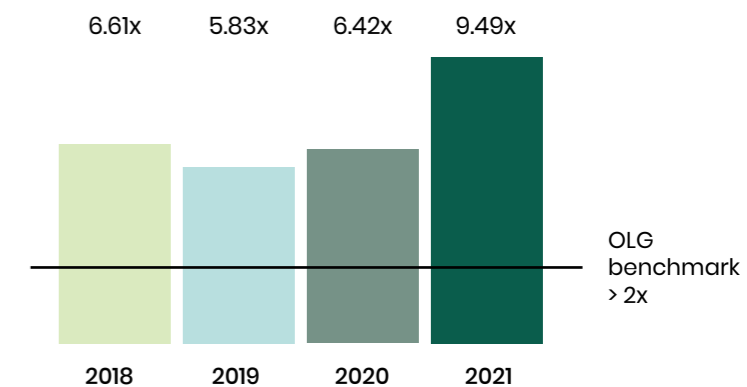
The uplift in the ratio for 2019–20 reflects the increase in cash and short-term investments held at end of year.



### 4. Debt service cover ratio

Council's own source operating revenue ratio has remained steady, and continues to meet the OLG benchmark.

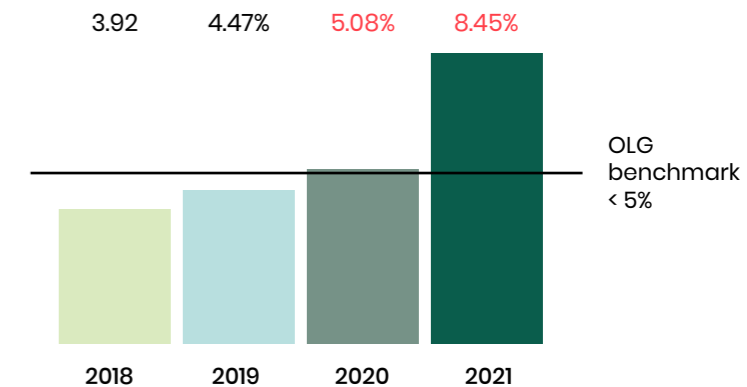
The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent.



### 5. Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

Council did not meet the OLG benchmark in 2019–21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected the capacity of some ratepayers to meet instalment payments.

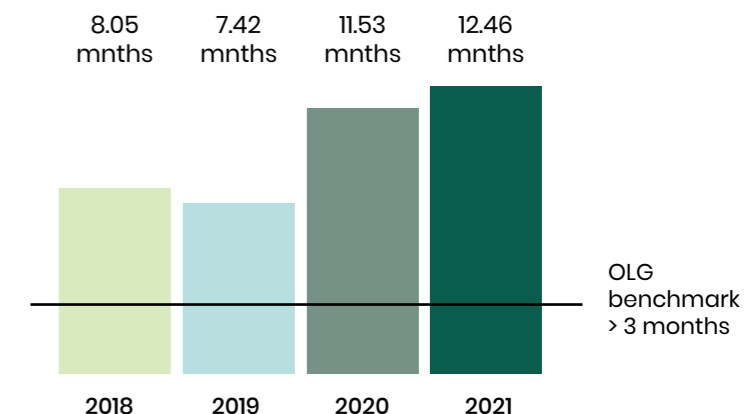
The 'rates and annual charges outstanding percentage' assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on council's liquidity and the adequacy of debt recovery efforts. The benchmark set by OLG is less than 5 per cent for metro councils.



### 6. Cash expense cover ratio

Council met the OLG benchmark.

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months the council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than three months.



## Awards won

The state-of-the-art Marrickville Library is one of the most visually stunning libraries in Sydney with an amazing array of services. It also has received a host of awards and was shortlisted as one of five finalists in the International Public Library of the Year Award in 2021. The awards and recognitions include:

### 2021 Australian Library Design Awards

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Winner – *Public Libraries*
- ▶ Winner – *Members' Choice*

### 2020 Australian Timber Design Awards

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Winner – *Overall Winner*
- ▶ Winner – *Excellence in Timber Applications (Public Buildings)*

### National Architecture Awards 2020

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Joint Winner – *The Sir Zelman Award for Public Architecture*
- ▶ Winner – *The David Oppenheim Award for Sustainable Architecture*

### National Trust – Heritage Awards 2020

#### Marrickville Library

##### Judges Choice

- ▶ Winner – *Adaptive Reuse*
- ▶ Winner – *Interpretation*

### Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) NSW Chapter – Architecture Awards 2020

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Winner – *NSW Premier's Prize*
- ▶ Winner – *Milo Dunphy Award for Sustainable Architecture*
- ▶ Winner – *People's Choice Award for Life*
- ▶ Winner – *Award for Public Architecture*
- ▶ Winner – *NSW Landscape Architecture Award for Civic Landscape*

### ALIA NSW Landscape Awards 2020

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Winner – *Landscape Architecture Award for Civic Landscape*

### Australian Interior Design Awards 2020

#### Marrickville Library

- ▶ Shortlisted – *Public Design Award Sustainability Awards 2020*
- ▶ Shortlisted – *Best Adaptive Reuse*

### OTHER AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS RECEIVED INCLUDE:

#### Cities Power Partnership – 2020 Climate Awards

#### Inner West Council

- ▶ Winner – *Community Engagement Achievement award: Go Solar campaign*



Award-winning Marrickville Library and Pavilion



Go Solar Award and the Sustainability team



NSW Community Sports Award

### NSW Community Sports Awards 2020

#### Inner West Council

- ▶ Winner – *Local Council of the Year*

### Australian Institute of Landscape Architects National Awards 2019

#### GreenWay

- ▶ Award of Excellence for Urban Design

### NSW Sustainable Cities Awards 2019

#### Composters of the Inner West

- ▶ Highly commended – *Recycled Organics Award*

### NSW Sustainable Cities Awards 2018

#### Inner West Council

Overall Winner – *Keep Australia Beautiful*

- ▶ Winner – *Recycled Organics Award*
- ▶ Highly commended – *Waste Less Recycle More Award*

### Planning Institute of Australia 2018

#### GreenWay

- ▶ Commendation award – *'Hard Won Victory'*

## Strategic Directions – Next Steps

### Strategic Direction 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West

#### Where we are headed

Inner West Council has declared a climate emergency and has adopted both the Climate and Renewables Strategy and the Zero Waste Strategy. We are focused on embedding sustainability in all Council systems and processes, along with achieving robust community targets.

This includes increasing the use of solar and renewable energy, making the switch to low carbon transportation, supporting low carbon development, diverting organic waste from landfill, addressing unsustainable consumption, enhancing tree canopy cover, and installing green infrastructure to protect local waterways and biodiversity.

#### Future challenges

Council's targets and community aspirations include investment in regional infrastructure such as large-scale organics processing, planning for population growth with policies that are ecological sustainable, and adapting and building resilience to a changing climate.

There is also a need for supporting policies and infrastructure investment at the State and Federal government level in relation to electricity, transportation and resource recovery to meet Council's objectives and targets.

### Strategic direction 2: Unique liveable, networked neighbourhoods

#### Where we are headed

Council has developed land-use strategies, such as the Local Strategic Planning Statement, Local Housing Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy and Integrated Transport Strategy. These strategies form the foundations of reviewing and preparing comprehensive planning policies, such as Local Environmental Plans, Development Control Plans and Development Contribution Plans, which guide and improve land use and public domain planning within the Inner West.

We also continue to move towards a future that focuses on active and sustainable modes of transport. This approach prioritises people and sustainable outcomes over private and polluting vehicles. As part of Council's strategies, we seek to implement improvements to support active transport modes, advocate for improvements to public transport, improve road safety outcomes, manage freight and goods delivery, and harness the latest developments in technology, which will improve network and sustainability outcomes.

#### Future challenges

Suitable housing and infrastructure developments that address the diverse needs of the Inner West community are issues that need to be considered by Council over the coming years. These challenges will also have to be balanced with the need to protect the current environment, such as heritage, ecology and the unique character of the Inner West.

The Inner West community will continue to be impacted by increasing traffic numbers, congestion on public transport services in peak periods, major State and Federal government infrastructure projects, increasing competition for parking on local streets, and the need to balance the needs of a range of road users within a constrained environment.



### Strategic direction 3: Creative communities and a strong economy

#### Where we are headed

The Arts and Culture sectors require new support and advocacy as the COVID-19 pandemic moves to an endemic phase. Rediscovery of the value of local creativity is vitally important to the industry. Cultural enlivenment will bring a new appreciation of our local streets, neighbourhoods and suburbs. The fact that residents have spent an unprecedented amount of time locally over the past two years presents new opportunities for co-design, improvement and strengthening infrastructure and the built environment.

#### Future challenges

A reactivation of local businesses, particularly in retail, entertainment, food and beverage, is essential as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Special entertainment precincts, outdoor dining and a focused attention to the preservation of industrial lands are contributors for Council. Significant new residential and commercial development arising from urban consolidation and Council contemporary planning instruments will combine as key drivers for positive change.

### Strategic direction 4: Caring, healthy, happy communities

#### Where we are headed

Council's approach to building wellbeing is to strengthen participation of people in local relationships and in their communities. Through participating with others, people build their stock of social capital and this, in turn, creates the inclusion that binds us together.

Appreciation of the places we live and fostering a sense that we control the destiny of our communities helps us to weather unexpected events with resilience. This includes the climate emergency, pandemics, and associated economic challenges. Creating ways for residents and business owners to shape and build our communities is critically important.

#### Future challenges

Significant numbers of people from diverse backgrounds move to the Inner West each year, adding to our growing population of 200,000. More than 65,000 locals speak a language other than English at home, one in four people are aged over 50, and the high birth rate means that all our schools are being redeveloped. Change and diversity bring new opportunities to create inclusion and to advocate for services and programs that meet the diverse needs of our communities.

## Strategic direction 5: Progressive local leadership

### Where we are headed

Council is committed to good governance through strong financial management, transparent and efficient service delivery, excellent communication and engagement and effective long term planning.

Council is focusing on long term financial sustainability and has already saved over \$18 million every year from more efficient ways of working.

Council's program of financial sustainability will improve the bottom line through service reviews and a focus on continuous improvement. As well Council is:

- Purchasing a new commercial investment property to generate income
- Maximising strategic procurement
- Enhancing asset management practices
- Implementing our Land and Property Strategy
- Leveraging the value in technology to deliver better processes and efficiency improvements
- Reviewing fees and charges
- Seeking out new revenue generating opportunities

### Future challenges

Council will continue to build partnerships with other agencies and community groups, and advocate on their behalf with State and Federal governments on issues that directly affect them.

New and emerging technologies will ensure that Council delivers its services in the most responsive, effective and efficient way. ▀



## Community Languages

Talk free with an interpreter call 131 450

Chinese Simplified	我们说普通话。如需免费传译服务，请致电131 450，然后请传译员致电02 9392 5000 接通 Inner West市政府。
Traditional Chinese	我們能說您的語言。如需免費傳譯服務，請致電131 450，然後請傳譯員致電02 9392 5000 接通 Inner West市政府。
Greek	Μιλάμε τη γλώσσα σας. Για να μιλήσετε δωρεάν σε διερμηνέα καλέστε το 131 450. Ζητήστε τους να καλέσουν το Δήμο Inner West Council στο 02 9392 5000.
Italian	Parliamo la vostra lingua. Per parlare gratuitamente con un interprete chiamate il numero 131 450. Chiedetegli di chiamare il Comune di Inner West al numero 02 9392 5000.
Vietnamese	Chúng tôi nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Muốn nói chuyện có thông dịch viên miễn phí, hãy gọi số 131 450. Yêu cầu họ gọi cho Hội đồng Thành phố Inner West qua số 02 9392 5000.