

Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance Inc

Board meeting – MINUTES

Tuesday 15 June, 6-7pm

Lake Macquarie City Council – Administration Building



**Present:** Robyn Charlton, Gabrielle Clappison, Mark Howells, Nico Marcar, Bruce Tozer

**Apologies:** Amanda Herrald, Sam Doove, Steve Dewar, Jean McGarry

### **Welcome from Chair and acknowledgement of Country**

Robyn welcomed everyone to the meeting. Robyn acknowledged the Awabakal people who are the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on. We pay our respects to Awabakal Elders both past and present and extend that to other Aboriginal people present.

### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### **1. Code of Conduct**

Draft Code of Conduct for SN volunteers has been developed as part of our refresh of Alliance governance. The draft has been circulated to SN Key Contacts and raised at recent group visits to seek their feedback. Feedback was summarised and circulated to board members.

Comments from individuals and group meetings were generally favourable. A number of points for improvement were suggested:

- Avoid making it too long or overly authoritarian
- One concern about the wording of 'Comply with all policies, guidelines and advice provided by the Alliance.'
- Two concerns about the wording of 'Act honestly, with integrity, and only within due authorisation.'
- Noted a relatively common confusion around existing membership and governance arrangements. Many members do not realise that they are actually members of the Alliance (rather than of their local group), and that this has been the case since the Alliance was established.

*Resolutions:*

a) *Update and approve the following amended code of conduct:*

I hereby apply to become a member of the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance (the Alliance).

I agree to abide by the rules and direction of the Alliance, including the volunteer Code of Conduct below, when participating in Sustainable Neighbourhood activities or acting on behalf of a Sustainable Neighbourhood Group.

Sustainable Neighbourhoods volunteer Code of Conduct

- Act in a way to further the Vision, Objectives and Values of the Alliance.
- Comply with all policies, guidelines and advice provided by the Alliance.

- Act honestly, with integrity.
- Act with due care and diligence.
- Treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without harassment.
- Behave in a way that upholds the values, integrity and reputation of Sustainable Neighbourhoods.

b) *Note that confusion around membership (ie that all SN members are Alliance members) is common, and Alliance Board should work to address this with a clear communication strategy.*

*Agree to distribute a standard membership form that includes the Alliance logo and local group logo.*

*Moved: Robyn. Seconded: Mark. Carried.*

## **2. Ban on helium balloons**

Request from Gayle (Valentine SNG member) regarding advocating for a ban on helium balloon releases in Lake Mac, following Council screening of film, Rubber Jellyfish:

A number of councils in Australia have developed policies on Helium balloons to ban any release of them - and effectively to help stop their use. Margo suggested that people may want to urge councillors to take up this issue and to urge Lake Mac council to follow suit. I thought the Alliance would be a good place to start.

Am interested in your thoughts on this and what you might suggest as a way to take this further.

Some links and existing campaigns:

- <https://www.facebook.com/noballoonrelease2016> - This Facebook page looks relatively active, and a central point of a national campaign
- Some good info about campaign ideas on the Clean Up website: <https://www.cleanup.org.au/balloons>
- From the NSW Government website: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/questions/release-helium-balloons>

A few examples of Council bans / new stories:

- <https://www.upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au/news/ban-balloon-releases>
- <https://clarencevalleynews.com.au/helium-filled-balloon-ban-on-the-horizon/>
- <https://www.begadistrictnews.com.au/story/4470486/balloon-ban-backed-by-eurobodalla-neighbours-urged-to-tag-along/>

*Resolution:*

*General agreement to approach Council to seek a ban or other effective action to prevent balloon releases.*

*Nico to research some key points and draft a letter.*

## **3. Robyn on leave – Acting Chairperson arrangements**

Robyn will be taking leave from the Alliance Board and Toronto Area SNG during July, August, and some of September. Will continue to be active with Five Bays SNG and ReLeaf Facebook page during that time, and will develop a project plan with ReLeaf team.

Plan is to return for the September board meeting.

*Resolution:*

*Nico nominated and accepted to take on the Acting Chairperson role while Robyn is on leave. Bruce agreed to be a back up should Nico not be available.*

*Moved: Robyn. Seconded: Gab. Carried.*

#### **4. Amanda resignation from the board**

Received notice from Amanda today that she is formally resigning from the Alliance Board, as she has new work and other commitments that clash with board meetings. Amanda will continue to volunteer with the Pelican Area SNG.

Note with Amanda's resignation there are currently have 8 board members, so the quorum for meetings is now 4.

*Resolution:*

*The board accepted Amanda's resignation, and expressed appreciation for her involvement to date.*

#### **5. May meeting minutes**

Meeting minutes were circulated via email.

*Resolution: Confirm that the previous meeting minutes, dated 18 May 2021, are an accurate record.*

*Moved: Gab. Seconded: Robyn. Carried.*

#### **6. TREASURERS REPORT – MAY**

See transaction list below.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENTS AND REQUESTS**

##### **7. Alliance – Cake, conversation and a circular economy, 12 June**

Risk assessment circulated and approved via email

#### **PROJECT AND LOCAL GROUP UPDATES**

##### **8. Strategic Plan progress update**

May progress update circulated via email.

Suggest scheduling a review and refresh of the Strategic Plan at the October board meeting.

##### **9. Alliance 10 Year Anniversary – 7 July 2021 - Update**

- Branding now available. Rachelle will develop a style guide to distribute to groups for use.
- Article in Winter Eco Advocate, and webpage completed.
- Request has been submitted to Homemade Markets to have a stall there on 18 July – waiting for a response.
- Heritage Shed is currently closed but there is a slight possibility of it being available for 18 July. Rachelle will confirm asap whether it's available or not.
- No problem if we need to postpone event till later in the year. Will be celebrating the anniversary for all of 2021-22.

## **10. National Tree Day update**

Confirmed sites at:

- 24 July, Afton Close, Cardiff Heights
- 31 July, Gurrumba Reserve, Coal Point
- 1 August, Kenibea Bushland Reserve, Kahibah
- 3 August, North Creek, Warners Bay
- Date TBC, Grannies Pool, Blacksmiths
- Date TBC, Rathmines Park, Rathmines

Noted that a couple of sites aren't suitable for tree planting, but that we can still promote as a National Tree Day event and encourage participation in general Landcare activities.

Rachelle and Landcare staff will develop promotional materials, and send around to groups when available.

## **11. Joint Alliance Council meeting**

Steve contacted Mayor Fraser, and they agreed to arrange a joint Alliance / Council meeting, following the Council elections in September.

## **12. Social media training**

Series of four online workshops in June. Going well – 31 participants from SN and other community groups.

## **13. SN Networking event – Circular Economy, 12 June**

33 people attending. Participants very inspired by Debbie and concept of a circular economy.

## **14. World Environment Day stall, Toronto 5 June**

Successful event as we engaged with the public after a cold start! We gave out info on ways to save energy/water, extra recycling places, plants, door seals, shower water savers, mesh and calico bags etc showing how to live Sustainably on World Environment Day! What was really pleasing was that many people are attempting to save water and energy and recycle right already. They are quite ahead of our governments! We are willing to do this again at the Homegrown Markets in July for our 10 year anniversary.

## 15. ReLeaf Lake Mac

Received official notification that Environmental Trust grant was unsuccessful.

Research and development continues, including a field trip to Grannies Pool.

Blackalls Park site investigation continues to move forward with LMCC staff assistance.

Timeline, FB Albums and Project Possibilities circulated to board members.

ReLeaf Direction Zoom meeting to be held on Tuesday 29 June 2021 @ 6pm for 40 minutes.  
Details coming soon.

Possible Alliance Projects

- Tree Trails at Sculpture Park Booragul, Pelican & LSF
- Street Trees
- Fundraising /Grants
- Assisting LMCC With the Tree Cities of the World Program
- QR Coding/ Tree tags

## 16. Waste to Art

Registrations now open, visit: <http://www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/waste-to-art.html>

2021 exhibition details: 9 October – 18 December. Will be held across 4 locations at library Launchpad spaces in Belmont, Charlestown, Swansea and Toronto.

Education Kit developed by Crystal is now available to help schools to deliver a Waste to Art project with their class (Available at link above).

## 17. Redhead EnergyWave project

Have an approved extension for their project, including to focus on alternate engagement methods (instead of face to face expo event that was originally planned), to complete their project. Current activities include education stories in newsletter, aerial photo survey, and community survey to evaluate their progress.

## 18. Living Smart Festival

Stallholder applications are now open.

Note that there is a Saturday and Sunday event, like in 2019. Saturday 18 September will be the main festival with Sunday 19 September as a music festival with a sustainable focus.

Possible ReLeaf fundraiser – Donated photo/image raffle. And draw at anniversary event.

## 19. Board member visits – Reports to date

(Resend talking points to Bruce)

Group	Report
Cardiff Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confirmed NTD site on July 24</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive of 10th Anniversary stall July at Farmers Market</li> <li>• Business Supporters Plan approved, although work involved in getting small business supporters.</li> <li>• Liked citywide projects eg coffee cups.</li> <li>• Some unease / problems with Code of Conduct. Could be seen as “over the top” / over-reaction.</li> <li>• Particularly unhappy with Council’s frequent lack of consultation with SNGs – particularly around property development and destruction of bushland, eg at Myall Rd.</li> <li>• Local Projects: Wreath Making, Pollinator Corridor, protect Munibung Hill, Frog Pond Workshop, Save Myall Rd, Swap Library, help Repair Cafe WB, Car boot sale, Boomerang Bags, Cardiff North School Community Garden, CASNG newsletter.</li> <li>• Need help from Alliance: Casual hire of Council Halls...at moment not allowed...need Council to change this. (Phantom public health concerns)</li> <li>• What do we do if Council disconnects from Sustainable Neighbourhoods?</li> <li>• Need help in advertising SNG events....Council needs to help in this on their online sites! Council often doesn’t consult transparently.....need Alliance to help set up more communication with Council....maybe a regular consultation</li> </ul>
Dudley	Meeting details TBC. Mark and Nico
Five Bays	<p>What a great group! Support for 10 year Anniversary with stalls at Homegrown Speers Pt in July.</p> <p>Support for possible NTD at Marmong Pt Landcare site.</p> <p>Support for Business sponsorship especially for small businesses.</p> <p>Proposed Code of Conduct viewed as a necessary way ahead.</p> <p>Numerous local projects, especially garden/ planting activities at Teralba Primary, possible treegiveaways/ art competition as well, and possible collaboration with other SNGs over school visits now that D of E allows visits...hope I got it right. Quite a lot of mention of garden/ tree work....Releaf Lakemac Sculpture Walk at MAC, Woodrising Centre, Blackalls Park Tree plantings. The group liked collaboration with other SNGs....similar activities and sharing ideas. Need for more tinned food for Pamper Care.</p>
Greater Charlestown	Gab – June meeting?
Morisset and Peninsula	Meeting details TBC. Bruce and Steve
Pelican Area	<p><b>10 Year Anniversary-</b> Pelican Team (PT)was on board in supporting where possible. KS wants an Anniversary Cake. Suggested a child-oriented planting experience. They have found success using “matchstick” seeds. Asked if there was going to be sustainable decorations? Hoping to assist if there is.</p> <p><b>National Tree Day</b> – Was on their agenda. PT are on board. Realise that they must order plants ASAP and confirm the site. PT understands that NTD is a Landcare project and that SNG’s are in a supportive role. They are happy for me to come take photos to add to the ReLeaf Lake Mac Facebook page.</p> <p><b>Business Supporters-</b> PT have a good relationship with some of the businesses. They are open to hear more about it and think that some of the businesses will be interested.</p>

	<p><b>Code of Conduct</b> – PT appreciates the need for a code of conduct, as it provides guidelines for individuals and is a common practice amongst NFP’s including Landcare. Agreed that it makes sense to have it on the membership form.</p> <p><b>Local Projects</b> – PT’s main projects include Landcare, assisting Blacksmiths Public School, litter and the Plastic Free Cafés Campaign They appreciate the leadership and support from Steve D.</p> <p><b>Concerns</b> – Enquiries about when the new Induction Pack will be delivered. Wondering when the membership form will become electronic/digital. It is felt that with an electronic form, new members will be captured more easily.</p> <p><b>General</b> – The Good Karma Network was mentioned as well as enviro events in the Newcastle LGA. PT appreciated the efforts of the Alliance Board and my efforts to come over from the west side of the lake. They were very interested in the tree trail/tag project. Circular Economy and verge planting was discussed briefly. PT is very grounded in Landcare and looking for opportunities to gain new members for both groups. They appear to be a close-knit group which extended to most of the members having dinner together after the meeting.</p>
Rathmines Area	<p>I enjoyed the lively discussion and obvious enthusiasm members have to improve the local area and promote sustainable values.</p> <p><b>10 Year Anniversary</b> - Enthusiastic to support the proposed Home-Grown or Farmers Market at Speers Point concept. Could be involved with furniture restoration (repair cafe), handmade fruit and vege bags, perhaps native bee boxes. Have a table. Could also do something locally. Keen on membership push, promote Rathmines Park on the day. Happy to assist in general volunteering support.</p> <p><b>National Tree Day</b> - Was on their agenda. On board. Waiting to hear back from Landcare about the option to plant in a landcare site within the Rathmines Park. A rep will attend 1 June meeting.</p> <p><b>Business Supporters</b> - RSNG has a good relationship with some of the local businesses and think they could get some traction. Want to make sure that the SNG values are upheld so need to be careful. Keen to raise the profile of RSNG.</p> <p><b>Code of Conduct</b> - RSNG understands the need for a code of conduct. Only received the draft letter from Rachelle that day so still to be circulated within the group. Queried why the need to use an Alliance membership form when RSNG has its own (as do others).</p> <p><b>Local Projects</b> - RSNG manages a physical community notice board in the shopping strip. This provides an opportunity to promote the group and generates a little income. Keen to improve the Main Street with better infrastructure (including recycling bins) and have written to Council for support.</p> <p><b>General</b> - Information provided: Next of Kin program - A police officer at the Toronto station is a special point of contact for elderly people. Myuna Bay sports and rec centre may be located to Woods Point (Morriset) on a 99 year lease with the current site to remain as is till Eraring PS shutdown in 2032.</p>
Redhead	Robyn and Jean – June meeting?
Toronto Area	Gab – May meeting?
Valentine	<p>I thoroughly enjoyed a 2 hour planning meeting at Gayle's house at Valentine with Lindy, Mardi and Mel in attendance, it was full of passion and commitment.</p> <p>They discussed the planning meeting, this was a good opportunity to remind them of our governance, which was forgotten. I sent a thank you email with links from our</p>

	<p>web page, regarding governance and planning. This gave me the opportunity to answer their other questions, which I needed to clarify.</p> <p>We discussed the points listed,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10yr anniversary, very excited about supporting the workshops and a Repair Cafe "the heritage shed will be a good place to do the Repair Cafe and showcase what we do" maybe with a photo display or video imaging. "like the idea of walking into a variety of workshops/activity tables.</li> <li>• National Tree day, some concerned were shared regarding people's attitude towards trees. I explained it was only Landcare sites and we are there to assist them, if they wanted to collaborate with other local volunteer groups.</li> <li>• Business supporters were not talked about, we ran out of time.</li> <li>• Several times we were referred to as 'the council' I clarified this every time. e.g the council will check our risk assessments, council will contact all our volunteers, council will give us the hall.</li> </ul> <p>I feel this experience has certainly benefited the group and myself.</p>
Warners Bay Area	Jean – June meeting?
West Wallsend District	<p>My visit to West Wallsend District Sustainable Neighbourhood Group went well last night.</p> <p>There were five people in attendance, including myself. The group currently has approximately 13 financial members although, a number of these were carried on because of COVID-19 last year so the group will have a more accurate number come June when memberships are due.</p> <p>The meeting was relatively quick and I touched on the draft code of conduct &amp; business sponsorships/memberships that were in the works. The group seemed to understand the reasoning behind both of these and no objections were raised. I advised a draft code of conduct would probably reach them in the next week or so and as it turns out, I've seen you sent that out today.</p> <p>West Wallsend District SNG is a relatively small group compared to others but their commitment to the local Community Garden should not be overlooked. The only real problem they raised was, like most other groups, getting and maintaining new members.</p> <p>One area of follow up which you may have more information on is the RMIT research project "Why Join a Sustainable Neighbourhood Group" which I believe was held at Club Macquarie on the 18th of March, West Wallsend District SNG was asking if there was any update on it or any outcomes released?</p>

## 20. CZMC

Item about the Toronto Wetlands – Interested to know

### Tabled for discussion at future meeting

#### 21. Business supporters – Membership platform costs and options

#### 22. Single use plastics – NSW Government

Phase out of lightweight shopping bags, plastic straws, cutlery and consideration of others such as heavyweight bags and fruit stickers in 3 years.



Expected to pass NSW parliament by end of 2021, and rolled out from 2022.

Seeking ideas to help businesses make the transition.

### 23. Correspondence 12 March -

- Austcover (Alliance insurer) announcement of merger between Austcover and Regional Insurance, effective 21 July 2021. No change in current insurance arrangements.
- Invitation from the Coal Ash Community Alliance to their upcoming gathering 19 June, Wangi Workers Club
- Invitation to Social Media for community groups training course – Sent to SN Key contacts
- Feedback sought on Draft Volunteer Code of Conduct – Sent to SN Key contacts
- Invitation to enter the 2021 Community Achievement Awards
- Request from Bradley Dunn, Youth Engagement Strategy, NSW Dept of Education, seeking support from SN volunteers to assist Speers Point Public School with gardening activities – Forwarded to local SN groups. Also general information about DET Youth Engagement Strategy and request to SN groups sent to Key Contacts.
- Notice that Council's Parks, Play and Public Amenities Strategies on public exhibition – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Waste to Art Education Kit and invitation for registrations emailed to school contacts.
- Invitation to SN Networking event, 12 June – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Waste to Art newsletter published, inviting registrations for 2021 exhibition
- Seeking citizen scientists – Operation Posidonia – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Notification from the NSW Environmental Trust that the ReLeaf grant application was unsuccessful
- Sustainable Neighbourhood News, June 2021
- Invitation to apply to be a stallholder at Councils 2021 Living Smart Festival

### Transactions May 2021 – TBC

Date	Transaction type	Project	Description	Income	Expenditure
1-May-21	Transfer	Cardiff Pollinator Plan - Env Sust Grant	Native plants from TIN - Reimbursement to Gavin Ord		\$ 80.00
24-May-21	Transfer	Cardiff Pollinator Plan - Env Sust Grant	Native plants from TIN - Reimbursement to Cass Shay		\$ 100.00
25-May-21	Transfer	Cardiff Pollinator Plan - Env Sust Grant	Native plants from TIN - Reimbursement to Gavin Ord		\$ 326.00
19-May-21	Transfer	Pamper Care Project	Pamper Care operating funds		\$ 200.00
19-May-21	Transfer	Pamper Care Project	Pamper Care operating funds (Accidental duplicate payment)		\$ 200.00
<del>28-May-21</del>	<del>Invoice payment</del>	<del>Repair Café</del>	<del>Venue hire - Warners Bay Theatre - Invoice from Council</del> Payment cancelled - TBC		<del>\$ 88.00</del>