



In March 2014, the Swansea and Swansea Heads Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups joined forces and expanded to form the Caves Beach-Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group.

This plan contains a vision for the neighbourhood, and documents the features that residents and friends of the greater Swansea area love and value about their community and want to protect or enhance. It also identifies opportunities for change, and outlines how the vision will be achieved through a variety of local community-led projects.

Approximately 300 local residents contributed to this plan through a range of engagement activities including a community survey, a community workshop, information stalls and stakeholder meetings.

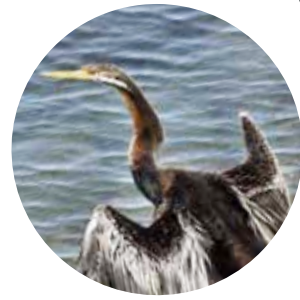
Did you know:

- The neighbourhood is home to an abundance of wildlife such as the Green Turtle, Striped Marsh Frog and the Little Tern, as well significant flora including the threatened Sandpaper Fig and the Magenta Lillypilly.
- Swansea Heads contains the most ecologically diverse coastal rock platform in the region.
- Black Ned's Bay is a feeding place for migratory birds such as the Terek Sandpiper, a shorebird that breeds in Russia, and the Southern Giant Petrel, a seabird from the Antarctic region.
- Caves Beach was originally known as The Plains. The area was covered in grass trees, and Aboriginal people went there to collect resin, used in spear making.
- The caves at Caves Beach were formed from ancient river deposits 6,500 years after the last glacial period.
- In 1889 three ferries owned by W.W. Johnson ('Pinafore' No. 1 and No. 2, and 'Maggie Johnson') ran daily, between Swansea and Cockle Creek.



Caves Beach-Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood

A vision for 2024



A friendly and caring community proud of its pristine natural environment, which provides for an active yet relaxed lifestyle



Our magnificent coastal environment is cared for and enjoyed by everyone

Our neighbourhood features beautiful green and clean parks as well as lots of healthy bushland thriving with native plants and wildlife



Our safe and well-used cycleways and footpaths link surrounding suburbs, facilities, services, and places of interest and recreation



Older and younger generations in our community enjoy getting together to share skills, stories and ideas

Our community supports each other and is well prepared for neighbourhood challenges

Our active and friendly community gets together regularly to celebrate, socialise and undertake activities that enhance our neighbourhood

We lead a lifestyle that is in harmony with our environment by participating in a range of sustainability initiatives within the neighbourhood and our homes



Our residents value:

- The local natural beauty of the Lake, wetlands, beaches and bushland
- Our friendly and safe community where everyone looks out for each other
- The village feel of the neighbourhood balanced with the convenience of being close to services and facilities
- A relaxed outdoor lifestyle



Caves Beach - Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group



Action Plan 2014 - 2024

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Protect and care for the natural environment

1. Biodiversity

- Support local Landcare groups by promoting their activities.
- Work with relevant agencies to eliminate feral pests.
- Develop an educational project, which promotes responsible pet ownership to protect, among other things, native wildlife from cats and dogs.
- Participate in local environmental monitoring programs.
- Liaise with the appropriate land manager about opportunities to construct walkways with educational signage and viewing platforms.
- Host educational activities to promote the protection of local ecosystems.
- Create habitat friendly schools, parks and gardens, including bird-nesting boxes.

2. Litter & illegal dumping

- Organise clean up events in identified hotspots and partner with community organisations e.g. Caves Beach Surf Life Saving Club.
- Promote and participate in existing clean-up programs.
- Acknowledge and work with the many local informal volunteers who pick up litter.
- Work with Council to reduce illegal dumping and littering.

Reduce resource consumption

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

3. Transport

- Promote and lobby for safer roads around schools.
- Organise workshops on safe cycling for both adults and children.
- Lobby Council and State Government to expand existing cycleways to link to suburbs on the eastern side of the Lake.

4. Sustainable food

- Work with schools to create community gardens.
- Host workshops on growing vegetables.
- Organise local farmers markets.
- Introduce cooperative organisations around food.

5. Consumption & waste

- Introduce cooperative organisations around the sharing of skills and goods such as gardening equipment, sewing machines etc.
- Organise events that promote re-use of household items e.g. swap parties, local garage sales.
- Work with Council to increase public place recycling at beaches, parks and local shops.
- Work with the school community to develop bin free waste systems.

6. Energy & water

- Investigate options for and promote community bulk-purchasing of electricity and water saving infrastructure e.g. solar panels, solar hot water systems, rain water tanks.
- Work with schools on projects that reduce electricity and water.

Action Plan 2014 - 2024

COMMUNITY WELLBEING & PRIDE

Participate in public life and decision-making

7. Community pride

- Lobby Council to undertake street beautification projects in collaboration with the community.
- Engage with young people to increase participation in community life.

8. Community connections

- Organise local community get-togethers e.g. street parties, community picnic.
- Support and promote existing local community groups.
- Encourage intergenerational interaction e.g. develop projects that share skills across generations.
- Invite the wider community to participate in our activities through a variety of media such as the Group's website, social media and advertising in local newsletters and shops.

9. Advocacy

- Promote and lobby for issues that help build a stronger community.

Respond effectively to environmental threats

NATURAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

10. King tides & flooding

- Organise tours to educate residents on how to be prepared for flooding.
- Organise expert talks on the science behind king tides and flooding, and how to be prepared for local events.
- Distribute information on local emergency shelters and evacuation routes.
- Practice emergency scenario drills.

11. Oil spills

- Gain a better understanding about how the community can assist in the event of an oil spill.
- Distribute information to the community about how they can alert authorities about or assist during an oil spill.

12. Bush fire

- Run educational sessions on bush fire, which includes localised and personalised information about how to prepare and respond in the event of a bush fire.
- Help residents to develop a bush fire survival plan (using Rural Fire Service template).
- Distribute important locally specific information about bush fires with the support of emergency services.
- Actively engage young people in healthy, active pursuits and educate them about the impacts of bush fire.

Join us! We'd love to hear from you!

Please contact us if you would like to join the Caves Beach-Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group, participate in an upcoming activity or project, share your ideas, or simply find out more.

www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/caves-beach-swansea-area

CavesBeachSwanseaArea@gmail.com or call Council on 4921 0117

Caves Beach-Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

For residents and friends of Swansea Heads, Swansea and Caves Beach

Lake Macquarie City residents have a strong commitment to their environment and community. In response, Lake Macquarie City Council has established the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program. This program encourages active citizenship by empowering residents to:

- protect and care for their environment and place
- reduce resource consumption
- respond effectively to environmental threats
- participate in public life and decision-making.



Caves Beach - Swansea Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group



Sustainable Neighbourhoods is an initiative of Lake Macquarie City Council