



SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS Annual Report 2021



Contact us

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"It's great to be able to put a project idea to the group, and once it's decided then everyone is there to support you to make your dreams come true. Everyone takes on a job and we feel empowered. As a collective we've made a huge difference." – Gab



Our vision

Neighbourhoods that are empowered to live sustainably.

Objective

To empower the community to reduce its ecological footprint, protect the natural environment, increase wellbeing and participate in public life and decision-making.

Mission

Our work is to foster sustainable neighbourhoods and a healthy environment in Lake Macquarie.

Values

We are guided by our values of participation, inclusion, collaboration, empowerment and shared responsibility.

Our actions

Reduce resource consumption (energy, water and waste), increase community involvement in protecting and caring for environment and place, increase our capacity to respond effectively to environmental threats, and increase community wellbeing and pride in our local areas.

Background

Lake Macquarie City Council established the Sustainable Neighbourhood Program in 2008 to empower residents to act on local environmental and sustainability issues.

The program supports residents to form neighbourhood groups that develop and implement their Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans. The program has achieved a network of active, skilled and supported citizens who make a meaningful contribution to local community life and address local sustainability challenges.

In 2011, a group of Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers established the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance to support the growing number of members and groups across the city. The Alliance is an incorporated not-for-profit association that provides coordination, governance, resourcing, capacity-building, marketing and communication, and insurance and risk management for and on behalf of the Sustainable Neighbourhood groups across Lake Macquarie City.

Sustainable Neighbourhood activities are organised by volunteers and financed through funding from grants, collaboration and community fundraising. Council continues to provide direct support for the program, including provision of administrative services and a small amount of operational support.



A message from the Chair

Another year has flown by, and the challenges of COVID-19 remain. I am proud that the Sustainable Neighbourhood network continues to exhibit resilience, patience and innovation. We have stayed connected with our members and the wider community by embracing hybrid meetings, small outdoor events, social media and our citywide projects.

On behalf of the Alliance Board, we say thank you to outgoing board members Avril Lockton, Christine Aus and Amanda Herrald for their dedication and commitment over years to champion Sustainable Neighbourhoods and sustainable practices across the city. We also welcomed Bruce Tozer to the Alliance Board this year, and look forward to learning from him with his fresh ideas and thoughts.

Our impact across the city grows as we collaborate with Lake Macquarie City Council on their Urban Greening Strategy, Circular Economy initiatives and other key projects. We were excited to support Council's recognition as a Tree City of the World in 2020. We look forward to continued collaboration to make a greener, healthier and more liveable city through our ReLeaf Lake Mac project.

Our ongoing war against waste continued this year with a number of citywide clean-up events, our Plastic Free Cafes project and the annual Waste to Art exhibition.

We continue to deliver our Strategic Plan: increasing our visibility through social media and media promotions, developing a Business Supporters Program and ongoing improvements to volunteer recruitment, induction, training, governance and collaboration opportunities such as regular networking events.

To our amazing volunteers, thank you. Without your commitment, dedication and forward-thinking, Sustainable Neighbourhoods would not have made the 10-year mark. In your roles as Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers and advocates, may you continue to inspire and empower the residents of Lake Macquarie to live a more sustainable life.

Robyn Charlton
Chairperson



Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups

There are 12 Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups located across Lake Macquarie City.

- Cardiff Area
- Dudley
- Five Bays (Teralba to Blackalls Park)
- Greater Charlestown
- Morisset and Peninsula
- Pelican Area
- Rathmines Area
- Redhead
- Toronto Area
- Valentine
- Warners Bay Area
- West Wallsend District



Our people

Our volunteers are community leaders, contributing their time and expertise to improve their neighbourhood, care for their place and bring people together. Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers are passionate about environmental issues, community participation and practical action.

As of June 2021, there were 270 Alliance members and 4811 subscribers to our major e-newsletters.

In the 2020-2021 financial year, our volunteers contributed an estimated 7800-plus hours, with a replacement cost value of more than \$332,000.

Board members 2020-21



Robyn Charlton,
Chairperson



Stephen Dewar,
Secretary



Jean McGarry,
Treasurer



Gabrielle Clappison



Samantha Doove



Amanda Herrald



Mark Howells



Nico Marcar



Bruce Tozer



Key projects 2020-21

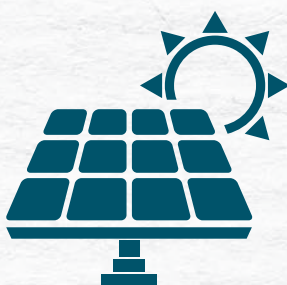


40 Waste to Art artworks created by **130 local artists**, attracting more than **600 visitors**



400 plants given to 50 people to **attract pollinators** to their gardens through the Cardiff Pollinator Project

Redhead EnergyWave project delivered **4 solar education newsletters**



7800 volunteer hours

1300 reusable cups distributed through **36 Plastic Free Cafes** since 2019, saving an estimated **13,000 takeaway cups** from landfill



Keeping the community connected, with **1381 volunteers attending 235 community events**



300 Boomerang Bags
created to reduce
plastic bag use



\$461,745 in value
delivered to
the Lake Mac
community

**400 volunteer
hours** creating **local
food production**,
gardening know-
how and community
connections



730 unique visits
to the **Warners
Bay Heritage Trail**
website



84 volunteers collected
more than **1800kg of litter**
at **8 clean-up events**



40,000 digital reach
through our website,
newsletters and
social media



380 volunteer hours dedicated
to **advocating for sustainability
and community outcomes**



Thank you

Members, volunteers and participants

We would not exist without our volunteers who are working to make Sustainable Neighbourhoods a reality. Many volunteers regularly and selflessly give their time, skills, knowledge and effort, and, at times, sacrifice to create innovative projects that bring our community together, educate about sustainability issues and improve our environment.

We appreciate the time and energy you contribute and look forward to supporting you to continue the excellent work you are doing.

Grants and funding

- Lake Macquarie City Council
- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Environment Protection Agency

Corporate and community partners

- Boomerang Alliance
- Children's University Australasia
- Grill'd, Charlestown
- Hunter Community Environment Centre
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Lake Macquarie Landcare
- Neighbour Day



Donors

- Pamper Care donations from many individuals
- Ultra Tune, Toronto
- Centennial Coal

Local partners

We rely on the generosity of our local partners to operate and increase the effectiveness of our programs. These organisations have assisted us throughout the year by providing meeting venues and networking and collaboration opportunities for our programs:

- Aspire Disability Group
- Barnsley Sustainable Play Preschool
- Blacksmiths Public School
- The Canopy, Cameron Park Community Centre
- Cardiff Bowling Club
- Cardiff North Public School
- Catalina Conference Centre, Rathmines
- Central Leagues Club, Charlestown
- Clean Up Australia
- Club Redhead
- Coal Point Progress Association
- Coast and Country Water Tanks
- Holmesville Progress Association
- Hunter Wetlands Centre
- Judd's Garages
- Marks Point Sports Club
- Pelican RSL
- Redhead Community Library
- SEEN@Swansea
- OzHarvest
- Speers Point Public School
- St Nicholas Out of School Hours Care, New Lambton
- Teralba Bowling Club
- Toronto Action Group
- Toronto Community Centenary Hub
- Toronto Community Garden
- Upcycle Newcastle
- Warners Bay Girl Guides
- Women's Shed on the Lake
- Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre
- Zonta Club of Hunter Newcastle

"Sustainable Neighbourhoods gives me connectivity with my community. I love meeting new people, and have developed some firm friendships. It's great to meet new people who are passionate about the same things as me." – Robyn





Our finances

Financial Report 2020-21

Income and expenditure statement, 2020-2021 financial year.
(All figures rounded to nearest \$10)

Opening balance	\$15,880
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Income

Council assistance	\$2950
Donations	\$1350
Fundraising and membership	\$10
Bank account transfer	\$130
Project grants	\$2880

Income total	\$7320
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Expenditure

Fundraising and membership	\$40
Bank account transfer	\$130
Insurance	\$2950
Pamper Care project	\$820
Project grants	\$5480

Expenditure total	\$9420
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Closing balance	\$13,780
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"I am motivated to actively play my part in protecting and caring for the local environment and for it to become more sustainable for future generations." – Ken

Project funding

Project	Funding source	Balance 30 June 2020	Income 2020- 2021	Expenditure 2020-2021	Balance 30 June 2021
Fundraising and membership	Various since 2021	\$3741	\$10	\$41	\$3710
Changed bank account	Balance Alliance funds	-	\$127	\$127	-
Insurance	Council	-	\$2950	\$2950	-
Plastic Free Cafes	NSW Government Community Litter Grant and community donations	\$974	\$4028	\$3752	\$1250
Repair Cafe Lake Mac	Council Environmental Sustainability Grant	\$810	-	-	\$810
Cardiff Pollinator Plan	Council Environmental Sustainability Grant	\$2805	-	\$745	\$2060
Dudley Nature Play project	Council Environmental Sustainability Grant	\$1051	-	-	\$1051
Pamper Care Project	Community donations	\$1732	\$200	\$819	\$1113
Charlestown Pool Garden	Council Environmental Sustainability Grant	\$116	-	-	\$116
Redhead EnergyWave	Council Environmental Sustainability Grant	\$3007	-	\$985	\$2022
Community Harmony Initiative, Toronto	Council Community Events Grant	\$1190	-	-	\$1190
Nature Play Adventure	Payment for service provision and community donations	\$22	-	-	\$22
Wangi Scarecrow Competition	Council Community Events Grant	\$430	-	-	\$430
Totals:		\$15,878	\$7315	\$9419	\$13,773



Get involved

Volunteer

Volunteers are an invaluable part of our community and vital to creating a sustainable city. Join our friendly team of more than 270 volunteers. Meet new people who share your passion, gain work experience or share your knowledge.

We offer a range of roles to suit your availability and interests. You can help irregularly; for example, helping to set up at a workshop, participating in working bees, letterbox drops, fundraising barbecues, clean-up events, providing morning tea and more.

Specialist roles include media and marketing, bookkeeping, project management, event management, group leadership, advocacy, fundraising, volunteer recruitment and support.

"I'd encourage anyone to come along and have a chat. You'll find something you want to work on, or at least find someone you want to chat to. And if you have a good idea, we can support you." – Jonathan





Participate

- Subscribe to our e-newsletter and attend our events.
- We love to see new faces and help our community try new things.
- We offer a range of events from sustainability workshops, clean ups, community gardening, repair cafes, nature play and social events.
- No need to commit to anything, just book in and turn up on the day.

Donate

- We welcome donations to support our activities. We are a not-for-profit incorporated association and all funds we receive go directly to our operations and projects.
- Donations can be made via direct deposit or by other arrangement. Contact us to find out more.

Partner

Community networks are at the heart of a sustainable future. We are keen to collaborate with local businesses, community groups, government organisations, sports clubs, special interest clubs, service organisations, advocacy and other networks.

Partnering with Sustainable Neighbourhoods can align your organisation with our sustainable ethic, excellent reputation and enthusiastic and effective community network.

Share

You can help us reach more people.

Share our e-newsletters, social media posts and event opportunities among your friends, family and community organisations.



Sustainable Neighbourhoods is an initiative of Lake Macquarie City Council.